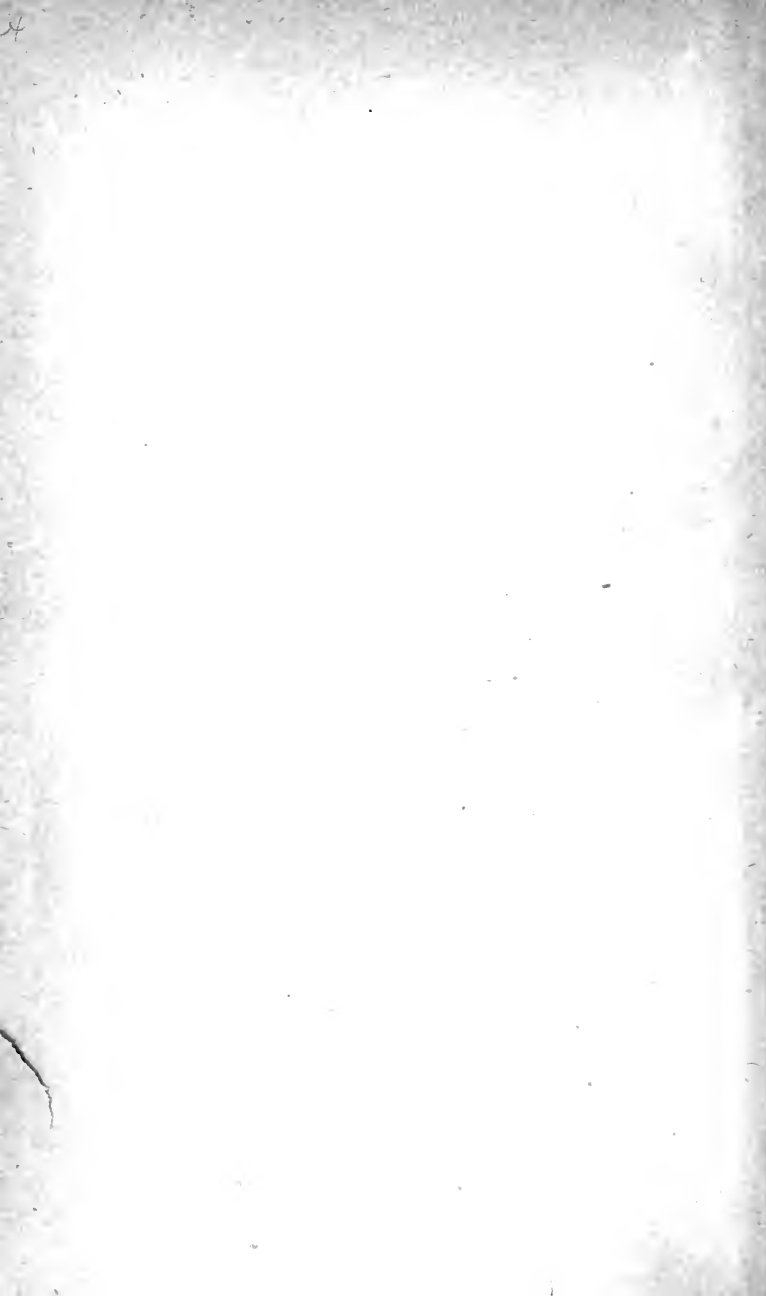


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A RATIONAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

GROUNDS OF PROTESTANT RELIGION :

BEING A VINDICATION

OF THE

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S

RELATION OF A CONFERENCE, &c.

FROM THE PRETENDED ANSWER BY T. C.

Wherein the true GROUNDS of FAITH are cleared, and the false discovered; the CHURCH of ENGLAND vindicated from the imputation of schism; and the most important particular controversies between us and those of the church of Rome thoroughly examined.

BY EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, D. D.

DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S, AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. I.

OXFORD:

AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

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A. D. 1844.

THIS treatise was originally printed in the year 1664 under the following circumstances. In the preceding year a work had appeared with the title of *Labyrinthus Cantuariensis*, or Dr. Laud's Labyrinth, purporting to have been printed at Paris by John Billaine in the year 1658, but not published before the year 1663. It is a reply to Archbishop Laud's Relation of his Conference with Fisher, and does not give the name of the author beyond the initials T. C., which, on the authority of Anthony Wood, are understood to denote Thomas Carwell, alias Thorold, a Jesuit and native of Lincolnshire. The work however was thought of so much importance as to require an immediate and powerful answer; and on the recommendation of Bishop Henchman Mr. Stillingfleet was requested to undertake this task, having recently established his reputation as an able and sound divine by the publication of his *Origines Sacræ*. He was at that time rector of Sutton in the county of Nottingham, but though much engaged with the duties of his parish, his task was

completed and his book licensed to be published, in the following year. Having received other honourable appointments in the mean time, he was promoted in the year 1677 to the deanery of St. Paul's, and in October 1689 was consecrated bishop of Worcester. He died March 27, 1699.

In this edition of 1844 the references to the *Labyrinthus* are taken, as in former editions, from the original folio printed in 1658; but the references to the Conference of Archbishop Laud are taken from the edition of that work printed in 8vo, at the University Press in the year 1839.

TO
HIS MOST SACRED MAJESTY
CHARLES II.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD KING OF GREAT BRITAIN,
FRANCE, AND IRELAND, DEFENDER OF THE
FAITH, &c.

Most gracious Sovereign,

SINCE that great miracle of Divine Providence in your Majesty's most happy restoration, we have seen those who before triumphed over the Church of England as dead, as much expressing their envy at her resurrection. Neither could it otherwise be expected but that so sudden a recovery of her former lustre would open the mouths of her weak but contentious adversaries, who see her shine in a firmament so much above them. But it is a part of her present felicity, that they are ashamed of that insulting question, What is become of your Church now? and are driven back to their old

impertinency, Where was your Church before Luther? They might as well alter the date of it, and ask where she was before your Majesty's restoration? for as she only suffered an eclipse in the late confusions, no more did she, though of a longer stay, in the times before the Reformation. And it was her great honour, that she was not awakened out of it (as of old they fancied) by the beating of drums, or the rude clamours of the people; but as she gradually regained her light, so it was with the influence of supreme authority: which hath caused so close an union and combination of interests between them, that the Church of England and the Royal Family have, like Hippocrates his twins, both wept and rejoiced together. And nothing doth more argue the excellent constitution of our Church, than that therein the purity of Christian doctrine is joined with the most hearty acknowledgment of your Majesty's power and supremacy; so that the loyalty of the members of it can neither be suspected of private interest, or of depending on the pleasure of a foreign bishop, but is inlaid in the very foundations of our Reformation: which stands on those two grand principles of religion and government, the "giving to God the things

that are God's, and to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." And as long as these two remain unshaken, we need not fear the continuance and flourishing of the Reformed Church of England, and your Majesty's interest in the members of it. Which it is hard to conceive those can have any zeal for, who are the busy factors among us for promoting so opposite an interest as that of the Church of Rome. For what a contradiction is it to suppose it consistent with your Majesty's honour and interest to rob your imperial crown of one of the richest jewels of it, to expose your royal sceptre to the mercy of a foreign prelate, to have another supreme head acknowledged within your dominions, and thereby to cut off the dependence of a considerable part of the nation wholly from yourself, and to exhaust the nation of an infinite mass of treasure merely to support the grandeur of the see of Rome! They who can make men believe that these things tend to your Majesty's service, think they have gained thereby a considerable step to their religion, which is by baffling men's reason, and persuading them to believe contradictions. But if, notwithstanding the received principles of their Church, any have continued faithful in

their loyalty to your Majesty, we have much more cause to attribute it to their love to their king and country than to their religion. We deny not but there may be such rare tempers which may conquer the malignity of poison, but it would be a dangerous inference from thence that it ought not to be accounted hurtful to human nature. If any such have been truly loyal, may they continue so, and their number increase: and since therein they so much come off from themselves, we hope they may yet come nearer to us, whose religion tends as much to the settling the only sure foundations of loyalty as theirs doth to the weakening of them. And were this the only controversy between us, there need not many books be written to persuade men of the truth of it.

But if these men may be believed, we can as little please God on the principles of our Church, as they your Majesty on the principles of theirs. A strange assertion! and impossible to be entertained by any but those who think there is no such way to please God as to renounce the judgment of sense and reason; and then indeed we freely confess there are none so likely to do it as themselves, with whom men are equally bound to believe the

greatest repugnancies to sense and reason with the most fundamental verities of Christian faith; as though no faith could carry men to heaven but that which can not only remove but swallow mountains. Yet these are the persons who pretend to make our faith infallible, while they undermine the foundations of it, as they advance charity by denying salvation to all but themselves, and promote true piety by their gross superstitions. By all which they have been guilty of debauching Christianity in so high a measure, that it cannot but heartily grieve those who honour it as the most excellent religion in the world, to see its beauty so much clouded by the errors and superstitions of the Roman Church.

That these are great as well as sad truths, is the design of the ensuing book to discover: which I humbly present to your Majesty's hands, both as it is a defence of that cause wherein your Majesty's interest is so highly concerned, and of that Book which your royal father, of most glorious memory, so highly honoured, not only by his own perusal and approbation, but by the commendation of it to his dearest children. On which account I am more encouraged to hope for your

Majesty's acceptance of this, because it appears under the shadow, as well as for the defence, of so great a name. And since God hath blessed your Majesty with so happy and rare a mixture of power and sweetness of temper, may they be still employed in the love and defence of our Reformed Church; which is the hearty prayer of

Your Majesty's most loyal
and obedient subject,

E. STILLINGFLEET.

PREFACE TO THE READER.

IT is now about a twelvemonth since there appeared to the world a book under the title of “Dr. Laud’s Labyrinth,” but, with the usual sincerity of those persons, pretended to be printed some years before. It is not the business of this Preface to inquire why, if printed then, it remained so long unpublished, but to acquaint the reader with the scope and design of that book, and of this which comes forth as a reply to it. There are three things mainly in dispute between us and those of the church of Rome, viz. whether they or we give the more satisfactory account of the grounds of faith; whether their church or ours be guilty of the charge of schism; and, whether their church be justly accused by us of introducing many errors and superstitions. In the handling of these, all our present debate consists; and therefore, for the greater advantage of the reader, I have distributed the whole into three distinct parts: which I thought more commodious than carrying it on in one continued discourse. And lest our adversaries should complain that we still proceed in a destructive way, I have not only endeavoured to lay open the palpable weakness of their cause, but to give a rational account of our own doctrine in opposi-

tion to theirs. Which I have especially done in the great controversy of the resolution of faith, as being the most difficult and important of any other. I hope the reader will have no cause to blame me for false or impertinent allegations of the Fathers, since it hath been so much my business to discover the fraud of our adversaries in that particular; which I have chiefly done from the scope and design of those very books out of which their testimonies are produced. In many of the particular differences, I have made use of several of their late writers against themselves; both to let them see how much popery begins to grow weary of itself, and how unjustly they condemn us for denying those things which the moderate and rational men of their own side disown and dispute against as well as we; and chiefly to undeceive the world as to their great pretence of unity among themselves. Since their divisions are grown to so great a height both at home and in foreign parts, that the dissenting parties mutually charge each other with heresy, and that about their great foundation of faith, viz. the pope's infallibility; the Jansenists in France, and a growing party in England, charging the Jesuits with heresy in asserting it, as they do them with the same for denying it. As to myself, I only declare, that I have with freedom and impartiality inquired into the reasons on both sides, and no interest hath kept me from letting that side of the balance fall, where I saw the greater weight of reason. In which respect I have been so far from dissembling the force of any of our adversaries' arguments, that if I could add

greater weight to them, I have done it; being as unwilling to abuse myself as the world. And therefore I have not only consulted their greatest authors, especially the three famous cardinals, Baronius, Bellarmine, and Perron; but the chiefest of those who, under the name of *conciliators*, have put the fairest varnish on the doctrine of that church. However, I have kept close to my adversary, and followed him through all his windings, from which I return with this satisfaction to myself, that I have vindicated his lordship and truth together. As to the style and way of writing I use, all that I have to say is, that my design hath been to join clearness of expression with evidence of reason. What success I have had in it, must be left to the reader's judgment; I only desire him to lay aside prejudice as much in judging as I have done in writing; otherwise I despair of his doing me right, and of my doing him good. For though reason be tractable and ingenuous, yet prejudice and interest are invincible things.

Having done thus much by way of preface, I shall not detain thee longer, by a particular answer to the impertinencies of our author's Preface, since there is nothing contained therein but what is abundantly answered in a more proper place. And I cannot think it reasonable to abuse so much the reader's appetite, as to give him a tedious preface to cloy his stomach. If any, after perusal of the whole, shall think fit to return an answer, if they do it fairly and rationally, they shall receive the same civility; if with clamour and imperti-

nency, I only let them know, I have not leisure enough to kill flies, though they make a troublesome noise. If any service be done to God or the church by this present work, next to that divine assistance through which I have done it, thou owest it to those great pillars of our church by whose command and encouragement I undertook it. Who the author was of the book I answer, I have been the less solicitous to inquire, because I would not betray the weakness of my cause by mixing personal matters in debates of so great importance. And whether he be now living, or dead, I suppose our adversaries cannot think it at all material, unless they judge that their cause doth live and die with him.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

PART I.

Of the grounds of faith.

CHAP. I.

THE OCCASION OF THE CONFERENCE, AND DEFENCE OF THE GREEK CHURCH,

T. C.'s title examined and retorted.—The labyrinth found in his book and doctrine.—The occasion of the conference about the church's infallibility.—The rise of the dispute about the Greek church, and the consequences from it.—The charge of heresy against the Greek church examined, and she found not guilty by the concurrent testimony of fathers, general councils, and popes.—Of the council of Florence, and the proceedings there; that council neither general nor free.—The distinction of ancient and modern Greeks disproved.—The debate of the *Filioque* being inserted into the Creed.—The time when and the right by which it was done, discussed.—The rise of the schism between the eastern and western churches mainly occasioned by the church of Rome. . . . Page 1

CHAP. II.

OF FUNDAMENTALS IN GENERAL.

The popish tenet concerning fundamentals, a mere step to the Roman greatness.—The question about fundamentals stated.—An inquiry into the nature of them.—What are fundamentals, in order to particular persons; and what to be owned as such, in order to ecclesiastical communion.—The prudence and moderation of the church of England, in defining articles of faith.—What judged fundamental by the catholic church.—No new articles of faith can become necessary.—The church's power in propounding matters of faith examined.—What is a sufficient proposition.—Of the Athanasian Creed, and its being owned by the church of England.—In what sense the articles of it are necessary to salvation.—Of the distinction of the material and formal object of faith as to fundamentals.—His lordship's integrity and T. C.'s forgery, in the testimony of Scotus.—Of heresy, and how far the church may declare matters of faith.—The testimony of St. Augustine vindicated.

CHAP. III.

THE ABSURDITIES OF THE ROMANISTS' DOCTRINE OF FUNDAMENTALS.

The church's authority must be divine, if whatever she defines be fundamental.—His lordship, and not the testimony of St. Augustine, shamefully abused three several ways.—Bellarmine not miscited;—the Pelagian heresy condemned by the general council at Ephesus.—The pope's authority not implied in that of councils.—The gross absurdities of the distinction of the church teaching and representative, from the church taught and diffusive, in the question of fundamentals.—The church's authority and testimony in matters of faith, distinguished.—The testimony of Vincentius Lirinensis explained, and shewed to be directly contrary to the Roman doctrine of fundamentals.—Stapleton and Bellarmine not reconciled by the vain endeavours used to that end. . P. 126

CHAP. IV.

THE PROTESTANT DOCTRINE OF FUNDAMENTALS VINDICATED.

The unreasonableness of demanding a catalogue of fundamentals.—The Creed contains the fundamentals of Christian communion.—The belief of scripture supposed by it.—The dispute concerning the sense of Christ's descent into hell, and Mr. Rogers his book confessed by T. C. impertinent: with others of the same nature.—T. C.'s fraud in citing his lordship's words.—Of papists' and protestants' unity.—The moderation of the church of England compared with that of Rome.—Her grounds of faith justified.—Infant-baptism how far proved out of scripture alone P. 156

CHAP. V.

THE ROMANISTS' WAY OF RESOLVING FAITH.

The ill consequences of the resolution of faith by the church's infallibility.—The grand absurdities of it manifested by its great unreasonableness in many particulars.—The certain foundations of faith unsettled by it, as is largely proved.—The circle unavoidable by their new attempts.—The impossibility of proving the church infallible by the way that Moses, Christ and his apostles were proved to be so.—Of the motives of credibility, and how far they belong to the church.—The difference between science and faith considered, and the new art of men's believing with their wills.—The church's testimony must be, according to their principles, the formal object of faith.—Of their esteem of fathers, scripture, and councils.—The rare distinctions concerning the church's infallibility discussed.—How the church can be infallible by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, yet not divinely infallible, but in a manner and after a sort.—T. C. applauded for his excellent faculty in contradicting himself P. 174

C H A P. VI.

OF THE INFALLIBILITY OF TRADITION.

Of the unwritten word, and the necessary ingredients of it.—The instances for it particularly examined and disproved.—The fathers' rule for examining traditions.—No unwritten word the foundation of divine faith. In what sense faith may be said to be divine.—Of tradition being known by its own light and the canon of the scripture.—The testimony of the Spirit, how far pertinent to this controversy.—Of the use of reason in the resolution of faith.—T. C.'s dialogue answered, with another between himself and a sceptic.—A twofold resolution of faith, into the doctrine and into the books.—Several objections answered from the supposition made of a child brought up without sight of scripture.—Christ no ignoramus nor impostor though the church be not infallible.—T. C.'s blasphemy in saying otherwise.—The testimonies of Irenæus and St. Augustine examined and retorted.—Of the nature of infallible certainty as to the canon of scripture; and whereon it is grounded.—The testimonies produced by his lordship vindicated P. 255

C H A P. VII.

THE PROTESTANT WAY OF RESOLVING FAITH.

Several principles premised in order to it.—The distinct questions set down, and their several resolutions given.—The truth of matters of fact, the divinity of the doctrine and of the books of scripture, distinctly resolved into their proper grounds.—Moral certainty a sufficient foundation for faith, and yet Christian religion proved to be infallibly true.—How apostolical tradition made by his lordship a foundation of faith.—Of the certainty we have of the copies of scripture, and the authority of them.—St. Augustine's testimony concerning church authority largely discussed and vindicated.—Of the private spirit, and the necessity of grace.—His lordship's way of resolving faith vindicated.—How far scripture may be said to be known by its own light.—The several testimonies of Bellarmine, Brierly, and Hooker, cleared P. 321

C H A P. VIII.

THE CHURCH'S INFALLIBILITY NOT PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE.

Some general considerations from the design of proving the church's infallibility from scripture.—No infallibility in the high priest and his clergy under the law; if there had been, no necessity there should be under the gospel.—Of St. Basil's testimony concerning traditions.—Scripture less liable to corruption than traditions.—The great uncertainty of judging traditions when apostolical, when not.—The church's perpetuity being promised in scripture proves not its infallibility.—His lordship doth not falsify A. C.'s words, but T. C. doth his meaning.—

Producing the Jesuits' words no traducing their order.—T. C.'s miserable apology for them.—The particular texts produced for the church's infallibility examined.—No such infallibility necessary in the apostles' successors as in themselves.—The similitude of scripture and tradition to an ambassador and his credentials rightly stated P. 374

CHAP. IX.

THE SENSE OF THE FATHERS IN THIS CONTROVERSY.

The judgment of antiquity inquired into, especially of the three first centuries; and the reasons for it.—The several testimonies of Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and all the fathers who writ in vindication of Christian religion, manifested to concur fully with our way of resolving faith.—T. C.'s answers to Vincentius Lirinensis, a Gandavo, and the fathers produced by his lordship, pitifully weak.—The particulars of his ninth chapter examined.—St. Augustine's testimony vindicated.—T. C.'s nauseous repetitions sent as vagrants to their several homes.—His lordship's considerations found too heavy for T. C.'s answers.—In what sense the scripture may be called a *præcognitum*.—What way the Jews resolved their faith.—This controversy, and the first part, concluded P. 417

PART I.

Of the grounds of faith.

CHAP. I.

THE OCCASION OF THE CONFERENCE, AND DEFENCE OF THE GREEK CHURCH.

T. C.'s title examined and retorted.—The labyrinth found in his book and doctrine.—The occasion of the conference about the church's infallibility.—The rise of the dispute about the Greek church, and the consequences from it.—The charge of heresy against the Greek church examined, and she found not guilty by the concurrent testimony of fathers, general councils, and popes.—Of the council of Florence, and the proceedings there; that council neither general nor free.—The distinction of ancient and modern Greeks disproved.—The debate of the *Filioque* being inserted into the Creed.—The time when, and the right by which it was done, discussed.—The rise of the schism between the eastern and western churches mainly occasioned by the church of Rome.

§. 1. **T**HAT which is the common subtilty of malefactors, to derive, if possible, the imputation of that fault on the persons of their accusers, which they are most liable to be charged with themselves, is the great artifice made use of by you in the title and design of your book. For there being nothing which your party is more justly accused for, than involving and perplexing the grounds of Christian faith under a pretext of infallibility in your church, you thought you could not better avoid the odium of it than by a confident recrimination; and from hence it is that you call his lordship's book a "labyrinth," and pretend to discover his "abstruse turnings, ambiguous windings and intricate meanders," as you are

pleased to style them. But those who will take the pains to search your book for the discoveries made in it, will find themselves little satisfied but only in these, that no cause can be so bad, but interested persons will plead for it; and no writing so clear and exact, but a perplexed mind will imagine nothing but meanders in it. And if dark passages and intricate windings, if obscure sense and perplexed consequences, if uncertain wanderings and frequent self-contradictions, may make a writing be called a labyrinth, I know no modern artist who comes so near the skill of the Cretan artificer as yourself. Neither is this merely your own fault; but the nature of the cause whose defence you have espoused is such as will not admit of being handled in any other manner. For you might as soon hope to persuade a traveller that his nearest and safest way was through such a labyrinth as that of Crete, as convince us that the best and surest resolution of our faith is into your church's infallibility. And while you give out that all other grounds of Christian faith are uncertain, and yet are put to such miserable shifts in defence of your own, instead of establishing the faith of Christians, you expose Christianity itself to the scorn and contempt of atheists; who need nothing more to confirm them in their infidelity, than such a senseless and unreasonable way of proceeding as you make use of for laying the foundations of Christian faith. Your great principle being, that no faith can be divine but what is infallible; and none infallible but what is built on a divine and infallible testimony; and that this testimony is only that of the present catholic church; and that church none but yours: and yet after all this you dare not say the testimony of your church is divine, but only in a sort and after a manner. You pretend that our faith is vain and uncertain, because built only on moral certainty and rational evidence; and yet you have no other proof for your church's infallibility, but the motives of credibility. You offer to prove the church's infallibility independently on scripture, and yet challenge no other infallibility but what comes by the promise and assistance of the Holy Ghost, which depends wholly on the truth of the scripture. You seek to disparage scripture on purpose to advance your church's authority, and yet bring your greatest evidences of the church's authority from it. By which authority of the

church you often tell us that Christian religion can only be proved to be infallibly true, when if but one error be found in your church, her infallible testimony is gone, and what becomes then of Christian religion? and all this is managed with a peculiar regard to the interest of your church, as the only catholic church, which you can never attempt to prove but upon supposition of the truth of Christianity, the belief of which yet you say depends upon your church's being the true and catholic church. These, and many other such as these, will be found the rare and coherent principles of your faith and doctrine, which I have here only given this taste of, that the reader may see with what honour to yourself and advantage to your cause, you have bestowed the title of "Labyrinth" on his lordship's book.

But yet you might be pardonable, if rather through the weakness of your cause than your ill management of it, you had brought us into these amazing labyrinths; if you had left us any thing whereby we might hope to be safely directed in our passage through them; whereas you not only endeavour to put men out of the true way, but use your greatest industry to keep them from a possibility of returning into it, by not only suggesting false principles to them, but decrying the use of those things which should discover their falsity. For although the judgment of sense were that which the apostles did appeal to, "that which we have seen and heard—declare 1 John i. 1, we unto you;" although that were the greatest and surest ³ evidence to them of the resurrection of Christ; although Christ himself condemned them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Mark xvi. ¹⁴ him after he was risen; yet, according to your principles, men must have a care of relying on the judgment of sense in matters of faith, lest perchance they should not believe that great affront to human nature, the doctrine of transubstantiation. Neither are men only deprived of the judgment of sense, but of the concurrent use of scripture and reason; for these are pretended to be uncertain, fallible, nay, dangerous without the church's infallibility: so that the short of your grounds of establishing faith is, If we will find our way, we must renounce the judgment of sense and reason, submit ourselves and scripture to an infallible guide, and then, you tell

us, we cannot miss of our way ; when it is impossible for us to know our guide, without the use of those things which we are bid to renounce. These things laid together make us admire more at your confidence than invention, in making the current title of your book to be “ Dr. Laud’s Labyrinth,” in which it is hard to say whether your immodesty or blindness be the greater.

Lab. p. 1. §. 2. But as though you were the only heroes for asserting the Christian cause, and all others but more subtle betrayers of it, you begin your book with a most ingenious comparison of “ the learned labours of those of your church to the stately temple of Solomon ; and the artificial but pestiferous works of all heretical authors” (i. e. all but yourselves) “ to labyrinths and intricate dungeons.” In which only your discretion is to be commended, in placing this at the entrance of your book ; for whosoever looks but further into it, and compares it with that you pretend to answer, will not condemn the choice of your similitudes, but your forgetfulness in misapplying them. But it matters not what titles you give to the books of our authors, unless you were better able to confute them : and if no other book of any late protestant writer hath been any more discovered to be of this intangling nature than this of his lordship (whom you call our grand author) is by you, you may very justly say of them as you do in the next words, Lab. p. 2. “ they are very liable to the same reproach.” In which we commend your ingenuity, that when you had so lately disparaged our authors and writings, you so suddenly wipe off those aspersions again by giving them the deserved name of reproaches. When you say his lordship’s book is most artificially composed, we have reason to believe so fair a testimony from a professed adversary ; but when notwithstanding this you call it a labyrinth, we can interpret it only as a fair plea for your not being able to answer it. And who can blame you for calling that a labyrinth, in which you have so miserably lost yourself ? But in pity to you and justice to the cause I have undertaken, I shall endeavour with all kindness and fairness to reduce you out of your strange intanglements into the plain and easy paths of truth ; which I doubt not to effect by your own clue of scripture and tradition, by which you may soon discover what a labyrinth you were in

yourself, when you had thought to have made "directive marks" (as you call them,) for others to avoid it.

§. 3. To omit therefore any further preface, I shall wait upon you to particulars; the first of which is, "the occasion of the conference," which (you say) was "for the satisfaction of an honourable lady, who having heard it granted in a former conference, that there must be a continual visible company ever since Christ, teaching unchanged doctrine in all points necessary to salvation; and finding" (it seems) "in her own reason, that such a company or church must not be fallible in its teaching, was in quest of a continual, visible, infallible church, as not thinking it fit for unlearned persons to judge of particular doctrinals, but to depend on the judgment of the true church." The question then was not concerning a continual and visible church, which you acknowledge was granted, but concerning such a church as must be infallible in all she teaches, (and if she be infallible, according to your doctrine of fundamentals, whatever she teaches is necessary to salvation,) which that lady thought necessary to be first determined, because, saith Mr. Fisher, "it was not for her, or any other unlearned persons, to take upon them to judge of particulars, without depending upon the judgment of the true church; which seeming to allow of some use of our own judgment, supposing the church's authority, you pervert into these words, "Not thinking it fit to judge, &c. but to depend," &c. But let them be as they will, unless you gave greater reason for them, it is not material which way they pass. For his lordship had returned a sufficient answer to that pretence (which you are content to take no notice of) in saying, "that it is very fit the people should look to the judgment of the church before they be too busy with particulars. But yet neither scripture, nor any good authority denies them some moderate use of their own understanding and judgment, especially in things familiar and evident, which even ordinary capacities may as easily understand as read. And therefore some particulars a Christian may judge without depending." To which you, having nothing to say, run post to the business of infallibility: for when it was said, "the lady desired to rely on an infallible church, therein," his lordship says, "neither the Jesuit nor the lady herself spake very advisedly:" "for an infallible church denotes a particular

Lab. p. 2.

Conf. p. 1.
sect. 2.Conf. p. 3.
sect. 3. n. 2.

church, in that it is set in opposition to some other particular church that is not infallible." Here now you begin your discoveries: for you tell us, "he makes this his first crook in his projected labyrinth; which is apparent to any man that has eyes, even without the help of a perspective." As seldom as perspectives are used to discern the turns of labyrinths, nothing is so apparent, as that your eyes or your judgment were not very good when you used this expression. For I pray, what crook or turn is there in that, when a lady demanded an infallible church to her guide, to say, that by that question she supposeth some particular church as distinct from and opposite to others, to be infallible? No, say you, "she sought not any one particular church infallible, in opposition to another church not infallible; but some church, such as might without danger of error direct her in all doctrinal points of faith." Rarely well distinguished! not *any* particular church, but *some* particular church. For if she inquired after "some church, which without danger of error might direct her in all doctrinal points of faith," doth she not thereby imply, that some other church might bring her into danger of error under pretence of directing her in matters of faith? and if this be some particular fallible church, the other must be some particular infallible church. And is it possible to conceive some church that may err in directing, and some other that may not err, without some particular church being taken in opposition to some other church? But you would fain persuade us that the force of his lordship's argument rests wholly upon the importance of the particle "a" or "an," which cannot be applied but to particulars, which you very learnedly disprove: whereas the main strength of what his lordship says depends upon the nature of the question, and the manner of proposing it. For the lady inquiring after such a church whose judgment she might rely on as to the matters in dispute in the Christian world, must mean such a church whose communion must be known as distinct from other churches which are not infallible; for otherwise she might be deceived still. And if you give a pertinent answer to her question, you must shew her some such church as an infallible guide, which can be no other in this case, but some particular church considered as distinct from others. For a general answer concerning the infallibility of the catholic church,

without shewing how the infallible judgment of that church may be known, can by no means reach the case in hand; which doth not merely respect an infallibility in the subject, but such an infallibility as may be a sufficient guide in all doctrinal points of faith. When you say therefore, “she Lab. p. 3. meant no other than the universal visible church of Christ,” you must tell us how the universal visible church can become such an infallible guide in the matters in controversy between those churches, which yet are members of that universal visible church: for the notion of the universal church not being in its nature confined to any one of these parties, but all of them concurring to the making of it up, can no more be an infallible guide in the matters in difference, than the common notion of animal can direct us in judging what beings are sensitive and what rational. Therefore though you would fain deceive the world under a pretence of the catholic church, yet nothing can be more evident, than that in the question what church must be a guide in doctrinal points of faith, it must be understood of some church as distinct from other churches, which ought not to be relied on as infallible guides. But the subtilty of this is, that when you challenge infallibility to your church, we should not apprehend her as a particular church, but as the true catholic church; which is a thing so every way absurd and unreasonable, that you had need use the greatest artifices to disguise it, which yet can deceive none but such as are resolved to be deceived by them: for any one “who had his eyes in his head might discern without a perspective,” as you speak, that churches of several and distinct communions from each other were placed in competition for infallibility: for Mr. Fisher’s next words are, “The question was, which was that church?” Do you think he means, which was that universal visible church? Certainly not; for the nature of the question supposes several churches: now I think you do not believe there are several universal visible churches. And it immediately follows, “A friend of the lady’s would needs defend, that not only the Roman, but the Greek church was right;” to which Mr. Fisher answers, that the Greek church had erred in matter of doctrine. Can any thing be more plain than that this question doth relate to churches considered severally and as under distinct communions and denomina-

tions? and therefore notwithstanding your pitiful pretences to the contrary, this question can be no otherwise understood than as his lordship said, "of some particular infallible church, in opposition to some other particular church which is not infallible." And if you judge this "an affected mistake," as you call it, your discerning faculty will be as liable to question as your church's infallibility.

Lab. p. 3. §. 4. That you might seem to avoid the better the force of his lordship's following discourse against Bellarmine about the infallibility of the particular church of Rome, you first tell us, that it is "sufficient for a catholic to believe that there is an infallibility in the church, without further obligation to examine whether the particular church of Rome be infallible or not." Which is an egregious piece of sophistry. For, put case a man believes the catholic church of all ages infallible, but not of any one particular age since the apostles' times; suppose a man believe the catholic church of the present age infallible, but not of any one particular communion but as it takes in those common truths wherein they are all agreed; will you say this is sufficient for a catholic to believe without obligation to examine further? If you will, speak it out, and, I dare say, you shall not have much thanks at Rome when you have done it. But the mystery is, if a man believes the Roman church only to be the catholic church, it is no matter whether he inquires whether the catholic church be only at Rome or no. It is not the place, but the communion of the Roman church which is now inquired after in the question of infallibility; although I cannot see but those places out of the fathers which are produced to prove the Roman church infallible, will hold for the continuance of that infallibility in that particular place of Rome. For St. Cyprian saith expressly of the Romans, "that they are such to whom *perfidia*" (whatever be meant by it) "cannot have access^a." St. Jerome saith, "The Roman faith admits no deceits into it^b." Gregory Nazianzen, that "Rome retains the ancient faith^c." Not that I

^a Navigare audent ad Petri cathedram, et ecclesiam principalem, &c. nec cogitare, eos esse Romanos ad quos perfidia habere non potest accessum. Cypr. l. 1. c. 3.

^b Scito, Romanam fidem ejusmodi præstigijs non recipere. Hieron. Apol. 3. c. Ruff.

^c Roma semper fidem retinet. Greg. Nazianz. Carm. de Vita sua.

think any of these places do in the least import the infallibility of the Roman church, (as will be shewed in its proper place,) but that, on supposition that infallibility were implied in them, they would hold for the infallibility of the particular Roman church. And therefore Bellarmine understood what he did when he produced these places to that purpose, especially the apostolical see remaining at Rome, as he supposeth himself in this part of the question which he there discusseth. Either therefore you must assert that which his lordship learnedly proves, viz. that no such thing as infallibility is intended by any of these citations, or else that it must extend to the particular Roman church. And when you deny this to be an article of faith among catholics, that the particular Roman church (the apostolical see remaining there) is infallible, prove at your leisure from any of these citations that the church within the Roman communion is infallible and not the particular Roman church. And from what hath been hitherto said, I am so far from suspecting his lordship's candour, as you do, that I much rather suspect your judgment, and that you are not much used to attend to the consequences of things, or else you would not have deserted Bellarmine in defence of so necessary and pertinent a point as the infallibility of the particular church of Rome.

Secondly, you answer to his lordship's discourse concerning Bellarmine's authorities, "that you cannot hold yourself obliged to take notice of his pretended solutions, till you find them brought to evacuate the infallibility of the catholic or the Roman church in its full latitude, as catholics ever mean it, save when they say the particular church of Rome." But taking it in as full a latitude as you please, I doubt not but to make it appear that the Roman church is the Roman church still, that is, a particular church as distinct from the communion of others, and therefore neither catholic nor infallible: which I must refer to the place where you insist upon it, which I shall do without the imitation of your vanity, in telling your reader as far as eighthly and lastly what fine exploits you intend to do there. But usually those who brag most of their valour beforehand shew least in the combat, and thus it will be found with you. I shall let you therefore enjoy yourself in the pleasant thoughts of your noble intendments, till we come

Bellarmin. de
Pontifice
Rom. l. 4.
c. 4. sect. 1.

Lab. p. 4.

to the trial of them ; and so come to the present controversy concerning the Greek church.

The defence of the Greek church.

§. 5. It is none of the least of those arts which you make use of for the perplexing the Christian faith, to put men upon inquiring after an infallible church, when yet you have no way to discern which is so much as a true church, but by examining the doctrine of it. So that of necessity the rule of faith and doctrine must be certainly known, before ever any one can with safety depend upon the judgment of any church. For having already proved that there can be no other meaning of the question concerning the church, as here stated, but with relation to some particular church to whose communion the party inquiring might join, and whose judgment might be relied on ; we see it presently follows in the debate, " Which was that church ? " and it seems, as is said already, " a friend of the lady's undertook to defend that the Greek church was right." To which Mr. Fisher answers, " that the Greek church had plainly changed, and taught false in a point of doctrine concerning the Holy Ghost : " and after repeats it, " that it had erred." Before I come to examine how you make good the charge you draw up against the poor Greek church in making it err fundamentally, it is worth our while to consider upon what account this dispute comes in. The inquiry was concerning the true church on whose judgment one might safely depend in religion. It seems, two were propounded to consideration, the Greek and the Roman ; the Greek was rejected because it had erred : from whence it follows, that the dispute concerning the truth of doctrine must necessarily precede that of the church : for by Mr. Fisher's confession and your own, " a church which hath erred cannot be relied on ; " therefore men must be satisfied whether a church hath erred or no, before they can judge whether she may be relied on or no. Which being granted, all the whole fabric of your book falls to the ground ; for then, 1. Men must be infallibly certain of the grounds of faith antecedently to the testimony of the church : for if they be to judge of a church by the doctrine, they must in order to such a judgment be certain what that doctrine is which they must judge of the

Conf. p. 21.
sect. 4.

church by. 2. No church can be known to be infallible, unless it appear to be so by that doctrine which they are to examine the truth of the church by, and therefore no church can be known to be infallible by the motives of credibility. 3. No church ought to be relied on as infallible, which may be found guilty of any error by comparing it with the doctrine which we are to try it by. Therefore you must first prove your church not to have erred in any particular; for if she hath, it is impossible she should be infallible; and not think to prove that she hath not erred because she cannot, that being the thing in question, and must by your dealing with the Greek church be judged by particulars. 4. There must be a certain rule of faith supposed to have sufficient authority to decide controversies without any dependence upon the church. For the matter to be judged is the church; and if the scripture may and must decide that, why may it not as well all the rest? 5. Every man's reason proceeding according to this rule of faith must be left his judge in matters of religion. And whatever inconveniences you can imagine to attend upon this, they immediately and necessarily follow from your proceeding with the Greek church, by excluding her because she hath erred, which while we are in pursuit of a church can be determined by nothing but every one's particular reason. 6. Then fundamentals do not depend upon the church's declaration. For you assert the Greek church to err fundamentally, and that this may be made appear to one who is seeking after a church. Suppose then I inquire, as the lady did, after a church whose judgment I must absolutely depend on, and some mention the Greek and others the Roman church: you tell me, it cannot be the Greek, for that hath erred fundamentally. I inquire how you know, supposing her to err, that it is a fundamental error? Will you answer me, Because the true church hath declared it to be a fundamental error? but that was it I was seeking for, which that church is, which may declare what errors are fundamental and what not. If you tell me it is yours, I may soon tell you, you seem to have a greater kindness for your church than yourself, and venture to speak any thing for the sake of it. Thus we see how finely you have betrayed your whole cause in your first onset, by so rude an attempt upon the Greek church.

And truly it was much your concernment to load her as much as you can: for though she now wants one of the great marks of your church (which yet you know not how long your church may enjoy), viz. outward splendour and bravery, yet you cannot deny, but that church was planted by the apostles, enjoyed a continual succession from them, flourished with a number of the fathers exceeding that of yours, had more of the councils of greatest credit in it, and, which is a commendation still to it, it retains more purity under its persecutions than your church with all its external splendour. “But she hath erred concerning the Holy Ghost, and therefore hath lost it.” A severe censure, which his lordship rebukes Mr. Fisher for citing king James so boldly for: but two ways it may be taken, he adds: 1. “to lose such assistance as prescribes from all error;” 2. or else from all fundamental error: this therefore, his lordship truly saith, “is an error of the first sort and not of the latter.”

§. 6. Passing by therefore his lordship’s expressions of his modesty, (which, if an error, is one you are like to be secured from,) and his cautious expressions concerning the Greek church, which he highly shewed his wisdom in, we come to consider how you prove the Greek church guilty of fundamental error. You say, “you pass by his trifling, and make way for truth.” I wonder not to see you reflect on his lordship for his modesty, considering how little of it you shew towards him; let us then make way too, but it is to see you and truth combat together. “It is to be considered,” say you, “that now for many hundred years, the whole Latin church hath decreed and believed it to be flat heresy in the Greeks; and they decreed the contrary to be an heresy in the Latin church, and both together condemned the opinion of the Grecians as heretical in a general council (in Florentino): how then bears it any show of probability, what some few of yesterday (forced to it by an impossibility of otherwise avoiding the strength of catholic arguments against them) affirm, that the matter of this controversy was so small and inconsiderable, that it is not sufficient to produce an heresy on either side? Is not this to make all the churches of Christendom for many hundred years quite blind, and themselves only clear and sharp-sighted? which swelling presumption what spirit it argues, and whence

Lab. p. 5.
n. 4.

Conf. p. 25.
n. 17. sect.
5.

Lab. p. 6.
n. 4.

it proceeds, all those who have learned from St. Augustine that pride is the mother of heresy, will easily collect." I grant this speech of St. Augustine to be true; only let it be added, that pride is likewise the mother of making heresies, as will appear in this present controversy; and whether we, who vindicate the Greek church from heresy, or you who would find the bill against her (to keep her from any rivalry with your church), be more guilty of pride, will be soon discovered; but sure you believe us not only to be men of yesterday, but to know nothing who should sentence the Greek church for heresy upon such feeble pretences as these are. I know not what presumption that can be, to say men may be too forward on both sides in calling each other heretics, and it may be not so much their blindness, as pride and passion, which may make them do it. But if they will condemn that for heresy which is not so made appear to be upon any evidence from scripture and reason, they were not so blind in defining it, as we should be in following their judgment without further examination. "But this was for many hundred years." The more to blame they, for continuing in so rash judgments so long, if it appear so. But it is well still you tell us, that as the Latin church condemned the Greek for heresy, the Greek condemned the Latin for it too. And so by your own rule the one was as blind as the other. "But the Latin church had the right to determine heresy, and the Greek had not." This is the question, which church must be relied on for judgment? and if they mutually condemn each other, we must have a higher rule to judge of both by. "But still, is it not an argument, that it is a heresy of one side or the other, because each party condemns the other of heresy?" Just as much, as if two men fall out and call each other knaves, it must be granted, that if both be not, yet at least the one of them is so: heresy being grown the scolding word in religion; and no two parties can differ, but they seek to fasten this reproach on each other. If one should bring greater evidence than the other of his knavery, he ought to be more accounted so. No otherwise can it be here; if sufficient proof be brought of heresy on the one side and not the other, that party may be looked on as more guilty: but still remembering, that the more confident affirmation, the pretence to greater honesty and

power, be not taken for the only evidences of it : as I doubt it will appear in our present case. But still suppose, that of two men who have so reproached each other, the one of them being fallen into distress and poverty, and not hoping for relief but from the other person, and he denying it, unless he be content by joint consent to be proclaimed knave, which he through his necessity yielding to, but as soon as that is over declaring on what account they agreed ; must this man be more pitied for his necessity, or condemned for his knavery ? Just such, I shall make it appear, that which you call condemning the Grecians as heretical in a general council at Florence to have been, and no otherwise.

§. 7. But I come to a closer examination of this subject, to see with what justice you charge the Greek church either with heresy or schism ; for both these you accuse it of - in this chapter. Two things were the most in dispute between the Greek and Latin churches, the one was the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Ghost from Father and Son, the other was concerning the addition of the *Filioque* to the Creed. And although the Greeks in their debates at Ferrara would not meddle with the doctrine before the Latins could clear themselves concerning the addition, which they said was the main cause of the contest between them, yet I am content to follow your method, and handle the other first. Your discourse concerning the first consists of two parts, proofs and answers ; proofs of their heresy, and answers to his lordship's arguments against it. The proofs are double, the one from authority, the other from theological reason. Through every of these particulars I shall follow you, and from them I doubt not to evince, that the Greeks are not guilty of the faults you lay to their charge.

We have already seen what your proofs from authority are ; their condemning one another for heretics, and the Greeks being condemned by a general council. If I can therefore prove that the Greeks' opinion was not accounted an heresy before the council of Florence, and that it did not become a heresy by the council of Florence, I shall sufficiently discover the weakness of your arguments from authority.

I. That it was not accounted a heresy before the council of Florence : I mean not, that there were no hot-brained persons in all the time of the difference, who did not brand the Greek

church with heresy, but that it was never accounted a heresy, by any of those whom yourselves account the only competent judges of heresy; and those are either the fathers, or popes, or councils; which I prove in their order.

i. That it was not accounted heresy by the fathers; which will be proved by these two things. 1. Because it is very doubtful whether many of the fathers did believe the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son, or no. 2. Because those who did believe it, did not condemn those of heresy who did not.

1. That it is very doubtful whether many of them did believe the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son, or no; at least, so far as to make it an article of faith: for, 1. There are clear testimonies that they make it unnecessary to be believed; 2. The testimonies which seem to say that they did believe it, do not necessarily imply that they did.

1. That there are clear testimonies, that they did not account it a thing necessary to be believed: both because they in terms asserted the nature of this procession to be incomprehensible, and withal, did as clearly affirm the belief of that, which doth not imply this procession to be sufficient for salvation. 1. They in terms assert, that the mystery of this procession is incomprehensible. And can you, or any reasonable man, imagine they should make the manner of that procession to be an article of faith, which they acknowledge to be absolutely beyond our apprehension? I grant, something supposed by them to be incomprehensible is made an article of faith: but then it is not that which is supposed as incomprehensible under that notion, which is made so; but the thing itself which may be incomprehensible; yet being clearly revealed in scripture, ought to be believed, notwithstanding that incomprehensibility of it: as the mystery of the Trinity itself, the eternal generation of the Son, the procession of the Spirit from the Father, &c. But then I say, these things are such, as are either declared by them to be expressly revealed in scripture, or necessarily consequent from something supposed to be so. As for instance, supposing the Trinity in unity to be something divinely revealed, whatever is necessarily consequent from that, and is necessary to be believed in order to that, though it be incomprehensible, must be believed; as,

supposing these two things clear from scripture, that there is but one true God, and that there are three Persons, who have the name, properties, and attributes of God given to them, though our reason be too short to fathom the manner how these can have three distinct subsistences, and yet but one essence, because our reason (i. e. all those conceptions which we have formed in our mind from the observation of things) doth tell us, that those things which agree or disagree in a third, agree or disagree one with another, and from thence it would infer, that, if the Father be God, and the Son God, there could be no difference between Father and Son; yet this being merely as to the connection of two propositions, both of which are supposed distinctly revealed in scripture; we are bound in this case to believe such a connection, because both parts are equally revealed by an infallible testimony, though the mode of that connection be to us incomprehensible: but it is not so, where neither clear revelation, nor a necessary consequent from something which is divinely revealed, doth enforce our belief of it. As in our present case: since we suppose it revealed in scripture, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are God, whatever is necessary to the belief of that, though incomprehensible, we ought to believe it: but if there be something without which I may believe the deity of the Father, Son and Spirit, and this not clearly asserted in scripture, but is a thing in itself incomprehensible, that cannot be made a necessary article of faith: thus that the Spirit doth proceed from the Father seems necessary on both accounts, as consequent upon the belief of the Trinity in unity, and as clearly expressed in scripture: but that the Spirit should proceed from Father and Son as from one principle, that they should communicate in an action proper to their subsistences, and yet be distinguished from each other in those subsistences, and agree only in essence, (and if the Spirit proceeds not from their subsistences, but from the essence, the Spirit must proceed from itself, because that is common to all three;) these things being in themselves incomprehensible, and not necessary to the belief of the divinity either of Son or Holy Ghost, nor pretended to be clearly revealed in scripture, cannot be said to make a necessary article of faith, the denial of which must suppose heresy. And therefore that

which is the only objection in this case is removed, viz. that this procession of the Spirit from the Father is incomprehensible, and yet supposed to be an article of faith; for that I have already shewed is expressly revealed in scripture, that the Spirit doth proceed from the Father. But neither is the procession from the Son necessary to the belief of the deity of the Son; for if it were, it would be as necessary to the deity of the Holy Ghost that the Son should be begotten by the Spirit; neither doth it follow from any place of scripture, for all those places which are usually brought are very capable of such interpretations as do not at all infer it: from hence then it follows, that those who upon these terms acknowledge this procession incomprehensible, do therein imply that the belief of it is no article necessary to salvation, and therefore the denial no heresy.

Now for this we have the clearest testimonies of such who were the greatest and most zealous assertors of the doctrine of the Trinity. Athanasius saith expressly, “that it is sufficient to know that the Spirit is no creature, nor to be reckoned among God’s works; for nothing of another nature is mingled with the Trinity, but it is undivided and like itself: these things are sufficient for believers. But,” saith he, “when we come hither, the cherubims veil their faces; but he that inquires and searches into more than these, neglects him that hath said, ‘Be not wise over much,’^d &c.” If it be sufficient to know that the Spirit is no creature, it cannot be necessary to believe that the Spirit proceeds from the Son: for they who do not believe that do firmly believe the deity of it. And if whatever goes beyond that goes beyond the bounds which God hath set us, then certainly he never dreamt that men should be condemned for heresy as to some things which cannot be supposed to be within them. To the same purpose speaks St. Basil in several places, acknowledging the procession of the Holy Ghost to be a thing inexplicable; and when the heretics inquired of him what kind of thing that procession

^d Ἀρκεί γινώσκειν ὅτι μὴ κτίσμα ἐστὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα, μηδὲ τοῖς ποιήμασι συναριθμεῖται· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλότριον ἐπιγίνονται τῇ Τριάδι ἀλλ’ ἀδιαίρετός ἐστι, καὶ ὁμοία ἐαυτῇ. Ἀρκεί ταῦτα τοῖς πιστοῖς.

Ἔως τούτων τὰ χερουβιμ καλύπτει ταῖς πτέρυξιν· ὁ δὲ περιττὰ τούτων ζητῶν καὶ θέλων ἐρευνᾶν παρακοῦει τοῦ λέγοντος, Μὴ σοφίζου πολλά, &c. Athanas. Ep. ad Serapion. p. 357. tom. I.

was, when the Spirit was neither ἀγέννητος, nor yet γεννητός, all the answer he gives them is, “If there be such multitudes of things in the world which we are ignorant of, what shame is it to confess our ignorance here^e?” And if it be here our duty to confess our ignorance, it is far from it to be magisterial and definitive, that unless men acknowledge every punctilio, they are guilty of heresy and fundamental errors. St. Gregory Nazianzen^f mentioning that question, what this procession is? returns this answer, “Tell me first what it is for the Father to be unbegotten, and I will explain the generation of the Son, and procession of the Holy Ghost; that we may both therein shew our folly, who pry into these divine mysteries, and do not know the things which are before our feet.” And elsewhere, “If we inquire into these things, what shall we leave to them, whom the scripture tells us alone know and are known of each other?” St. Cyril^g requires of men, “to believe his being, and subsistence, and dominion over all; but for other things not to suffer the mind to go beyond the bounds allotted to human nature.” These spoke like wise men, and the true fathers of the church, who would have men content themselves with believing merely what was necessary in these deep and incomprehensible mysteries, and not to make articles of faith of such things which are not made necessary, either by deduction of reason or clear divine revelation. Although therefore I should grant, that some or all of these did themselves believe this procession from the Son, yet hereby it appears they were far from imposing it upon others, or making it a heresy in any not to believe it. They saw well these were not things to be narrowly searched into, but as the philosopher said of some kind of hellebore,

^e Εἰ δὲ πολλὰ ἀγνοεῖς, καὶ μυριοπλάσια τῶν ἐγνωσμένων ἐστὶ τὰ ἀγνοούμενα, τί οὐχὶ μετὰ πάντων καὶ περὶ τοῦ τρόπου τῆς ὑπάρξεως τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος τὴν ἀκίνδυνον ἀγνοίαν ἀνεπισχύντως ὁμολογεῖς; Basil. de Spir. Sancto, c. 18.

^f Τίς οὖν ἡ ἐκπόρευσις; εἰπέ σὺ τὴν ἀγεννησίαν τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ γὰρ τὴν γεννησιν τοῦ Υἱοῦ φυσιλογήσω. καὶ τὴν ἐκπόρευσιν τοῦ Πνεύματος, καὶ παραπληκτίσωμεν ἄμφω εἰς Θεοῦ μυστήρια παρακύπτουτες. καὶ ταῦτα τίνας, οἱ

μηδὲ τὰ ἐν ποσὶν εἶδέναι δυνάμενοι, &c. Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 37. p. 597. tom. 1.

Εἰ δὲ τὸν τρόπον ἐπιζητεῖς, τί καταλείψεις τοῖς μόνοις γινώσκειν ἄλλα καὶ γινώσκεσθαι ὑπ’ ἀλλήλων μαρτυρομένοις; Orat. 23. tom. 1. p. 426.

^g Ὅτι μὲν ἐστὶ καὶ ὑπάρχει καὶ τῶν ὅλων κρατεῖ συναινῶν τε καὶ συντιθέμενος· ἐπέκεινα δὲ ὥσπερ τῶν τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος μέτρων ἴεναι τὸν ἰοῦν σωφρόνως οὐκ ἐφίεις. Cyril. Paschal. 12. tom. 5. p. 2.

“ taken in the lump it is medicinal, but beaten into powder is dangerous,” is true of these more abstruse mysteries of religion; for whosoever will endeavour to satisfy himself concerning them from the strange niceties and subtilties of the schools, may return with greater doubts than he went to them. For, not to go beyond our present subject, whosoever would examine the way they take to make the procession to be immediate from the Father and the Son, so as to be from one principle, to shew how the Spirit comes from both by the same numerical spiration; but most of all, when they come to make distinctions between the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Ghost, (of which no less than nine are recounted and rejected by Petavius^h out of the fathers and schoolmen, and the last which he rests in, which is the common one of the schools, viz. that the one is *per modum intellectus* and the other *per modum amoris*, as unsatisfactory as any, there being so vast a disproportion between the most immediate acts of our souls and these emanations,) will see much greater reason to commend the wisdom of those fathers who sought to repress men’s curiosity as to these things, and as much to condemn you, who are so apt to charge whole churches with heresy, if they come not up to every thing which you shall pronounce to be an article of faith.

§. 8. 2. It is plain from the fathers, that they made the belief of that to be sufficient for salvation, which doth not imply this procession from the Son; which is, that the Holy Ghost doth proceed from the Father: if therefore they often mention the procession from the Father, without taking notice of the procession from the Son, and when they do so, assert the sufficiency of the belief of that for salvation, there cannot be the least ground to imagine that they looked on the procession from the Son as a necessary article of faith. We see before, Athanasius made no more necessary than the belief of the divinity of the Holy Ghost; and in the same discourse, where he speaks expressly what the orthodox opinion was of the Holy Ghost, he says no more but, “ If they thought well of the Word, they would likewise of the Spirit, which proceeds from the Father, and is is proper to the

^h Dogm. Theol. de Trinit. l. 7. c. 13, 14. tom. 2.

Son, and is given by him to the disciples, and all that believe on himⁱ." In which words there is nothing but what the Greeks to this day do most freely and heartily acknowledge, viz. that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, and is the Spirit of the Son, being given by him to all that believe. Many other testimonies are produced out of him and the rest of the Greek fathers, by the patriarch Hieremias^j in his answer to the Wirtenberg divines, by Marcus Ephesius^k in his disputes in the council of Florence, by Gregorius Palamas^l, in his answer to Beceus the latinizing patriarch of Constantinople in the time of Michael Pakeologus, and other modern defendants of the Greek church. But although I do not think that the places produced by them are sufficient for their purpose, viz. that those fathers believed the procession from the Father *exclusivè*, to be an article of faith; yet whosoever will take the pains to compare those testimonies with the others produced on the other side by those who writ in defence of the *Filioque*, either Latins, as Hugo Eterianus, Anselm, &c., or latinizing Greeks^m, such as Nicephorus Blemmydes, Beccus, Emanuel Calecas, and others, will find it most for the honour of the fathers, and most consonant to truth, to assert that they did not look upon this as any necessary article of faith, and therefore took liberty to express themselves differently about it as they saw occasion. For such different testimonies are produced not only of different fathers, but of several places of the same, that it will be a hard matter but upon this ground to reconcile them to each other and themselves: and that which abundantly confirms it is, that when they sat most solemnly in council to determine the matters of faith about the Trinity, they were so far from inserting this, when they had just occasion to do it, that they only mention the proceeding from the Father, and determine this to be a perfect symbol of Christian faith which contained no more. In the first Nicene Creed, and that which is pro-

ⁱ Εἰ γὰρ ἐφρόνον ὁρθῶς περὶ τοῦ Λόγου, ἐφρόνον ἂν ὑγιῶς καὶ περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος· ὁ παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἴδιον ὄν, παρ' αὐτοῦ μεταδίδοται τοῖς μαθηταῖς, καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς αὐτόν. Athanas. c. Serap. ubi supr.

^j Acta Theolog. Wirtenberg. p.

217. &c. Res. 2. Patriarch.

^k Concil. Florent. sess. 19, 20, 21, &c. Arcudii opuscula aurea.

^l V. Ep. Cyrilli Patriarch. ad Joh. Utenbogard. inter Epistol. Remonstrant. p. 402.

^m V. Leonis Allatii Græciam Orthodox. tom. 2.

perly so called, (for that which now goes under that name is the Constantinopolitan Creed,) there was nothing at all determined concerning the procession of the Holy Ghost; and yet Athanasius^o saith expressly of the faith there delivered by the fathers according to the scriptures, “that it was of itself sufficient for the turning men from all impiety, and the establishment of all Christian piety:” and afterwards saith, that “though certain men contended much for some additions to be made to it, yet the Sardican synod would by no means consent to it, because the Nicene Creed was not defective, but sufficient for piety, and therefore forbid the making any new creed, lest the former should be accounted defective.” We see then by the testimony of Athanasius and the Sardican synod, (which when it serves your turn, as in the case of appeals, you extol so much, and in defence of Zosimus his forgery of the Nicene canons you would have confounded with the Nicene,) that the Nicene Creed, without any thing at all concerning the procession of the Holy Ghost, was looked on as sufficient to salvation, and therefore certainly they did not then judge this article of the procession to be so necessary as you would have it be. But suppose we yield Nazianzen^p, and the fathers of the Constantinopolitan council, that though this Creed was not defective as to the Son, yet there ought to be somewhat added further concerning the Holy Ghost, upon the rising of Macedonius: yet even here we shall find when they purposely added to the article of the Holy Ghost, they added only this touching the procession, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, “which proceedeth from the Father.” And thus the copies of the Constantinopolitan Creed, either in the councils or elsewhere, have it, where they mention the procession at all; and when Marcus Ephesius in the Florentine council read this Creed, the Latins took no exceptions at all to it, but it passed then as it doth still for the Nicene Creed, (although it much differs from the original Nicene,) and therefore it is a great mistake of them who imagine the article of *Filioque* was found in some copies of this Creed, for this the Latins never

^o Ἡ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ παρὰ τῶν πατέρων κατὰ τὰς θείας γραφὰς ὁμολογηθεῖσα πίστις, αὐτάρκης ἐστὶ πρὸς ἀνατροπὴν μὲν πάσης ἀσεβείας, σύστασιν δὲ εὐσεβείας ἐκ Χριστοῦ. Athanas. Ep. ad Epictet. tom. 1. p. 562.

^p Greg. Naz. Ep. 2. ad Cled.

pretended in the Florentine council, (but did indeed as to the Creed of the second council of Nice, but were therein much suspected of forgery by the Greeks,) which might be the ground of that mistake. But that which I insist on is, if this article of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son had been by these fathers judged necessary, when had there been a fitter time to insert it than now, when purposely they added the procession to the former Creed? and yet we see they did not judge it at all necessary to be inserted. It may be you will say it was, because the controversy was not then started concerning the *Filioque*: but that can signify nothing here, because we have already shewed that the fathers themselves spake differently concerning it, and looked upon it as a thing not necessary to be known; but the things which were upon the rising of heretics inserted into the Creed, were such as by the fathers were judged and believed as necessary before ever those heretics arose; as in the case here of Mæcedonius, for I hope you will not say it was no heresy to deny the divinity of the Holy Ghost till it was determined in this œcumenical council. For the fathers never thought that they made articles of faith in councils, but only declared themselves and what they believed against the heretics which did arise in the church: and therefore that answer of the *Filioque* not being then controverted comes to nothing. From hence we come to the third œcumenical council, to see if that adds any thing concerning this procession; instead of which it highly confirms what was established before: for the fathers of that council discerning at last the great inconveniency of making such additions to the Creed, because the Nestorians had got the art of it too, and made a new creed of their own, (which by Charisius was brought to the council and there read,) upon which the Ephesine fathers⁹ make an irrevocable decree against all additions being made hereafter to the Creed. For after they had caused the Nicene, or rather the Constantinopolitan Creed to be publicly read, (in which yet the article of procession was left out, as appears by that copy which Marcus Ephesius produced at the council of Ferrara^r, as it is likewise in the copies of the Ephesine council,) upon

⁹ Concil. Ephes. part. 2. act. 6. p. 357. tom. 2. Bini ed. Paris. 1636.

^r Concil. Florent. sess. 5. p. 587.

which they pass this definitive sentence ; “ That it should not be lawful hereafter for any one to produce, write, or compose any other creed, besides that which was agreed on and designed by the holy fathers who were met together at Nice by the Holy Spirit^s.” Concerning the meaning of this decree, we shall fully inquire when we come to the addition of the *Filioque*. That which I take notice of it now for, is not only the further ratification of what was in the Creed before, and that what was therein contained was as much as was judged necessary, but an express decree made against all after additions, which doth, as fully as a general council could do, declare that nothing else was necessary to be believed, but what was already inserted in the Creed : or else, to what end did they prohibit any further additions ? To the like purpose, the fourth general council of Chalcedon determines, “ that by no means they would suffer that faith to be moved which was already defined^t.” I might proceed to the fifth and sixth councils, but these are sufficient. Let me now put some few questions to you—Are general councils infallible or no ? Yes, say you, if confirmed by the pope. Were not these four first councils confirmed ? Yes, it is evident they were. Were they then infallible in all their decrees or no, especially concerning matters of faith ? If they were, were they not infallible in this determination, that it should not be lawful to add to the Creed any thing else but what was in before ? were they infallible in declaring the received Creed to be full and sufficient ? If they were so, how comes any article to become necessary, which was not then in the Creed ? If you say, the pope and another general council have power infallibly to contradict these, and to say that somewhat else is necessary to be inserted into the Creed, and to be believed in order to salvation ; I must content myself with having brought you to the humble confession, that both parts of a contradiction may be infallibly determined. Thus we see that the fathers, whether single or joined, in such councils which are of the greatest

^s Μηδενὶ ἐξείναι προφέρειν, ἢ γων συγγράφειν, ἢ συντιθέναι ἑτέραν πίστην, παρὰ τὴν ὀρισθεῖσαν παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων τῶν ἐν Νικαίᾳ συναχθέντων ἐν ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι. Concil. Eph.

part. 2. act. 6. p. 366.

^t Κατ’ οὐδένα τρόπον σαλεύεσθαι πρὸς τῶν ἀνεχόμεθα τὴν ὀρισθεῖσαν πίστην. Concil. Chalced. act. 5. Concil. Florent. ass. 5. p. 590.

authority in the Christian world, have been so far from believing or determining this article of the procession of the Holy Ghost to be necessary, (which must be, if the denial of it be a fundamental error,) that they have plainly enough expressed and determined the contrary.

§. 9. 2. The next thing we come to is, that those testimonies which are produced out of the fathers are so far from asserting the necessity of this article, that the most of them do not evidently prove that they believed it. For these two answers the Greeks return to them: 1. That they do not assert the procession of the Spirit from the Son, but the consubstantiality of the Spirit with the Son. 2. That those which speak of a procession do not mean it of an eternal procession, but a temporal, which is the same with the Spirit's mission.

1. That they do not assert the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Son, but the consubstantiality of the Spirit with the Son. And therefore no more can be inferred from them, but only the *δμοούσιον*, which the Greeks constantly acknowledge. This they make probable by two things: 1. That, when the fathers dispute not with those who denied the consubstantiality of Son and Spirit, they use not the particle *ex*, but only say that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son. So Cyril expressly, when Theodoret had denied the procession from the Son, he gives no other answer but this, "The Holy Spirit doth truly proceed from God and the Father, according to our Saviour's words, but is not of another nature from the Son^u." We see he contents himself with the acknowledgment that the Spirit is of the same nature with the Son. To the same purpose is another testimony of his produced by the patriarch Hieremias; speaking of the Spirit whereby the apostles spake, he says, "which proceeded in an ineffable manner from the Father, but is not different from the Son in regard of his essence^x:" several other testimonies are there produced by him, and elsewhere by others, which need not be here recited. 2. That when they use the particle *ex*, it is

^u Ἐκπορεύεται μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος φωνήν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀλλότριόν ἐστι τοῦ Υἱοῦ. Cyril. Alex. tom. 6. edit. Paris. p. 229.

^x Ὁ πρόεισι μὲν ἀρρήτως ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς· ἔστι δὲ καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἀλλότριον, κατὰ τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον. Acta Theolog. Wittenberg. Resp. 2. Patriarch. p. 202.

against those who denied the consubstantiality both of the Son and Spirit; and therefore Gregorius Palamas lays down this rule, That as often as the prepositions *ex* and *per* have the same force in divinity, they do not denote any division or difference in the Trinity, but only their conjunction and inseparable union, and consent of their wills^y. For which, he cites the famous epistle of Maximus to Marinus, which was made the foundation of the union at the council of Florence; who therein saith, that when the Latins said, in their synodical epistle sent to Constantinople, that the Spirit did proceed *ex Filio*, they meant no more than to shew τὸ συναφὲς τῆς οὐσίας καὶ ἀπαράλλακτον, “the perfect and inseparable union of the divine essence.” So when St. Basil saith that the Father did create the world *per Filium*, he adds, that notes no more than τὸ ἠνωμένον τοῦ θελήματος, “the conjunction of their wills.” And by this means the Greeks interpret all those passages of the fathers which seem most express for the Spirit’s proceeding *ex Filio*. So Marcus Ephesius tells the Latins in the Florentine council^z, that when we say, man comes ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας, “from the essence of a man,” therein is not implied that the essence of man is the productive cause of man, but only it notes the τὸ ὁμοούσιον, “that communion of essence” which is in men; so when the Greek fathers speak of the Spirit’s proceeding *ex Filio*, that doth not imply that the Son is the principle of spiration, but that there is a communion of essence between the Son and the Spirit. So when Athanasius, disputing against the Arians (saith the patriarch Hieremias), saith^a, that the Spirit ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, “from the Son, is given to all;” and that the Father διὰ τοῦ Λόγου, ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι, “by the Son, in the Spirit, doth create, work, and give all things;” you must consider, that Athanasius was then disputing against the Arians, who made both Son and Spirit to be creatures: that therefore he might shew that the Spirit was of the same substance with the Father and the Son, he therefore useth that preposition *ex*, ἐγκαίρως καὶ ἀρμολίως, “very opportunely and conveniently.” Therefore, saith

^y Οὐ τὴν διαίρεσιν οὐδὲ τὴν διαφορὰν ἀλλὰ τὴν ἔνωσιν, καὶ τὴν ἀπαρραξίαν—καὶ τὴν ὁμοβουλίαν. Gregorius Palamas, c. i. apud Pe-

tavium Dogmat. Theolog. de Trin. tom. ii. l. 7. c. 18.

^z Sess. 19.

^a Ubi supra.

he, “it is to be observed, that he never useth this but in opposition to the Arians, and such who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost.” To which purpose it is well observed by Spalatensis^b, that when the fathers of the Constantinopolitan council did insert into their Creed the article of the Spirit’s procession from the Father, they did it not with a purpose to define any thing concerning the procession as an article of faith, but that they might from those words of St. John infer the divinity of the Holy Ghost, because it proceeds from the Father: and withal, it is further observable, that in the Creed which Charisius delivered into, and was accepted by, the council of Ephesus, all that he says as to the Holy Ghost is, “And in the Spirit of truth, the Paraclete who is consubstantial with the Father and the Son^c.” By which, that which Spalatensis saith is much confirmed; for this symbol of Charisius was accepted by the council as agreeable to the Nicene Creed. Thus we see how probable this answer of the Greeks is, that the intention of the fathers in those expressions is only to assert the consubstantiality of the Spirit with the Father and the Son, because when they used them, it was in their disputes with them who denied it. And therefore Petavius^d spends his pains to very little purpose, when going about to take off this answer of the Greeks, he only shews that those expressions in themselves cannot be confined merely to the signification of the consubstantiality of the persons, whereas the main force of this answer lies in the intention and scope of the persons who used them, and the adversaries they disputed against, and not in the importance of the articles themselves.

2. The second answer of the Greeks is, that most of those places which speak of the procession of the Spirit from the Son, are not to be understood of the eternal procession, but of the temporal, which is the same with the Spirit’s mission. This, as the rest of the Greeks, so the patriarchs Hieremias and Cyril, especially insist upon; the first, in his last answer to the divines of Wirtenberg. For when they, in their reply^e

^b Spalatens. de Rep. Eccles. tom.

act. 6. p. 360.

3. l. 7. c. 10. sect. 125.

^d Petav. ubi supra.

^c Καὶ εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ Παράκλητον ὁμοούσιον Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῶ.
Apud Acta Concil. Ephes. part. 2.

^e Acta Theolog. Wirtenb. p. 350,
&c. Resp. 3. Patriarch.

to his second answer, had produced several testimonies of Athanasius, Cyril, Epiphanius, Basil and Nazianzen, in behalf of the Spirit's procession from the Son, he wonders at them, that leaving the plain and clear places both of scriptures and fathers, which do (as he saith) so openly proclaim the Spirit's procession from the Father only, they should hope for relief from other obscure places which are capable of a different interpretation: as from the word *προϊέναι*, which only relates to the Spirit's manifestation, and is quite different from the *ἐκπόρευσις*, and so cannot imply his eternal procession. Therefore for the clearing the controversy, and giving account of the mistakes in it, he begins with the signification of the *Spirit*, which when it is applied to the divine Spirit is capable of different significations, being taken either for the several gifts of the Spirit, or for the person of the Spirit; and so, though the word *procession* be taken in a peculiar manner for the eternal procession of the Spirit, yet it is not only sometimes attributed to the bestowing the forementioned gifts, but likewise to the eternal generation of the Son; and therefore whenever they meet with the word *procession* attributed to the Spirit with a respect to the Son, they must not presently infer the eternal procession, but the word *ἐκπορεύεσθαι* there signifies no more than *δῦέναι, πέμπεσθαι, καὶ διδόναι*, i. e. that the Spirit doth "come through, is sent, and given" by the Son, which the fathers often mention, the better thereby to assert *τὴν συμφυΐαν καὶ γνησιότητα τοῦ Πνεύματος*, "the identity of nature and essence which is in the Spirit with the Father and Son." This he doth therein very largely explain, and endeavour to make it out, that this is the most proper interpretation both of scripture and fathers, when they seem most clearly to speak of the procession of the Spirit from the Son. The same likewise the patriarch Cyril^f insists upon, who acknowledgeth these several words to be attributed to the Spirit in reference to the Son, *δίδοσθαι, προχεῖσθαι, ἐκχεῖσθαι, ἐκφυσεῖσθαι, προϊέναι*, and several others in the writings of the fathers, all which he acknowledgeth to be true, but he denies that any of them do import a hypostatical procession of the Spirit from the Son, but that they all refer to the temporal mission and manifestation of the Spirit through Christ, under

^f Cyril. Ep. ad Utenbogard. p. 403.

Lab. p. 6.

the gospel. Whether this answer will reach to all the places produced out of the fathers, is not here my business to inquire, only that which is pertinent to my purpose may be sufficiently inferred from hence, that the fathers certainly were not definitive in this controversy, when their expresset sentences seem capable of quite a different meaning to wise and learned men, who, one would think, if the belief of this procession had been a tradition of their church, or fully expressed in the writings of the fathers of the Greek church, could not be so ignorant or wilful as either not to see this to have been their meaning, or supposing they had seen it, to persist in so obstinate a belief of the contrary. I can therefore with advantage return your words back again to you. "It is to be considered, that for many hundred years the whole Greek church never believed this to be an article of faith; nay, the fathers were so far from it, that both single and in general councils they did plainly express the contrary: how then bears it any show of probability, what some few of yesterday (forced to it by an impossibility of otherwise defending the power and infallibility of the Roman church) affirm, that the matter of this controversy is so great and considerable, that it is sufficient to produce a heresy on either side? Is not this to make fathers, and general councils, and consequently all Christendom for many hundred years, quite blind, and themselves only clear and sharp-sighted? Which swelling presumption what spirit it argues and whence it proceeds, all those who have learnt from reason, if not from St. Augustine, That pride is the mother of making heresies in unnecessary articles of faith, will easily collect." Do not you see now, how unadvisedly those words came from you, which with so small variation in the manner of expression, and much greater truth in the matter of it, are returned upon yourself?

§. 10. But I go on still, if possible, to make you sensible how much you have wronged the Greek church, in this charge of a fundamental error in her for denying the procession of the Spirit from the Son. Which shall be from hence, that although there were some who did as plainly deny this as ever the modern Greeks did or do, yet they were far from being condemned for heresy in so doing. For which we must consider, that although the fathers, as we have already seen, did

speak ambiguously in this matter, yet the first who appears openly and stoutly to have denied it was Theodoret: which, being the rise of the controversy, must be more carefully inquired into. It appears then, that a general council being summoned by the emperor Theodosius to meet at Ephesus concerning the opinions of Nestorius, which were vehemently opposed by Cyril of Alexandria and several Egyptian and Asian bishops, who being there convened, proceed to the deposition of Nestorius and anathematizing his doctrine, before Johannes Antiochenus, and several other bishops who favoured Nestorius, were come to Ephesus. When these therefore came and found what had been done by the other bishops, they, being seconded by Candidianus there and the court-party at Constantinople, assemble apart by themselves, and proceed on the other side to a deposition and excommunication of Cyril and Memnon, who were the leaders of all the rest; and these make an anti-synod to the other, which consisted of persons of several interests and persuasions, some Pelagians, some Nestorians, and others, more as friends to Nestorius than his opinions, as being his ancient familiars and acquaintance, did join with them to prevent his deposition; among which, the chief were Johannes Antiochenus and Theodoret. But before the council, Cyril had published his twelve anathemas against the opinions of Nestorius: to these therefore not only the Oriental bishops gave an answer, but John the patriarch of Antioch particularly appoints Theodoret to refute them. The ninth anathema of Cyril was against Nestorius, and all others who said, "that Christ used the Holy Ghost as a distinct power from himself, for the working of miracles, and that did not acknowledge him to be the proper Spirit of Christ." Theodoret grants the first part, wherein he shews he was no Nestorian, but quarrels with the latter part; for saith he, "If by that he means that the Spirit is of the same nature with the Son, and that it proceeds from the Father, we acknowledge it together with him——but if by that he understands as though the Spirit had his subsistence from or by the Son, we reject it as blasphemous and impious^e." Was ever any thing in this kind spoken with greater heat and confidence than this was

^e Ἰδιον δὲ τὸ Πνεῦμα τοῦ Υἱοῦ, εἰ μὲν ὡς ὁμοφύεις καὶ ἐκ Πατρὸς ἐκπο-
 ρευόμενον ἔφη, σὺννομολογήσομεν,—
 εἰ δὲ ὡς ἐξ Υἱοῦ, ἢ δι' Υἱοῦ τὴν ὑπαρξίν

here by Theodoret? and if this had been looked on as heretical at that time, can we possibly imagine that so zealous an opposer of all heresies, and especially of the Nestorians, as St. Cyril^f of Alexandria was, should so coolly and patiently pass this by as he doth^g? for all the answer he gives is only that which was before cited out of him, that he acknowledgeth the Spirit doth proceed from the Father, but yet *οὐκ ἀλλότριόν ἐστι τοῦ Υἱοῦ*, “it is not of another nature from the Son:” but did not Theodoret expressly assert that as well as Cyril? Is it then possible that any one who hath his wits about him should imagine, that if that doctrine of Theodoret had been accounted heretical, it being expressed in so vehement a manner as it is, it should have no other answer from Cyril, but only approving that which Theodoret confesseth, viz. the consubstantiality of the Spirit with the Son? All the answer which Petavius^h and others give, is so weak and trifling, that one may easily see how much they were put to it to find out any: sometimes it was because Cyril was intent upon his business, and therefore passed it by; as though he were so weak a man as to let his adversary broach heresy and say nothing to it, because it was not pertinent to the present cause. But if it were not, it is an argument the second answer is false, viz. that Theodoret was herein a Nestorian; for if he were so, it could not be besides the business, but was a main part of it. Moreover, if this were a piece of Nestorianism, it is very strange the fathers of that council, when they purposely collected the opinions of Nestorius out of his own writings, should never make any mention at all of this, no not when they produce his opinion concerning the Spirit of God^h. Why was it not then condemned and anathematized as one of his heresies? why did not the Oriental bishops, when they subscribed to the deposition of Nestorius, and the election of Maximianus at Constantinople, and sent a confession of their faith to Cyril at Alexandria by Paulus Emesenus, mention this among the rest of their agreement with the orthodox bishops? Yet in that, extant both in Cyril’s works, and in the

ἔχον, ὡς βλάσφημον τοῦτο, καὶ ὡς δυσσεβὲς ἀπορρίψομεν. Theodoret. c. Cyril. Anath. tom. 4. p. 718. ed. Sirmond. Concil. Ephes. part. 3. p. 497. ed. Bin.

^f Cyril. tom. 6. p. 229.

^g Petav. Dogmat. Theol. tom. 2. l. 7. c. 18.

^h Concil. Ephes. part. 2. act. 1. p. 177.

third part of the council at Ephesusⁱ, there is not the least intimation of it. And therefore the learned Jesuit Sirmondus, in the life of Theodoret prefixed by him to the first tome of his works which he set forth, vindicates Theodoret from all suspicion of Nestorianism, and imputes all the troubles which he fell into on that account to the violence of Dioscorus the successor of Cyril at Alexandria, who being a great patron of the Eutychians thought to revenge himself on Theodoret by blasting his reputation as a Nestorian. There is not then any show of probability that this opinion in Theodoret was condemned as a piece of Nestorianism, which certainly the whole Greek church could not have been ignorant of from that time to this. But though that piece of Theodoret against Cyril's anathemas were condemned in succeeding councils, yet that might be for the defence of other things, which they judged bordered too near on Nestorianism, or because they would not have any monument remain of that discord between the Oriental bishops and the Ephesine council^k; which Theodosius doth so much and so heartily lament in his excellent epistle to Johannes Antiochenus about a reconciliation between him and Cyril, after the banishment of Nestorius, and the choice of Maximianus. Thus we see one who in a divided and busy time ventured upon the absolute denial of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son not as a bare error, but as impious and blasphemous, yet was far from being condemned for heretical himself for saying so, by those fathers who were the most zealous defenders of the true apostolical faith. And if these things considered together do not make it appear that the fathers did not make the denial of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son to be a heresy, I know not what can be made plain from them.

§. 11. But I know, whatever the fathers say, you are of Cornelius Mussus his mind, who heartily professed, that he preferred the judgment of one pope before a thousand Augustines and Hieromes; but what if the popes should prove of the same mind with the fathers, how then can this be accounted a heresy? And that they were exactly of the same mind, might be made appear by the several epistles of Vigilius and Agatho in confirmation of the faith established in the

ⁱ Concil. Ephes. part. 3. p. 596.

^k Concil. Ephes. part. 3. p. 581.

four first general councils, in which it was determined, that all necessaries were already in the Creed, and that there needed no further additions to it, both which are produced and insisted on by the Greeks in the fifth session at Ferrara¹. But I pass by them, and come to more particular testimonies of popes, and that either in councils, or upon a reference to them from councils. The first time we read of this controversy in the western churches was about anno Dom. 767, in the time of Constantinus Copronymus, upon which in the time of Pepin king of France, there was a synod held at Gentilly near Paris for determining a controversy between the Greeks and Latins about the Trinity, as appears by the several testimonies of Ado and Rhegino in their chronicles, produced by Pithœus^m, Petaviusⁿ, and others: but little more is left of that convention besides the bare mention of it: but it seems the ashes were only raked over these coals then, which about two and forty years after, anno Dom. 809, broke out into a greater flame; for, as appears by the testimonies of the same Ado, and Adelmus or Ademarus, a synod was held at Aquisgrane about this very question, whether the Spirit did proceed from the Son as well as the Father; which question, they say, was started by one John, a monk of Jerusalem, which monk Pithœus supposeth to be Johannes Damascenus, who after Theodoret most expressly denied the procession from the Son: but whether it was he or any other, it seems from that council called by Charles the Great, there were several legates (called *apocrisarii*) dispatched to Rome to know the judgment of the present pope Leo III. concerning this controversy; the legates were Bernarius, Jesse, and Adalhardus, the two former the bishops of Worms and Amiens, the latter the abbot of Corbey. But Petavius herein betrays either his fraud or inadvertency, that he will by no means admit that these came to the pope to know his judgment concerning the procession itself, but only concerning the addition of the *Filioque* to the Creed, which now began to be used in the Gallican churches with that addition. But although I grant that the main of their business was concerning the addition of *Filioque*, by the same token that Leo con-

¹ Concil. Florent. sess. 5. p. 593.

ⁿ Petav. Dogm. Theol. tom. 2.

^m Pithœus Opus. de Proces. S. S. l. 7. c. 1.

demned it, as will appear afterwards ; yet that brought on the discourse concerning the doctrine itself of the procession from the Son. For in the acts of Smaragdus which were sent to Charles the Great, giving an account of this controversy, which are published both by Baronius^o and Sirmondus^p, it appears that when they urge the pope for his consent to the addition of *Filioque*, they make use of this argument, That it was a matter of faith, and therefore none should be ignorant of it : upon which they ask the pope this question ; Whether if any one doth not know or doth not believe this article, he could be saved ? to which the pope returns this wise and cautious answer : “ Whosoever by the subtilty of his wit can reach to the knowledge of it, and knowing it will not believe it, he cannot be saved. For there are many things, of which this is one, which being the deeper mysteries of faith, to the knowledge of them many can attain, but many others cannot, being hindered either through want of age, or capacity ; and therefore, as we said before, he that can and will not shall not be saved^q.” I pray, sir, do me the favour to let me know your judgment, whether this pope were infallible or no ? or will you acknowledge that he was quite beside the cushion, that is, not *in cathedra*, when he spake it ? What ! not then, when solemn legates were dispatched from a council purposely to know his judgment in a matter of controversy which the church was divided about ? If so, the pope shall never be *in cathedra* but when you will have him ; or if he were there, you will surely say he did not act very apostolically when he spake these words. For, can any thing be more plain than that the pope determines this article of the procession from the Son to be no necessary article of faith ; but acknowledgeth it to be one of the deeper mysteries of religion, which none were obliged to believe, but such as could reach to the knowledge of ; which either want of age in some, capacity in others,

^o Baron. Annal. ad an. 809.

^p Sirmond. Concil. Gallic. tom. 2. p. 256, 257.

^q Quisquis ad hoc sensu subtiliori pertingere potest, et id scire, aut ita ciens, credere noluerit, salvus esse non poterit. Sunt enim multa, e quibus istud unum est, sacræ fidei

altiora mysteria, ad quorum indagacionem pertingere multi valent : multi vero aut ætatis quantitate, aut intelligentiæ qualitate præpediti non valent ; et ideo, ut prædiximus, qui potuerit, et noluerit, salus esse non potuerit. Apud Sirmond. ubi supra.

and invincible prejudice in many more, might keep them from the knowledge of? Thus it appears by the pope's judgment, the denial of this could be no heresy then, because he declares it not to be necessary to be believed by all. What now must we think of this pope, if we apply your words to him? "Were all other succeeding ages blind, and this pope only clear and sharp-sighted? which judgment of his must be called nothing short of swelling presumption;" and, if you please, St. Austin shall be quoted for it too, but it must be in some other place besides that where he says, that pride is the mother of heresy. Do you think we can do other than hugely applaud ourselves, in seeing you so furiously lay about you, when we know your first blows fall on the fathers, and your second cut off one leg at least of your infallible chair? Can we have better security against you than the judgment of one of your own popes? may we not well be accounted blind, when for our sakes infallibility itself must be so to? If you tell us that after-popes declared otherwise, I have but one request to make to you, viz. To make it appear, that when two popes shall determine both parts of a contradiction to be true, they both are infallible in doing so.

§. 12. But if we proceed a little further, it may be we shall find the judgment of another pope agreeing with this. For which we must consider that anno Dom. 858, Ignatius the patriarch of Constantinople being imprisoned by the emperor Michael, and Photius being placed in his room, in a council held by Photius, anno Dom. 861, Ignatius was condemned, upon which he being likewise condemned by pope Nicolaus at Rome, he doth as much for him at Constantinople. So that those grudges which had been before more closely carried between the Greeks and Latins did now openly discover themselves. But among several other things which Photius charged the Latin church with, the chiefest, and that which he insists on with the greatest vehemency, is, "That they did attempt to corrupt and adulterate the holy and sacred Symbol of faith, which had attained an unalterable force by the decrees of synods and councils, with false senses and new additions, by an unmeasurable confidence. O their diabolical machinations! for by a strange innovation, they make the Holy Ghost

proceed not only from the Father but the Son too^r." This we find in his encyclical epistle, published by him on the account of the difference between the Latin and the Greek church, in which he largely disputes against the doctrine of the procession of the Spirit from the Son, and, as we see, charges the Latins with fraud, presumption, and a desire of innovation, in the inserting that article into the Creed. Not long after, this pope Nicolaus, having advised with the Gallican bishops what to do in this business, dies; to whom Adrian succeeds, as bitter against Photius as his predecessor, and had more advantage against him than the other had. For at Constantinople the emperor Michael being slain by Basilius whom he had adopted to a partnership in the empire the year before, he presently banisheth Photius, restoreth Ignatius, calleth a council A. D. 869. in which Photius is anathematized; and, for the greater execration of him, they dipt their pens wherewith they subscribed, in the sacred chalice. This the Latins call the eighth œcumenical synod. Notwithstanding all which, Ignatius being dead, Photius is restored by Basilius Macedo, A. D. 878. Legates are dispatched to pope John VIII. (as in courtesy to you we call him) who succeeded Adrian, that Photius might be restored to the communion of the church and his patriarchal dignity; which is presently done. The year following, a general council is held at Constantinople, in which the pope's legates are present, and this the Greeks only admit for the eighth œcumenical. In which all that was done against Photius is abrogated, the Constantinopolitan Creed without the addition of *Filioque* is solemnly read, and it is decreed against the Latins, the pope's legates consenting, that nothing should be added to the Creed. But lest you should think the pope's legates were practised upon by some arts of Photius, (for some of his enemies, among other reproaches, did not stick to say, he learnt magic from the famous Santarabenus,) and that it was done without the pope's free consent, we have his own

^r Καὶ τὸ ἱερόν καὶ ἅγιον σύμβολον, ὃ πᾶσι τοῖς συνοδικοῖς καὶ οἰκουμηνικοῖς ψηφίσμασιν, ἄμαχον ἔχει τὴν ἰσχὺν, νόθοις λογισμοῖς, καὶ παρεγγράπτοις λόγοις, καὶ θράσους ὑπερβολῇ κινδυνεύειν ἐπεχείρησαν· ὧ τῶν τοῦ

πονηροῦ μηχανημάτων! τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς μόνον, ἀλλὰ γε καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, ἐκπορεύεσθαι, καινολογήσαντες. Photius, ep. 7. p. 51.

testimony afterwards in approbation of it. For Pithœus, an ingenious as well as very learned man^s, confesseth, that the letters of this pope are still extant among the Latins, by which it appears, that he condemned all the synods held against Photius, whether at Rome or Constantinople; and the patriarch Hieremias (whose testimony in other cases you make much of) saith expressly, not only that the pope consented to this synod, by the cardinal Peter, and Paulus, and Eugenius, who were there his legates, but that in an epistle he writ to Photius he hath these words: "I declare again to your grace concerning that article, by which such scandals have been in the churches of Christ. Assure yourself, that we not only speak this, but that we really judge those who first durst out of their presumption do this to be transgressors of the sacred oracles, changers of the doctrine of our Lord Christ and the holy fathers, and we place them in the society of Judas^t." What article was this, I pray, which the pope is so zealous against? Even no other than that which you account all blind who do not esteem the denial of it heresy. It seems then we have one more added to the number of the heretical popes; for Photius himself could not express more vehemency against this article than the pope doth, and that when by his legates in a council (therefore infallible, according to you, because confirmed by the pope) he had declared himself utterly against the addition of this article to the Creed. And instead of accounting them heretics who denied it, you see how much worse than heretics he accounted them who first added it. So that I wonder you do not rather account the belief of that article heresy, than the denial of it. I know well enough how your party rail here to purpose against Photius; but what is all that to the business? Let Photius be what he will, were not the pope's legates present at the council? did not they confirm the decrees of it? did not the pope afterwards

^s Opuscul. edit. Lutet. 1609.

^t Πάλιν παραηλοῦμαι τῇ σῇ αἰδεσμιότητι, περὶ τοῦ ἄρθρου τούτου; δι' ἃ συνέβη τὰ σκάνδαλα μέσον τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἔχε πρὸς ἡμᾶς πληροφορίαν, ὅτι οὐ μόνον λέγομεν τοῦτο, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς πρώτους θαρρήσαντας τῇ ἐαυτῶν ἀπονοίᾳ τοῦτο ποιῆ-

σαι, παραβάτας κρίνομεν τῶν θείων λόγων, καὶ μεταποιητὰς τῆς θεολογίας τοῦ δεσπόπου Χριστοῦ, καὶ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων καὶ μετὰ τοῦ Ἰουδα αὐτοὺς τάττομεν. Acta Theolog. Wirtenberg. Resp. 2. Patriarch. p. 213, 214.

ratify it? So that if ever council were infallible according to your principles, this must be: choose therefore, either to relinquish the pope's and council's infallibility, or else acknowledge that men at one time may be infallibly guilty of violating scriptures, fathers, councils, for asserting that doctrine, which they may be infallibly guilty of heresy for not asserting at another. I know very well that Marinus, who succeeded John VIII. at Rome, condemned his predecessor's acts and Photius together, (for he was before employed both by Nicolaus and Adrian in the excommunicating and condemning Photius,) but what this proves I understand not, any further than that still one pope may infallibly contradict another, or that a pope without a council shall be more infallible than with one; or lastly, (which is the grand *arcanum imperii*;) those popes and those decrees which are for the present interest of the church of Rome must be owned as infallible; but for the rest, the best art must be used to blast them that may be. And for this you want not your many tricks and devices to accuse authors of forgery, cry out on them for heretics, rail out of measure when you have nothing else to say; or if after all this, testimonies stand of force against you, then nothing is left, but *excogitato commento detorqueve in alium sensum*, to find out some trick to wrest them to another sense, as the authors of the Belgic Index Expurgatorius professed in the case of Bertram. But for all men who think it not lawful to say any thing in a bad cause, this may certainly be sufficient to shew, that if fathers and councils may be relied on, if popes and councils be infallible, that was not accounted a heresy by them, which you condemn for such in the Greek church.

§. 13. Having thus discovered, that this opinion you condemn for heresy in the Greek church was otherwise esteemed both by fathers, œcumenical councils, and popes, I come to that which you seem to rely on for making it heretical, viz. That the Greeks and Latins both together condemned it for heretical in the general council at Florence. Although it might be worth our while to inquire how far any general council can either make or declare that to be a necessary article of faith, which was determined to be otherwise by former general councils. But omitting that at present, which we may have a fitter occasion to discuss in the question of

fundamentals, and the infallibility of general councils, I therefore come to examine the matter of fact in the Florentine council, concerning the determination of this opinion there as heretical. Wherein if we consider the time in which and the occasion upon which this council was called, if we consider the way of the managery of it, the arts whereby the Greeks were drawn to this consent, the manner of proposing the decrees of it, or the acceptance which it found in the Greek church, upon none of these respects we shall have cause to look upon it as a free and general council, determining that opinion as heretical, which you say was so determined here. In all which we must profess, how much we are obliged to that faithful and impartial account of all the proceedings relating to this council, written by Sylvester Sguropulus, one present at the most secret negotiations of it, transcribed out of the MS. in the king of France his library by Claudius Serravius, and first published for the general good of the world by our learned dean of Wells. It appears then, that which gave the first rise to the thoughts of union between the Greek and Latin churches, was the miserable condition which the Greek empire was now reduced to by the incursions of the Turks and Saracens. For it seems for thirty years, (before that an ambassador was sent to Rome from Manuel Palæologus to negotiate the business of the union,) from the time of the patriarch Nilus and pope Urban, there had been no intercourse at all between the popes and patriarchs, but now upon this address made to them by the Greeks, the popes caress them with all imaginable kindness, feed them high with promises, engage their utmost to promote this union, (well knowing with what advantage to themselves it might be managed in this critical juncture of their affairs.) For now^x Amurath II. having subdued Peloponnesus, had advanced almost to the walls of Constantinople, and therefore when the pope sent one to the emperor and patriarch, to appoint a day for the council, they told him they could not then have leisure to think of councils; and if they had, by reason of the fury of the wars, the bishops could not be assembled together to make a full council. But it seems the state of affairs grew worse still with them, and

^x Sylvester Sguropul. *Histor. Conc. Florent.* sect. 2. c. 10.

the dead-palsy of Manuel Palæologus was but an emblem of a worse in the state, the empire being brought daily into greater dangers. Which put Johannes Palæologus upon further thoughts, how any help or relief might be had from the west in this extremity. But they might easily understand the terms of that union from the speech of the cardinals to the emperor's legates, That the Roman church was the mother, and the eastern only the daughter, and therefore it was but fit that the daughter should submit to the mother; that for their parts, they would not leave the decision of this controversy to multitudes of voices, (it seems then they had high thoughts of the infallibility of general councils,) but three should be chosen on either side^y, who being apart by themselves should invoke God, and whatever he should reveal to them, that all should consent to: for he that hath said, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he would be in the midst of them, he that made the ass to speak, (the cardinals' own argument,) would not fail of letting them know his will infallibly, which was to be received from them by all others. (There may be then a much readier way for infallibility than by pope and councils.) But if nothing else would satisfy but a council, it must be in Italy, contrary to the pope's promise before, that it should be at Constantinople; but when they urged the vastness of the expense, and unsuitableness of it to their present necessities, rather than a matter likely to be so much for the advantage of the see of Rome should not go forward, the pope proffers to advance a considerable sum of money for the defraying the charges of the Greeks, both in coming to and abiding at the council; which those who understand not the intrigues of that court would have thought had been far better spent in a present supply of the Greek emperor, the better to have enabled him to defend the Christian churches from the invasion of their enemies. But any one who looks into the management of things will easily discern upon what grounds the pope chose rather a dilatory proceeding, drawing the emperor and so many bishops from Greece into Italy at that time, and all the while to feed them with rich promises of assistance, upon condition that the

^y Sylvester Sguropul. Hist. Concil. Florent. sect. 2. c. 12.

union was accomplished ; but at last, after two years attendance, (for so long the council continued at Ferrara and Florence,) the poor emperor was sent home as empty as he came, and found things in a much worse condition than he left them ; which could not rationally be expected to be otherwise. When the Greeks knew that the emperor had assented that the council should be in Italy^z, they began strangely to be troubled at it ; some resolved never to communicate more in the councils of the union ; the patriarch often said, that he knew no good issue could come of a council held in the pope's territories ; and if they must receive their allowance from the pope, what did they else but therein confess themselves his vassals already, and therefore nothing could be expected from them but to do just what he would have them ; or else he might easily starve them into consent and approbation of his will. For they should be wholly under his power, and if he denied their stipends, there was no possibility of getting from him. Was not this then like to be a very free council ? And it proved accordingly : for when they were at council the pope kept them short enough, so that many of them were reduced to the greatest necessities, and were not suffered, unless by stealth, to go so much as out of the gates of the city^a, as Bessarion himself once found, when he attempted it at Florence. But notwithstanding all the persuasions of the wisest of his counsellors at home to the contrary^b, notwithstanding an express from the emperor Sigismund to dissuade the Greek emperor in the present state of affairs from this journey into Italy, yet he was resolved upon it, and used all the arts he could beforehand to make choice of such persons as might be most for his purpose ; himself, without the consent of the patriarch, appointing the legates of the three other patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria^c : and when these patriarchs had given no other instructions to these legates, than that they should have power to give their suffrages upon these terms and no other, " That all things were carried fairly, and defined canonically, according to the decrees of œcumenical councils and holy fathers, so that nothing should be added, changed, or innovated in the Symbol of faith," he,

^z Sylv. Sguropol. Hist. Concil. Florent. sect. 2. c. 17, 18.

^a Ibid.

sect. 6. c. 1.

^b Ibid. sect. 3. c. 12.

^c Ibid. c. 3.

at the instigation of one of the Latin legates then resident at Constantinople, sent away to the several patriarchs^d for the altering their instructions, upon a solemn promise that the conditions mentioned by them should however be exactly observed; which whether they were or no, will appear by the series of the story. And that we may better judge how general this council was like to be, at the same time that these negotiations for union were on foot, the council of Basil was then sitting in opposition to pope Eugenius; to them, and to the pope at the same time, the emperor dispatcheth several legates with the same instructions, and both of them returned theirs to the emperor, seeking^e as much as possible to outvie each other in large promises, if the Greeks did join in council with them; both which the emperor held in play till he could see with whom he was like to make the best terms. But as the Romanists are never backward at such arts, they had caused it by their instruments to be reported at Constantinople^f, that the council at Basil had submitted to the pope, which within fifteen days was confuted by the arrival of the galleys sent from the council to convey the Greeks over to it; upon which the emperor had much to do to keep Condelmerius the pope's nephew from fighting the council's galleys within his view; for he said he had express order from the pope to sink them wherever he met them. And were not these fair tendencies to a free and general council? And yet after all this, not full thirty bishops of the Greek church went along with the patriarch, as appears by the particular enumeration of them by Sguropulus^g: other officers indeed and monks there were to fill up the number; and yet these were more than the emperor could well mould to his designs when he had them there. But the pope soon accomplished the patriarch's prediction in keeping them bare enough^h, when they were at his finding, that he might be sure to make them hungry Greeks, and then he supposed the other part of the proverb would follow after. After the council had begun at Ferrara, and continued there sixteen sessions, wherein were many public and solemn disputes between the Greeks and Latins, it was removed to Florence; where the Greeks still

^d Sylv. Sguropul. Hist. Concil. Florent. sect. 3. c. 4.

^e Ibid. c. 12.

^f Ibid. c. 11.

^g Ibid. c. 15.

^h Ibid. sect. 6. c. 3.

underwent the same hardships, and the Latins sought to hold out at disputations, till the Greeks' necessity should be so pressing, as to necessitate them to an absolute submission to the Latin church. But reports and messages coming from Constantinople, acquainting the emperor with the difficulties the city was in, and the progress which the enemies made, and finding that during the sitting of the council, the pope still put him off and gave him nothing but words, he therefore resolves upon another course: he breaks all public and conciliary proceedings, pretending that no issue would come of those disputations, calls a private cabal of such whom he knew fittest for his purpose, to contrive some shorter way to put an end to this business. For that end, makes choice first of ten persons of either side to agree upon some proposals for union, and acquaints none else of the Greeks with their transactionsⁱ. When these things took no effect, the patriarch who carried on the emperor's design often convenes the Greeks together, and in plain terms persuades them to perfect dissimulation, that since the necessity of affairs was such, it would be hugely for their advantage, if in some things they did yield to the Latins' desires. When they told him that in matters of faith they could not do it, he replies, that if in twenty-four articles of faith they yielded but in one, the soundness of twenty-three would make amends for the twenty-fourth. Such kind of arguments as these were they driven to, to bring the Greeks to hearken to any terms of union. After this, the Latins sent them an explication of faith, which if the Greeks would subscribe, there might be an union between them^k; which being read among them, containing chiefly the acknowledgment of the procession from the Son, all but the four who were the emperor's instruments in this work unanimously disown it^l: and when the emperor urged them every one to deliver their suffrages in writings, they tell him, it was contrary to the proceeding of all œcumenical councils: however, he told them he commanded them to do it. By which means rebuking some, cajoling others, he at last^m brought it by the multitude of suffrages, that five persons were selected among the rest to draw up a form of union; which though drawn

ⁱ Sylv. Sguropul. Hist. Concil. Florent. sect. 8. c. 12. ^k Ibid. c. 13.
^l Ibid. c. 14. ^m Ibid. c. 16.

up very favourably for the Greeks, yet those who were for it did not easily carry it from those who opposed itⁿ. And yet to this the Latins returned no less than twelve exceptions: upon which the emperor was fain to take a new course, and exclude those from the councils who were of greatest authority in obstructing his designs^o; but Marcus Ephesius still continued in so great opposition, that he publicly charged the Latins' opinion with heresy^p. Notwithstanding all which, when it was put to suffrage, "Whether the Spirit did proceed from the Son," for ten who affirmed it, there were seventeen who denied it^q, which put them yet to more disquietment and new councils. At first the emperor would vote himself, which when the patriarch kept him from, some advised him to remove more of the dissenters; but instead of that, they used a more plausible and effectual way: the emperor and patriarch sent for them severally, and some they upbraided with ingratitude, others they caressed with all expressions of kindness, both by themselves and their instruments; yet at the last^r, they could get but thirteen bishops to affirm the procession from the Son, all others being excluded the power of giving suffrage, who were accustomed formerly to give it, such as the great officers of the church of Constantinople, the cœnobiarchs and others; but to fill up the number, all the courtiers were called in, who made no dispute, but did presently what the emperor would have them do. Having dispatched this after this manner, the other controversies^s concerning the addition to the Creed, unleavened bread in the eucharist, purgatory, pope's supremacy, the emperor agreed them privately, never so much as communicating them to the Greek synod. Among the emperor's instruments, the bishop of Mitylene^t went roundly to work, saying openly, "Let the pope give me so many florins to be distributed to whom I think fit, and I make no question but to bring them in very readily to subscribe the union;" which he accordingly effected: and the same way was taken with several others^u; by which, and other means, most of those who were excluded from the suffrages were at last persuaded to subscribe. This is the short account of the

ⁿ Sylv. Sguropol. Hist. Concil. Florent. sect. 8. c. 18. ^o Ibid. sect. 9. c. 4. ^p Ibid. c. 5. ^q Ibid. c. 8. ^r Ibid. c. 9. ^s Ibid. c. 10. ^t Ibid. sect. 10. c. 1. ^u Ibid. c. 4.

management of those affairs at Florence, which are more particularly and largely prosecuted by the author; wherein we see what clandestine arts, what menaces and insinuations, what threats and promises were used to bring the poor Greeks to consent to this pretended union. For it afterwards appeared to be no more than pretended; for the infinitely greater number of bishops at home refused it, and these very bishops themselves, when they saw what arts were used in it, fell off from it again, and the emperor found himself at last deceived in his great expectations of help from the Latins. Must we then acknowledge this for a free and general council, which hath a promise of infallibility annexed to the definitions of it? Shall we from hence pronounce the Greeks' doctrine to be heretical, when for all these proceedings, yet at last no more was agreed on, than that they did both believe the procession from the Son, without condemning the other opinion as heretical, as you pretend, which the Greeks would never have consented to, or anathematizing the persons who denied it, as was usual in former general councils, who did suppose it not enough to have it virtually done by the positive definition, but did expressly and formally do it? For when this anathematizing dissenters was propounded among the Greeks by Bessarion of Nice and Isidore of Russia, (who for their great service to the pope in this business were made cardinals,) it was refused by the rest, who were zealous promoters of the union. Thus I have at large (more out of a design to vindicate the Greek church, than being necessitated to it by any thing you produce) shewed, that there is no reason from authority either before or after the council of Florence, to charge the Greek church with heresy.

Lab. p. 6. §. 14. I now come to the examination of your theological reason, by which you think you have so evidently proved the Greeks' opinion to be heresy, that you introduce it with confidence in abundance. "But," say you, "though this persuasion had not been attested by such clouds of witnesses, theological reason is so strong a foundation to confirm it, that I wonder how rational men could ever be induced to question the truth of it." Still you so unadvisedly place your expressions, that the sharpest which you use against your adversaries return with more force upon yourself: for it being so fully cleared, that

these clouds of witnesses are fathers, councils, and popes against you, what do you else by this expression, but exclude them from the number of rational men, because, forsooth, not acquainted with the depth of your theological reason? But “is not this to make all the churches of Christendom for many hundred years quite blind, and yourself only clear and sharp-sighted? which swelling presumption what spirit it argues, &c.” You see we need no other weapons against you but your immediate preceding words. What pity it is, that the fathers and councils had not been made acquainted with this grand secret of your theological reason! but happy we that have it at so cheap a rate! but it may be that is it which makes us esteem it no more. But such as it is, it being reason and theological too, it deserves the greatest respect that may be, if it makes good its title. His lordship had said, “that since the Greeks, notwithstanding this opinion of theirs, deny not the equality or consubstantiality of the persons in the Trinity, he dares not deny them to be a true church for this opinion, though he grants them erroneous in it.” To this you reply, “Is it (think you) enough to assert the divinity, and consubstantiality, and personal distinction of the Holy Ghost (as the bishop says), to save from heresy the denial of his procession from the Father and the Son as from one principle?” But why is it not enough? your theological reason is that we want to convince us of the contrary; that therefore follows. “Would not he that should affirm the Son to be a distinct person from and consubstantial to the Father, but denied his eternal generation from him, be an heretic? or he, who held the Holy Ghost distinct from and consubstantial to them both, but affirmed his procession to be from the Son only and not from the Father, be guilty of heresy? It is then most evident, that not only an error against the consubstantiality and distinction, but against the origination, generation, and procession of the divine Persons, is sufficient matter of heresy.” Your faculty at clinching your arguments is much better than of driving them in; for your conclusion is most evident, when your premises have nothing like evidence in them. For, 1. He that doth acknowledge the Son to be consubstantial with the Father, and yet a distinct person from him, must needs therein acknowledge his eternal generation:

Conf. sect.
9. n. 1. p.
19.

for how he should be the Son of the same nature with God, and yet having a distinct personality as a Son, without eternal generation, is so hard to understand, that I must confess, that whoever asserts the one, and denies the other, is so far from theological reason, that I think he hath no common reason in him. Is this then, think you, a parallel case with the procession of the Spirit from the Son, which may be supposed consubstantial to Father and Son, and a distinct person from both, without any connotation of respect to the personality of the Son, as a principle of spiration? 2. He that should affirm the procession of the Spirit only from the Son, and not the Father, would speak much more absurdly than the Greeks do; for thereby he would destroy the Father's being the fountain or principle of origination, as to the distinct hypostases of Son and Spirit; he would plainly and directly thwart the Creed of the second general council; and, which is more, would speak directly against express words of scripture, which say, the Spirit proceeds from the Father: which by the consent of the Christian church, hath been interpreted of the eternal procession. And by this time, I hope you begin to have better thoughts of rational men, than to make such a wonder at their questioning the Greeks' heresy; but if this be your theological reason, one scruple of common reason goes far beyond it.

§. 15. We have had a fair proof of your skill at charging; we shall now see how good you are at standing your ground. Your main defence lies in a distinction which ruins you; for you think to ward off all the citations his lordship produceth against you out of the schoolmen and others, that the Greeks and Latins agree with each other *in eandem fidei sententiam*, upon the same sentence of faith, but differ only in words, by saying, "That the Greeks must be distinguished into ancient and modern." "The ancient," you say, "expressed themselves *per Filium*, but they meant thereby a *Filio*: whereas the modern Greeks will not admit that expression a *Filio*, but *per Filium* only, and that too in a sense dissignificative to a *Filio*." This is the substance of all the answer you give, both in general, and to the particular authorities for several pages: the disproof therefore of this distinction must, by your own confession, make all those testimonies stand good

against you ; which I shall do by two things : 1. By shewing that the ancient Greeks did assert as much as the modern do in this controversy : 2. That those who speak expressly of the modern Greeks, do deny their difference from us in any matter of faith. 1. That the ancient Greeks did assert as much as the modern do. By the ancient Greeks, we must here understand those who writ before the schoolmen, whose testimonies you would answer by this distinction. Now nothing can be more clear, than that those Greeks who writ before them did as peremptorily deny the procession from the Son as any of the modern Greeks do. We have already produced the testimony of Theodoret, who accounts the contrary opinion blasphemous and impious ; and that of Photius, who so largely and vehemently disputes against the procession from the Son. To whom I shall add two more of great reputation, not only in the Greek, but in the Latin church ; and those are Theophylact and Damascen. Theophylact, whether he lived in the time of Photius, about 870, as the common opinion is, or more probably in the time of Michael Cerularius, as great an adversary as Photius to the Latins, about 1070, yet was long enough before the schoolmen : for Peter Lombard flourished A. D. 1145, and Thomas and Bonaventure, about 1260. So that in this respect he must be one of the ancient Greeks. He therefore delivers his opinion as expressly as may be in his commentaries on St. John^x ; and that not as his own private opinion, but as the common sense of the Greek church ; for there taking occasion to speak “ how the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, for the Latins,” saith he, “ apprehend it amiss, and mistaking it, say, that the Spirit proceeds from the Son^y. But we answer, that it is one thing to say, the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, which we assert ; and another, that it proceeds from the Son, which we deny ; for it hath no testimony of scripture for it, and then we must bring in two principles, the Father and the Son.” And withal adds, that when Christ breathed the Spirit on his disciples, it is not to be understood personally, but in regard of the gift of remission of sins ; after which, he briefly and comprehensively

^x Theophylact. in Joh. iii. 26.

^y Οἱ γὰρ Λατίνοι κακῶς ταῦτα ἐκδέχονται καὶ παρανοοῦντες φασίν, ὅτι

τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐκπορεύεται.
Theophylact. in Joh. iii.

sets down the opinion of the Greek church: "Believe thou that the Spirit doth proceed from the Father, but is given to men by the Son; and let this be the rule of sound doctrine to thee^z." And what now do the modern Greeks say more than Theophylact did? or what do they say less? for they acknowledge that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son as well as he. To the same purpose Damascen, who lived between the sixth and seventh synod, about A. D. 730, in the time of Leo Isaurus, delivers the sense of the Greek church in his time concerning this article. "It must be considered," saith he, "that we assert not the Father to be from any, but that he is said to be the Father of the Son. We say not, that the Son is a proper cause, neither the Father; but we say, the Son is from the Father, and of the Father. The Holy Spirit, we say, is from the Father, and of the Father; but we say not, the Spirit is from the Son, but we call him the Spirit of the Son; and we confess, that by the Son, the Spirit is manifested and given to us^a." These words are so plain, that the patriarch Hieremias producing them, saith^b, "Nothing can be more clear and evident than these words are." But the philosopher, who was so much pleased to see the ass mumble his thistles, could not take much less contentment to see how the schoolmen handle this testimony of Damascen. For, being very loath that so zealous an assertor of images should in any thing seem opposite to the church of Rome, they very handsomely and with wonderful subtilty bring him off, by admiring the wisdom and caution he useth in these words. So your own

Lab. p. 8. St. Bonaventure, whose testimony you think so considerable as to produce at large, *tamen ipse caute loquitur, unde non dicit quod Spiritus non est a Filio, sed dicit, non dicimus a Filio*, which you put in great letters, the more to be taken notice of. But, I pray, what was it which Damascen was there delivering

^z Πίστετε σὺ τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς μὲν προῖέναι, δι' Υἱοῦ δὲ χορηγείσθαι τῇ κτίσει· καὶ οὗτος ἔσται σοι κανὼν ὀρθοδοξίας. Theophylact. in Joh. iii.

^a Χρὴ γινώσκειν, ὅτι τὸν Πατέρα οὐ λέγομεν ἐκ τινός, λέγομεν δὲ αὐτὸν τοῦ Υἱοῦ Πατέρα· τὸν δὲ Υἱὸν οὐ λέγομεν αἴτιον, οὐδὲ Πατέρα· λέγομεν δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ Υἱὸν

τοῦ Πατρὸς· τὸ δὲ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς λέγομεν, καὶ Πνεῦμα Πατρὸς ὀνομάζομεν, ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ δὲ τὸ Πνεῦμα οὐ λέγομεν· Πνεῦμα δὲ Υἱοῦ ὀνομάζομεν.—καὶ δι' Υἱοῦ πεφανερῶσθαι καὶ μεταδίδοσθαι ἡμῖν ὁμολογοῦμεν. Joh. Damascenus de Trinit. c. 8. et l. 1. de Orthodoxa Fide, c. 11.

^b Acta Theolog. Wirten. p. 220.

of? was it not the sense of the Greek church concerning the persons of the Trinity? and how could he otherwise have expressed it, than by *non dicimus*; but if this must argue what Bonaventure and you would have from it, (for this is the only testimony you give of your distinction of ancient and modern Greeks,) will it not as well hold for the other things before mentioned concerning the Father and the Son, where he useth *dicimus et non dicimus*, as well as here? And therefore Aquinas was much wiser^c, who plainly condemns Damascen for a Nestorian in this, *licet a quibusdam dicatur*, &c., although it be said by some, that in these words he neither affirms or denies it: wherein I am much mistaken, if he reflects not on Bonaventure. Vasquez^d, Petavius^e, and several others think to bring Damascen off by the distinctions of *a Filio*, and *per Filium*, much to your purpose: but in the great dispute at the council at Florence between Bessarion and Marcus Ephesius, about the importance of the articles ἐξ and διὰ, Marcus Ephesius produceth the words of Damascen expressly, that the “Spirit doth not proceed from the Son, but by the Son^f;” whereby it is plain, that he understood *per Filium*, in opposition to *a Filio*. And Bessarion had nothing else to return in answer to it, but that he could produce but one out of antiquity who said so. Thus we see, if Theophylact and Damascen, as well as Theodoret and Photius, be ancient Greeks, your distinction comes to nothing. But besides this, it appears by the disputations of Hugo Etherianus against the Greeks, who lived, saith Bellarmine, A. D. 1160, still extant in the Bibliotheca Patrum, that the Greeks held the very same then that they do now. And so in the synod of Bar in Apulia, when Anselm disputed so stoutly against the Greeks, that pope Urban said he was *alterius orbis papa*, as the story is related by Eadmerus^g and Wilhelmus Malmsburiensis^h; it appears, they denied the procession of the Spirit absolutely from the Son; (and this was A. D. 1096.) as is evident from the letter of Hildebertus to him about the publishing his disputation,

^c Sum. 1. q. 36. art. 2.

ἐκ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον. Hist. Council. Florent. sect. 8. c. 15. p. 239.

^d Vasquez in Thom. tom. 2. dis. 146. c. 7.

^g Eadmer. de Vita Anselm. l. 2.

^e Petavius Dogm. Theol. tom. 2.

^h Malmsbur. de Gestis Pontif.

l. 7. c. 17.

Angl. l. 1.

^f Οὐχ ὡς ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἀλλ' ὡς δι' αὐτοῦ

and from the book of Anselm still extant on that subject. We find not therefore any ground for this distinction of yours concerning the ancient and modern Greeks; and therefore they who said, that there was no real difference in any matter of faith between the ancient Greeks and Latins, must be understood as well of the modern Greeks as them; their words being no more capable of such a tolerable interpretation as you speak of, than the words of any of the modern Greeks are.

§. 16. His lordship was proving that the point was not fundamental that the Greeks and Latins differed in, from that acknowledgment of Peter Lombard and the schoolmen; that is to say, "The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Father and the Son, and that he is, or proceeds from the Father and the Son, is not to speak different things, but the same sense in different words. Now in this cause," saith he, "where the words differ, but the sentence of faith is the same, (*penitus eadem*,) even altogether the same, can the point be fundamental?" But, say you, "he was to prove, that such as were in grievous error in divinity erred not fundamentally; and for proof of this, he alleges such as have no real error at all in divinity." But do you not herein wilfully mistake his lordship's meaning? For in the paragraph foregoing, his lordship first declares his own judgment concerning the denying the procession of the Holy Ghost, viz. "That he did acknowledge it to be a grievous error in divinity," but yet he could not judge the Greeks guilty of a fundamental error, which he proves by a double medium: 1. Because they did not thereby deny the equality and consubstantiality of the persons. 2. Because divers learned men were of opinion, that *a Filio*, and *per Filium*, in the sense of the Greek church, was but a question *in modo loquendi*, and therefore not fundamental: now for this he produceth those testimonies. Now, I pray, do you put no difference between the making the denial of a proposition to be an error, and the saying, that such persons are guilty of the denial of that proposition? His lordship grants the denial of the procession to be a grievous error in divinity, but he questioned ("as the Greeks expressed themselves," for those very words he inserts) whether they were guilty of denying that proposition, as appears by the authorities of the

Conf. p. 19.
sect. 9. n. 1.

Lab. p. 8.

schoolmen, and therefore certainly much less guilty of a fundamental error. Thus you see his lordship fully proves what he intends; for if they agreed in sense, they were much less guilty of a fundamental error, than if they had plainly denied the procession, which he supposeth from those authorities that they did not. And therefore when you sarcastically ask, "Is not this strong logic?" the only answer I shall give you is, that if you apprehend it not to be so, it is because of the weakness of your theological reason. And therefore you put his lordship's defender on a strange task, to prove from those authorities, that those Greeks who err grievously in divinity, err not fundamentally. When the only design of his lordship, in producing those authorities, was to shew, that according to their opinion, the Greeks were so far from erring fundamentally, that they did not err grievously in divinity. And to this purpose the citation of Peter Lombard was pertinent, who saithⁱ, "that because the Greeks acknowledge that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Son, though he doth not proceed from him, therefore the difference between the Greeks and the Latins is in words, and not in sense:" but, you say, "he speaks only of such as differed in words and not in substance;" as though he put a difference between the Greeks, that some differed in words, and others really, which is quite beside his meaning: for he takes not the least notice of any such difference among themselves, but saith, the difference itself concerning the procession, the Greeks acknowledging the Holy Ghost to be the Spirit of the Son, is more verbal than real. And that the present Greeks say full as much, is evident; for they acknowledge the same things in express words. The testimony of Bonaventure^k hath been already considered, as far as concerns Damascen; as for the rest, it was sufficient for his lordship's purpose, to produce such a confession from so bitter an enemy of the Greeks as Bonaventure was, (so his lordship in his marginal citation says truly of him, *licet Græcis infensissimus*, &c.) that he doth not deny but that salvation might be had without the article of *Filioque*; but whether on that supposition there were sufficient reason to add it to the Creed, will be considered after-

ⁱ Sentent. 1. dist. 11.^k In Sent. 1. 1. dist. 11. art. 1. q. 1.

wards. Though Bonaventure held the Greeks to be heretics and schismatics, I hope you do not think that is argument enough to persuade us that they were so. That any thing, without which salvation might have been had before, may, by the definition of your church, become so necessary, that men cannot be saved without the belief of it, had need be more than barely asserted either by Bonaventure or you : and we must wait for the proof of it, for any thing here said by either of you. That the Greeks might be excused by ignorance, before such declaration of your church concerning the *Filioque*, and not be excused after through greater ignorance of any such power in your church to declare such things to be matters of faith, is an assertion not easy to be swallowed by such as have any strength of logic, or one drachm of theological reason : or else it is a very strange thing, you should think it sufficient for the Greeks to know what your church had declared, without an antecedent knowledge that your church had power to declare. How much you answer at random, appears by your answering Aquinas his testimony, instead of that of Jodocus Clitoveus, as is plain enough in his lordship's margin ; and you might have been easily satisfied that it was so, if you had taken the pains to look into either of them. But the art of it was, Aquinas his testimony might be easily answered, because he speaks only by hearsay, concerning the opinion of some certain Greeks ; but Clitoveus his was close to the purpose, who plainly confesseth, that the difference of the ancient Greeks was more in words and the manner of explaining the procession than in the thing itself. This therefore you thought fit to slide by, and answer Aquinas for him. Your answer to Scotus depends on the former distinction of ancient and modern Greeks, and therefore falls with it. Bellarmine's answer concerning Damascen, and your own after Bonaventure of his *non dicimus*, hath been sufficiently disproved already. What Tolet holds, or the Lutherans deny, the words of neither being of either side produced, deserve no further consideration.

§. 17. You tell us, his lordship's argument depends upon this, that the Holy Ghost may be equal and consubstantial with the Son, though it proceed not from him ; which, you

say, is a matter too deep for his lordship to wade into. But any indifferent reader would think it had been your concernment to have shewn the contrary, that thereby you might seem to make good so heavy a charge as that of heresy against the whole Greek church. For if the Holy Ghost cannot be equal and consubstantial with the Son, if it proceeds not from the Son, then it follows, that they who deny this procession must deny that equality and consubstantiality of the Spirit with the Son; which you ought to prove, to make good your charge of heresy. But on the other side, if the Spirit may be proved to be God by such arguments as do not at all infer his procession from the Son, then his equality and consubstantiality doth not depend upon that procession; for I suppose you grant, that it is the unity of essence in the Persons which makes them equal and consubstantial: but we may sufficiently prove the Spirit to be God by such arguments as do not infer the procession from the Son; as I might easily make appear by all the arguments insisted on to that purpose: but I only mention that which the second general council thought most cogent to that purpose, which is the Spirit's eternal procession from the Father; if that proves the Spirit to be God, then its equality with the Son is proved without his procession from the Son: for I hope you will not say, that the proving his procession from the Father doth imply procession from the Son too; because the procession cannot be supposed to be from the essence, for then the Spirit would proceed from itself, but from the hypostasis, and therefore one cannot imply the concurrence of the other. And since you pretend so much to understand these depths, before you renew a charge of heresy against the Greek church in this particular, make use of your theological reason in giving an intelligible answer to these questions: 1. Why the Spirit may not be equal and consubstantial to the other Persons in the Trinity, supposing his procession to be only from the Father, as the Son to be equal and consubstantial with them, when his generation is only from the Father. 2. If the procession from the Son be necessary to make the Spirit consubstantial with the Son, why is not generation of the Son by the Spirit necessary to make the Son consubstantial with the Spirit? 3. If the Spirit doth proceed from Father and Son as

distinct hypostases, how he can proceed from these hypostases as one principle by one common spiration, without confounding their personalities? or else, shew how two distinct hypostases, always remaining so, can concur in the same numerical action *ad intra*? 4. If there be such a necessity of believing this as an article of faith, why hath not God thought fit to reveal to us the distinct emanations of the Son and Spirit, and wherein the eternal generation of the Son may be conceived as distinct from the procession of the Spirit, when both equally agree in the same essence, and neither of them express the personality of the Father? Either, I say, undertake intelligibly to resolve these things, or else surcease your charge of heresy against the Greek church, and upbraid not his lordship for not entering into these depths. Methinks, there being confessed to be depths on both sides, might teach you a little more modesty in handling them, and much more clarity to men who differ about them. For you may see, the Greeks want not great plausibleness of reason on their side, as well as authority of scripture and fathers, plain for them, but not so against them. As long therefore as the Greek church confesseth the divinity, consubstantiality, eternal procession of the Spirit, and acknowledgeth it to be the Spirit of the Son, there must be something more in it than the bare denial of the procession from the Son, which must make you so eager in your charge of heresy against her. The truth is, there is something else in the matter; by this article of *Filioque*, the authority of the church of Rome in matters of faith is struck at: and therefore if this be an heresy, it must be on the account of denying the plenitude of her power in matters of faith, as Anselm and Bonaventure ingenuously confess it, and plead it on that account. And therefore wise men are not apt to believe, but that if the church of Rome had not been particularly concerned in this addition to the Creed; if the Greeks would have submitted in all other things to the church of Rome, this charge of heresy would soon be taken off the file. But, as things stand, if she be not found guilty of heresy, she may be found as catholic as Rome, and more too, and therefore there is a necessity for it, she must be contented to bear it, for it is not consistent with the interest of the church of Rome that she should be free from heresy,

schism, &c. But if she hath no stronger adversaries to make good the charge than you, she may satisfy herself, that though the blows be rude, yet they are given her by feeble hands. For let us now make way for theological reason to enter the lists armed cap-à-pie in mood and figure. For now at last you tell us, you will argue in form against his lordship and the Greek church together. And thus it proceeds: "If the Greeks' error be not only concerning, but against the Holy Ghost, then (according to the bishop's own distinction) they have lost all assistance of that blessed Spirit. and are become no true church: But their error is not only concerning but against the Holy Ghost: Therefore, &c. The major or first proposition contains the bishop's own doctrine, the minor or second proposition" (wherein you learnedly tell us what the major and minor in syllogisms are) "you thus prove. All errors especially opposite to the particular and personal procession of the Holy Ghost, are (according to all divines) not only errors concerning, but errors against the Holy Ghost: But the Greeks' error is opposite to the particular and personal procession of the Holy Ghost. as is already proved: *Ergo*, their error is not only concerning, but against the Holy Ghost; whose assistance therefore they have lost, not only according to the first, but even latter branch of the bishop's distinction: and consequently remain no true church." Now who is there, that out of mere pity can find in his heart not to yield this to you, when you have been at such pains to prove it? But things set out with the greatest formality have not always the most solidity in them. All the force of this argument, such as it is, lies in this, that his lordship had said, that the error of the Greeks was rather about the doctrine concerning the Holy Ghost, than against the Holy Ghost; which he after explains, by saying, It was not such an error as did destroy the equality or consubstantiality of the Spirit with the other persons of the Trinity: I pray now take his lordship's explication of himself, and you must form your argument after another way than you have done: but you saw well enough, that you could not make any show of an argument but merely from words. If I thought it worth considering, it were easy to tell you, that what is only against the procession from the Son, is not thereby against the Holy Ghost, because it may be the Holy

Ghost, i. e. the third person in the Trinity, though it proceed only from the Father. And as well you might say, that whatever doctrine denies the Son to be begotten of the Spirit, is not only concerning, but against the Son, and urge the consequences upon as good terms as you do about the Spirit: but so trifling an argument is too much honoured by any serious confutation. And, it seems, you were something sensible of it yourself, when you say, "his lordship seemed to have provided against the force of it" (as who would not?) "by hinting a difference between errors fundamental and not fundamental; which point I shall purposely examine in the following chapter." When you therefore come to hold forth what is now but hinted at, I shall readily hearken to what you have to say.

Thus for any thing you have produced to the contrary, it sufficiently appears that the Greek church is very unjustly charged with heresy by you, and that those testimonies which his lordship produced would as well hold for the modern as ancient Greeks: to which I might add the judgment of others of your own side, who speak as much concerning the modern Greeks as Thomas à Jesu, Azorius and others; but I think not that way of arguing to have much force on either side, and therefore pass it over.

§. 18. And come to the debate of the *Filioque*, with which, you say, his lordship "begins to quibble, on occasion of the pope's inserting it into the Creed." But I am quite of another mind; I think he speaks very seriously, and with a great deal of reason, when he saith, "And Rome in this particular should be more moderate, if it be but because this article (*Filioque*) was added to the Creed by herself. And it is hard to add and anathematize too." For what you say to this, "of the Holy Ghost's having leave to assist the church, in adding expressions for the better explication of any article of faith: and then the pope hath leave and command too, to anathematize all such as shall not allow the use of such expressions;" I commend you, that when you must beg something, you would beg all that was to be had at once: but before you persuade us to the digesting such crudities as these are, prove but these following things. 1. Where it is, that there is any promise of the Holy Ghost's assistance, in adding any articles to the

Lab. p. 11.
n. 5.

Lab. p. 11.
n. 5.

Creed, under pretence of better expressions for explication of them? 2. Supposing such an assistance, what ground is there to impose such additional expressions, so that those who admit them not must be guilty of heresy, and consequently (by your principles) incur eternal damnation? 3. How those expressions can be accounted a better explication of an article of faith, which contain something not implied in nor necessarily deduced from any other article of faith? 4. If this assistance be promised to the church, how any one part of that church, as great a part stiffly opposing such additional expressions, can claim that assistance to itself, the other parts of the catholic church utterly denying it? 5. If an assistance as to such things be promised the church, why may it not be more reasonably presumed to be in an œcumenical council, as that at Ephesus forbidding such additions, than in any part of the church, which after such a decree shall directly contradict it? 6. What right can the church have to anathematize any for the not using such expressions, which that church which determines the use of them doth acknowledge to be only expressions for better explication of an article of faith? and consequently the denial of them cannot amount to the denial of an article of faith, but only of the better explication of it. 7. If all these things be granted, how comes the pope, not only to have leave, but command too, to anathematize all such as use not these expressions? Where is that command extant? how comes it to be limited to him? Is he expressed in it? or doth it by necessary consequence follow from it? What good would it do us, to see but one of these proved, which you very fairly beg in the lump together: and, till you have proved them all, you may assure yourself, that we shall never believe that the pope hath so much as leave, much less command, to add and anathematize too.

As to the *Filioque*, you grant, that many hundred years had passed from the time of the apostles, before *Filioque* was added to the Nicene Creed, and more since the declarations and decrees were sufficiently published, and in all these years salvation was had without mention of *Filioque*. A fair concession; and nothing is wanting to destroy all that you had said before, but only this, that what was not once necessary to salvation, cannot by any after-declaration of the church be made necessary, as shall be abundantly manifested in the con-

Lab. p. 11,
12. n. 6.

troversy of fundamentals. What follows must be more particularly considered, because therein you would fain remove the article of *Filioque* from being the cause of the schism between the eastern and western churches, and impute it wholly to the pride and ambition of the eastern prelates. Your words are: "But it is also true, that the addition of *Filioque* to the Creed was made many years before the difference brake out between the Latins and Greeks; so that the inserting this word (*Filioque*) into the Creed, was not the first occasion of schism: but grudges arising among the Greeks, who had been a large flourishing church, with a number of most learned and zealous prelates, and held the articles still, though upon emptier heads; such, quickly filled with wind, thinking their swelling places and great city of Constantinople might hold up against Rome, they began to quarrel, not for places, (that wastoo mean a motive for such as looked so big,) but first they would make it appear, they could teach Rome; nay, they spied out heresies in it, (the old way of all heretics,) and so fell to question the procession of the Holy Ghost, and must needs have *Filioque* out of the Creed." These words of yours lay the charge of schism on the Greeks wholly, and therefore, in order to our vindication of them from that, two things must be inquired into: 1. Whether it was in your church's power to make the addition of *Filioque* to the Creed; 2. Whether the Greeks' ambition and pride were the only cause of the separation between the eastern and western churches.

1. Concerning the addition of *Filioque*, two things must be inquired into: 1. When it began, and by whom it was added to the Creed; 2. Whether they who added it had power so to do, and to impose on all others the use of it.

Lab. p. 164.
n. 5.

1. Concerning the time of this addition, nothing seems more dark in church history than the precise and punctual time of it. And so much you acknowledge yourself elsewhere. But it seems, it is your concernment to say, that the addition was made before the difference brake out. To that I answer, if you mean, that in some churches the procession from the Son was acknowledged before that difference, I grant it, as is clear by some councils of Toledo; and, that the doctrine of the procession was received in France too about the time of Charles the Great, I acknowledge, and that it was admitted into the solemn offices of the church; but that it was added to

the Nicene and Constantinopolitan Creed to be received by all churches, so that it should not be lawful for any to use that Creed without such addition, that I deny to have been before the schism, but assert it to have been a great occasion of it. It is acknowledged, that in Spain, several councils of Toledo, in their profession of faith, do mention the procession from the Son ; but this they delivered only as their own private judgments, and not as the public Creed received by all churches. For Petavius confesseth^l, that *in Symbolo ipso nihil adjecerunt*, they added nothing at all to the Creed. And although the custom of singing the Constantinopolitan Creed in the liturgy seems first to have begun in Spain, from whom Petavius supposeth both the French and Germans received it, yet even there it appears it was not universally received. For the church of Seville contented itself still with the Mozarabick liturgy, in which only the bare Nicene Creed was used. You tell us indeed, “ that the inserting the article in the councils of Toledo, is supposed to have been done upon the authority of an epistle they had received from pope Leo ;” which though it be not barely supposed, but asserted with great confidence by Baronius, yet (as most other things in him which are brought to advance the pope’s authority) it hath no other ground but his confident assertion^m. There being not the least shadow of proof for it, but only that this Leo, in a certain epistle of his to the Spaniards, did, once upon a time, mention that the Son proceeded from the Father. Therefore, in Spain I grant the doctrine to be received ; I deny the addition to be made to the Constantinopolitan Creed : although it be read, as added to it in the eighth or tenth council of Toledo, under Reccesuintus anno Dom. 653. But this was still only the declaration of their own faith in this article, and no imposing it on others. In France, that it began to be received in public use A. D. 809, must be acknowledged by the proceedings of the legates from the council of Aquisgrane to pope Leo III. But it appears as clearly, that pope Leo did then condemn the use of it, as will be shewed afterwards. When it should creep into the Athanasian Creed, seems as hard to find out, as when first added to the Constantinopolitan ;

^l Dogmat. Theol. tom. 2. l. 7. c. 2. ^m Baron. tom. 5. an. 447. n. 58.

but if we believe Pithœus, the whole Creed was of a French compositionⁿ; (there being many arguments to persuade us it never was made by Athanasius; of which in their due place;) and Vossius adds, that it is very probable it was composed about the time of Charles the Great, the controversy being then so rife about the procession^o. But that seems the less probable, because the article of *Filioque* is not found in the ancient copies of that Creed. For Spalatensis saith, "That in all the Greek copies he had seen, there was only mention made of the procession from the Father^p." And the patriarch Cyril saith, "That not only the Symbol of Athanasius is adulterated among the Latins, but that it is proved to be so by the more ancient and genuine copies^q." But however this be, we deny not but the article of procession from the Son grew into use, especially in the Gallican and Spanish churches, before the schism broke out between the eastern and western churches; but our inquiry is not concerning that, but concerning the time when it was so added to the Constantinopolitan Creed, that it was required to be used only with that

Lab. p. 16. addition. For this you tell us, that Hugo Eterianus affirms, that it was added by the pope in a full council at Rome, but he names not the pope. So likewise the Latin divines, at the council of Florence pretended still that it was added by the pope in a full council, but very carefully forbore the mention of the person, or the punctual time. But it is your unhappiness, if there be divers opinions to be followed, to make choice of the most improbable; as you do here, when you embrace that of Socolovius, which is, "That the fathers of the first council at Constantinople, sending the confession of their faith to pope Damasus and his council at Rome, the pope and council at Rome approved of their said confession; but yet added, by way of explication, the word *Filioque* to the article which concerned the Holy Ghost; and this they did to signify, that the Holy Ghost, as true God, proceeded from the Son, and was not made or created by him, as some heretics in those times

ⁿ Magni Athanasii symbolum, quamvis Treveris ut plerique tradiderunt, i. e. in Gallia a theologo tamen inter illos doctissimo acutissimoque scriptum. P. Pithœus Opusc. de Process. Sp. S.

^o Vossius de tribus Symb. Ad d. ad p. 55. 31.

^p Spalatensis de Rep. Eccles. tom. 3. l. 7. c. 10. sect. 124.

^q Patriarch. Cyril. Ep. ad Joh. Utenbogard. p. 404.

began to teach." "Neither doth he," say you, "affirm this without citation of some credible authority." I could wish you had produced it, not only for our satisfaction, but of the more learned men of your own side, who look on this as an improbable fiction. Bellarmine^q produceth many arguments against it, saying, that no mention is made of it in the councils, or Theodoret's History, who particularly relates the letters of the council to Damasus, and his to the council; that Leo III. caused the Constantinopolitan Creed to be inscribed in a silver table without that addition; that the third council of Toledo used the Creed without that addition; that the Greeks did not begin this controversy till A. D. 600. And how could they possibly charge the Latins with breaking the canons of the third œcumenical, when (according to this opinion) it was added in the second? Petavius^r is so great a friend to your opinion, that in plain terms he calls it ridiculous, and abundantly confutes that imagination of its being inserted, because of the heresy of the *νιοπαρρία*, as Manuel Calecas calls it, who with Aristinus are all those worshipful authorities which this opinion stands on. But setting aside the contrary authorities to these, any one who is any thing versed in this controversy, must needs esteem this the most improbable account that can be given of this addition. For if this were true, how little did the Latins at the council at Florence understand their business; when, if they could have produced such an addition before the Ephesine council, all the Greeks' objections had come to nothing? If this were true, how little did Leo III. consult his own or his predecessor's honour, who dissuaded the legates of the council at Aquisgrane from continuing in the Creed that addition of *Filioque*; for when, after a great deal of discourse concerning the article and the addition, the legates at last tell him, "That they perceived his pleasure was that it should be taken out of the Creed, and so every one left to his liberty;" his answer is, "So it is certainly determined by me, and I would persuade you by all means to assent to it^s." And to manifest this to be his constant judgment, he caused the Con-

^q Bellarmin. de Christo, l. 2. c. 21. sect. ult.

^r Petav. Dogmat. Theol. de Trin. tom. 2. l. 7. c. 2.

^s Ita proculdubio a nostra parte

decernitur; ita quoque, ut a vestra assentiat, a nobis omnimodis suadet. Apud Sirmond. Concil. Gallic. tom. 2. p. 256. Baron. Annal. ad an. 809.

stantinopolitan Creed, without the addition of *Filioque*, to be inscribed in a greater silver tablet, and placed publicly in the church, to be read of all, as appears by the testimony of Photius^t and Peter Lombard^u, that so all, both Greeks and Latins, might see that nothing was added to the Creed. Had not this now been a strange action of his, if this addition had been so long before in the time of Damasus? Nothing then can be more evident, than that in this Leo's time no such addition was made to the Creed; therefore it seems most probable, which the famous Antoninus delivers, that this addition was made by pope Nicolaus I. For when he relates the causes why Photius excommunicated him, he mentions that in the first place, "That he had made an addition to the Creed, by making the Spirit to proceed from the Son; and therefore had fallen under the sentence of the third oecumenical council, which prohibited such additions to be made^x." To which P. Pithœus subscribes likewise, and Petavius seems not to dissent; the only thing which is pretended against it, that Andreas Colossensis in the council at Ferrara^y saith, that though Photius was a known and bitter enemy of the Latin church, yet he never objected this addition against Nicolaus or Adrian; but how strangely overseen Andreas was in these words, sufficiently appears by Photius his Encyclical Epistle, wherein he doth in terms object this against the Latins, as appears by the words already produced. So that although you would willingly have set this addition far enough off from the schism, yet you see how improbable a fiction you produce for it; and withal you see that this addition, by the consent of your own most learned and impartial writers, falls just upon the time when the schism broke out, viz. in the time of Nicolaus and Photius: and therefore now judge you, whether these words were so long added before the schism, that they could give no occasion to it.

§. 19. 2. The next thing to be considered is, Whether they

^t Phot. in Epist. ad Patriarch. Aquileiens.

^u Pet. Lombard. lib. 1. Sent. dist.

II.

^x Tunc inter alias accusationes hoc principaliter posuit, Ipsum fore excommunicatum, quod apposuerat ad

symbolum, Spiritum Sanctum a Filio procedere. Similiter et depositum, quod ipse Nicolaus papa incidisset in sententiam tertii concilii. Anton. part. iii. tit. 22. c. 13. sect. 10.

^y Concil. Florent. sess. 8.

who added it had power so to do? Two things the Greeks insist on, to shew that it was not done by sufficient authority :

1. Because all such additions were directly prohibited by the Ephesine council. 2. That supposing them not prohibited, yet the pope had no power to add to the Creed without the consent of the eastern churches.

1. That such additions were severely prohibited by the Ephesine council ; the sanction of which council to this purpose hath been already produced, and is extant both in the acts of the Ephesine^z and Florentine^a councils, in which latter it is insisted on as the foundation of the Greeks' arguments against the addition of *Filioque*, by Marcus Ephesius ; and the reason he there gives of such a sanction made by the council at Ephesus is, that after the Nicene council, in several provincial councils there were above thirty several expositions made of the Nicene Creed ; upon which the second œcumenical council made a further explication of it, explaining those things which belonged to the divinity of the Spirit and the incarnation of Christ ; and because they did not prohibit any additions, the Nestorians easily depraved the Nicene Creed, inserting their own opinions into it, (as appears by the confession of faith exhibited to the council by Charisius,) which being read in the council, and the fathers thereby understanding how easily, after this rate, new creeds might be continually made in the church, they severely prohibited any further additions to be made to the Creed. And therefore, although they decreed in that council the Virgin Mary to be *θεότοκος*, in opposition to Nestorius, yet they never offered to insert it into the Creed, although they apprehended it necessary to explain the economy of our Saviour's incarnation. And that which much confirms the meaning of the decree to be the absolute prohibition of all kind of additions to the Creed, is the epistle of St. Cyril of Alexandria to Johannes Antiochenus, wherein reciting this decree of the council, he adds these words as the explication of it : " We neither permit ourselves or others to change one word or syllable of what is herein contained" (speaking of the Nicene Creed), which epistle was

^z Concil. Ephes. part. 2. act. 6. p. 366.
5. p. 587.

^a Concil. Florent. sess.

read and approved in the fourth œcumenical council^b. To this the Latins answered them, that which is still answered in the same case, viz. That this article of *Filioque* was only declaration, and not a prohibited addition; but the Greeks say this answer is unsatisfactory on these accounts: 1. Because there is no reason to say that decree doth not forbid the inserting declarations into the Creed. 2. That if it did not forbid that, yet there is as little reason to say this was a mere declaration. 1. Because there is no reason to say that the council did not forbid the inserting declarations into the Creed; for, as Bessarion well observes, it never was lawful to add new and distinct articles of faith from those which are contained in scripture, but the church only undertook the explication and declaration of the things therein contained^c; and this was only lawful. Therefore the ancient fathers had full liberty of explaining articles of faith, and using those explications as they judged most expedient, and to place them where they thought good, so it were not in scripture: thence they might insert them into the Creed, or elsewhere. But afterwards (i. e. after this decree of the Ephesine council) this liberty was partly taken away, and partly continued. For it never was, or will be, unlawful to explain or declare articles of faith; but to insert those explications into the Creed is now unlawful, because forbidden by the decree of a general council. For, saith he, the fathers of the third council observing what great inconveniences had followed in the church upon the enlargement of creeds, and that no injury could at all come by the prohibition of any further additions to be inserted, (for by that means they should only be bound to believe no more than what those holy fathers believed, and who dare charge their faith with imperfection?) they did therefore wisely forbid all other expositions of faith to be inserted into the Creed, as he there at large proves. And in the progress of that discourse takes off that which Bellarmine looked on as the only satisfactory answer, viz. That the prohibition concerned only private persons; for, saith he, it

^b Οὐτε μὲν ἐπιτρέπομεν ἑαυτοῖς, ἢ συλλαβῆν. p. 589. sess. 5.
^c ἐτέροις ἢ λέξιν ἀμείψαι τῶν ἐγκειμένων ἐκεῖσι, ἢ μίαν γοῦν παραβῆναι
 c Concil. Florent. sess. 8. p. 626.

cannot be conceived that the council should take care about the declarations of the Creed made by particular persons, (whereas it always was, and is lawful for such to declare their faith more particularly, as appears by the Creed of Charisius, received in this council,) but this they looked after, that the Creed which was commonly received in the Christian churches, and into which men are baptized, should receive no alteration at all. And to shew what their meaning was, though their council was purposely assembled against Nestorius, yet they would not insert Θεοτόκος into the Creed. And the same decree was observed in the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh councils, which by their actions did declare this to be the meaning of the Ephesine council, that no declarations whatsoever should hereafter be inserted into the Creed; for if they were mere declarations, there was much less necessity of inserting them into the Creed, which was supposed to be a system of the necessary articles of faith.

2. There was as little reason to say, that this article was a mere declaration. For the Latins pretended, that the article of *Filioque* was only a further explication of that *ex Patre*. For if so, then whosoever doth believe the procession from the Father, doth believe all that is necessary to be believed: and therefore certainly it can be no heresy not to believe the procession from the Son, because that is only supposed to be a declaration of that from the Father. And since you are so ready to charge the Greek church with heresy, I pray tell us whether this article be a declaration or not: if not, then the Latins were all deceived, who pleaded the lawfulness of inserting *Filioque* on that account; and consequently it must be a prohibited addition: if it be, then shew us what heresy lies in not acknowledging a mere explication, when all that is supposed necessary is believed in the substance of the article. Moreover, Bessarion rightly distinguisheth between an explication τῶν ἐγκειμένων, from ἐκ τῶν ἐγκειμένων^d, and therefore grants that the *Filioque* might be said to be an explication “of something” contained in the Creed, but not “out of any thing” contained in the Creed; and therefore the medium being extrinsical, it could not be said to be a mere declaration. For there can be no necessary argument drawn from the pro-

^d Concil. Florent. sess. 8. p. 625.

cession from the Father, to infer the procession from the Son; but it must be proved from some extrinsical distinct argument.

§. 20. 2. Suppose this to be no prohibited addition, yet what right had the pope and his council, without the consent of the eastern churches, to make this addition to the Creed? For the Greeks said, whatever authority the church of Rome had, it received by the canons, and its authority was therefore less than that of an œcumenical council, wherefore it could not justly repeal, or act contrary to the decree of a general council, as it did apparently in this case. By which means the Latins were driven off from those which they looked on as slighter velitations, and took sanctuary in the plenitude of the pope's power, that therefore no council could prescribe to him; there could be no necessity of his calling the eastern churches to debate this addition, for he could do it of himself, by virtue of his own authority in and over the church. Here Anselm and Bonaventure think to secure themselves, and hither they are all driven at last. So that we plainly see, whatever else is pretended, the pope's usurped power was that which truly gave occasion to the schism: for it was not the Latins' believing the procession from the Son, which made the separation between the eastern and western churches, but the pope's pretending a power to impose an article of faith in the Creed against the decree of a former, and without the consent of a present œcumenical council. If you pretend that there hath been since an œcumenical council at Florence, which hath declared it; by that very answer you justify the Greeks before that council, and so lay the guilt of the schism wholly on the pope, who did insert and impose this article before an œcumenical council. Thus still it appears, the cause of the schism began at Rome; and by the same argument with which you charge them with heresy, viz. the council at Florence, you vindicate the Greek church from schism, in all the actions of it before that council.

And this might suffice to shew, that it was not the levity, vanity, or ambition of the Greeks, which gave the great occasion of the schism, but the pride, encroachments, and usurpations of the church of Rome, as might largely be manifested from the history of those times when the schism began. The

rise of which ought to be derived from the times of the Constantinopolitan and Chalcedon councils; the second and fourth œcumenical. For the canons of those councils decreeing equal privileges to Constantinople with those of Rome, made the popes have a continual jealousy upon the Greek church, and watch all opportunities to disgrace it, and infringe the liberties of it. Thence came the rage of Leo against Anatolius the patriarch of Constantinople, in the time of Martinus: thence the feud between Simplicius and Felix III. of Rome, and Acacius of Constantinople, for defending the privileges of his see in opposition to the pope's; insomuch that Felix fairly excommunicates him, because he would not submit to the pope's trial in the case of the patriarch of Alexandria; which continued so long, that Euphemius, who succeeded Acacius, though he excommunicated Petrus Moggus of Alexandria, yet could not be received into the communion of the Roman church by Felix, because he would not expunge the name of Acacius out of the diptychs of the church; and afterwards Gelasius refused it on the same grounds; which Euphemius still denying to do, the schism continued. And although afterwards the emperor Anastasius and the Greek church desired the making up of this difference, yet no other terms of communion would be accepted by Hormisdas, without the expunging the name of Acacius. So implacably were they bent against the very memory of Acacius, for defending the privilege of his see, that they would rather continue that lamentable schism, than not avenge themselves upon him; and consequently, make all future patriarchs fearful of opposing the pope's authority. If we look yet further, we shall still find the ambition of the popes to have caused all the disturbance in the Greek churches, although some of the patriarchs of Constantinople cannot be excused from the same faults. In the time of the second council at Nice, pope Adrian not only contends for the enlargement of his jurisdiction, but threatens to pronounce them heretics who did not consent to it, which makes Petrus de Marca^e say, that he supposeth [that] the first time ever any were charged with heresy on such an account. The same pretence we still find in all the schisms which ever happened, as that in the time of Photius, that afterward,

^e Petrus de Marca, de Concord. Sacerd. et Imp. l. 1. c. 1. sect. 5.

in the time of Michael Cerularius, and in the successive ages ; still the terms of communion were, submission to the church of Rome, and acknowledging the supremacy of that see, which the Greeks did then and do still constantly deny ; so that it was not the Greeks' levity, but the Romanists' ambition and usurpation, which gave occasion to that fearful schism.

§. 21. But for all this, it must still be lawful for your church to add, and anathematize too ; which his lordship thought a little unreasonable, but it seems you do not : for, say you, " the church did rightly anathematize all such deniers." Why so ? " Because the meaning of the Latin church being understood by the addition of *Filioque*, and that whosoever denied must be supposed to deny the procession, then it became heresy to deny it, and the church did rightly anathematize all such deniers." So you say indeed ; but you would do well, 1. To shew, that the understanding the meaning of the Latin church is sufficient to make the deniers of what she affirms to be heretics. 2. How any one that denies the *Filioque* must be supposed to deny the procession. If you mean the procession a *Filio*, you speak very wisely, but prove nothing ; for some might grant the procession, and yet deny the lawfulness of your church's adding to the Creed. 3. All this while we are to seek how the Latin church can make any thing to be a heresy, which was not so before. And therefore if your anathemas have no better grounds, the Greeks need not much fear the effects of them. That your church on any occasion is apt enough to speak loud words, we may very easily believe, but whether she had just cause to speak so big in this cause, is the thing in question, and we have already manifested the contrary.

Conf. sect.
9. p. 20. n.
3-

Lab. p. 12.
n. 6.

His lordship says, " It ought to be no easy thing to condemn a man of heresy in foundation of faith ; much less a church ; least of all, so ample and large a church as the Greek, especially so as to make them no church. Heaven gates were not so easily shut against multitudes, when St. Peter wore the keys at his own girdle." To this you answer ; " Neither is the Roman catholic church justly accusable of cruelty (though the bishop taxes her of it) because she is quick and sharp against those that fall into heresy." But if she hath power to pronounce whom she please heretics, and on what account

she please (as Hadrian I. in case of his patrimony), and then it be commendable in her to deal with them as heretics, it must needs be dangerous opposing her in any thing, for such who dread her anathemas. But his lordship was not speaking of what was to be done in case of notorious heresy, but what tenderness ought to be used in condemning men for heresy; and much more in condemning whole churches for it, on such slender accounts as you do the Greek church. You should shew when St. Peter, or any of the apostles, did exclude churches from communion, for denying such articles as that you charge the Greek church with. And it would be worth your inquiry, why those in the Corinthian church who at least questioned the resurrection, those in the Galatian and other churches who asserted the necessity of the ceremonial law under the gospel—both which errors are by the apostle said to be of so dangerous a nature—are not anathematized presently by the apostle, and thrown out of the church, at least to prevent the infection of other Christians, if not for the good of the libertine heretics, as you speak. Your mentioning St. Peter's proceeding with Ananias and Sapphira, must be acknowledged a very fit resemblance for your church's dealing with heretics; only they whom you are pleased to account heretics have cause to rejoice, that since your church's good will is so much discovered, she hath not the same miraculous power; for then she would be sure to have few left to oppose her. But do you really think Ananias and Sapphira's fault was no greater than that of the Greek church, that you produce this instance? and do you think the church enjoys still the same power over offenders which St. Peter then had? If not, to what purpose do you mention such things here; unless to let us see, that it is want of something else besides will, which makes you suffer any whom you call heretics to live? That St. Paul chastised his untoward children, indeed you tell us, from 1 Cor. v. 5, 1 Tim. i. 20; but if you bring this to any purpose, you must make the Greeks' error as bad as incest, or a denying the faith; and when you have done so, you may hear of a further answer. On what account your church punisheth delinquents, will be then necessary to be shewed, when you have a little further cleared what power your church hath to make delinquents in

such cases as you condemn the Greek church for. But, as long as your church is accuser, witness, and judge too, you must never expect that your anathemas will be accounted any other than *bruta fulmina*, noise and no more.

CHAP. II.

OF FUNDAMENTALS IN GENERAL.

The popish tenet concerning fundamentals, a mere step to the Roman greatness. —The question about fundamentals stated.—An inquiry into the nature of them.—What are fundamentals, in order to particular persons; and what to be owned as such, in order to ecclesiastical communion.—The prudence and moderation of the church of England, in defining articles of faith.—What judged fundamental by the catholic church.—No new articles of faith can become necessary.—The church's power in propounding matters of faith, examined.—What is a sufficient proposition.—Of the Athanasian Creed, and its being owned by the church of England.—In what sense the articles of it are necessary to salvation.—Of the distinction of the material and formal object of faith, as to fundamentals.—His lordship's integrity and T. C.'s forgery, in the testimony of Scotus.—Of heresy, and how far the church may declare matters of faith.—The testimony of St. Augustine vindicated.

§. 1. **T**HE Greek church appearing not guilty of heresy, by any evidence of scripture, reason, or the consent of the primitive church, nothing is left to make good the charge, but that the church of Rome hath defined it to be so; which pretence, at first view, carrying the greatest partiality and unreasonableness in it, great care is taken that the partiality be not discovered, by not openly mentioning the church of Rome, but the church in general, (as though it were impossible to conceive any other church but that at Rome,) and for the unreasonableness of it, it must be confidently asserted that all points defined by the church are fundamental: so to be sure the Greek church will never escape the charge of heresy. For this end, Mr. Fisher in the conference acknowledgeth, that when his lordship had denied the error of the Greek church to be fundamental, he was forced to repeat what he had formerly brought against Dr. White concerning points fundamental. The reason of which was, that easily perceiving that it was impossible to stand their ground in their charge

on the Greek church upon other terms, he is forced to take sanctuary in the church's definition; and if that will not make it good, there is nothing else remaining to do it. And this is the cause of the following dispute concerning fundamentals; wherein the main thing undertaken is, the proof, that the formal reason of fundamentals is to be taken from the definition of the present church; but, as this must be confessed to be the main fundamental of the church of Rome, (for which yet the thing being manifest, no definition of that church is necessary,) so withal, I doubt not but it will be made evident in the progress of this discourse, that never was there any pretence more partial, absurd, and tyrannical than this is. Which his lordship takes notice of in these words, which deserve a repetition; "It was not the least means by which Rome grew to her greatness, to blast every opposer she had with the name of heretic or schismatic; for this served to shrivel the credit of the persons. And the persons once brought into contempt and ignominy, all the good they desired in the church fell to dust, for want of creditable persons to back and support it. To make this proceeding good, in these latter years, this course, it seems, was taken. The school, that must maintain (and so they do) that all points defined by the church are thereby fundamental, necessary to be believed, of the substance of faith; and that, though it be determined quite *extra scripturam*. And then leave the wise and active heads to take order, that there be strength enough ready to determine what is fittest for them." To this you answer with an ὦ καρδάρε! You call it a squib, a fancy, a weak discourse, one of the bishop's railleries, and what not. It seems it pinched you hard, you cry out so tragically. But it is very certain, you are more impatient to have your politics than your errors discovered; and if you have any curses more dreadful than others, they are sure to light on those who discover the intrigues of your designs. For if once men come to discern how much more of artifice and cunning than of truth and religion there is in the managing the interest of your church, they would not easily think the way to heaven can lie among so many foldings of the old serpent. And this is not to think, as you tragically speak, that all the world is turned mad or heathen: for,

Conf. p. 21.
sect. 10. n.
2.

Lab. p. 13.
n. 1.

thanks be to God, as catholic as your church is, it must be a huge catachresis to take it for all the world: neither do we think your church mad, but very wise and politic in these pretences; and that still you are resolved to shew, that though other churches may be more "children of light" than yours, (ignorance being so much in favour with you,) yet yours is "wiser in its generation." But how the pretending of your church to infallibility, and power to define fundamentals, should make us imagine all the world heathen, is not easy to conceive, unless you are conscious to yourself, that such pretences as these are, are the way to make it so. But we must see still how your cothurnus fits you. No truth left upon earth, but all become jugglers! See what it is to be true catholics, that if they juggle, all the world must do so too; as though *totus mundus exercet histrioniam*, were Latin for the infallibility of the church of Rome. But have you indeed such a monopoly of truth, that if your party prove jugglers, there will be no truth left upon earth? if you had said, none unsophisticated, yet even that had been a great truth left upon earth still. But I shall cut you short in what follows of your declamation, by telling you, that though your harangue were ten times longer than it is, and your exclamations louder, and your authorities better than of your prelates, miracles, doctors, heads of schools, austere and religious persons (in English, monks and friars), yet all these would not one jot persuade us contrary to common sense, and the large experience of the world, that religion is not made by you an instrument to advance the pope's ambition, and that the *church* is but a more plausible name whereby to maintain the court of Rome. And we need not go from our present subject for a proof of it. I will not charge this upon all persons of your communion, for all of them do not believe the state-principles of your church; and others are kept, as much as may be, from all ways of discovering the great designs of it; and therefore there may be so much innocency and simplicity in some, as may keep them from prostituting their salvation to the pope's greatness: but this is no plea on behalf of those who have the managery of those designs; who if they do not see what things are fittest for the pope's temporal ends, will not long be thought fit for their employment. But is it not

palpable how much you endeavour to shrivel Christianity into a party and faction, excluding all others that are not of your party out of the church, and consequently from hopes of salvation, though never so pious and conscientious? Are not the far greatest part of the opinions you contend for against all the rest of the Christian world, such as are manifestly subservient to temporal ends? and are not such more zealously disputed for than the plain articles of faith, and the indispensable precepts of the Christian religion? Have you not found out all the artifices imaginable to enervate the force of Christian piety, by your doctrines about repentance, prayer, indulgences, probability, purgatory, and such like? and instead of those rational acts of devotion which our religion requires from us, have made choice of such fond, ludicrous, unintelligible pieces of devotion, (by the most who are concerned in them,) as though you were resolved to see how much it was possible to debase Christianity, and make it contemptible in the world? Add to these the arts you have to violate human societies, by dispensing with oaths, breaking faith, dissolving obedience to civil authority, when it opposeth your designs; and is it possible then for persons not blindfolded with the grossest sort of implicit faith, to judge otherwise, but the design of your church is to determine, not what is truest, but what is fittest for your ends? And, although you scurrilously call his lordship's discourse, "stuff that might serve sometimes for pulpit-babble, to deceive the giddy multitude, and cast a mist before their eyes;" yet you see, he was not afraid of what any adversary could say against it, by writing it in a polemical discourse, in which we could be glad to see some of those famous legends, and seraphical notions, which your pulpit-entertainments consist so much of, especially where you are out of the reach of heretics, and then we should judge which looks more like babbling, and deceiving the giddy multitude. But to let us see what men of reach and politicians you are, you have found out a strange fetch in his lordship's discourse, viz. that all this is, "that they might not see the impurity of their own English-protestant church, even in its first rise under Henry the Eighth, and the people-cheating policies it was beholding to for its restoration under queen Elizabeth, as may be seen in history." History is a large

Lab. p. 13.

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wood to bid us seek for these cheating policies in ; and if you had any other design but merely to shew yourself a politician in this, that you can *fortiter calumniari*, use your tongue manfully when reproaches are useful, you would have produced some evidence so clear of them, as his lordship here insists on in reference to your church. But as long as you converse only in generals, you will give us leave to think who those are which use to do so, viz. such grand politicians as yourself. For the particulars of our reformation, we shall have occasion to vindicate them in another place, and therein shall easily manifest what an itch you had to calumniate here, though you were sure to smart for it afterwards. That which you call weakness of judgment, or want of charity in his lordship, will be found to lie at another door, by our making it appear, that what you call a groundless and impossible slander, is a real and undoubted truth. But when you tell us, that “such raileries do not become one that would be esteemed a grave doctor of the English church, an *alterius orbis patriarcha*, as the ancient primates of England have been called ;” I know not whether you discover more judgment or reading in it : your judgment in calling that an unbecoming raillery, which is a great and seasonable truth ; your reading, in mistaking *patriarcha* for *papa*, or else you were willing to dissemble it, because then by the advantage of his title, he might be fitter to discover the artifices and designs of his fellow-pope. The laying open of which is certainly vastly different from “sporting with all that can be serious on earth (man’s salvation),” as you most injuriously calumniate his lordship in your next words, in affirming so of him, when his only design was to clear the way to man’s salvation, by discovering the gins and traps which are laid in the way of silly men, by the pernicious subtily of those of your party.

§. 2. The way being thus cleared, we come to the main question, viz. “Whether all points defined by the church are fundamental ;” and here, because you tell us, “his lordship is like one that provides for a retreat or a subterfuge, by cutting out a number of ambiguous distinctions,” you give us fair hopes what clear proceedings we may expect from you, who abhor as much the clear stating of a question, as foxes do running in beaten roads. But, as well as you love them, you

must be drawn out of your holes, which will be much for the advantage of truth, though very little for yours. To come therefore close to the business, that you may not think I seek subterfuges, or retreats, I shall wave all other acceptions of fundamentals, and take the question in your own sense, that is, for points necessary to salvation. The question then in controversy between us is this—Whether the ground or reason why any thing is fundamental or necessary to salvation, be, because it is defined by the church to be so, and consequently, whether all points defined by the church be not fundamental or necessary to salvation? For the occasion of this controversy was from the Greek church, whether her error, as to the procession from the Son, be fundamental or no, i. e. such as excludes her from being a church, and consequently from salvation. The ground of your affirmation is, because the church hath defined it to be so; so that the ground and reason why any thing is supposed fundamental or necessary to salvation, must be the definition of the church: but for our better understanding your meaning, you “distinguish of two ways, Lab. p. 15. whereby points may be necessary to salvation; the one n. 4. absolutely, by reason of the matter they contain; which,” say you, “is so fundamentally necessary in itself, that not only the disbelief of it, when propounded by the church, but the mere want of an express knowledge and belief of it, will hinder salvation; and those are such points, without the express belief whereof no man can be saved, which divines call necessary *necessitate medii*; others of this kind they call necessary *necessitate præcepti*, which all men are commanded to seek after, and expressly believe; so that a culpable ignorance of them hinders salvation, although some may be saved with invincible ignorance of them. And all these are absolutely necessary to be expressly believed, either *necessitate præcepti*, or *medii*, in regard of the matter which they contain. But the rest of the points of faith are necessary to be believed *necessitate præcepti*, only conditionally, that is, to all such to whom they are sufficiently propounded, as defined by the church: which necessity proceeds not precisely from the material object, or matter contained in them; but from the formal object of divine authority, declared to Christians by the church’s definition. Whether therefore the points in question

be necessary in the first manner or no, by reason of their precise matter ; yet if they be necessary, by reason of the divine authority, or formal object of divine revelation, sufficiently declared and propounded to us, they will be points fundamental, that is, necessary to salvation to be believed, as we have shewed *fundamental* must here be taken." These words of yours containing the full state of the question in your own terms, and being the substance of all you say on this controversy, I have recited at large, that you may not complain your meaning is mistaken in them. You assert then, that besides that necessity which ariseth from the matter of things to be believed, and from the absolute command of God, there is another necessity conditionally upon the church's definition ; but, supposing that definition, the thing so propounded becomes as necessary to salvation, as what is necessary from the matter ; for in all hypothetical propositions, the supposition being in act, the matter becomes necessary. For unless you speak of such a necessity as becomes as universally obligatory, on supposition of the church's definition, as that which ariseth from the matter, or absolute command, you are guilty of the greatest tergiversation, and perverting the state of the question. For otherwise, that cannot be said to be fundamental or necessary to salvation, in the sense of this question, which is not generally necessary to salvation to all Christians. For no man was ever so silly as to imagine that the question of fundamentals, with respect to whole churches, as it is here taken, can be understood in any other sense, than as the matter, called fundamental or necessary, must be equally fundamental and necessary to all persons. And that this must be your meaning, appears by the rise of the controversy, which concerns the whole Greek church, which you exclude from being a church, because she errs fundamentally, and that she errs fundamentally, because the church hath defined it to be an error. So that what the church determines as matter of faith, is as necessary to be believed, in order to salvation, as that which is necessary from the matter, or from an absolute command. For otherwise the Greek church might not be in a fundamental error, notwithstanding the church's definition ; the ground of this error being fundamental, not being derived from the matter, or absolute command, but from the church's

definition. If therefore the denial of what the church defines doth exclude from salvation, the necessity and obligation must be equal to that which ariseth from the matter to be believed. And if the church defines any particulars to be explicitly believed as necessary to salvation, not only the not disbelieving them, but the not explicit believing them, will be as destructive to salvation, as if the matter of the things themselves were necessary, or that it were absolutely commanded ; for in those cases you say, the not explicit believing is that which damns, and so on your principles it will do here, when the explicit belief is the thing defined by the church. This will be more plain by an instance. It is notoriously known, that at the shutting up of the council of Trent, a confession of faith was drawn up, and confirmed by the bull of Pius IV. A. D. 1564, and that, *ut unius et ejusdem fidei professio uniformiter ab omnibus exhibeatur*, that the profession of one and the same faith may be made known to all, and declared uniformly by all. In which confession, after the enumeration of the articles contained in the ancient Creed, there are many others added concerning traditions, seven sacraments, the decrees of the council of Trent, as to original sin and justification, the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, communion in one kind, purgatory, invocation of saints, worship of images, indulgences, the pope's supremacy, &c. All which are required to be believed with an equal assent to the former, as absolutely necessary to salvation, and necessary conditions of catholic communion. For thus it ends ; *Hanc veram catholicam fidem, extra quam nemo salvus esse potest, quam in presenti sponte profiteor, et veraciter teneo, eandem integram et inviolatam usque ad extremum vitæ spiritum*, &c. "This true catholic faith, without which none can be saved, which at present I profess, and truly hold, and will do whole and undefiled to my life's end, &c." Judge you now, whether an equal explicit faith be not here required to the definitions of the church, as to the articles of the Creed ; and if so, there must be an equal necessity, in order to salvation, of believing both of them, it being here so expressly declared, that these definitions are integral parts of that catholic faith, without which there is no salvation. And what could be more said of those things, whose matter or absolute precept

do make them necessary? This confession of faith therefore gives us the truest state of the present question, in these particulars: 1. That the definitions of the church are to be believed to be as necessary to salvation as the articles of the ancient Creed, without the belief of which no salvation is to be expected. 2. That the explicit belief of these definitions as necessary to salvation, may be required in order to catholic communion, and that they are to be believed of all as such, because they are defined by the church. So that the question is not, what is so required by the church's definition, declared and propounded to us, that it ought not to be disbelieved without mortal and damnable sin, which unrepented destroys salvation, as you stated it; for this seems only to respect the faith of particular persons, who are to believe according as the proposition may be judged sufficient: but the true state of the question is, whether any definitions of the church may be believed as necessary articles of faith; and whether they may be imposed on others to be believed as such, so that they may be excluded catholic communion if they do not. For this is really the true state of the question between your church and ours, ever since the council of Trent; and as to it thus stated (as it ought to be) I do most readily join issue with you.

§. 3. For the clearing of which important question, on which the main cause of our being separated from your communion depends, these three things will be necessary to be exactly discussed: 1. What the grounds are on which any thing doth become necessary to salvation? 2. Whether any thing whose matter is not necessary, and is not required by an absolute command, can by any means whatsoever afterwards become necessary? 3. Whether the church hath power by any proposition or definition to make any thing become necessary to salvation, and to be believed as such, which was not so before? These three I suppose you cannot deny but will take in all that is considerable in this controversy. Which I shall with the more care examine, because nothing tends more to the peace of the Christian world than a through and clear discussion of it; and nothing causeth more the schisms and divisions of it than the want of a right and due conception of it.

1. What the grounds are on which any thing doth become

necessary to salvation? For our better understanding of which, we must consider two things: 1. What things are necessary to the salvation of men as such, or considered in their single and private capacities? 2. What things are necessary to be owned in order to salvation by Christian societies, or as the bonds and conditions of ecclesiastical communion? The want of understanding this distinction of the necessity of things, hath caused most of the perplexities and confusion in this controversy of fundamentals.

1. What those things are which are necessary to the salvation of particular persons? But that we may make all as clear as possible in a matter of so great intricacy, two things again must be inquired into: 1. What the ground is, why any thing becomes necessary to be believed in order to salvation? 2. What the measure and extent is of those things which are to be believed by particular persons as necessary to salvation?

1. What the ground or foundation is, on which things become necessary to be believed by particular persons? And that which is the true ground of the necessity why any thing is to be believed, is the proper ratio of a fundamental article. For I suppose it a much clearer notion of fundamentals, to understand them, not as principles from whence deductions may be drawn of theological truths, but in regard of that immediate respect which they have to men's salvation. Those things therefore which are necessary to be explicitly believed by particular persons, are fundamentals in order to their salvation. Now all belief in this case supposing divine revelation, nothing can be imagined to be necessary to be believed, but what may be certainly known to be of divine revelation. But when we consider, that besides the general reason of believing what God hath revealed, we must either suppose that all things are of equal necessity, which are revealed in order to the general end of this revelation, or that some things therein contained are expressly necessary to the end, and other things to be believed on the general account of faith, so far as they are known to be of divine revelation. Now from hence ariseth a twofold necessity of things to be believed; the first more general and large, the second more particular and absolute: the first depends upon the formal reason of faith; the second, on the particular end of divine revelation.

That which depends on the formal reason of that assent we call *faith*, is that which supposeth divine veracity, or the impossibility of God's deceiving us in any thing revealed by him ; now this extends to all things whatsoever which are supposed by men to be of divine revelation. For though men may mistake in the matter, yet the reason of assent holding under that mistake, they are bound necessarily to believe whatever is supposed by them to be divine revelation. Here lies no difficulty in the ground of faith, but all the care is to be used in the search into the matters which are to be believed on the account of this revelation. But here we are to consider that the only thing which is in general and absolutely necessary to salvation, is the general act of faith, viz. believing whatever God reveals to be true, else God's veracity would be called in question ; but particular objects cannot be said, on this account, to be absolutely and universally necessary, but only so far as there are sufficient convictions that those particulars are of divine revelation. And the more general and extensive the means of conviction are, the more large and universal is the obligation to faith : as, that the scriptures contain in them the word of God, is a matter of more universal obligation than particular things therein revealed ; because the belief of the one depends upon the acknowledgment of the other. And withal, supposing it believed, that the matters contained in scripture are of divine revelation, yet all things are not equally clear to all capacities, that they are therein contained. Which is a sufficient ground for us to say, it was not God's intention that all things contained in his word should be believed with the same degree of necessity by all persons. And therefore, though the general reason of faith depends on God's veracity, yet the particular obligation to the belief of particular things, as revealed by God, depends on the means whereby we may be assured that such things are revealed by him : which means admitting of so great variety, as to the circumstances and capacities of particular persons, there can be no general rule set down what things are necessary to be believed by all particular persons. For those who have greater means of knowledge, a larger capacity, and clearer proposal, are bound to believe more things explicitly than those who want all these, or have a lower degree of them. In which case,

it is an unreasonable thing to say, that such a one, who disbelieves any thing propounded to him as a matter of faith, doth presently call in question God's veracity; for he may as firmly believe that as any in general, and yet may have ground to question whether God's veracity be at all concerned in that which is propounded to him as a matter of faith, because he sees no reason to believe that this was ever revealed by God. And by this a clear answer is given to that question which you propose: "Whether all those truths which are sufficiently Lab. p. 15. proposed to any Christian as defined by the church for matter ^{11. 4.} of faith, can be disbelieved by such a Christian without mortal and damnable sin, which unrepented destroys salvation?" To which the answer is easy upon the grounds here assigned; for this question concerning particular persons and particular objects of faith, the resolution of it doth depend upon the sufficiency of the means to convince such a person, that whatever is propounded as defined by the church for a matter of faith, is certainly and truly so: for to instance in any one of those new articles of faith, transubstantiation, or the pope's supremacy, &c., you tell me, these are necessary to be believed, or at least cannot be disbelieved without sin, (which is all one in this case, supposing clear conviction, for then what cannot be disbelieved without sin must be explicitly believed.) I desire to know the grounds why they may not? You tell me, These are truths which are sufficiently proposed to me as defined by the church for matters of faith. I deny the church's proposition to be sufficient to convince me that these are matters of faith, for I understand not what power your church hath to define any thing for matter of faith: if I granted that, I must understand what you mean by sufficient proposition, whether that your church hath so defined them, or that she hath power so to define them; and because I am heartily willing to believe any thing that I have reason to believe is a matter of faith, certainly it can be no sin in me not to believe that which I can see no ground at all to believe, either in itself, or because of your church's definition. And all this while I have as high thoughts of God's veracity as you can have, and it may be higher, because I interest it not in the false and contradictory definitions of your church. If therefore you will prove it to be a damnable sin not to believe

whatever is proposed by your church for a matter of faith, you must first prove, that there is as universal an obligation to believe whatever is sufficiently proposed as defined by the church for matter of faith, as there is to assent to whatever God reveals as true. And when you have done this, I will give you leave to state the question as you do; for then you would offer something to the proof of it, which now you do not. The substance then of what concerns the obligation to faith as to particular objects, on the account of divine revelation, lies in the means of conviction concerning those particular objects being divinely revealed, which being various, the degrees of assent must be various too; but yet so, that the more men are negligent of the means of conviction, the more culpable their unbelief is: but where men use all moral diligence to understand what is revealed and what not, if they cannot be convinced that some particular thing is of divine revelation, it is hard to prove them guilty of mortal and damnable sin, without first proving that God absolutely requires from men an assent to that which it is impossible in their circumstances they should believe. And this is the first sort of things necessary to be believed by particular persons; such as are believed on the general account of God's veracity in revealing them.

§. 4. But because there must be a more particular reason assigned of any such intention in God to reveal his mind to the world, viz. some peculiar end which he had in it; therefore a further degree of the necessity of things to be believed must be inquired after, viz. such as have an immediate and necessary respect to the prosecution of that end. Now the only end assignable of that great expression of divine goodness, in declaring to man the will of God, is the eternal welfare and happiness of mankind, for nothing else can be imagined suitable and proportionable to the wisdom and goodness of God; besides that this is expressly mentioned in scripture as God's great end in it. Now this being the great end of divine revelation, the necessity of things to be believed absolutely and in themselves must be taken from the reference or respect which they have to the attainment of this end. And although the distinction be commonly received, of necessity of the means and of the command, as importing a different kind of necessity,

yet in the sense I here take *necessity* in, the members of that distinction do to me seem coincident. For I cannot see any reason to believe that God should make the belief of any thing necessary by an absolute command, but what hath an immediate tendency by way of means for the attainment of this end; for otherwise, that which is called the necessity of precept falls under the former degree of necessity, viz. that which is to be believed on the general account of divine revelation. And although these things which are necessary, as means, are to be believed on the same formal reason of faith, yet since God had a different end in the revelation of these from the other, therefore there is a necessity of putting a difference between them. For, supposing God to have such a design to bring the souls of men to happiness; in order to this end some means must be necessary, and these must consequently be revealed to men, because they are so necessary in order to such an end: now it is apparent all things contained in scripture are not of that nature, some being at so great a remove from this end, that the only reason of believing them is because they are contained in that book, which we have the greatest reason to believe contains nothing false in it. Now the only way whereby we may judge of the nature of these things, is from the consideration of what is made the most necessary condition in order to happiness, and the way by which we may come to it. And, nothing being more evident than that the gospel contains in it a covenant of grace, or the conditions on which our salvation depends, whatever is necessary in order to our performance of the conditions required of us, must be necessary to be believed by all. The gospel therefore tendering happiness upon the conditions of our believing in Christ and walking in him, these two things are indispensably necessary to salvation (where the gospel is known, for we have no reason to inquire into the method of God's proceeding with others), a hearty assent to the doctrine of Christ, and a conscientious walking according to the precepts of it. But to undertake to define what parts of that doctrine are necessary to salvation and what not, seems to me wholly unnecessary; because the assent to the doctrine of Christ, as revealed from God, must necessarily carry in it so much as is sufficient in order to salvation. Whatever there-

fore is necessary to a spiritual life, is necessary absolutely to salvation, and no more; but what and how much that is, must be gathered by every one as to himself from scripture, but is impossible to be defined by others as to all persons. But in all, faith towards God and in our Lord Jesus Christ, and repentance from dead works, are absolutely and indispensably necessary to salvation, which imply in them both an universal readiness of mind to believe and obey God in all things; and by this we see what the rule and measure of the necessity of things to be believed is, as to particular persons, which lies in these things:

1. Whatever God hath revealed, is undoubtedly and infallibly true.

2. Whatever appears to me, upon sufficient inquiry, to be revealed by God, I am bound to believe it by virtue of God's veracity.

3. All things not equally appearing to all persons to be revealed of God, the same measure of necessity cannot be extended to all persons.

4. An universal assent to the will of God, and universal obedience to it, are absolutely and indispensably necessary to all persons to whom God's word is revealed.

Thus much may suffice concerning what is necessary to be believed by particular persons, considered as such.

§.5. But this controversy never need break Christian societies in that sense, but the great difficulty lies in the other part of it, which is most commonly strangely confounded with the former, viz. What things are necessary to be owned in order to church-societies, or ecclesiastical communion? For which we must consider, that the combination of Christian societies, or that which we call the catholic church, doth subsist upon the belief of what is necessary to salvation. For the very notion of a Christian church doth imply the belief of all those things which are necessary in order to the end of Christian religion, which is men's eternal happiness. From whence three things must be taken notice of.

1. That the very being of a church doth suppose the necessity of what is required to be believed in order to salvation. For else there could not be such a thing as a church imagined, which is only a combination of men together upon the belief

of such a doctrine as necessary to salvation, and for the performance of those acts of worship which are suitable thereto: therefore to assert the church to have power to make things necessary to salvation, is not only absurd, but destructive to the being of that church. For when it offered to define any thing to be necessary which was not so before, was it a church or no? If it was a church, it believed all things necessary: if it believed all things necessary before it defined, how comes it to make more things necessary by its definition? But of this more afterwards.

2. Whatever church owns those things which are antecedently necessary to the being of a church, cannot so long cease to be a true church; because it retains that which is the foundation of the being of the catholic church. Here we must distinguish those things in the catholic church which give its being, from those things which are the proper acts of it as the catholic church. As to this latter, the solemn worship of God in the way prescribed by him is necessary; in order to which there must be supposed lawful officers set in the church, and sacraments duly administered: but these, I say, are rather the exercise of the communion of the catholic church, than that which gives its being, which is, the belief of that religion whereon its subsistence and unity depends; and as long as a church retains this it keeps its being, though the integrity and perfection of it depends upon the due exercise of all acts of communion in it.

3. The union of the catholic church depends upon the agreement of it, in making the foundations of its being to be the grounds of its communion. For the unity being intended to preserve the being, there can be no reason given why the bonds of union should extend beyond the foundation of its being, which is, the owning the things necessary to the salvation of all. From whence it necessarily follows, that whatsoever church imposeth the belief of other things as necessary to salvation, which were not so antecedently necessary to the being of the catholic church, doth as much as in it lies break the unity of it; and those churches who desire to preserve its unity, are bound thereby not to have communion with it so long as it doth so. Of what great consequence these principles

are to the true understanding the distance between our church and yours, if you see not now, you may feel afterwards.

§. 6. These things being premised, I come to that which is the main subject of the present dispute, which is, what those things are which ought to be owned by all Christian societies as necessary to salvation, on which the being of the catholic church depends. If we can find any sure footing for the definition of these, we shall thereby find what the necessary conditions of ecclesiastical communion are, and consequently where the proper cause of schism lies in transgressing those bounds, and what foundations may be laid for the peace of the Christian world. Which being of so vast importance, would require a larger discussion than this place will admit of; but so far as is pertinent to our present subject, I shall inquire into it, and give an account of my thoughts in these propositions.

1. Nothing ought to be owned as necessary to salvation by Christian societies, but such things, which, by the judgment of all those societies, are antecedently necessary to the being of the catholic church. For no reason can be assigned (as I said before) why the bonds of union should be extended beyond that which is the church's foundation; neither can there any reason be given why any thing else should be judged necessary to the church's communion, but what all those churches (who do not manifestly dissent from the catholic church of the first ages) are agreed in as necessary to be believed by all: this will be further explained afterwards. Only I add here, when I speak of the necessary conditions of ecclesiastical communion, I speak of such things which must be owned as necessary articles of faith, and not of any other agreements for the church's peace. I deny not therefore, but that in case of great divisions in the Christian world, and any national church's reforming itself, that church may declare its sense of those abuses in articles of religion, and require of men a subscription to them; but then we are to consider, that there is a great deal of difference between the owning some propositions in order to peace, and the believing of them as necessary articles of faith. And this is clearly the state of the difference between the church of Rome and the church of

England. The church of Rome imposeth new articles of faith to be believed as necessary to salvation; as appears by the formerly cited bull of Pius IV. Which articles contain in them the justification of those things which are most excepted against by other churches: and by her imposing these as the conditions of her communion, she makes it necessary for other churches, who would preserve the unity of the catholic church upon her true foundations, to forbear her communion. But the church of England makes no articles of faith, but such as have the testimony and approbation of the whole Christian world of all ages, and are acknowledged to be such by Rome itself, and in other things she requires subscription to them not as articles of faith, but as inferior truths, which she expects a submission to in order to her peace and tranquillity. So the late learned L. primate of Ireland often expresseth the sense of the church of England as to her thirty-nine Articles. "Neither doth the church of England," saith he^f, "define any of these questions as necessary to be believed, either *necessitate medii*, or *necessitate precepti*, which is much less; but only bindeth her sons, for peace sake, not to oppose them." And in another place more fully: "We do not suffer any man to reject the thirty-nine Articles of the church of England at his pleasure; yet neither do we look upon them as essentials of saving faith, or legacies of Christ and his apostles; but in a mean, as pious opinions fitted for the preservation of unity: neither do we oblige any man to believe them, but only not to contradict them." By which we see what a vast difference there is between those things which are required by the church of England in order to peace, and those which are imposed by the church of Rome as part of that faith, *extra quam non est salus*, without belief of which there is no salvation. In which she hath as much violated the unity of the catholic church, as the church of England by her prudence and moderation hath studied to preserve it.

§. 7. 2. Nothing ought to be imposed as a necessary article of faith to be believed by all, but what may be evidently propounded to all persons as a thing which God did require the

^f Bp. Bramhall, *Schism Guarded*, sect. 7. p. 396.

^g Sect. I. cap. 11. p. 190. V. Re-

plication to the Bp. of Chalcedon, p. 264.

explicit belief of. It being impossible to make any thing appear a necessary article of faith, but what may not only be evidently proved to be revealed by God, but that God doth oblige all men to the belief of it in order to salvation. And therefore none of those things, whose obligation doth depend on variety of circumstances, ought in reason be made the bonds of that communion which cannot take notice of that variety as to men's conditions and capacities. There are many things in Christian religion, which whosoever believes the truth of it cannot but easily discern to be necessary in order to the profession and practice of it, in most of which the common sense and reason of mankind is agreed. Not only the existence of a Deity, the clear discovery of the wisdom, goodness and power of God, with his providence over the world, and the immortality of souls, being therein most evidently revealed; but the way and manner of the restitution of men's souls by faith in Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, and obedience to his commands, is so fully laid down in the clearest terms, that no rational man, who considers the nature of Christian religion, but must assert the profession of all these things to be necessary to all such who own Christian religion to be true. But there are many other things in Christian religion, which are neither so clearly revealed in the scriptures, nor unanimously assented to in any age of the Christian church; and why any such things should be made the conditions of that communion in the catholic church, whose very being depends only on necessary things, would puzzle a philosopher to understand. As if none should be accounted mathematicians, but such as could square circles; and none naturalists, but such as could demonstrate whether quantity were infinitely divisible or no: much so it is, if none should be accounted members of the catholic church, but such as own the truth and necessity of some at least as disputable points as any in religion. Let therefore any Romanist tell me, whether the pope's supremacy be as clear in scripture, as that Christ is Saviour of the world; whether purgatory be as plain as eternal life; transubstantiation as evident, as that the Eucharist ought to be administered; whether invocation of saints be as manifest, as the adoration of God; the doctrine of indulgences, as repentance from dead works; and if there

be so great a clearness in the revelation of the one, and so far from it as to the other, let them give any just account why the belief of the one is made as necessary to salvation as the other is. Certainly such who take in things at least so disputable as all these are, and enforce the belief of them in order to their communion, cannot otherwise be thought but to have a design to exclude a great part of the Christian world from their communion; and to do so, and then cry out of them as schismatics, is the most unreasonable proceedings in the world.

§. 8. 3. Nothing ought to be required as a necessary article of faith, but what hath been believed and received for such by the catholic church of all ages. For, since necessary articles of faith are supposed to be so antecedently to the being of the catholic church, since the catholic church doth suppose the continual acknowledgment of such things as are necessary to be believed; it is but just and reasonable to admit nothing as necessary, but what appears to have been so universally received. Thence it is that antiquity, universality and consent, are so much insisted on by Vincentius Lirinensis, in order to the proving any thing to be a necessary article of faith. But the great difficulty of this lies in finding out what was received for a necessary article of faith and what was not by the catholic church; which being a subject as necessary as seldom spoken to, I shall not leave it untouched, although I must premise that rule to be much more useful in discovering what was not looked on as a necessary article of faith than what was; and therefore I begin with that first.

1. It is sufficient evidence that was not looked on as a necessary article of faith, which was not admitted into the ancient creeds. Whether all those declarations which were inserted in the enlargements of the Apostolical Creed by the councils of Nice and Constantinople, and in that Creed which goes under the name of Athanasius, were really judged by the catholic church of all ages to be necessary to salvation, is not here my business to inquire; but there seems to be a great deal of reason for the negative, that what was not inserted in the ancient creeds, was not by them judged necessary to be believed by all Christians. I know it is said by some of your party, that the Apostolical Creed did only contain those

articles which were necessary to be believed, in opposition to the present heresies which were then in the church. As though the necessity of believing in Christians came only by an antiperistasis of the opposition of heretics; and if there had been no heretics to have denied God's being the Creator and Christ's being the Saviour, it had not been necessary to have believed either of them so explicitly as now we do. But when we speak of all things necessary to be believed by all, I mean not that all circumstances of things contained in those creeds are necessary to be believed in order to salvation; but that all those things which were judged as necessary to be believed by all were therein inserted, will appear to any one who either considers the expressions of the ancients concerning the creeds then in use, or the primary reason why such summaries of faith were ever made in the Christian church. The testimonies of the fathers^h to this purpose are so well known in this subject, that it were a needless task to repeat them, who so unanimously assert the sufficiency, unalterableness and perfection of that faith which is contained in the Creed; making it the sum of all necessary doctrines, the foundation of the catholic faith and of the church, the first and sole confession of evangelical doctrine. Of all which and many more expressions to the same purpose, produced not only by our writers, but by yours too, no tolerable sense can be made, without asserting, that whatever was judged necessary to be believed by all by the catholic church of that age they lived in or before them, was therein contained. Besides, what account can be given why any such summaries of faith should at all be made either by apostles or apostolical persons, but only for that end, that necessary articles of faith might be reduced into such a compass, as might become portable to the weakest capacities? If the rise of creeds were (as most probably it was) from the things propounded to the catechumens to be believed in order to baptism, can we reasonably think that any thing judged necessary to be believed should be left out? If the Apostolical Creed be a

^h Irenæus l. 1. c. 2, 3. Tertull. de Veland. Virgin. c. 1. de Præscript. c. 13, 14. Cyril. Hierosolymit. Catech. 4, 5. Hieron. Ep. 61. ad Pammach. Augustin. de Symbol. ad Catech. l.

3. c. 1. de Temp. serm. 115, 119, 131, 181. Ambros. serm. 38. de Jejun. et Quadrag. &c. Hilar. ad Constant. Aug. Ruffinus in Symbol. c. 2.

summary comprehension of that form of sound doctrine which the apostles delivered to all Christians at their first conversion (as it is generally supposed), either we must think the apostles unfaithful in their work, or the Creed an unfaithful account of their doctrine, or that such things which were supposed universally necessary to be believed are therein comprehended. Which is sufficient for my purpose, that nothing ought to be looked on as a necessary article of faith, or was so esteemed by the catholic church, which is not contained in the ancient creeds.

2. Nothing ought to be judged a necessary article of faith, but what was universally believed by the catholic church to be delivered as such by Christ or his apostles. So that it is not the judgment, but the testimony of the catholic church, which must be relied on, and that testimony only when universal, as delivering what was once infallibly delivered by Christ or his apostles. From whence it follows, that any one who will undertake to make out any thing as a necessary article of faith by catholic tradition merely, must do these things :

1. He must make it appear to be universally embraced at all times, and in all places, by such who were members of the catholic church.

2. That none ever opposed it, but he was presently disowned as no member of the catholic church, because opposing something necessary to salvation.

3. That it be delivered by all those writers of the church who give an account of the faith of Christians, or what was delivered by Christ and his apostles to the church.

4. That it was not barely looked on as necessary to be believed by such as might be convinced it was of divine revelation, but that it was delivered with a necessity of its being explicitly believed by all.

5. That what is delivered by the consent of the writers of the catholic church, was undoubtedly the consent of the church of those ages.

6. That all those writers agree not only in the belief of the thing itself, but of the necessity of it to all Christians.

7. That no writers or fathers of succeeding ages can be supposed to alter in the belief either of the matters believed before, or the necessity of them.

8. That no oppositions of heretics, or heats of contention, could make them judge any article so opposed to be more necessary than it was judged before that contention; or they themselves would have judged it, had it not been so opposed.

9. That when they affirm many traditions to be apostolical, which yet varied in several churches, they could not affirm any doctrine to be apostolical, which they were not universally agreed in.

10. That when they so plainly assert the sufficiency of the scriptures as a rule of faith, they did yet believe something necessary to salvation which was not contained therein.

When you, or any one else, will undertake to make good these conditions, I shall then begin to believe that something may be made appear to be a necessary article of faith which is not clearly revealed in scripture, but not before: but till then this negative will suffice, that nothing ought to be embraced as the judgment of the church concerning a necessary article of faith, but what appears to be clearly revealed in scripture, and universally embraced by the catholic church of all ages.

3. Nothing ought to be looked on as a necessary article of faith by the judgment of the catholic church, the denial of which was not universally opposed, and condemned as heresy. For otherwise the catholic church was very little sensible of the honour of Christian faith, if it suffered dissenters in necessary things, without putting a mark of dishonour upon them. Therefore we may conclude, that whatever was patiently borne with in such as dissented from the generality of Christians, especially if considerable persons in the church were the authors or fomenters of such opinions, however true the contrary doctrine was supposed to be, yet it was not supposed necessary, because then the opposers would have been condemned of heresy by some open act of the catholic church.

§. 9. But if, beyond these negatives, we would inquire what was positively believed as necessary to salvation by the catholic church, we shall hardly find any better way than by the articles of the ancient creeds, and the universal opposition of any new doctrine on its first appearance, and the condemning the broachers of it for heresy in œcumenical councils,

with the continual disapprobation of those doctrines by the Christian churches of all ages. As is clear in the cases of Arius and Pelagius. For it seems very reasonable to judge, that since the necessary articles of faith were all delivered by the apostles to the catholic church, since the foundation of that church lies in the belief of those things which are necessary, that nothing should be delivered contrary to any necessary article of faith, but the church, by some evident act, must declare its dislike of it, and its resolution thereby to adhere to that necessary doctrine which was once delivered to the saints. And withal, it seems reasonable, that because art and subtilty may be used by such who seek to pervert the catholic doctrine, and to wrest the plain places of scripture, which deliver it, so far from their proper meaning, that very few ordinary capacities may be able to clear themselves of such mists as are cast before their eyes; the sense of the catholic church in succeeding ages may be a very useful way for us to embrace the true sense of scripture, especially in the great articles of the Christian faith. As for instance, in the doctrine of the deity of Christ, or the Trinity; though the subtilty of such modern heretics who oppose either of these may so far prevail on persons, either not of sufficient judgment, or not sufficiently versed in the scriptures, as at present to make them acknowledge the places are not so clear as they imagined them to be; yet they being always otherwise interpreted by the catholic church, or the Christian societies of all ages, lays this potent prejudice against all such attempts, as not to believe such interpretations true, till they give a just account why, if the belief of these doctrines were not necessary, the Christians of all ages from the apostles' times did so unanimously agree in them, that when any began first to oppose them, they were declared and condemned for heretics for their pains. So that the church of England doth very piously declare her consent with the ancient catholic church, in not admitting any thing to be delivered as the sense of scripture, which is contrary to the consent of the catholic church in the four first ages. Not as though the sense of the catholic church were pretended to be any infallible rule of interpreting scripture in all things which concern the rule of faith; but that it is a sufficient prescription against any

thing which can be alleged out of scripture, that if it appear contrary to the sense of the catholic church from the beginning, it ought not to be looked on as the true meaning of the scripture. All this security is built upon this strong presumption, that nothing contrary to the necessary articles of faith should be held by the catholic church, whose very being depends upon the belief of those things which are necessary to salvation. As long therefore as the church might appear to be truly catholic by those correspondencies which were maintained between the several parts of it, that what was refused by one was so by all, so long this unanimous and uncontradicted sense of the catholic church ought to have a great sway upon the minds of such who yet profess themselves members of the catholic church. From whence it follows, that such doctrines may well be judged destructive to the rule of faith, which were so unanimously condemned by the catholic church within that time. And thus much may suffice for the first inquiry, viz. what things are to be esteemed necessary, either in order to salvation, or in order to ecclesiastical communion.

§. 10. 2. Whether any thing which was not necessary to salvation may by any means whatsoever afterwards become necessary, so that the not believing it becomes damnable, and unrepented destroys salvation? We suppose the question to proceed on such things as could not, antecedently to such an act whereby they now become necessary, be esteemed to be so, either from the matter or from any express command. For you in terms assert a necessity of believing distinct from the matter and absolute command, and hath the church's definition for its formal object, which makes the necessity of our faith continually to depend upon the church's definition: but this strange kind of ambulatory faith I shall now shew to be repugnant to the design of Christ and his apostles in making known Christian religion, and to all evidence of reason, and directly contrary to the plain and uncontradicted sense of the primitive and catholic church.

1. It is contrary to the design of Christ and his apostles in making known the Christian religion to the world. For if the design of Christ was to declare whatever was necessary to the salvation of mankind, if the apostles were sent abroad for this

very end, then either they were very unfaithful in discharge of their trust, or else they taught all things necessary for their salvation; and if they did so, how can any thing become necessary which they did never teach? Was it not the great promise concerning the Messias, that at his coming "the earth Isa. xi. 9. should be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," that then "they shall all be taught of God?" John vi. 45. Was not this the just expectation of the people concerning him, that when he came he would tell them all things? Doth not he John iv. 25. tell his disciples, that "all things I have heard of my Father, John xv. 15. I have made known unto you?" And for all this, is there something still remaining necessary to salvation, which neither he nor his disciples did ever make known to the world? Doth not he promise life and salvation to all such as believe and obey his doctrine? and can any thing be necessary for eternal life which he never declared? or did he only promise it to the men of that age and generation, and leave others to the mercy of the church's definitions? If this be so, we have sad cause to lament our condition, upon whom these heavy loins of the church are fallen: how happy had we been if we had lived in Christ's or the apostles' times! for then we might have been saved, though we had never believed the pope's supremacy, or transubstantiation, or invocation of saints, or worshipping images; but now the case is altered; these millstones are now hung about our necks, and how we shall swim to heaven with them, who knows? How strangely mistaken was our Saviour when he said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed!" for much more blessed certainly were they who did see him and believe in him, for then he would undertake for their salvation; but now, it seems, we are out of his reach, and turned over to the merciless infallibility of the present church. When Christ told his disciples, his "yoke was easy and burden light," he little thought what power he had left in the church, to lay on so much load as might cripple men's belief, were it not for a good reserve in a corner, called *implicit faith*. When he sent the apostles to teach all that he commanded them, he must be understood so that the church hath power to teach more if she pleases; and though the apostles, poor men, were bound up by this commission, and St. Peter himself too, yet his infallible successors have a

paramount privilege beyond them all. Though the Spirit was promised to the apostles to lead them into all truth, yet there must be no incongruity in saying they understood not some necessary truths, (for how should they, when never revealed?) as transubstantiation, supremacy, &c. ; because, though they never dreamt of such things, yet the infallible church hath done it since for them ; and, to say truth, though the apostles' names were put into the promise, yet they were but feoffees in trust for the church, and the benefit comes to the church by them. For they were only tutors to the church in its minority, teaching it some poor rudiments of Christ and heaven, of faith and obedience, &c. But the great and divine mysteries of the seven sacraments, indulgences, worship of images, sacrifice of the mass, &c., were not fit to be made known till the church were at age herself, and knew how to declare her own mind. When St. Paul speaks so much of the "great mysteries hidden from ages and generations, but now made known," it must be understood with a reference to those silly people who lived in that age ; but there were greater mysteries than these, which neither Christ nor any of his apostles were ever acquainted with, as purgatory, and those before mentioned ; for these were reserved as the church's portion when her infallibility-ship should come to age. St. Paul, honest man, spake as he thought, when he told not the

Acts xx. 27. common people, but the bishops of the church, "that he had not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God ;" but if he had lived to our age, he would have heard of this mistake with both ears, and if he had not sworn the contrary, he must have been contented to have been called schismatic and heretic a thousand times over. These are all the just and rare consequences of your church's blessed infallibility, and power of defining things necessary, which were not so in Christ's or his apostles' times. But the greatest knack of all is yet behind, for men are bound to believe all the doctrines of your church to be apostolical, and yet that your church hath power to make things necessary to be believed which were not so in the apostolical times. Yes, say you, "they were doctrines then, but not so necessary as now, because they had not the church's definition." It seems. at last, the apostles knew them, but did not understand the worth of them ; else, no doubt, they were

such charitable souls, they would have declared them to the world. Blessed St. Paul, who was continually employed in teaching and instructing men in the way to salvation, could he have held back any thing that had tended to it, when he says, “ he kept back nothing that was profitable to them, but shewed them and taught them publicly, and from house to house, testifying to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ?” Act. xx. 20, 21. What, not one word of the necessary points all this while? nothing of the church of Rome, nor Christ’s vicar on earth and his infallibility? How slyly and cunningly did St. Paul and the rest of the apostles carry it, if they had believed these things,—never let one word drop from their mouths or pens concerning them! and instead of that, speak so, and write so, that one that believes them honest would swear they never heard of them. In what another kind of strain would St. Paul have writ to the church of Rome, if he had had but any inkling of the chair of infallibility being placed there! How soon would he have blotted out the whole fourteenth chapter of his epistle to the Corinthians, if he had known his holiness his pleasure about serving God in an unknown tongue! How well might he have spared saying, that a bishop should be the husband of one wife, if he had known *de jure divino* he must have none at all! At what another rate would he have discoursed of the eucharist, had he believed transubstantiation, sacrifice of the mass, communion under one kind! What course would he have taken with the schismatical Corinthians that were divided like other churches, if he had known the infallible judge of controversy! If he had but understood the danger of reading scriptures, he might have spared his exhortations to the people of the word of God dwelling richly in them, and filled his Epistles with *Pater Nosters* and *Ave Marias*, or given good directions about them. But he must be pardoned, he was ignorant of these things as well as we; only St. Paul never heard of them, and we do not believe them, because neither he nor his brethren ever revealed them to us, though they were the “ stewards of the mysteries of God;” and they tell us themselves, that it is requisite such should be faithful, which we cannot understand how they could be, if they knew these deep mysteries, but never discovered them that we can learn. But if they knew them not, I pray

from whence is it your church learns them? by immediate inspiration? No, as bold as you are, you dare not challenge that. But whence then come you to know them to be necessary? Infallibly forsooth: but whence comes this infallibility? must there not be a peculiar revelation to discover that to be necessary which was never discovered to be so before? but if discovered before, and declared before, the things were as necessary before your church's definition as after; and therefore your church's definition adds nothing of necessity to them. If neither discovered nor declared, you must have particular revelation for them; and then work miracles, and we will believe you, but not otherwise; but before you do it, consider what St. Paul hath said concerning an angel from heaven preaching another gospel, "let him be accursed;" and what can be more preaching another gospel, than making other things necessary to salvation than Christ or his apostles did? and think then what your church hath deserved for all her definitions concerning articles of faith, or things necessary to be believed in order to salvation. But yet further you say, "That these things were declared by the apostles, but they need a further declaration now:" and why so? shew us the apostle's declaration, and it sufficeth us; we shall not believe them one jot the more for your additional definition. And it is surely a sign you did not think the apostles' declaration sufficient, or else you would never pretend to new ones. Perhaps you will tell us, It was to their age, but not to ours. Why not, as well as the other necessary articles of faith contained in scripture? I know your answer is, "We can know no necessary article of faith at all, but from your church." So then we have brought all into a narrow compass, and instead of new definitions of the church concerning necessary things, we can know nothing at all to be necessary to be believed, but from your church. This is high, but the higher it is, the better foundation it had need stand on, which we shall thoroughly search into in the controversy of the resolution of faith; to which we refer it, and return. If there were once a declaration, but still there needs another, what is become of that declaration? was it lost in its passage down to us? how then was that present church infallible, which lost a declaration in matter of faith? was it necessary to be believed in the intermediate age

or no? If it was, then it was not lost, and then what need a new declaration? if not, then a thing once necessary to salvation may be not necessary to salvation, and become necessary to salvation again. But still we have cause to envy their happiness who lived in the age when they might be saved without believing these things: for the case goes hard with us; for you tell us, unless we believe them necessary, we cannot be saved; and our consciences tell us, that if we did profess to believe them necessary when we do not and cannot, we cannot be saved. What a case then were we in, if the pope were Christ's vicar in heaven, as he pretends to be on earth; but it is our comfort he is neither so nor so. Thus we see what repugnancy there is both to scripture and reason in this strange doctrine of your church's definitions making things necessary to salvation which were not so before.

§. 11. I should now proceed to shew how repugnant this doctrine is to the unanimous consent of antiquity; but I find myself prevented in that, by the late writings of one of your own communion, and if you will believe him in his epistle dedicatory (which I much question), the present pope's most humble servant, our countryman Mr. Thomas White. Whose whole book, called his *Tabulæ Suffragiales*^d, is purposely designed against this fond and absurd opinion; nay, he goes so high as to assert the opinion of the pope's personal infallibility not only to be heretical, but archi-heretical; and that the propagating of this doctrine is in its kind a most grievous sin. It cannot but much rejoice us to see, that men of wit and parts begin to discover the intolerable arrogance of such pretences, and that such men as D. Holden and Mr. White are in many things come so near the protestant principles; and that since they quit the plea of infallibility, and rely on universal tradition, we are in hopes that the same reason and ingenuity which carried these persons thus far, will carry others who go on the same principles so much further, as to see, how impossible it is to make good the points in controversy between us upon the principle of universal tradition. Which the bigots of your church are sufficiently sensible of, and therefore like the man at Athens, when your hands are cut off, you are resolved to hold this infallibility with your teeth: and so

^d *Tabulæ Suff.* cap. 19, 20, 21.

that gentleman finds by the proceedings of the court of Rome against him for that and his other pieces. But this should not have been taken notice of, lest we should seem to see (as who doth not, that is not stark blind?) what growing divisions and animosities there are among yourselves both at home and in foreign parts; and yet all this while the poor silly people must be told, that there is nothing but division out of your church, and nothing but harmony and music in it, but such as is made of discords. And that about this present controversy; for the forenamed gentleman in his epistle to the present pope tells him plainly, "that it is found true by frequent experience, that there is no defending the catholic faith against the subtilties of his heretical countrymen, without the principles of that book which was condemned at Rome^e." And what those principles are, we may easily see by this book, which is writ in defence of the former. Wherein he largely proves that the church hath no power to make new articles of faith, which he proves both from scripture, reason and authority: this last is that I shall refer the reader to him for; for in his second table, as he calls it, he proves from the testimonies of Origen, Basil, Chrysostom, Cyril, Irenæus, Tertullian, pope Stephen, Hierom, Theophylact, Augustine, Vincentius Lirinensis, and several others^f; nay, the testimonies, he says, to this purpose are so many, that whole libraries must be transcribed to produce them all. And afterwards more largely proves, that the faith of the church lies in a continued succession from the apostles, both from scripture and reason, and abundance of church authorities in his fourth, fifth and sixth tables: and through the rest of his book disproves the infallibility of councils and pope. And can you think all this is answered by an Index Expurgatorius, or by publishing a false Latin order of the inquisition at Rome, whereby his books are prohibited, and his opinions condemned as heretical, erroneous in faith, rash, scandalous, seditious, and what not? It seems then, it is grown at last *de fide* that the pope is infallible, and never more like to do so

^e Neque si complurium experimentis fidem habere liceat, adversus nostratium hæreticorum subtilitates fides catholica sustineri potest absque præcipuis hujus libelli dog-

matibus, et (si conjicere fas sit) aliquibus accusatis. Tabulæ Suffrag. Ep. dedicat. ad Papam Alex. VII.

^f Tabulæ Suffrag. tab. 2. p. 11, &c.

than in this age; for the same person gives us this character of it in his purgation^g of himself to the cardinals of the inquisition, saying, “that their eminencies, by the unhappiness of the present age, in which knowledge is banished out of the schools, and the doctrines of faith and theological truths are judged by most voices, fell, it seems, upon some ignorant and arrogant consulters; who, hand over head, condemn those propositions, which upon their oaths they could not tell whether they were true or false^h.” If these be your proceedings at Rome, happy we that have nothing to do with such infallible ignorance: this is the age your religion were like to thrive in, if ignorance were as predominant elsewhere as it seems it is at Rome. But I leave this and return.

§. 12. 3. The last thing is, whether the church hath power, by any proposition or definition, to make any thing become necessary to salvation, and to be believed as such, which was not so before? But this is already answered by the foregoing discourse; for if the necessity of the things to be believed must be supposed antecedently to the church's being, if that which was not before necessary cannot by any act whatsoever afterwards become necessary, then it unavoidably follows, that the church neither hath nor can have any such power. Other things which relate to this we shall have occasion to discuss in following your steps; which, having thus far cleared this important controversy, I betake myself to.

And we are highly obliged to you, for the rare divertisements you give us in your excellent way of managing controversies. Had my lord of Canterbury been living, what an excellent entertainment would your confutation of his book have afforded him! But, since so pleasant a province is fallen to my share, I must learn to command myself in the management of it, and therefore, where you present us with any thing which deserves a serious answer, for truth and the cause's sake you shall be sure to have it. In the first place, you

^g V. exemplar ipsius decreti apud Tho. Albii Purgat. p. 9.

^h Eminentissimos præstules, infortunio præsentis seculi, in quo scientia ex scholis exulat, et fidei et theologiæ veritates numero votorum æstimantur, incidisse in consultores

ex majori parte et ignaros et arrogantes, qui intrepide configant propositiones, quas jurati asserant se nescire, sintne veræ vel falsæ. Appendix Albiana ad Purgat. sect. poster. p. 212. A. D. 1662.

Lab. p. 15.
n. 4.

charge his lordship with a fallacy, and that is, because, when he was to speak of fundamentals, he did not speak of that which was not fundamental. But, say you, "he turns the difficulty, which only proceeded upon a fundamentality or necessity derived from the formal object, that is, from the divine authority revealing that point, to the material object, that is, to the importance of the matter contained in the point revealed; which is a plain fallacy, in passing *a sensu formali ad materialem*." Men seldom suspect those faults in others which they find not strong inclinations to in themselves: had you not been conscious of a notorious fallacy in this distinction of formal and material object, as here applied by you, you would never have suspected any such sophistry in his lordship's discourse. I pray consider what kind of fundamentals those are which the question proceeds on, viz. such as are necessary to be owned as such by all churches, in order to their being true churches, as is plain by the rise of this controversy; for Mr. Fisher was proving the Greek church to be no true church, and in order to that, proves that she erred fundamentally, for which he makes use of this medium, That whatever is defined by the church is fundamental. So that the whole process of the dispute lies thus: Whatever church is guilty of a fundamental error ceaseth to be a true church; but the Greek church is guilty of a fundamental error; *ergo*. The minor being denied, he thus proves it: If whatever is defined by the church be fundamental, then the Greek church is guilty of a fundamental error because she denies something defined by the church; but whatever is defined by the church is fundamental; which is the thing his lordship denies, and his adversary is bound to prove. So that any one who was not resolved to wink as hard as you do might easily see, the state of the controversy doth not concern what things are fundamental, supposing men know them to be sufficiently propounded; but what things are so necessary to be owned for fundamentals, that upon the denying them, a church ceaseth to be a true church. Yet this mistake, as gross and palpable as it is, runs through your whole discourse of fundamentals, which without it cannot hold together. If you will therefore prove, that besides such things whose necessity ariseth from the matter, there are other from the

formal object, which all churches are equally bound to believe in order to their being true churches, you do something; but not before.

But we must still attend your motions, especially when they tend towards proofs, as yours do now. For, say you, "Now Lab. p. 15. I shew (the difficulty being understood, as it ought to be, ofⁿ. 4^o the formal object, whereby points of faith are manifested to Christians) that all points defined by the church as matter of faith, are fundamental,—that is, necessary to salvation to be believed by all those to whom they are sufficiently propounded to be so defined,—by this argument: Whosoever refuseth to believe any thing sufficiently propounded to him for a truth revealed from God, commits a sin damnable and destructive of salvation; But whosoever refuses to believe any point sufficiently propounded to him for defined by the church as matter of faith, refuses to believe a thing sufficiently propounded to him for a truth revealed from God; *Ergo*, whosoever refuses to believe any point sufficiently propounded to him for defined by the church as matter of faith, commits a sin damnable and destructive of salvation." Before you proceed to the proof of your minor, several things must here be considered, that we may better understand your meaning, and know what it is you intend to prove. Especially what you intend by *sufficient proposition*. Do you mean such a proposition as carries evidence along with it, or not? in which case the very understanding the terms is sufficient proposition, as that two and two make four; but I suppose you mean not this, therefore it must be the sufficient proposition of something which wants natural evidence; and therefore something else must be required, besides the propounding the thing, to make the proposition be said to be sufficient. For sufficiency relates to some end; so that a sufficient proposition must be such a proposition as is sufficient for its end: now the end of the proposition of matters of faith is, that they may be believed; and therefore the sufficiency of the proposition lies in the arguments or motives inducing men to believe. Now the objects of faith being of a different nature, the sufficiency of the proposition must be taken from a respect to them: for in things which are so clearly revealed as necessary to salvation, that none who acknowledge the scrip-

ture to be God's word can doubt but such things are necessary, in this case the sufficiency of the proposition lies in the evidence of divine revelation, and the clearness of it to all understandings who consider it; and the reasons or motives of faith in that case are the same with those which induce men to believe, that the scripture itself is from divine revelation. But there being other things in scripture, which neither appear so clear or so necessary to be believed by all, something else is required in order to a sufficient proposition of them; and in order to the making any of these things universally obligatory to Christians on pain of damnation for not believing them, these things are necessary: 1. It must be much clearer than the thing which is propounded to be believed on the account of it; for to propound a thing to be believed by something at least as disputable as the matter itself, cannot certainly be called a sufficient proposition. 2. It must be antecedently proved to be a true and certain proposition, before any thing can be believed on the account of it. For if men cannot see any reason to believe that there is any necessary connection between that which you call a sufficient proposition and any matter of faith, they cannot be guilty of any sin at all in not believing what you think is sufficiently propounded. But in this case it is not your judgment what proposition is sufficient, that makes it so, but the reason of the thing, and the evidence that God hath appointed that way to reveal his will to men, and that what is so propounded is necessary to be believed. As for instance, suppose you were told by the Greek church, that to believe the pope's supremacy *jure divino* were a damnable sin, and that whosoever did not believe this being sufficiently propounded to them as a matter of faith, as defined by the church, were guilty of a sin destructive to salvation; what answer would you return in this case? would you not say, that the proposition, though judged sufficient by them, is not judged so by you; and that they must first prove, that whatever their church defines as a matter of faith is to be believed for such, before the other can be believed on the account of it? Just the same answer we return to you: prove first of all to us in a clear and evident manner, that God hath appointed the definition of your church, as the means whereby we may be infallibly

assured what is matter of faith, and what not; and then we may grant, that what your church propounds as a matter of faith is sufficiently propounded as a matter revealed from God; but not before. For while I see no reason to believe the church's proposition to be sufficient, I have no reason to believe that what she propounds as defined for matter of faith is truly so: and as long as I can see no reason to believe it, prove the disbelief of it to be a sin in me when you can. Thus we see how far from being evident that major of yours is, though you are pleased to tell us it is so; but we do not believe your defining it to be so, to be any matter of faith, unless we had better reason for it than we have. For, say Lab. p. 16. you, "to refuse to believe God's revelation, is either to give ^{n. 4.} God the lie, or to doubt whether he speak truth or no." But have you so little wit, as not to distinguish between not believing God's revelation, and not believing what is propounded for God's revelation? Must every one, who doth not believe every thing that is propounded for God's revelation, presently give God the lie, and doubt whether he speak truth or no? And are not you then guilty of that fault every time a quaker or enthusiast tells you that the Spirit of God within him told him this and that? But you said, "sufficiently propounded." But the question is, what sufficient proposition is, and who must be judge whether the proposition be sufficient or no, you or the conscience of the person to whom the thing is proposed to be believed? If any one, indeed, that judgeth a proposition sufficient, do notwithstanding question the truth of it, he doth interpretatively call God's veracity into question; but not he certainly who thinks not God's veracity at all concerned in that which you call a sufficient proposition, but he judgeth not to be so.

Let us now see how you prove your assumption, which is very fairly done from a supposition which his lordship denies; Conf. p. 22. which is, "that general councils cannot err." But, say you, sect. 10. n. 3. he adds, "that though he should grant it, yet this cannot down with him, that all points even so defined were fundamentals." I grant those are his words, and his reasons follow them. "For deductions are not prime and native principles; nor are superstructures foundations. That which is a foundation for all, cannot be one and another to different

Lab. p. 16.
ii. 4.

Christians in regard of itself; for then it could be no common rule for any, nor could the souls of men rest upon a shaking foundation. No, if it be a true foundation, it must be common to all, and firm under all; in which sense the articles of Christian faith are fundamental." What now do you prove to destroy this? You very strenuously prove, that if men believe a general council cannot err, they believe it cannot err so far, and no further than it cannot err. But if you mean any thing further, your meaning is better than your proof: for when you would prove, that to disbelieve the church's definition is to disbelieve God's revelation; and in order to that, confound the church and general councils together, and from the general council's not erring, infer the former proposition, because what is testified by the church is testified by an authority that cannot err; you do not consider, that all this while you prove nothing against his lordship, unless you first prove that whatever is testified to be revealed from God, is presently fundamental to all churches and Christians, which his lordship utterly denies, by distinguishing even things which may be testified to be revealed from God, into such things as are common to all Christians to be believed by them, and such things as vary according to the different respects of Christians. But yet further, I add, that taking fundamentals in your sense, you prove not the thing you intended, but only to such as do acknowledge, and as far as they do acknowledge, that general councils cannot err. For they who acknowledge them infallible only in fundamentals, do not judge any thing fundamental by their decision, but judge their decisions infallible so long as they hold to fundamentals; and so (for all that I can see) leave themselves judges, when general councils are infallible, and when not: and therefore, if they go about to testify any thing as revealed from God which is not fundamental, they do not believe that their testimony cannot err, and so are not bound to believe that it is from God. They who believe general councils absolutely infallible, I do verily think do believe general councils infallible in all they say; for that is the substance of all you say. But what that is to those who neither do nor can see any reason to believe them infallible in all they say or testify as revealed from God, I neither do nor can possibly understand. And if you hope such kind of

arguments can satisfy your ingenuous reader, you suppose him a good-natured man in the Greek sense of the phrase.

But all of a sudden, we find you in a very generous strain, and are contented to take fundamentals for fundamentals (which is a huge concession, and his lordship, were he living, would take it for a singular favour from you). “Yet to deal freely with the bishop,” say you, “even taking fundamentals in a general way” (as it ought to be taken only here) “for a thing belonging to the foundation of religion” (and it is a strange fundamental which hath no respect to the foundation, but they who build downwards must have their foundations on tops of their houses), “it is also manifest, that all points Lab. p. 16, defined by the church are fundamental, by reason of that ^{17.} formal object, or infallible authority, propounding them, though not always by reason of the matter which they contain.” The main proof of which lies in this, that he who doth not believe the church infallible, can believe nothing at all infallibly, and therefore no fundamental of religion; but if he believe any thing upon the church’s infallibility, he must believe all things on the same account of her infallibility, and therefore must believe all equally; and so whatever is propounded by the church is to be believed as fundamental. This you cannot deny to be the force and strength of your verbose and confused way of arguing. And therefore I give you a short answer, that I utterly deny the infallibility of any church to be in any thing the foundation of divine and infallible faith; as you will find it abundantly proved in the proper place for it, in the controversy of the resolution of faith. Where it will be largely discussed, in what sense faith may be said to be divine and infallible, what the proper grounds and reasons of our believing are, and how much you impose upon the world, in pretending that the resolution of faith is into the catholic church’s infallibility: whereby it will appear to be far from a fundamental error, not to believe on the church’s infallibility, and that he who denies it will have no reason to call into question the canon of scripture, or the foundations of all religion; but that you rather, by these absurd and unreasonable pretences of yours, have done your utmost to shake the true foundations of religion, and advance nothing but scepticism, not to say atheism, in the

world. These things I take upon me to make good in their proper place, and therefore shall not enter the discussion of them here : but since this is the main, and, in truth, the only foundation of your doctrine of fundamentals, the vanity, falsehood and absurdity of it cannot be sufficiently understood, till we have gone through the account of the grounds of faith.

If St. Augustine make some no catholic Christians for holding obstinately some things of no great moment in his book of heresies, it was because by *catholic Christians* he understood all such, and only such, as were the members of the sound and orthodox church, in opposition to all kind of unnecessary separation from it upon matters of small moment, and not because he believed the church's infallibility in defining all matters of faith, and that all such things were so defined which men are called heretics for denying of : unless you will suppose it was ever infallibly defined that there were no antipodes ; for some were accounted heretics for believing them, and that by such whom you account greater than St. Austin. But for St. Austin, how far it was from his meaning to have all those accounted fundamental errors which he recounts in his book of heresies, appears not only from the multitude of particulars mentioned in it, which no one in his senses can acknowledge fundamental, or declared by the church as necessary to be believed by all, but from his declared scope and design in the preface to that book, wherein it appears he was desired not only to write the greater errors concerning faith, the Trinity, baptism, repentance, Christ, the resurrection, the Old and New Testament, *sed omnia omnino quibus a veritate dissentiunt*, i. e. all kind of errors whatsoever ; and do you think that there could then be no error, but it must be against something then defined by the church as necessary to salvation ? If not, then all truths were then defined by the church, and consequently there could be no new definitions ever since ; if there might, then those errors mentioned by St. Austin were not about matters necessary to be believed ; and so St. Austin's book of heresies makes nothing for you, but very much against you, considering that in all that black list of heretics, there are none brought in for denying those grand fundamentals of your church, the pope's supremacy, your

church's infallibility, nor any of that new brood of necessary articles which were so prudently hatched by the council of Trent. But if St. Austin do you no good, you hope St. Gregory Nazianzen may, because he saith, "That nothing can be more perilous than those heretics who with a drop of poison do infect our Lord's sincere faith." Therefore all things defined by the church are fundamental. What an excellent art this logic is, that can fetch out of things that which was never in them! What a rare consequence is this—If heresy be dangerous, then whatever is defined by the church is fundamental! But it may be, the strength lies in the drop of poison, as though St. Gregory thought a drop of poison as dangerous as a whole dose of it. But were I your physician, instead of the least drop of poison, I should prescribe you good store of hellebore, and should hope to see the effect of it in making better consequences than these are. But to see yet further the strange effects that logic hath upon some men; for, say you, in the prosecution of your proof, that all things defined by the church are fundamental: "Hence it is that Christ our Saviour saith, Matt. viii. 17. 'If he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.'" The argument in form runs thus: Whosoever deserves excommunication is guilty of a fundamental error; but he that will not hear the church deserves excommunication; *ergo*. Or else there may be more in it than so. For no doubt the heathens and publicans as such were guilty of fundamental errors; therefore they who will not hear the church are guilty of as fundamental errors as heathens and publicans. But before you urge us any more with this dreadful argument, I pray tell us what that church is which our Saviour speaks of; what the cases are wherein the church is to be heard; what the full importance is of being as a heathen and publican: and you must prove this church to be understood in your sense of the catholic church, and that this church hath hereby power to define matters of faith, and that none can possibly in any other sense be accounted as heathens and publicans, but as guilty of as fundamental errors as they were.

Your next objection concerning giving God and the church the lie, and preferring and opposing a man's private judgment and will before and against the judgment and will of God and the church, if men deny or doubt of any thing made known by

the church to be a truth revealed by God, signifies nothing at all, unless it be antecedently proved, that the church can never err in declaring any thing to be a truth revealed by God; which none who know what you mean by the church will easily assent to, till you have attempted a further proof of it than yet we find. And although the questioning divine veracity be destructive to that which you call supernatural faith, yet I hope it is possible to believe God to be true, and yet that all men are liars, or that there is no such inseparable connection between God's veracity and the present declarations of any church, but that one may heartily assent to the former, and yet question the truth of the latter. If you think otherwise, shew your pity to the weakness of our understandings by something that may look like a proof of it, which we are still much to seek for.

§. 14. But your greatest strength, like Samson's, seems to lie there where one would least suspect it, viz. in Athanasius his Creed. For thus you go on: "Wherefore it is said in St. Athanasius his Creed (which is approved in the thirty-nine Articles of the pretended English church), that 'whosoever will be saved, it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith—which unless every one hold whole and inviolate, without doubt he shall perish for ever:' neither can the bishop reply, that all points expressed therein are fundamental in his sense; for (to omit the article of our Saviour's descent into hell) he mentions expressly the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, which his lordship hath denied to be a fundamental point, as we saw in the former chapter." But the better to comprehend the force of this argument, we must first consider what it is you intend to prove by it, and then in what way and manner you prove it from this Creed. The matter which you are to prove is, that all things defined by the church are fundamental, i. e. in your sense necessary to salvation; and that the ground why such things, whose matter is not necessary, do become necessary, is because the church declares them to be revealed by God: now in order to this, you insist upon the Creed commonly called Athanasius his, wherein some things acknowledged not to be fundamental in the matter, are yet said to be necessary to salvation, and that this is owned by the church of England. This is the substance of the argument, which being resolved into its parts, will consist of these propositions. 1. That some things owned not

I ab. p. 18.
n. 4.

to be fundamental in the matter, are yet acknowledged in the Creed of Athanasius to be necessary to salvation. 2. That the reason why these things do become necessary, is because the church hath defined them to be so. 3. That this is acknowledged by the church of England. And therefore by parity of reason, whatever is defined by the church must be necessary to salvation. But every one of these propositions being ambiguous, the clear stating of them will be the best way of solving the difficulty which seems to lie in the present argument. And the main ambiguity lies in the meaning of that necessity to salvation which is implied in the Athanasian Creed, as to the articles therein contained; for there being different grounds and reasons upon which things may be supposed necessary, there can be no just consequence made from the general owning a necessity of the belief of some things, to the making those things necessary to be believed upon one particular account of it. For the necessity of believing things to salvation may arise from one of these three grounds. 1. The supposition that the matter to be believed is in itself necessary, this makes it necessary to all those persons who are of that persuasion; and on this ground it is plain that the main articles of the Athanasian Creed are generally supposed necessary, viz. those concerning the Trinity in Unity, the incarnation, resurrection, and eternal life, &c. Now these being supposed to be necessary from the matter, any church may own them under this degree of necessity, in that expression used in several places of the Athanasian Creed, “Whosoever will be saved, it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith—which catholic faith is,” &c. But then we are to consider that this is only a declaration of the sense of that church, what things she owns as necessary, and what not. And this declaration doth not oblige the conscience of particular persons any further, than as the articles of that church are required to be owned as the conditions of communion with her, i. e. where the degree of necessity is not declared, nor expressly owned by a church, but left in general terms; no man is bound to believe the things judged as necessary, with any particular kind of necessity exclusive of others, but only that the church in general may use that Creed supposed necessary, and that the use of that Creed is a lawful condition

of that church's communion. 2. The belief of a thing may be supposed necessary, because of the clear conviction of men's understandings, that though the matters be not in themselves necessary, yet being revealed by God, they must be explicitly believed; but then the necessity of this belief doth extend no further than the clearness of that conviction doth. As suppose it inserted into a Creed, that the article of the descent must be understood according to the sense of the scriptures, this doth oblige no man to any further necessity of belief of the sense of the article than he is convinced that it is the sense of the scriptures; and the case is the same when the article is expressed only in general terms, which are known to be capable of very different senses, when none of which are expressed, no particular sense can be said to be necessary to salvation to particular persons, but only that sense in general which all must agree in who own it, and the particulars are left to the convictions of men's understandings upon the use of the best means of satisfaction. So that he that believes fully that the meaning of this article from scripture is, that Christ's soul did locally descend to hell, it is necessary for him to believe so upon such conviction; but he that sees no more necessary to be believed by it but that Christ's soul was, during his body's lying in the grave, in a state of separation from it, how can you prove it necessary to salvation for him to believe any more than this? And the case is the same as to all modes of existence, and particular explications of articles in themselves owned, as of the different subsistences in the Trinity, the manner of the hypostatical union of the two natures in Christ's person, supposing the doctrines themselves believed, what reason can there be to assert it necessary to salvation to all persons to believe them under such a sense, if the article may be itself believed without it, any further than as things under those explications are manifested to such persons to be necessary to be believed? As Leo III. defined in the article of the Holy Ghost's procession from the Son; to such, who by reason of capacity and apprehension could attain to the knowledge of it, it was necessary to be believed, but not by others; as appears in our former discourse on that subject. Therefore from hence we see another account, why things may become necessary to be believed and owned as such, besides the matter

and the church's definition. These things may be said to be necessary to be believed by such who believe the church's proposition to be sufficient, though it be not; as, suppose any member of the Greek church should believe their church infallible, it is necessary for such a one to believe whatever is propounded by that church, though you suppose that judgment of his to be false in itself, because you say, the Greek church is not infallible. So that from hence it appears, that the necessity arising from the church's definition doth depend upon the conviction, that whatever the church defines is necessary to be believed. And where that is not received as an antecedent principle, the other cannot be supposed. By this opening the several grounds of necessity, your difficulty concerning the Athanasian Creed comes to nothing; for granting that the church of England doth own and approve the Creed going under the name of Athanasius, and supposing that her use of the Creed doth extend to the owning of those expressions which import the necessity of believing the things therein contained in order to salvation; yet this doth not reach to your purpose, unless you prove that the church of England doth own that necessity purely on the account of the church's definition of those things which are not fundamental, which it is very unreasonable to imagine; it being directly contrary to her sense in her nineteenth and twentieth articles. And thence that supposed necessity of the belief of the articles of the Athanasian Creed must, according to the sense of the church of England, be resolved either into the necessity of the matters, or into that necessity which supposeth clear convictions that the things therein contained are of divine revelation. From hence then it cannot at all follow, because the church of England owns the Creed of Athanasius, therefore all things defined by the church are, *eo nomine*, "necessary to salvation." Other particulars concerning that Creed, as to its antiquity and authority, we may have occasion afterwards more at large to discuss; it sufficeth now that nothing is 67 thence produced pertinent to the present controversy.

§. 15. His lordship, in the progress of this discourse, takes away that slight and poor evasion, "that the declaration of the church makes any thing fundamental *quoad nos*, because that no respect to us can vary the foundation. And that the

Conf. p. 25,
26. n. 8.

church's declaration can bind us only to peace and external obedience, where there is not express letter of scripture and sense agreed on: but it cannot make any thing fundamental to us, that is not so in its own nature. For," saith he, "if the church can so add, that it can by a declaration make a thing to be fundamental in the faith that was not, then it can take a thing away from the foundation, and make it, by declaring, not to be fundamental, which all men grant no power of the church can do. For the power of adding any thing contrary, and of detracting any thing necessary, are alike forbidden, and alike denied." Now you say, "that all this is satisfied by the foresaid distinction of material and formal object;" and you desire the reader "to carry along with him this distinction of *objectum materiale et formale, materia attestata, et autoritas attestantis*, and he will easily discover the fallacies of his lordship's discourse in this main point of controversy, and solve all his difficulties supported by them." No doubt, an excellent amulet to preserve from the infection of reason! But it is your great mishap, that where you commend it so much, it doth you so little service: for let your distinction of "formal and material object" be supposed as sound and good, as I have shewed it in your sense to be false and fallacious; yet it doth not reach that part of his lordship's discourse which you apply it to. For still his reason is conclusive, though the necessity only be supposed to arise from the church's authority, yet if it be in the power of the church to make any thing necessary which was not, why may it not be equally in her power to make something not necessary which was? For either the grounds of the necessity of things to salvation doth depend on the doctrine of the gospel as at first declared to the world, or it doth not. If it doth, then it is not in the church's power to make any thing necessary which was not made necessary by it; if it doth not, then the church may as well pretend to a power to make something not necessary which was, as to make something necessary which was not. So that your distinction of formal and material object signifies nothing at all here; only this is observable, that you make the church's definition to be the formal object of faith here, which you very solemnly contradict afterwards, (chap. 5. §. 4.) And can any thing be more evident

from this discourse of yours, than that you make the last resolution of faith, as to the necessity of things to be believed, into the church's definition, as its formal object? But this distinction with the grounds of it being removed in our former discourse, I shall ease myself and the reader of any further labour in examining what follows in this chapter, which depends wholly upon it; or else run out into "the church's infallibility, the infallible assent requisite to faith, the canon of scripture, and our certainty of it, or the authority of general councils;" all which shall be fully and particularly examined in their proper places. There being nothing said here, but what either hath been answered already, or will be more at large in a more convenient place.

§. 16. The only things remaining then in this chapter, which deserve a further discussion here, are the testimonies of Scotus and St. Austin, and the discourses which depend thereon. For our better clearing the testimony of Scotus, in which you charge his lordship with falsification, we must consider on what account and for what purposes that testimony is produced. His lordship had said before, "that fundamentals are a rock immovable, and can never be varied; therefore what is fundamental after the church hath defined it, was fundamental before the definition, and no decrees of councils, how general soever, can alter immovable verities: wherefore, if the church in a council define any thing, the thing defined is not fundamental because the church hath defined it, nor can be made so by the definition of the church, if it be not so in itself. For if the church hath this power, she might make a new article of faith, which the learned among themselves deny. For the articles of faith cannot increase in substance, but only in explication:" for which he appeals to Bellarmine. "Nor," saith he, "is this hard to be further proved out of your own school; for Scotus professeth it in this very particular of the Greek church. 'If there be,' saith he, 'a true real difference between the Greeks and Latins about the point of the procession of the Holy Ghost, then either they or we be *vere heretici*, truly and indeed heretics.' Which he speaks of the old Greeks long before any decision of the church in this controversy. For he instances in St. Basil and Gregory Nazianzen on one side; and St. Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose

on the other. ‘And who dares call any of these heretics?’ is his challenge.” That then which his lordship proves by this testimony is, that the nature of heresy doth not depend on the church’s definition, but on the nature of the thing; for according to Scotus, antecedently to the church’s definition, if there had been any real difference between the Greeks and Latins, one side of them had been heretics. To this you
 Lab. p. 22. answer, “that hence it follows not that Scotus thought they could be heretics, unless they denied or doubted of that which they had reason to believe was revealed by God: but it only follows, that if they knew this, (as those learned Greeks had sufficient reason to know it,) they might well be esteemed heretics, before any special declaration of the church; although it be more clear that he is an heretic, who denies to believe that doctrine, after he confesses that it is defined by the church.” From which answer of yours, several things are to our purpose observable. 1. That the formal reason of heresy is denying something supposed to be of divine revelation. 2. That none can reasonably be accused of heresy but such as have sufficient reason to believe that which they deny is revealed by God. 3. That none can be guilty of heresy for denying any thing declared by the church, unless they have sufficient reason to believe, that whatever is declared by the church is revealed by God. Which unavoidably follows from the former, and therefore the church’s definition cannot make any heretics, but such as have reason to believe that she cannot err in her definitions. From whence protestants will be in less danger of heresy than papists, till you give us more sufficient reasons to prove, that whatever the church declares is certainly revealed by God. And although you tell us, “men may be accounted heretics before they are condemned as such by general councils, if they oppose the doctrine clearly contained in scripture, or generally received by the church;” yet you tell us not what the measures are, whereby we ought to judge what things are thus clearly contained in scripture, or universally received; whether the church’s judgment must be taken, or every man’s own judgment: if the former, the ground of heresy lies still in the church’s definition, contrary to what Scotus affirms; if the latter, then no one can be an heretic, but he that opposeth that which he is or may be convinced is clearly

contained in scripture, or generally received by the church. If that which he is convinced, then no man is an heretic but he that goes against his present judgment, and so there will be few heretics in the world; if that which he may be convinced of, it must be understood either in his own judgment or yours: if in his own judgment, then a heretic is one who assents to things rashly, without using means to inform himself; if in yours, why may not he say, you may as well be convinced of the truth of that which he believes, as he be convinced of the truth of that which you believe? and so you may be a 69 heretic to him by the same reason that he is to you. But you say further, "that there are many things which in themselves are matters of faith; yet so obscure in relation, especially to unlearned and particular persons, that before the decree of the church we are not heretics, though we should either doubt of them or deny them; because, as yet, there appears no sufficient reason that can oblige us to believe them; although, after the definition of the church, we ought as well to believe them as any other." But it is impossible to understand how there can be such things which men might safely not believe, but upon the definition of the church they are bound to believe them necessarily, unless it be clear to them that the church hath power to make obscure things plain and unnecessary things to become necessary. For suppose one of these obscure things be this very power of the church in defining such things; while this remains so obscure, you tell me I may doubt or disbelieve it without heresy, and while I do so, I may certainly doubt or disbelieve all she declares. But by what means shall this thing become clear? must it be by the church's defining it? But that very power of defining is the thing in question, and therefore cannot be cleared by it. And if there be any thing then so obscure, that men may without sin doubt of it or disbelieve it, certainly the church's power in defining matters of faith is such; it being not capable, by any act of the church, of being made so clear as to oblige men to believe it.

But we must see how his lordship hath wronged the testimony of Scotus: "For first," say you, "he would persuade Lab. p. 22. his reader, that this author supposed a real difference between the ancient Greek and Latin fathers, about the procession of the Holy Ghost; whereas Scotus declares that there was no

real difference between them:" but doth his lordship say there was? doth he not expressly cite Scotus his testimony in an hypothetical manner, "If there be a true real difference," &c.? and it is evident from Scotus his words, that he supposeth, "if the difference had been real, that either the Greeks or Latins were truly hereticsⁱ." And therefore you are guilty of a much greater injury to his lordship than he was to Scotus. Again, you say, "he wrongs him, in saying, that after the church's definition, it becomes of the substance of faith." Now, say you, Scotus "hath not one word of the substance of faith, much less of fundamentals, which he imposes presently upon him, but says only thus: *Ex quo ecclesia declaravit hoc esse tenendum, &c. tenendum est, quod Spiritus Sanctus procedat ab utroque*—since the church hath so declared, so it must be held." Sure you never expect to be believed, but by a very implicit faith; for if one doth but offer to search an author, your juggling becomes notorious. Had you the confidence to say, that Scotus has not one word of the substance of faith? I pray who made that, " &c." for you in the sentence? If you did it yourself, you abuse your readers; if another did it for you, he abused you: for that very " &c." leaves out those words, *sicut de substantia fidei*, and try if you can render that otherwise than "as of the substance of faith:" to manifest your forgery, the whole place is cited in the margin^k. Is this your fidelity in quoting authors, even when you charge others with wronging them? It may be you will say yet, that Scotus doth not say it is to be held *sicut de substantia fidei*, though it be declared by the church to be so held. But what means then the *ex quo*, if men's faith must not be guided by the church's declaration? for if it be therefore to be believed necessarily because declared by the church, it must be believed as it is declared by the church: if therefore the church declares that it is to be held as of the substance of faith, it ought to be held
70 so by such as are bound to believe it on the church's declaration. Besides, you will not say but that it was to be believed before; now what alteration is caused by the declaration of

ⁱ Pateret utique tandem, ipsam contrarietatem non esse veraciter realem sicut est vocalis, alioquin vel ipsi Græci, vel nos Latini sumus vere hæretici. Scotus, dist. 11. l. 1. q. 1. sect. 2.

^k Quicquid sit de iis ex quo ec-

clesia catholica declaravit hoc esse tenendum, sicut de substantia fidei, sicut patet extra. De Sum. Trin. et Fid. Cath. c. firmiter tenendum est quod Spiritus Sanctus procedat ab utroque. Scotus, ib.

the church but this, that which was before to be believed simply and in itself, is now to be believed on the account of the church's declaration, as of the substance of faith? And thus it is impossible to relieve yourself with your old shift of material and formal object, which you betake yourself to. Thus still we see you are that most unhappy person, who never begin a charge against your adversary, but it falls back most inevitably upon yourself, who so readily make use of forgeries to prove others guilty of them.

§. 17. Upon Scotus his mentioning the church's declaration, Conf. p. 25. his lordship inquires what this declaration is, and how far it n. 7. extends. For which his lordship saith, "the master teacheth, and his scholars too, that every thing which belongs to the exposition or declaration of another *intus est*, is not another contrary thing, but is contained within the bowels and nature of that which is interpreted; from which if the declaration depart, it is faulty and erroneous, because instead of declaring, it gives another and contrary sense. Therefore, when the church declares any thing in council, either that which she declares was *intus* or *extra*, in the nature and verity of the thing, or out of it. If it were *extra*, without the nature of the thing declared, then the declaration of the thing is false, and so, far from being fundamental in the faith. If it were *intus*, within the nature and compass of the thing, though not open and apparent to every eye, then the declaration is true, but not otherwise fundamental than the thing is which is declared: for that which is *intus* cannot be larger or deeper than that in which it is; if it were, it could not be *intus*. Therefore nothing is simply fundamental because the church declares it, but because it is so in the nature of the thing which the church declares." In answer to this, you seem more ingenuous than usual; for you acknowledge "that his expression is learnedly solid and good:" but yet you would seem to return some answer to this argument, viz. although there be no Lab. p. 23. alteration in the nature of the articles by the church's declaration, "yet this doth not hinder them from becoming fundamental in that sense in which we dispute, i. e. such as cannot be denied or doubted of under pain of damnation, although they were not thus fundamental before the declaration, as not being so clearly proposed to us, as that we were bound to

believe them." "Neither doth this take away anything from their *intus*, or that being which they had of themselves; but only gives a certainty of their being so, and declares that they ought to be so *quoad nos*, as well as *quoad se*, and internally." "And it is no evasion, but a solid distinction, that the declaration of the church varies not the thing in itself, but *quoad nos*, in its respect to us." The substance of your answer lies in this, that though the church by her declaration doth not alter the nature of things, yet she may and doth our obligation to believe them; so that such things which men might have been saved without believing before, when once the church hath declared them, become necessary to be believed in order to salvation. And yet you would not have this called making new articles of faith! But I pray tell us what you mean by articles of faith; are not those properly articles of faith, as distinct from theological verities, which are necessary to be believed by all? If therefore those things which the church declares were before not necessary, and by the church's declaration do become necessary; then certainly those things which were not articles of faith do become articles of faith, and what then doth the church by her declaration but make new articles of faith? But though you assert the thing, you like not the terms, because they do not sound so pleasantly to the ears of Christians, who believe all obligation to faith doth depend upon immediate divine revelation. Setting aside therefore the terms, let us examine the thing, to see upon what grounds the church can make that necessary to us which was not in itself. In which case, the obligation not arising from the necessity of the matter in itself to be believed, it is no otherwise intelligible, but that it must result from the supposition of some immediate revelation. For nothing else can bind us to an internal assent, which you require as necessary to the church's definitions, but that, unless you can shew how any society of men considered as such have power to oblige all other men to believe what they declare, on pain of damnation for not doing it. I pray tell me, whether the apostles themselves had power to bind all Christians to the belief of something as necessary, which the Spirit of God did not immediately reveal to them to be so? If not, what power can any church have to do it, without a greater measure of

Lab. p. 24.

Conf. p. 25.
n. 8.

71

infallibility than the apostles ever pretended to? For they never attempted to define any thing as necessary, which was supposed unnecessary to be believed after the doctrine of the gospel was declared to the world. Before then you can persuade us to believe that your church can make any thing necessary which was not so, you must prove an absolute infallible divine assistance of God's Spirit with your church, in whatever she shall attempt to declare or define as matter of faith. As for instance, supposing it not necessary to salvation in itself to believe the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary, how is it possible to conceive, after your church's definition of it, it should become necessary, unless it be supposed that there was an immediate divine revelation in that definition? For nothing but divine authority commanding our assent, the ground of faith must be resolved into that. Now in this case, besides the immediate assent to the thing declared as a truth, there is a distinct proposition to be believed, which is, that what was not before necessary to be believed doth now become necessary to be believed by all; and shew us, either that there is divine revelation for this, or else excuse us that we cannot give an internal assent to it. For we have not learnt to give an assent of faith to a mere human proposition, or, in our Saviour's words, we call no man master upon earth, so as to promise to believe it in the power of any church whatsoever to make any thing necessary to be believed which was not so before. Hence it appears that your distinction of *in se, et quoad nos*, is as insignificant, as your pretence of the church's power to define matters of faith is presumptuous and arrogant, being the highest degree of lording it over the Christian world.

Why your church may not as well declare something not Lab. p. 24. to be of faith which before was of faith, as declare something to be of faith which before was not of faith, it is not easy to apprehend, if that thing might be supposed of faith before, without the church's explicit declaration. For in that case the church would not so apparently contradict herself; for that contradiction doth not lie in varying the respects of things, but in one declaration contradicting another. For otherwise, it is as great a contradiction to say, that something which was not necessary is become necessary, as that a thing

which was necessary is become not necessary. Therefore if there be a contradiction in one, there is in the other. If the contradiction lies in the declaration, you must say, that nothing could be supposed necessary to be believed but what was declared by the church to be so, and as declared by the church; which is a province as difficult as necessary to be undertaken, to rid your hands of this difficulty. For otherwise that answer of yours cannot reach the objection.

And now we come to that testimony of St. Augustine which 72 was produced to prove, that all points defined by the church are fundamental: which say, "It is a thing founded. An erring disputant is to be borne with in other questions not diligently digested, not yet made firm by full authority of the church; their error is to be borne with: but it ought not to proceed so far, that it should labour to shake the foundation itself of the church¹." Now to this place his lordship answers:

Conf. p. 26, "1. He speaks of a foundation of doctrine in scripture, not of
27. n. 9, 10. a church-definition: this appears," saith he, "for few lines before he tells us, 'There was a question moved to St. Cyprian, whether baptism was concluded to the eighth day, as well as circumcision? and no doubt was made then of the beginning of sin; and that out of this thing, about which no question was moved, that question that was made was answered.' And again, 'That St. Cyprian took that which he gave in answer from the foundation of the church, to confirm a stone that was shaking.' Now St. Cyprian, in all the answer that he gives, hath not one word of any definition of the church: therefore *ea res*, that thing by which he answered was a foundation of prime and settled scripture-doctrine, not any definition of the church: therefore, that which he took out of the foundation of the church to fasten the stone that shook, was not definition of the church, but the foundation of the church itself, the scripture upon which it is builded; as appeareth in the Milevitan council, where the rule by which Pelagius was condemned is the rule of scripture. Therefore St. Augustine goes on in the same sense, that the disputer is

¹ Fundata ista res est; ferendus est disputator errans in aliis questionibus, non diligenter digestis, nondum plena ecclesie autoritate firmatis, ibi ferendus est error: non

tantum progredi debet, ut etiam fundamentum ipsum ecclesie quater moliatur. August. serm. 14. de Verb. Apostol. tom. 10. p. 224. edit. Froben. 1529.

not to be borne any longer, that shall endeavour to shake the foundation itself upon which the whole church is grounded."

2. His lordship answers, "That granting that the church's definition was meant by St. Austin, yet it can never follow out of any or all these circumstances, that all points defined by the church are fundamental, because this foundation may be upon human authority; and that which follows only is, that things are not to be opposed which are made firm by full authority of the church: but it cannot be thence concluded they are therefore fundamental in the faith." This is the substance of his lordship's answer to this place; which we must consider what you reply to. First you say, "That it can- Lab. p. 25. not be doubted but that St. Austin's judgment was, that all our faith depended on the authority of the church, and therefore, that he that opposeth himself against this, endeavoureth to shake and destroy the very groundwork of all divine supernatural faith." This is a rare way of silencing adversaries, by telling them "that cannot be doubted," which others can see no reason at all to believe. As in this present case you tell me that cannot be doubted which I utterly deny, viz. that St. Austin's judgment was, that all our faith depended on the authority of the church; and if all the proof you have for it be only that well-known place, *Ergo vero evangelio non crederem, &c.*, you shall in time see what an ill choice you made of fixing your proof wholly upon that. But whoever is never so little conversant in St. Augustine's way of disputing, either against the Donatists, Pelagians, or Manichees, will find very little reason to doubt but that he made the foundation of faith to be God's word, and not the authority of the church. Indeed St. Austin, by way of prescription, often makes use of the church's authority, not where there hath been particular definitions, but universal consent, which he understands by the settlement, by full authority of the church; but this he insists not on as the ground of faith, but to shew the unreasonableness of men's opposing those things which the universal church was agreed in, as in this controversy here disputed by him concerning original sin in infants. Therefore, if I understand St. Austin in this place, he doth not at all speak concerning what is to be owned as a matter of faith simply in itself, but what the church's carriage towards 73

dissenters is. For after that citation of St. Cyprian at the conclusion of his sermon, he addresseth himself to the Pelagians as his dissenting brethren ; therefore, saith he, “ Let us, if possible, entreat this of our brethren, that they would no longer call us heretics ; because we might as well call them so if we would, but we do not^m. ” Why was St. Austin so scrupulous of calling the Pelagians heretics, if he made the definition of the church the foundation of faith, and looked on this controversy as defined by full authority of the church ? And after, speaks of the church’s bearing with them still, in order to their instruction ; though they were gone so far that they were scarce to be borne with ; and that the church exercised great patience towards them : therefore entreats them not to abuse this patience of the church, but to be reformed, since they did exhort as friends, and not contend as enemies. And so brings in the former words, which I thus paraphrase : It is a thing to be taken for granted, that in disputable points, and such as the church hath not always been agreed in, dissenters may be borne with ; but if direct and full opposition to the clear sense of the church should still be suffered, it would overthrow the very foundation of the church itself. And that this, and no other, is the plain and genuine meaning of St. Austin, is evident to any one who impartially considers antecedents and consequents, and the natural sense of the words themselves. Before, he spake how far the church had borne with them ; in the words themselves, he tells them, They must not expect the church would always bear with them, if they joined obstinacy with their errors, for that would ruin the church, if she continually suffered such as violently opposed things contrary to her clearest sense : and after tells them, “ This is not expedient : for hitherto, it may be, our patience is not to be found fault withal ; but we ought likewise to fear, lest we be blamed for our negligenceⁿ ; ” which words immediately follow the former. And is not this now a rare consequence : If the church must not always bear with such as oppose her, then

^m Impetremus ergo, si possumus, a fratribus nostris, ne nos insuper appellent hæreticos ; quod eos talia disputantes nos appellare possimus forsitan, si vellemus, nec tamen appellamus. August. serm. 14. de Verb.

Apostol. tom. 10. p. 224. edit. Froben. 1529.

ⁿ Non expedit : adhuc forte nostra non est reprehendenda patientia ; sed debemus timere, ne culpetur etiam negligentia.

whatsoever is defined by the church is fundamental? For it is most evident St. Austin speaks not of the church's power in defining matters of faith, but of the church's proceeding with obstinate heretics. And therefore the foundation spoken of is not the foundation of her belief, but of her communion; which the continual bearing with such obstinate persons as the Pelagians were would in time overthrow. The want of understanding this to be St. Augustine's meaning, hath made you spend many words to very little purpose, supposing all along that he speaks of the church's definition, and not her proceedings. Your reply to his lordship's second answer runs upon the same mistake, that he speaks of shaking the foundation of faith, whereas I have already shewed that he speaks of no such thing, and therefore that as well as the former answer fall to the ground together, being both built on the same mistaken foundation.

THE ABSURDITIES OF THE ROMANISTS' DOCTRINE OF
FUNDAMENTALS.

The church's authority must be divine, if whatever she defines be fundamental.—His lordship, and not the testimony of St. Augustine, shamefully abused three several ways.—Bellarmine not miscited ;—the Pelagian heresy condemned by the general council at Ephesus.—The pope's authority not implied in that of councils.—The gross absurdities of the distinction of the church teaching and representative, from the church taught and diffusive, in the question of fundamentals.—The church's authority and testimony in matters of faith, distinguished.—The testimonies of Vincentius Lirinensis explained, and shewed to be directly contrary to the Roman doctrine of fundamentals.—Stapleton and Bellarmine not reconciled by the vain endeavours used to that end.

§. I. **T**HE main doctrine of fundamentals being in the foregoing chapter settled and cleared, what remains of that subject will be capable of a quicker dispatch. The scope of this chapter is, to assail those difficulties which your doctrine of fundamentals is subject to. What little footing that hath in the place of St. Augustine, was the last thing discussed in the preceding chapter, and therefore must not be repeated here. His lordship urgeth this reason why St. Augustine, or any other reasonable man, could not believe that whatever is defined by the church is fundamental in the faith ; “ because full church authority (always the time that included the holy apostles being passed by, and not comprehended in it) is but church authority ; and church authority, when it is at full sea, is not simply divine ; therefore the sentence of it not fundamental in the faith.” To this you very wisely and learnedly answer ; “ I will not dispute with his lordship, whether it be or no ; because it is sufficient that such authority be infallible. For if it be infallible, it cannot

Conf. p. 27,
28. n. 11.

Lab. p. 28.
n. 1.

propose to us any thing as revealed by God but what is so revealed. So that to dispute against this authority is in effect to take away all authority from divine revelation, we having no other absolute certainty that this or that is revealed by God, but only the infallibility of the church proposing or attesting it unto us as revealed. Whence also it follows, that to doubt, dispute against, or deny any thing that is proposed by the infallible authority of the church, is to doubt, dispute against, and deny that which is fundamental in faith." His lordship denies the sentence of the church to be fundamental in the faith, because not divine; you dare not say it is divine, but contend that it is infallible, and from that infallibility infer, that whosoever denies the church's infallibility must deny something fundamental in the faith, because we can have no other absolute certainty that any thing is revealed by God, but only from the church's infallibility. So that your whole proof rests upon a very rotten and uncertain foundation, viz. that all certainty in matters of faith doth depend upon the church's infallibility; the falsehood and unreasonableness of which principle will at large be discovered in the succeeding controversy. And if this fails, then the denial of the church's infallibility doth not infer the denial of any thing fundamental in the faith, because men may be certain of all fundamentals without believing this infallibility. But yet, say you, "there is no necessity of asserting church authority to be divine, but only to be infallible, in order to the making what she defines to be fundamental." A rare and excellent piece of your old theological reason! as though any thing could be any further infallible than it is divine, or any further owned to be divine 75 than as it is infallible. I pray acquaint us with these rare arts of distinguishing between an authority divine and infallible, when the ground of that infallibility is the supposition of something properly and simply divine, which is the infallible assistance of God's Spirit. Is that assistance infallible too, but not divine? If it be divine as well as infallible, how comes that infallibility which flows from it not to be divine, when the cause of it was simply and absolutely so? Besides, what infallible authority is that which makes all its definitions fundamental, and yet is not in itself divine? From whence comes any thing to be fundamental? You tell us yourself, "as it is

known to be revealed by God." And can any thing be known to be revealed by God, but by an authority divine? especially on your principles, who make all certainty of knowing it to depend on that church's authority. If so, then, since the church's sentence makes things become matters of faith, some things may become matters of faith which have no divine authority for them. But this excellent and subtle distinction between divine and infallible authority we shall have occasion to examine afterwards. And therefore it is well you tell us, "notwithstanding that *infallible* and *divine* seem to many great divines to be terms convertible," which only acquaints us with thus much, that there are some men who understand things better than you do; and that to do so, is to be a great divine. And if Stapleton be one of these, we are not much offended at it; and so far we will take the testimonies which you produce out of him. That which next follows depends upon the proof of the infallibility of general councils, which when you have sufficiently cleared, we will believe that there can be no plain scripture or evident reason against any of their definitions; but till then we must believe there may be room for both.

§. 2. Your next section promiseth to shew us a shameful abuse of St. Augustine's testimony three several ways; but if it appears that not one of those ways will hold, then it only follows that so many ways you have abused his lordship, and not he

Conf. p. 28. n. 11. St. Augustine. His lordship having affirmed, "that plain scripture with evident sense, or a full demonstrative argument, must have room, where a wrangling and erring disputer may not be allowed it. And there is neither of these but may convince the definition of the council, if it be ill founded." Over against these words he cites that sentence of St. Austin; *Quæ quidem si tam manifesta monstratur, ut in dubium venire non possit, præponenda est omnibus illis rebus, quibus in catholica teneor*^a. *Ita si aliquid apertissimum in evangelio, &c.* The plain meaning of which words of St. Augustine is, that evident truth is to be preferred before all church-authority: now a threefold exception you take to his lordship's insisting

Lab. p. 30. on this testimony. 1. That St. Austin speaks not either "of plain scripture, or evident sense, or of a full demonstrative

^a Aug. contra Ep. Fundam. c. 4.

argument ; but addressing his speech to the Manicheans, he writes thus : *Apud vos autem ubi nihil horum est quod me invitet ac teneat, sola personat veritatis pollicitatio* (and then follow the words cited by the bishop) *quæ quidem si tam manifesta monstratur* ; where it is plain *quæ*, 'which,' is relative only to truth, and not to scripture, or any thing else." A wonderful abuse of St. Austin to make him parallel plain scripture, evident sense, or a full demonstrative argument with truth ! As though if evident truth were more prevalent with him than all those arguments which held him in the catholic church, plain scripture, evident sense, or demonstrations would not be so too. What truth can be evident, if it be not one of these three ? Do you think there is any other way of manifesting truth but by scripture, sense, or demonstration ? if you have found out other ways, oblige the world by communicating them ; but till then give us leave to think that it is all one to say, manifest truth, as plain scripture, evident sense, or clear demonstrations. But, say you, " he speaks only of that truth 76 which the Manichees bragged of and promised : " as though St. Austin would have been persuaded sooner as it came from them, than as it was truth in itself. I suppose St. Austin did not think their testimony sufficient, and therefore says, *Quæ quidem si tam manifesta monstratur*, &c. ; i. e. if they could make that which they said evident to be truth, he would quit the church, and adhere to them : and if this holds against the Manichees, will it not on the same reason hold every where else, viz. That manifest truth is not to be quitted on any authority whatsoever ? which is all his lordship asserts.

But you offer to prove that St. Austin by " truth " could not mean plain scripture ; but can you prove, that by " truth, " he did not mean truth wherever he found it, whether in scripture or elsewhere ? No, say you, " it cannot be meant, that by truth he should mean plain scripture in opposition to the definitions of the catholic church or general councils ; " for which you give this reason, " Because he supposes it impossible that the doctrine of the catholic church should be contrary to scripture ; for then men, according to St. Austin, should not believe infallibly either the one or the other. Not the scriptures, because they are received only upon the authority of the church ; nor the church, whose authority is infringed by

the plain scripture which is brought against her^b." For which you produce a large citation out of St. Austin to that purpose. But the answer to that is easy. For St. Austin, when he speaks of church authority, *qua infirmata jam nec evangelio credere potero*, he doth not in the least understand it of any definitions of the church; but of the universal tradition of the catholic church concerning the scriptures from the time of Christ and his apostles. And what plain scriptures those are supposable which should contradict such a tradition as this is, is not easy to understand. But the case is quite otherwise as to the church's definitions, for neither doth the authority of scripture at all rest upon them; and there may be very well supposed some plain scriptures contrary to the church's definitions, unless it be proved that the church is absolutely infallible; and the very proof of that depending on scripture, there must be an appeal made to plain scripture, whether the church's definitions may not be contradicted by scripture. When therefore you say, "this is an impossible supposition, that scripture should contradict the church's definitions, like that of the apostle; 'If an angel from heaven teach otherwise, let him be accursed,'" Gal. i., you must prove it as impossible for the church to deviate from scripture in any of her definitions, as for an angel to preach another gospel; which will be the braver attempt, because it seems so little befriended either by sense or reason. But, say you, "if the church may be an erring definer, I would gladly know why an erring disputer may not oppugn her." That which you would so gladly know, is not very difficult to be resolved by any one who understands the great difference between yielding an internal assent to the definitions of the church, and open opposing them; for it only follows from the possibility of the church's error in defining, that therefore we ought not to yield an absolute internal assent to all her determinations, but must examine them by the best measures of truth, in order to our full assent to them: but though the church may err, it doth not therefore follow, that it is lawful in all cases or for all persons to oppugn her definitions, especially if those definitions be only in order to the church's

^b C. ep. Fund. c. 5.

peace : but if they be such as require internal assent to them, then plain scripture, evidence of sense, or clear reason, may be sufficient cause to hinder the submitting to those definitions.

2. You tell us, "that his lordship hath abused St. Austin's testimony, because he speaks not of the definitions of the church in matters not fundamental, according to the matter they contain ; but the truth mentioned by him was fundamental in its matter." This is the substance of your second answer, which is very rational and prudent, being built on this substantial evidence. If St. Austin doth prefer manifest truth before things supposed fundamental in the matter, then no doubt St. Austin would not prefer manifest truth before things supposed not fundamental in the matter. And do not you think this enough to charge his lordship with shamefully abusing St. Austin ? But certainly if St. Austin preferred manifest truth before that which was greater, would he not do it before that which was incomparably less ? If he did it before all those things which kept him in the catholic church, such as the consent of nations, miracles, universal tradition, which he mentions before ; do you think he would have scrupled to have done it as to any particular definitions of the church ? These are therefore very excellent ways of vindicating the fathers' testimonies from having any thing of sense or reason in them.

§. 3. 3. You say, "He hath abused St. Austin, by putting in 'a wrangling disputer ;'" but I wonder where his lordship ever says that St. Austin mentions any such in the testimony cited. For his words are these : " But plain scripture with evident sense, or a full demonstrative argument, must have room, where a wrangling and erring disputer may not be allowed it. And there is neither of these" (over against these words he refers to St. Austin's testimony, and not the foregoing) " but may convince the definition of the council if it be ill-founded." When you therefore ask where the wrangling disputer is to be found, had it not been for the help of this cavil, we might have been to seek for him. But when you have been inquiring for him, at last you cry out, *Εἶρηκα*, " Oh ! I see now : " and you are the fittest man to find him out that I know. You say, " This is done to distinguish him from such a disputer as Lab. p. 32. proceeds solidly and demonstratively against the definitions of ^{11. 2.} the church when they are ill-founded ; which St. Austin is so

far from supposing that one may do, that he judges him a madman who disputes against any thing *quod universa ecclesia sentit*; and that they have hearts not only of stone but even of devils, who resist so great a manifestation of truth as is made by an œcumenical council, for of that he speaks." Your design is to prove that St. Austin doth not admit of any plea from scripture, sense, or reason, against any definitions of the church, for which you first produce that known place in which St. Austin accounts it madness to oppose the universal practices of the church, which will hold for your purpose, as far as rites and matters of faith have any analogy with each other; your latter testimony seems more to the purpose to all persons who do not examine it, and to none else. For although you seemed very careful to prevent any examination of the place by a false citation of Epist. 153 for 152, yet that hath not hindered my discovering your fraud, in asserting that St. Austin there speaks of an œcumenical council. For there is not so much as any thing like it in that Epistle. I acknowledge those words to be found there which you produce, *Nulla excusatio jam remansit: nimium dura, nimium diabolica sunt hominum corda, quæ adhuc tantæ manifestationi veritatis ob-sistunt*. But there needs no more to confute the most of your testimonies out of the fathers but to mention the occasion of their being produced, or the scope and design of the authors, as is most evident in this place. For this Epistle is written in the name of Silvanus, Valentinus, Aurelius, Innocentius, Maximinus, Optatus, Augustinus, Donatus, and other bishops, for satisfaction of the Donatists concerning the proceedings at the council of Carthage; for the Donatist bishops being therein baffled, had dispersed among their proselytes many false rumours of that council, and of their being circumvented by their catholic adversaries. To disprove which in this Epistle they first shew the fraud and falsity of the Donatists, 78 and then the integrity of their own proceedings by the choice of seven persons on either side, who should speak in behalf of the rest; and seven others as counsellors to them, and four notaries on either side, and four other persons who should keep the records to prevent all fraud. Besides all this, every one was to subscribe in his own words, that no man might complain that any thing was corrupted afterwards; which

things being dispersed while the persons themselves lived, there was no probability posterity should be deceived in the report of them. And then follow those words, "That no excuse hath now been left, but that their hearts are too hard and diabolical who could gainsay so clear a manifestation of truth. Is it not now a rare consequence from hence to infer, that it is not lawful upon any ground of scripture, sense, or reason, to dispute the definitions of general councils? whereas no such thing was ever mentioned as a general council, as appears by the very next words, where he says expressly it was only a council of African bishops; and elsewhere St. Austin tells the Donatists that they never durst appeal to a general council^d. And supposing the council never so œcumenical, he mentions nothing of the definitions of it, but the manner of its proceedings. So that the greatest truth hereby manifested, is your design to abuse his lordship and the reader together.

§. 4. Since you disown the distinction of things being fundamental in the matter and in the manner, I shall not trouble you with shewing you the weakness of it; but it were easy to manifest it as good as that you embrace of the material and formal object, which hath been sufficiently refuted in the precedent chapter, and I have no leisure for repetitions.

His lordship, endeavouring further to shew "what little foundation your doctrine of fundamentals hath in the forecited place of St. Augustine, urgeth this as an argument against it, That if all points defined by the church are therefore fundamental, because that is not to be shaken which is settled by full authority of the church; then it must follow that the point there spoken of, the remission of original sin in the baptism of infants, was defined when St. Augustine wrote this, by a full sentence of a general council." You deny the consequence; for, say you, "By authority of the church you mean (and not improperly) the church generally practising this doctrine, and defining it in a national council confirmed

Conf. p. 28.
sect. 10. n.
13.

Lab. p. 32.

n. 3.

^d Ecce putemus illos episcopos qui Romæ judicarunt non bonos judices fuisse, restabat adhuc plenum ecclesiæ universæ concilium, ubi etiam cum ipsis iudicibus causa posset agitari, ut si male judicasse

convicti essent, eorum sententiæ solverentur. Quod utrum fecerint, probent. Nos enim non factum esse facile probamus, ex eo quod totus orbis non iis communicat. Aug. Epist. 162.

by the pope. For this was *plena autoritas ecclesie*, though not *plenissima*; and to dispute against what was so practised and defined is, in St. Augustine's sense, to shake the foundation of the church, if not wholly to destroy it." It seems a little hard to understand what you mean by the church's being (not improperly) said to practise this doctrine. What, did the church practise the doctrine of the remission of original sin in infants? That a church should practise a matter of faith seems a little wonderful; but that it should do this, and that not improperly, increaseth the admiration. And we might think it a peculiar privilege belonging to your church, but that she is not so much used to practise things more capable of it. And can you think it enough to run us down by telling us that the pope with a national council hath defined it, unless you first prove that the pope and a national council have as much authority as a general council, which you pretend to be infallible; and if a national council with the pope be so too, I wonder to what end general councils are ever called, since the infallibility may be had at a much cheaper rate.

And by the same reason you make national councils infallible you may do provincial, if the pope concurs with them; 79 and by the same reason the college of cardinals may be infallible without any of them, because of the pope's concurrence with them. And so all this business of councils is but a formal piece of pageantry, since all the infallibility they have by this pretence is conferred by the pope in his concurrence; whose infallibility doth not depend on the presence of a council, and therefore he must be as infallible without a council as with it. So that at last this discourse comes to this issue, "He that shakes the pope's infallibility, shakes the foundation of the church:" and prove but this to have been St. Augustine's meaning, you will highly advance the interest of your cause.

§. 5. But whatever St. Austin's meaning be, you think yourself engaged to vindicate Bellarmine, who his lordship had said was deceived in saying, "that the Pelagian heresy was never condemned in an œcumenical council, but only in nationals." For, saith he, "while the Pelagians stood out impudently against national councils, some of them defended

Nestorius, which gave occasion to the first Ephesine council to excommunicate and depose them." To which you answer, " 1. It is not credible that Bellarmine, who writ so much of controversy, should not have read that council; nor can there be any suspicion of his concealing the matter, had he found it there," &c. and therefore you suspend your assent till the council's words be produced. 2. You tell us, " that it is not enough to prove that Pelagianism was condemned by a general council, because some who were Pelagians were; but," say you, " they were condemned not for Pelagianism, but Nestorianism, and therefore his lordship shoots wide of the mark." Your argument from Bellarmine will have no great force with them who see no reason to admire his fidelity; and they who inquire into the matter of fact in the present debate will have cause to suspect it. The short account whereof is this. After that Julianus, Florus, Orontius, Fabius and others, had been deposed and banished in the western churches for the Pelagian heresy, they fly to Constantinople, and shroud themselves under the protection of Nestorius the patriarch there, who secretly favoured them, and writ several letters to pope Celestine in behalf of them: who is supposed to have received his doctrine of the person of Christ from the Pelagians. But when he saw that no good was to be done by these letters, but by the daily spreading of Nestorianism the emperor was forced to summon a council at Ephesus, A. D. 431, the Pelagians accompany Nestorius thither, and join with Johannes Antiochenus and his party in opposition to the synod. But the council, understanding the proceedings which had been in the western churches against the Pelagians, ratifies and confirms their deposition, as appears by the synodal epistle of the council to pope Celestine, which is extant in the acts of the Ephesine council, and in the epistles of Cyril of Alexandria. And besides this, some of the canons of that council do equally concern Celestius and Nestorius: the first canon decreeing as well the favourers of Celestius as Nestorius to be excommunicate; and the fourth decreeing the deposition of all such who should embrace either of them. And therefore it is truly said by Jansenius, that the " Pelagian heresy, and the bishops who favoured it, were again condemned by an œcumenical coun-

Lab. p. 33.

ii. 3.

cile.” And thence Prosper in the epitaph of the Nestorian and Pelagian heresies^f, as he makes the Nestorian only an offspring of the Pelagian, so he makes both of them to fall and be condemned together. From whence it appears, that the Pelagians were not condemned in the Ephesine council merely for Nestorianism, but for their proper and peculiar sentiments; the former deposition of them being ratified by 80 the council, and a new canon made to that purpose for the future. And now let the reader judge whether his lordship or Bellarmine were herein the more mistaken.

Conf. p. 29.
sect. 10. n.
13.

§. 6. His lordship adds; “If this heresy were condemned only by a national council, then the full authority of the church here is no more than the full authority of this church of Afric. And I hope,” saith he, “that authority doth not make all points defined by it to be fundamental. You will say, Yes: if that council be confirmed by the pope. And then I must ever wonder why St. Augustine should ‘say the full authority of the church;’ and not bestow one word upon the pope, by whose authority only that council, as all other, have their fulness of authority in your judgment. An inexpiable omission, if this doctrine concerning the pope were true.” To this you answer, “That there was no need of any special mention of the pope, in speaking of the authority of the church; because his authority is always chiefly supposed, as being head of the whole church.” But by whom was this supposed? by you, or by St. Augustine? Can you prove that St. Austin, or any of the African fathers, did ever suppose any such thing, that the pope being head of the church, his authority is chiefly supposed in the acts of national councils? Where was the supposal of this authority in the dispute between the African fathers and the popes in the case of appeals? These are suppo-

Lab. p. 33.
n. 4.

^e Paulo post enim, lectis commentariis Romæ sub Cœlestino conscriptis, et hæresis ipsa Pelagiana, et authores, fautoresque ejus episcopi, ab œcumenica synodo iterum condemnati sunt. Jansenius de Hæres. Pelag. lib. i. p. 31.

^f Nestoriana lues successi Pelagianæ,

Quæ tamen est utero progenerata meo.

Me tamen una dedit victam sententia letho:

Illa volens iterum surgere, bis cecidit.

Mecum oritur, mecum moritur, mecunque sepulchrum

Intrat, et inferni carceris ima subit.

Prosper in Epitaph.

Nestor. et Pelag. Hæres.

sitions only to be obtruded upon ignorant novices, and such who look no further into antiquity than the implicit faith in their priests will give them leave. But what a stranger to all true antiquity this supposition of the pope's being head of the church is, we shall see abundantly when we come to the controversy of the pope's authority. Yet granting the supposition true (than which nothing can be more false) when the main strength lies not in the bare definition of a national council, which you grant of itself hath not full authority, but in the confirmation of that decision by the pope which makes that authority full which was not so before; was it not necessary to declare that the pope did concur to the giving it full authority, which without it could not be had? You do not say that all national councils have this full authority, not being confirmed by the pope; if therefore St. Augustine designed to shew that council to have full authority, the only way to prove it was to produce the pope's confirmation of it: which cannot therefore be otherwise looked on than as an inexpiable omission, if your doctrine be true; for he left out that which was only pertinent and material to the business. Your parallel between St. Austin and yourself (which is a very worthy one), in leaving out the mention of the pope's authority when it is understood, will then hold when you produce as great evidence that St. Austin was a Jesuit, as we have from your principles that you are. When you give as manifest proof that the pope's power is necessary to all definitions of councils, as there is in our laws for our kings assenting to acts of parliament, we may give you leave to parallel the omission of the express mention of one with the other. If the definitions of ancient councils did run in the name of pope and council, as our acts of parliament in the name of the king and both houses, we might easily say the authority of them came from the pope, as of these from the king; but there is nothing of that nature, but much of the contrary, as will appear in due time. When you therefore prove that the pope's power is implied, though it be not mentioned, you must prove it by some evident confession, that no authority of a council was full, unless the pope concurred with it: else you may as well say that the great Mogul hath no full authority to decree any thing without the pope's consent;

for I dare say there is no denial of it in any of his laws. And yet that is more than can be said here, for we have sufficient testimony from the records of that age, that the pope's authority was not supposed necessary to councils, from his being head of the church. What follows p. 34. n. 5, 6. depends
81 wholly upon the often mentioned distinction of the formal and material object of faith; the foundation of which having been already removed, whatever you offer to build upon it must of necessity fall to the ground: but I shall not follow your ill example in making tedious repetitions, and then cry out, you are forced to it.

§. 7. His lordship urgeth further from the Romanists' doctrine of fundamentals, "that the church's definition must be
Conf. p. 30. the church's foundation." His words are: "Besides, what-
n. 14. soever is fundamental in the faith, is fundamental to the church, which is one by the unity of faith: therefore, if every thing defined by the church be fundamental in the faith, then the church's definition is the church's foundation. And so, upon the matter, the church can lay her own foundation, and then the church must be in absolute and perfect being before so much as her foundation is laid." To which you answer;
Lab. p. 35. "But what absurdity is it to grant that the definition of the
n. 6. church teaching is the foundation of the church taught! or the definition of the church representative is the foundation of the church diffusive!" I pray inform us whether this church teaching and representing be the same church with the church taught and diffusive, or one different from it: if it be different, it must have a different foundation, and so must be fundamentally different; if it be the same, then the church must still lay its own foundation: for whatever becomes fundamental by the definition of the church is, I suppose, to be believed as necessary, i. e. fundamental, by the church teaching and representing, as well as taught and diffusive. Unless you think those who decree things to be believed by all in order to salvation do exclude themselves out of that number; and therefore though it be necessary for all others to believe it, it is still indifferent for them whether they will believe it or no. And therefore, were I of your church, I should heartily wish myself of the teaching and representative church; for then others might go to hell for not believing that which I might

choose whether I would or no. What an excellent invention this is, to make the pope and cardinals go to heaven, though they be atheists and infidels! For you tell us, we can have no assurance of any matter of faith, but from the infallibility of your church; this infallibility lies not in the taught and diffusive, but in the teaching and representative church; and this distinction here supposes, that what is made the foundation of the church taught, is not the foundation of the church teaching; i. e. what is necessary to salvation for one, is not so for the other: for that is your meaning of fundamentals. Now since all things become necessary to be believed by the church diffusive upon the authority of the church representative; it necessarily follows from this distinction, that nothing at all is necessary to be believed by the church representative. And is not this a rare church the mean while? But what is it which makes it a church? for though it represents and teaches, yet it is still called a church teaching and representative: if it be a church, something must make it so: what can make it so, if not the belief of what is necessary to salvation? And if it doth not believe all that is necessary to salvation, the church diffusive is much more truly a church than the representative: if it doth believe all that is necessary, then it must believe its own definitions, because those are supposed to be so; and consequently if those be fundamental, the church must still lay her own foundation. Or else these consequences follow: 1. That may be a true church which doth not believe all things necessary to salvation. 2. The church teaching is not bound to believe that which she teaches, but only the church taught. 3. That may be the same church which fundamentally differs from itself. 4. When the church defines a thing to be necessary, she doth not believe it to be necessary, but it becomes necessary after her definition. For, I pray, satisfy us as to this teaching church, when she defines some- 82
thing necessary to be believed in order to salvation which was not so defined before: doth she at that instant of her definition believe that to be necessary to salvation, or doth she not? if she doth, then it is necessary before her definition; and so the belief of it as necessary cannot depend upon it: but if she believes it only to be necessary because she defines it to be so, then she cannot believe it to be necessary till she hath defined it,

and consequently defines that to be necessary which she believes not to be necessary : and so defines contrary to her own judgment and belief. Let me therefore ask here some more questions, which I doubt you will think troublesome—If the church representative believed that not to be necessary to salvation which she defined to be necessary to salvation, was she infallible in that belief or no ? if she was not infallible, then at that time what assurance could men have of any matter of faith, since you tell us that must be had from the church's infallibility ? if she were infallible, then either in some things only, or in all she believed ? if only in some things, we ought to know what she is infallible in, and what not, lest we deceive ourselves in believing her infallible in that in which she is not infallible ? if in all things, then she is infallible in believing that not to be necessary to salvation, which yet she infallibly defines to be necessary to salvation : and so the church may infallibly define that to be true, which at the very moment of that definition she infallibly believes to be false. All these are the just and excellent consequences of this useful distinction of yours, which you look on as the only happy expedient whereby to free yourself from asserting, that the church, by making things fundamental by her definitions, doth thereby lay her own foundation.

§. 8. But as absurd and unreasonable as this is, you would seem to have something to say for it ; for you tell us, “that the pastors in all ages, preserving Christian people from being carried away with every wind of doctrine, are a foundation to them of constancy in doctrine.” Wonderfully subtle ! it is pity such excellent reasoning should want the ornaments of mood and figure : but thus it is in them. If the pastors of the church may be the means of preserving men from errors, then the definition of the church teaching is the foundation of the church taught ; which in short amounts to this : If the pastors of the church may be a foundation of men's constancy in doctrine, then they may be a foundation of men's inconstancy in doctrine. If this be not that you mean, I can make no sense of what you say ; and if it be, let any one else make sense of it that hath a gift for it. For by constancy in doctrine, is meant the adhering to that doctrine which God hath revealed as necessary in his word, but by the definitions of the teaching church, you understand a power to make more things

necessary to the salvation of all than Christ hath made ; so that, join these two together, the consequence is this : If the pastors of the church may and ought to keep men from believing any other doctrine, then they have power to impose another doctrine ; which things are so contradictory to each other, that none but one of your faculty would have ventured to have set one to prove the other. Therefore when you would prove any thing by this argument, your medium must be this, That the pastors of the church are a foundation of constancy in doctrine, by laying new foundations of doctrines by her definitions ; which is just as if you would prove that the best way to keep a house entire without any additions, is to build another house adjoining to it.

But, say you further, " Were not the apostles in their times (who were *ecclesia docens*), by their doctrine and decrees, a foundation to the church which was taught by them ? doth not St. Paul expressly affirm it, *superædificati supra fundamentum apostolorum, &c. ?*" To which I answer, 1. That the apostles were not therefore said to be the foundation on which they were built who believed on that doctrine, because by virtue of their power they could define or decree any thing to be necessary to salvation which was not so before, but because they were the instruments whereby the things which were necessary to salvation were conveyed to them. And because their authority, by virtue of their mission and the power accompanying it, was the means whereby they were brought to believe the doctrine of the gospel as in itself true. But there is a great deal of difference between teaching what is necessary to salvation, and making any thing necessary to salvation which was not before, merely because it is taught by them. 2. I grant that those things did become necessary to be believed which the apostles taught ; but it was either because the things were in themselves necessary in order to the end declared, viz. man's salvation, or else it was on the account of that evidence which the apostles gave that they were persons immediately employed by God to deliver those doctrines to them. But still here is nothing becoming necessary by virtue of a decree or definition, but by virtue of a testimony that what they delivered came from God. 3. When the apostles delivered these things, the doctrine of the gospel was not

made known to the world ; but they were chosen by God, and infallibly assisted for that end, that they might reveal it to the world : and this is certainly a very different case from that, when the doctrine of salvation is fully revealed and delivered down to us in unquestionable records. And therefore, if you will prove any thing to your purpose, you must prove as great and as divine assistance of the Spirit in the church representative of all ages, as was in the apostles in the first age of the Christian church. 4. When you say from hence, That the apostles, as the teaching church, laid the foundation of the church taught ; that can only be understood of those Christians who became a church by the apostles' preaching the doctrine of the gospel to them : but this is quite a different thing from laying the foundation of a church already in being, as your church taught and diffusive is supposed to be. Can you tell us where the apostles are said to lay further foundations for churches already constituted, that they made or declared more things necessary to salvation than were so antecedently to their being a church ? But this is your case ; you pretend a power in your church representative to make more things necessary to salvation than were before to a church already in being, and therefore supposed to believe all things necessary to salvation. You see therefore what a vast disparity there is in the case, and how far the apostles' declaring the doctrine of Christ, and thereby founding churches, is from being an argument that the representative church may lay the foundation of the church diffusive, which being a church already, must have its foundation laid before all new decrees and definitions of the teaching church. So that still it unavoidably follows upon your principles, that the church must lay her own foundation, and then the church must have been in absolute and perfect being before so much as her foundation is laid. Your weak endeavour of retorting this upon the bishop, because of the apostles' teaching the church of their age, only shews that you have a good will to say something in behalf of so bad a cause, but that you want ability to do it : as appears by the answers already given as to the difference of the apostles' case and yours. The subsequent section, which is spent in a weak defence of A. C.'s words, hath the less cause to be particularly examined ; and besides,

its whole strength lies on things sufficiently discussed already, viz. the sufficient proposition of matters of faith, and the material and formal object of it.

§. 9. That which follows pretending to something new, and which looks like argumentation, must be more distinctly considered. A. C.'s words are, "That if one may deny, or 84 doubtfully dispute against any one determination of the church, then he may against another, and another, and so against all: since all are made firm to us by one and the same divine revelation, sufficiently applied by one and the same full authority of the church; which being weakened in any one, cannot be firm in any other." To which his lordship answers, "1. That Conf. p. 31. this is understood only of catholic maxims which are properly n. 15. fundamental, by Vincentius Lirinensis, from whom this argument is derived. 2. He denies that all determinations of the Conf. p. 32. church are made firm to us by one and the same divine n. 16. revelation. 3. He denies that all determinations of the church are sufficiently applied by one and the same full authority of the church." Of each of these he gives his reasons; the examination and defence of which is all that remains of this chapter. To the first you answer three things (for I must digest your answers for you): 1. That there is no evidence Lab. p. 37. that A. C. borrowed this from Vincentius, and you give an n. 7. excellent reason for it, because good wits may both hit on the same thing, or at least come near it; which, had it been said of yourself, had been more unquestionable: but to let that pass, 2. you tell us, That the doctrine is true, whosoever said it. For which you give this reason: "For the same reason which permits not our questioning or denying the prime maxims of faith, permits not our questioning or denying any other doctrine declared by the church; because it is not the greatness or smallness of the matter that moves us to give firm assent in points of faith, but the authority of God speaking by the church." To which I answer, that all this runs upon a supposition false in itself, which is, That all our assurance in matters of faith depends upon the infallible authority of the present church; which being granted, I would not deny but, supposing that infallibility absolute, on the same reason I believe one thing on the church's authority, I must believe all. For the case were the same then as to the

church which we say it is as to the scriptures; he that believes any thing on the account of its being contained in that book as the word of God, must believe every thing he is convinced to be therein contained, whether the matter be in itself small or great; because the ground of his belief is the authority of God revealing those things to us. And if therefore you could prove such a divine authority constantly resident in the church for determining all matters of faith, I grant your consequence would hold: but that is too great a boon to be had for begging, and that is all the way you use for it here. If you offer to prove it afterwards, our answers shall be ready to attend you. But at present let it suffice to tell you, that we believe no article of faith at all upon the church's infallible authority; and therefore, though we deny what the church proposeth, it follows not that we are any more liable to question the truth of any article any further than the church's authority reaches in it; i. e. we deny that any thing becomes an article merely upon her account. But now, if you remove the argument from the present church's infallible authority to the universal church's testimony, we then tell you, that he who questions a clear, full, universal tradition of the whole church from Christ's time to this, will by the same reason doubt of all matters of faith which are conveyed by this testimony to us. But then we must further consider, that we are bound by virtue of the church's testimony to believe nothing any further than it appears to have been the constant, full, universal testimony of the church, from the time of Christ and his apostles. Whatever therefore you can make appear to have been received as a necessary article of faith in this manner, we embrace it, but nothing else; and on the other side we say, that whoever doubts or denies this testimony will doubt of all matters of faith, because the ground and rule of faith, the scriptures, is conveyed to us only through this universal tradition.

85 §. 10. 3. You answer, "that his lordship mistakes Vincen-
 Lab. p. 37-
 n. 8. tius Livinensis his meaning, and falsifies his testimony thrice at least." Whereof the first is in rendering *de catholico dogmate*, "of catholic maxims:" and here a double most dreadful charge is drawn up against his lordship; the first from the accusation of Priscian, and the second of no less authors than

Rider and the English lexicons : the first is for translating the singular number by the plural ; whereas our most reverend Orbilius himself in the following page tells us, that this *catholicum dogma* Vincentius speaks of, “ contains the whole system of the catholic faith, and in that system some are fundamentals, some superstructures,” (both plurals,) yet all these contained in this one singular dogma : but it was his lordship’s great mishap not to have his education in the schools of the Jesuits, else he might have escaped the lash for this most unpardonable oversight of rendering *verbum multitudinis* by our author’s own confession (who makes it larger too than his lordship doth ; for his lordship saith it contains only fundamentals, but our author, superstructures too) by the plural number. But the second fault is worse than this ; for, saith our author very gravely and discreetly with his rod in his hand, “ But in what author learnt he, that *dogma* signifies only maxims, were it in the plural number ? *Dogma*, according to our English lexicons, Rider and others, signifies a decree, or common received opinion, whether in prime, or less principal matters.” What a learned dispute are we now fallen into ! But I see you were resolved to put all but boys and pædagogues out of all likelihood of confuting you ; for those are only the persons among us who deal in Rider and English lexicons. I see now there is some hopes that the orders of the inquisition may have better Latin than that against Mr. White had ; since our old Jesuits begin to be so well versed in such masters of the Latin tongue. How low is infallibility fallen, that we must appeal for knowing what *dogma fidei* is to the definition, not of popes and councils, but of Rider and English lexicons ! But it is ill jesting with our Orbilius in so severe a humour, that his grace of Canterbury cannot scape his lash for not consulting Rider’s dictionary for the signification of *dogma*. But our author passeth, and we must attend him, out of his grammatical into the theological school ; and there tells us, “ that the ecclesiastical signification of *dogma* extends itself to all things established in the church as matters of faith, whether fundamentals or superstructures ;” and for this Scotus is cited, (somewhat a better author than Rider,) who calls transubstantiation *dogma fidei*. I begin to believe now that *dogma* is a very large word, and *fides* much

Lab. p. 38.
m. 8.

larger, that can hold so prodigious a thing as transubstantiation within them. But, notwithstanding what Rider and Scotus say, none so able to explain Vincentius his meaning as Vincentius himself. To him therefore at last our author appeals, and tells us, "that he declares in other places, that he means by *dogma*, such things as in general belong to Christian faith without distinction." But doth Vincentius any where by *dogma* mean any such things which were not judged necessary by the ancient and primitive church, but become necessary to be believed upon the church's definitions? Nothing can possibly be imagined more directly contrary to the design of his whole book than that is, when he appeals still for matters to be believed to antiquity, universality, and consent; and to be sure, all these are required to whatever he means by a *dogma fidei*: if you therefore can produce any testimonies out of his book, which can be supposed in the least to favour the power of the church in her new definitions of matters of faith, you may justly challenge to yourself the name of an excellent invention, who can find that in his book which all other persons find the directly contrary to. Your first citation is out of chap. 33, (not 23. as you quote it, or some one else for you,) where he is explaining what St. Paul means by *prophanas*

86 *vocum novitates*. *Vocum*, saith he, *i. e. dogmatum, rerum, sententiarum novitates; quæ sunt vetustati, quæ antiquitati contrariæ*. I shall not scruple to grant you that Vincentius by *dogmata* here doth mean such things as the definitions of your church are, for he speaks of those things which all Christians who have a care of their salvation are to avoid; of such things as are contrary to all antiquity; and such kind of *dogmata* I freely grant the definitions of your church to be. Your second citation is as happy as the first, cap. 28. *Crescat* (saith he, speaking of the church) *sed in suo duntaxat genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu, eademque sententia*. An excellent place, no doubt, to prove it in the church's power to define new articles of faith; because the church must always remain in the same belief, sense and opinion. When his words but little foregoing are, *Profectus sit ille fidei non permutatio*, which without the help of English lexicons you would willingly render by leaving out that troublesome particle *non*, that the best progress in faith is by adding new articles, though it be

as contrary to reason as it is to the sense of Vincentius Lirinensis. If Vincentius saith that the Pelagians erred in *dogmate fidei*, (which words neither appear cap. 24. nor 34,) he gives this reason for it, because they contradict the universal sense of antiquity and the catholic church, cap. 34. So that still Vincentius, wherever he speaks of this *dogma fidei*, speaks in direct opposition to your sense of it, for new definitions of the church in matters of faith. There being scarce any book extant which doth more designedly overthrow this opinion of yours than that of Vincentius doth.

§. 11. To shew therefore how much you have wronged his lordship, and what little advantage comes to your cause by your insisting on Vincentius his testimony, I shall give a brief account both of his design and book. The design of it is, to shew what ways one should use to prevent being deceived by such who pretend to discover new matters of faith; and those he assigns to be these two, settling one's faith on the authority of scripture, and the tradition of the catholic church[§]. But since men would inquire —The canon of scripture being perfect, and abundantly sufficient for all things, what need can there be of ecclesiastical tradition? he answers, For finding out the true sense of scripture, which is diversely interpreted by Novatianus, Photinus, Sabellius, Donatus, Arius, Eunomius, Macedonius, Apollinaris, &c.^h In the following chapter he tells us what he means by this ecclesiastical tradition, *Quod ubique, quod semper, ab omnibus creditum est*ⁱ; that which hath antiquity, universality and consent joining in the belief of it. And can any new definitions of the church pretend to all or any of these? He after inquires^k, What is to be done in case a particular church separates itself from the communion of the catholic? He answers, We ought to prefer the health of the whole body before any pestiferous or corrupted member. But in case any novel contagion should spread over, not a part only, but endanger the whole church? Then, saith he, a man must adhere to antiquity, which cannot be deceived with a pretence of novelty. But if in antiquity, we find out the error of two or three particular persons, or city, or province; what is then to be done? Then, saith he, the decrees of general councils are to

§ Commonit. 1. c. 1. h Ibid. cap. 2. i Ibid. cap. 3. k Ibid. cap. 4.

be preferred : But in case there be none ? Then, he adds, the general consent of the most approved writers of the church is to be inquired after ; and what they all with one consent, openly, frequently, constantly held, writ and taught, that let every man look on himself as bound to believe without hesitation. Now then, prove but any one of the new articles of faith in the Tridentine confession by these rules of Vincentius, and it will appear that you have produced his testimony to some purpose : else, nothing will be more strong and forcible against all your pretences than this discourse of Vincentius 87 is ; which he enlarges by the examples of the Donatists, Arians, and others, in the following chapters ; in which still his scope is to assert antiquity, and condemn all novelties in matters of faith under any pretext whatsoever¹. For this, ch. 12, 14, he cites a multitude of texts of scripture ; forbidding our following any other doctrine but what was delivered by Christ and his apostles ; and anathematizing all such as should preach any other gospel : and concludes that with this remarkable speech : “ It never was, never is, never will be lawful to propose any thing” (as matter of faith) “ to Christian catholics, besides what they have received. And it was, is, and will be becoming Christians to anathematize all such who declare any thing but what they have received^m.” Do you think this man was not of your mind in the doctrine of fundamentals ? Could he do otherwise than believe it in the church’s power to define things necessary to salvation, who would have all those anathematized, who pretend to declare any thing as matter of faith, but what they received as such from their ancestors ? And after he hath at large exemplified this in the Photinian, Nestorian, Apollinarian heresies, and shewed how little the authority of private doctors, how excellent soever, is to be relied on in matters of faith ; he concludes again with this : “ Whatsoever the catholic church held universally, that and

¹ Nihil novandum nisi quod traditum est. Nosque religionem, non qua vellemus ducere, sed qua illa duceret, sequi oportere. Idque esse proprium Christianæ modestiæ et gravitatis, non sua posteris tradere, sed a majoribus accepta servare. cap. 9.

^m Adnunciare ergo aliquid Chris-

tianis catholicis præter id quod acceperunt, nunquam licuit, nunquam licet, nunquam licebit : et anathematizare eos qui adnunciant aliquid, præterquam quod semel acceptum est, nunquam non oportuit, nusquam non oportet, nusquam non oportebit. Vincent. Lirin. cap. 14.

that alone is to be held by particular persons." And after "admires at the madness, blindness, perverseness of those, who are not contented with the once delivered and ancient rule of faith, but are still seeking new things, and always are itching to add, alter, take away something of religion (or matter of faith); as though that were not a heavenly doctrine which may suffice to be once revealed, but an earthly institution, which cannot be perfect but by continual correction and amendmentⁿ." Is not this man now a fit person to explain the sense of your church's new definitions and declarations in matters of faith? And have not you hit very right on this sense of *dogma*, when here he understands by it that doctrine of faith which is not capable of any addition or alteration? And thus we understand sufficiently what he means by the present controverted place; that "if men reject any part of the catholic doctrine, they may as well refuse another and another, till at last they reject all^o." By the catholic doctrine, or *catholicum dogma*, there he means the same with the *cæleste dogma* before, and by both of them understands that doctrine of faith which was once revealed by God, and which is capable of no addition at all, having antiquity, universality and consent going along with it: and when you can prove that this *catholicum dogma* doth extend beyond those things which his lordship calls catholic maxims, or properly fundamental truths, you will have done something to the purpose, which as yet you have failed in. And thus we say Vincentius his rule is good, though we do not say that he was infallible in the application of it, but that he might mention some such things to have had antiquity, universality and consent, which had not so, such as the business of not rebaptizing heretics, and the observation of Easter, which you instance in. And withal

ⁿ Quicquid universaliter antiquitus eccles. catholicam tenuisse cognoverit, id solum sibi tenendum, credendumque decernit. cap. 25. Mirari satis nequeo tantam quorundam hominum vesaniam, tantam excæcatæ mentis impietatem, tantam postremo errandi libidinem, ut contenti non sint tradita semel et accepta antiquitus credendi regula; sed nova et nova in diem quærun, semperque aliquid gestiunt religioni addere,

mutare, detrahere. Quasi non cæleste dogma sit, quod semel revelatum esse sufficiat; sed terrena institutio, quæ aliter perfici nisi assidua emendatione, immo potius reprehensione, non possit. cap. 26.

^o Abdicata enim qualibet parte catholici dogmatis, alia quoque item atque alia, &c. quid aliud ad extremum sequetur, nisi ut totum pariter repudietur? cap. 31.

we add, though nothing is to be admitted for matter of faith which wants those three marks, yet some things may have all 88 three of them, and yet be no matters of faith at all; and therefore not at all pertinent to this question; such as those things are which you insist on as "*deposita dogmata*": which doubtless is a rare way of probation, viz. to shew that by *dogmata deposita*, Vincentius means some articles of faith which are not fundamental in the matter of them; and for that make choice of such instances which are no matters of faith at all, but either ritual traditions, or matters of order, such as the form and matter of sacraments, the hierarchy of the church, pædobaptism, not rebaptizing heretics, the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary. For that of the canon of scripture, it will be elsewhere considered, as likewise those other church traditions.

Lab. p. 39.
n. 8.

§. 12. How the church should still keep *hoc idem quod antea*, as you confess she ought, and yet make some things necessary to be believed by all which before her declaration were not so, is somewhat hard to conceive; and yet both these you assert together. Is that which is necessary to be believed by all, the same with that which was not necessary to be so believed? if the same measure of faith will not serve after, which would have done before, is there not an alteration made? "Yes," you grant, "as to our believing, but not as to the thing, for that is the same it was." But do you in the mean time consider what kind of thing that is which you speak of, which is a thing propounded to be believed and considered in no other respect but as it is revealed by God in order to our believing it? Now when the same thing which was required only to be believed implicitly, i. e. not at all necessarily, is now propounded to be believed expressly and necessarily, the fundamental nature of it as an object of faith is altered. For that which you call implicit faith, doth really imply as to all those things to be believed implicitly, that there is an indifferency whether they be believed or no; nothing being necessary to be believed but what is propounded to be expressly believed: which being so, can it be imagined there should be a greater alteration in a matter of faith, than from its being indifferent whether it were believed or no, to become necessary to be expressly believed by all in order to salvation? And where there is such an

alteration as this in the thing to be believed, who can without the help of a very commodious implicit faith believe that still this is *hoc idem quod antea*, the very same as a matter of faith which it was before? Though the church were careful to preserve every iota and tittle of sacred doctrines, yet I hope it follows not, that every iota and tittle is of as much consequence and as necessary to be believed as the main substance of Christian doctrine. Although when any doctrine was violently opposed in the church, she might declare her owning it by some overt act; yet thence it doth not follow, that the internal assent to every thing so declared is as necessary as to that proposition, that Jesus is the Son of God, the belief of which the scripture tells us was the main design of the writing of scripture. That general councils, rightly proceeding, may be great helps to the faith of Christians, I know none that deny; but that by virtue of their definitions any thing becomes necessary to be believed which was not so before, remains yet to be proved.

§. 13. You much wonder his lordship should father that saying on Vincentius, that “if new doctrines be added to the old, the church which is *sacrarium veritatis*, the repository of verity, may be changed in *lupanar errorum*,” which his lordship saith he is loath to english: for you tell us, “that Vincentius is so far from entertaining the least thought of it, that he presently adds, *Deus avertat*, God forbid it should be so.” A stout inference! Just as if one should say, the church of Rome may be in time overspread with the Mahometan religion, but God forbid it should be so; were he not an excellent disputer, who should hence infer it impossible ever to be so? What you add out of Vincentius only proves that he did not believe it was so in his time, but doth not in the least prove that he believed it impossible that ever it should be so afterwards; but notwithstanding all that you say, it is evident enough that Vincentius believed it a very supposable case, by that question he puts elsewhere. “What if any new contagion doth not only endeavour to defile a part only, but the whole church? in which,” he saith, “we are to adhere to antiquity^p.” If you answer, he speaks only of an endeavour:

^p Quid si novella aliqua contagio non jam portiunculam tantum, sed totam pariter ecclesiam commaculare conetur? tunc item providebit, ut antiquitati inhæreat. cap. 4.

it is soon replied, that he speaks of such an endeavour as puts men to dispute a question what they are to do in such a case, and he resolves at that time, they are not to adhere to the judgment of the present church, but to that of antiquity, which is all we desire in that case, viz. That the present church may so far add to matters of faith, that we can in no reason be obliged to rely only upon her judgment. Wherein we are to consider, the question is not of that you call the diffusive, but the representative church, all which may be overspread, and yet but a part of the other: but yet if that church, whose judgment you say only is to be relied on, may be so infected, it is all one as to those who are to be guided by her judgment, whether the other be or no. For here *eadem est ratio non entis et non apparentis*, because it is not the reality, but the manifestation, which is the ground of men's relying on the church's judgment. So that if as to all outward appearance and all judicial acts of the church, she may recede from the ancient faith, and add *novitia veteribus*, (whether all particular persons in it do so or no,) all ground of relying on the judgment of that church is thereby taken away. Whether it be the church herself, or heretics in the church which make these additions, is very little material, if these heretics who add these new articles of faith may carry themselves so cunningly as to get to themselves the reputation of the catholic church: and so that which ought to have been *sacrarium veritatis*, may become *impiorum et turpium errorum lupanar*: which your church is concerned not to have englished; but by the help of Rider, and other good authors of yours, it is no hard matter to come to understand it. And thus we see how much you have abused his lordship, in charging him with a threefold falsification of Vincentius Lirinensis.

Conf. p. 32.
sect. 10. n.
16.

§. 14. The second thing which his lordship answers is, "That all determinations of the church are not made firm to us by one and the same divine revelation; because some are made by scripture, and others, as Stapleton saith, without any evident or probable testimony of holy writ: though therein Bellarmine falls quite off, and confesses in express terms, that nothing can be certain by certainty of faith, unless it be contained immediately in the word of God, or be deduced thence by evident consequence." Your only design here is to vindicate your two great champions from contradicting each other, which though

it be of little consequence to the main assertion of his lordship, which you knew well enough, and therefore carefully avoid the main charge of your enemy, to part two of your quarrelling friends; yet since you intend this for a trial of your skill, we must see how well you play your prize. Stapleton, you say, “means that we must submit to the determinations of the church and the traditions she approves, though they be not expressly contained in scripture.” Excellently well guessed at Stapleton’s meaning! when the very words you cite out of him are, “We ought not to deny our assent in matters of faith, though we have them only by tradition, or the decisions of the church against heretics, and not confirmed with evident or probable testimony of scripture.” What a rare interpreter are you grown since your acquaintance with Rider, and other English lexicons! who make not denying assent in matters of faith, to be the same with submitting to the church’s deter- 90 minations, when you know well enough we plead for submission to the church’s determinations where there may be a liberty as to internal assent: and it is as good to make “no evident or probable testimony of scripture” the same with “not being expressly contained in scripture;” as though nothing which was not expressly contained in scripture could have any probable testimony from thence. And from this we may guess what an easy matter it is for you to accommodate all persons who differ; if one says *yes*, and the other *no*, you will tell them they do not differ, but that one of them by *yes* means *no*, and the other by *no* means *yes*. Just so here you reconcile Stapleton and Bellarmine; for you say, Stapleton by “no probable testimony” means some kind of probable testimony, viz. such as, though not express, may be yet deduced from scripture; and Bellarmine, when he speaks of God’s written word as the ground of certainty, means that which is neither God’s word nor yet written, viz. tradition. I never met with one who had a better faculty of reconciling than you seem to have by this attempt. But his lordship had prevented this subterfuge as to Bellarmine and Stapleton, “as if Stapleton spake of the word of God written, and Bellarmine of the word of God unwritten (as he calls tradition). For Bellarmine,” saith he, “there treats of the knowledge which a man hath of the certainty of his own salvation. And I hope

Lab. p. 42.

n. 9.

Conf. p. 32.

sect. 10. n. 16.

Lab. p. 43.
n. 8.

A. C. will not tell us there is any tradition extant unwritten, by which particular men may have assurance of their several salvations. Therefore Bellarmine's whole disputation there is quite beside the matter: or else he must speak of the written word, and so lie cross to Stapleton, as is mentioned." You tell us this reason is very strange: but I dare say yours exceeds it in strangeness, which is, "because Bellarmine's design was to shew there was no such unwritten tradition to be found." But doth Bellarmine dispute against any body or nobody? If he disputes against any body, upon your principles, those whom he disputes against must be such who assert that men may have certainty of faith concerning their salvation from tradition; and you would do well to tell us who those were, that pretended that there was a tradition or unwritten word delivered down from the apostles that they should be saved. And though Bellarmine was not to affirm this, yet those he disputed against, upon your principles, must be supposed to do it. But certainly you thought none of your readers did ever intend to look into Bellarmine for the place in controversy; for if they did, nothing could be more plain than that Bellarmine's reason against Catharinus and others proceeds wholly and only upon the written word. For, 1. When he saith that "nothing can be certain with the certainty of faith, but what is either immediately contained in the word of God, or may be deduced thence by evident consequence, because faith can rest on nothing but the authority of God's word;" he adds, "That of this principle neither the catholics nor the heretics doubt⁴." But I pray, do those whom Bellarmine there calls heretics acknowledge the unwritten word as a foundation for certainty of faith in the case disputed? Therefore it is plain he speaks exclusively of a written word. 2. When he mentions the assumption, he evidently explains himself of the written word; for, saith he, "there is no such proposition contained in the word of God, that such and such a particular person is justified; for there are none mentioned therein save Mary Magdalen and a certain paralytic, of whom it is said, their sins are forgiven them." *Cæteri homines in sacris literis ne nominantur quidem.* And will Rider and your other good friends the English lexicons

⁴ Bellarm. de Justific. l. 3. c. 8. sect. 2.

help you to interpret *sacra literæ* by "unwritten traditions?" Could any one that had either any common sense left in him, or else had not a design most grossly to impose on his readers, offer to persuade men that Bellarmine could here understand 91 the word of God in a sense common to scripture and tradition? If you can prove that Bellarmine saith otherwise elsewhere, you are so far from reconciling Bellarmine and Stapleton, that you will not easily reconcile Bellarmine to himself.

The remainder of this chapter either refers to something to Lab. p. 43, be handled afterwards, as the infallibility of the church and 44 councils, or else barely repeats what hath been discussed already concerning your sense of fundamentals, and therefore I dare not presume so far on the reader's patience as to give him the same things over and over.

CHAP. IV.

THE PROTESTANT DOCTRINE OF FUNDAMENTALS VINDICATED.

The unreasonableness of demanding a catalogue of fundamentals.—The Creed contains the fundamentals of Christian communion.—The belief of scripture supposed by it.—The dispute concerning the sense of Christ's descent into hell, and Mr. Rogers his book confessed by T. C. impertinent : with others of the same nature.—T. C.'s fraud in citing his lordship's words.—Of papists' and protestants' unity.—The moderation of the church of England compared with that of Rome.—Her grounds of faith justified.—Infant-baptism how far proved out of scripture alone.

§. 1. **T**HIS chapter begins with a very pertinent question, as you call it: we might the easier believe it to be so, because it is none of your own proposing; but yet your very calling it "a pertinent question" renders it liable to suspicion, and upon examination it will be found both unreasonable and impertinent. The question was, What points the bishop would account fundamental? and that you may shew how necessary this question was, you add, "For if he will have some fundamental which we are bound to believe under pain of damnation, and others not fundamental, which we may without sin question or deny, it behoves us much to know what they are. I have ever desired," say you, "a satisfactory answer from protestants to this question, but could never yet have it in the sense demanded." An unhappy man you are, who, it seems, have in your time propounded more foolish questions than a great many wise men were ever able to answer. But is it not every jot as reasonable, that since your church pretends to the power of making things necessary to the salvation of all which were not so before, we should have from you an exact catalogue of all your church's definitions? If for that you refer us to the confession of faith at the end of the council of Trent,

so may not we with far greater reason send you back to the Apostolical Creed? there being no objection which will hold against this being a catalogue of our fundamentals, but will hold against that being a catalogue of yours. Nay, you assert such things yourself concerning the necessity of believing things defined by the church, as make it impossible for you to assign the definite number of such things as are necessary for all persons, and therefore it is very unreasonable to demand it of us. For still when you speak, that the things defined by the church are necessary to the salvation of all, you add, "where they are sufficiently propounded;" so that the measure of fundamentals depends on the sufficiency of the proposition. Now will you undertake to assign what number of things are sufficiently propounded to the belief of all persons? Can you set down the exact bounds as to all individuals, when their ignorance is inexcusable, and when not? Can you tell what 92 the measure of their capacity was? what allowance God makes for the prejudices of education, where there is a mind desirous of instruction? Will you say, God accounts all those things sufficiently proposed to men's belief which you judge to be so? or that all men are bound to think those things necessary to salvation which you think so? By what means shall the church's power of defining matters of faith be sufficiently proposed to men as an article of faith? either by its own definition, or without? If by it, the thing is proposed to be believed which is supposed to be believed already before that proposition; or else the inquiry returns with as great force, why should I believe that definition more than any other? If without it, then the sufficiency of proposition and the necessity of believing depends not on the church's definition. These questions I am apt to think as pertinent and necessary as yours was: and now you know my sense, and are so discontented you could never meet with a satisfactory answer from protestants, prevent the same dissatisfaction in me, by giving a punctual answer to such necessary questions. But if you think the demands unreasonable because they depend on such things which none can know but God himself, I pray accept of that as a satisfactory answer to your own very pertinent question.

§. 2. But if the question be propounded not concerning

what things are fundamental and necessary to particular persons, which on the reasons formerly given it is impossible to give a catalogue of, but of such things which are necessary to be owned for Christian communion, as I have shewed this question of fundamentals ought only to be taken here; then his lordship's answer was more pertinent than the question, viz. "That all the points of the Creed were such: for," saith he, "since the fathers make the Creed the rule of faith; since the agreeing sense of scripture with those articles are the two regular precepts by which a divine is governed about the faith; since your own council of Trent decrees, that it is that principle of faith in which all that profess Christ do necessarily agree, *et fundamentum firmum et unicum*, not the firm only, but the only foundation; since it is excommunication *ipso jure* for any man to contradict the articles contained in that Creed; since the whole body of the faith is so contained in the Creed, as that the substance of it was believed even before the coming of Christ, though not so expressly as since, in the number of the Articles; since Bellarmine confesses, that all things simply necessary for all men's salvation are in the Creed and decalogue, what reason can you have to except?" Thus far his lordship. Though from hence it appears what little reason you have to except, yet because of that, I expect your exceptions the sooner: and therefore very fairly passing by the sense of the fathers, you ask concerning the council of Trent, "What if that call the Creed the only foundation?" Are you come to a "what if" with the council of Trent? But I suppose it is not from disputing its authority, but its meaning; for you would seem to understand it only of prime articles of faith, and not of such as all are bound upon sufficient proposition expressly to believe: for that is all the sense I can make of your words. But whoever was so silly as to say, that all such things which are to be believed on sufficient proposition that they are revealed by God, are contained in the Creed? When you seem to imply that this was the sense the question was propounded in, it is a sign you little attend to the consequence of things: when it is most evident that the question was started concerning the Greek church, and therefore must refer only to such fundamentals as are necessary to be owned in order to the being of a true church. And

Conf. p. 34.
sect. 11. n.
1.

when you can prove that any other articles are necessary to that besides those contained in the Creed, you will do something to purpose, but not before. But you suppose them to take the Creed in a very large sense, who would lap up in the folds of it all particular points of faith whatever: and I am ⁹³ sure this is not the sense it is to be taken in here, nor that in which his lordship took it. He saith indeed, "That if he had ^{Lab. p. 44.} said that those articles only which are expressed in the Creed are fundamental, it would have been hard to have excluded the scripture, upon which the Creed itself in every point is grounded." For nothing is supposed to shut out its own foundation. And this is built on very good reason. For the things contained in the Creed are proposed as matters to be believed; all faith must suppose a divine testimony revealing those things to us, as the ground on which we believe them; this divine testimony is never pretended to be contained in the Creed, but that it is only a summary collection of the most necessary points which God hath revealed; and therefore something else must be supposed as the ground and formal reason why we assent to the truth of those things therein contained. So that the Creed must suppose the scripture as the main and only foundation of believing the matters of faith therein contained. But, say you, if all the scripture be included in the Creed, ^{Lab. p. 45.} "there appears no great reason of scruple why the same should ^{11. 2.} not be said of traditions, and other points; especially of that for which we admit scripture itself." But do you make no difference between the scripture being supposed as the ground of faith, and all scripture being contained in the Creed? And doth not his lordship tell you, "That though some articles may be fundamental which are infolded in the Creed, it would not follow that therefore some unwritten traditions were fundamental; for though they may have authority and use in the church as apostolical, yet are they not fundamental in the faith?" And as for that tradition, That the books of holy scripture are divine and infallible in every part, he promises to handle it when he comes to the proper place for it. And there we shall readily attend what you have to object to what his lordship saith about it.

§. 3. But yet you say, "His lordship doth not answer the question as far as it was necessary to be answered;" we say,

Lab. p. 46.
n. 2.

he doth. “No,” say you: “for the question arising concerning the Greek church’s error, whether it were fundamental or no, Mr. Fisher demanded of the bishop, what points he would account fundamental? to which he answers, That all points contained in the Creed are such, but yet not only they: and therefore this was no direct answer to the question; for though the Greeks’ error was not against the Creed, yet it may be against some other fundamental article not contained in the Creed.” This you call fine shuffling. To which I answer, that when his lordship spake of its not being *fundamentum unicum* in that sense, to exclude all things not contained in the Creed from being fundamental, he spake it with an immediate respect to the belief of scripture as an infallible rule of faith: “For,” saith he, “the truth is, I said, and say still, that all the points of the Apostles’ Creed, as they are there expressed, are fundamental. And herein I say no more than some of your best learned have said before me. But I never said or meant that they only are fundamental; that they are *fundamentum unicum*, is the council of Trent’s, it is not mine. Mine is, that the belief of scripture to be the word of God and infallible, is an equal, or rather a preceding principle of faith, with or to the whole body of the Creed.” Now what reason can you have to call this shuffling, unless you will rank the Greeks’ error equal with the denying the scripture to be the word of God? otherwise his lordship’s answer is as full and pertinent as your cavil is vain and trifling. His lordship adds, “That this agrees with one of your own great masters, Albertus Magnus, who is not far from the proposition *in terminis*.” To which your exceptions are so pitiful, that I shall answer them without reciting them; for he that supposeth the sense of scripture joined with the articles of faith to be

94 the rule of faith, as Albertus doth, must certainly suppose the belief of the scripture as the word of God, else how is it possible its sense should be the rule of faith? Again, it is not enough for you to say, that he believed other articles of faith besides those in the Creed, but that he made them a rule of faith together with the sense of scripture. 3. All this while here is not one word of tradition, as the ground on which these articles of faith were to be believed. If this therefore be your way of answering, I know none will contend with you

Conf. p. 35.
sect. 11. n.
2.

for fine shuffling. What follows concerning the right sense of the article of the descent of Christ into hell; since you say, you "will not much trouble yourself about it, as being not fundamental either in his lordship's sense or ours;" I look on that expression as sufficient to excuse me from undertaking so needless a trouble, as the examining the several senses of it; since you acknowledge that no one determinate sense is fundamental, and therefore not pertinent to our business. Much less is that which follows concerning Mr. Rogers his book and authority; in which, and that which depends upon it, I shall only give you your own words for an answer, "That truly I conceive it of small importance to spend much time upon this subject;" and shall not so far contradict my judgment as to do that which I think, when it is done, is to very little purpose. Of the same nature is that of Catharinus; for it signifies nothing to us whether you account him an heretic or no, who know men are not one jot more or less heretics for your accounting them to be so or not.

§. 4. You call the bishop your "good friend, in saying, That all protestants do agree with the church of England in the main exceptions which they jointly take against the Roman church, as appears by their several confessions. For," say you, "by their agreeing in this, but in little or nothing else, they sufficiently shew themselves enemies to the true church, which is one, and only one, by unity of doctrine; from whence they must needs be judged to depart, by reason of their divisions." As good a friend as you say his lordship was to you in that saying of his, I am sure you ill requite him for his kindness, by so palpable a falsification of his words, and abuse of his meaning. And all that friendship you pretend lies only in your leaving out that part of the sentence which takes away all that you build on the rest. For where doth his lordship say that the protestants only agree in their main exceptions against the Roman church, and not in their doctrines? Nay, doth he not expressly say, "That they agree in the chiefest doctrines, as well as main exceptions which they take against the church of Rome, as appears by their several confessions?" But you, very conveniently to your purpose, and with a fraud suitable to your cause, leave out the first part of agreement in the chiefest doctrines, and mention only the latter, lest your

Lab. p. 46.
n. 4

Lab. p. 48.
n. 6.

Conf. p. 41.
sect. 14. n.
1.

declamation should be spoiled as to your unity and our disagreements. But we see by this by what means you would persuade men of both, by arts and devices, fit only to deceive such who look only on the appearance and outsides of things ; and yet even there, he that sees not your growing divisions is a great stranger to the Christian world. Your great argument

Lab. p. 47.
n. 4. of the unity of your party, “ because, whatever the private opinions of men are, they are ready to submit their judgments to the censure and determination of the church,” if it be good, will hold as well, or better, for our unity, as yours, because all men are willing to submit their judgments to scripture, which is agreed on all sides to be infallible. If you say, That it cannot be known what scripture determines, but it may be easily what the church defines ; it is easily answered, that the event shews it to be far otherwise : for how many disputes are there concerning the power of determining matters of faith, to whom it belongs, in what way it must be managed, whether parties ought to be heard in matters of doctrine, what the

95 meaning of the decrees are when they are made ! which raise as many divisions as were before them, as appears by the decrees of the council of Trent, and the later of pope Innocent relating to the five propositions : so that upon the whole it appears, setting aside force and fraud (which are excellent principles of Christian unity), we are upon as fair terms of union as you are among yourselves.

Lab. p. 48.
n. 6. §. 5. You tell us, “ that your church doth anathematize only such persons as are obstinate ;” but who are they whom she accounts obstinate ? even all who dissent from her in any punctilio. And therefore this is a singular piece of moderation in your church. And you believe the troubles of Christendom rather come from too great freedom taken in matters of faith, than from any severity in the church of Rome. The truth is, you have excellent ways of ending controversies, much like persuading men to put out their eyes to end the disputes about the nature of colours ; and if they will not hearken to such prudent counsel, they are pronounced obstinate and perverse for offering to keep their eyes in their heads. And if men will not say that white is black when your church bids them do it, these men are the troublers of Israel, and the fomentors of the discords of the Christian world. But if your

church had kept to the primitive simplicity and moderation, and not offered to define matters of faith, the occasion of most of the controversies of the Christian world had been taken away. Believe what you will, and speak what you list, there are none who consider what they believe or speak, but easily discover whence the great dissensions of the Christian world have risen, viz. from the ambition and usurpation of the church of Rome; which hath not been contented to have introduced many silly superstitions into the public exercise of devotion, but when any of these came to be discovered, thought it her best course to defend her corruptions with greater, by enforcing men to the belief of them, and thereby rendering a separation from her communion unavoidable by all those who sought to retrieve the piety and devotion of the primitive church. And yet this must be called *schism*, and the persons attempting it *heretics*, by that same pious and tender hearted mother of yours, who loves her children so dearly, that if they do but desire any reformation of abuses, she takes all possible care they shall complain no more. As though the only way to prevent quarrelling in the world were to cut out people's tongues, and cut off their arms: such a kind of unity hath your church shewed herself very desirous of, wherever power and conveniency have met for the carrying it on. But I hope you will give us leave not to envy the unity of those, who therefore agree in the church, because, as soon as they do in the least differ from it, they are pronounced not to be of it, for opposing the determinations of it. And yet, notwithstanding the violence and fraud used in your church to preserve its unity, the world is alarmed with the noise of its dissensions, and the increase of the differing parties, who manage their contests with great heats and animosities against each other, under all the great pretences of your unity. I cannot but therefore judge it a very prudent expression of his lordship, that as the church of England "is Conf. p. 41. sect. 14. n. 1. not such a shrew to her children as to deny her blessing, or denounce an anathema against them, if some peaceably dissent in some particulars remoter from the foundation; so if the church of Rome, since she grew to her greatness, had not been so fierce in this course, and too particular in determining too many things, and making them matters of necessary belief,

which had gone for many hundred of years before only for things of pious opinion, Christendom (I persuade myself) had been in happier peace at this day, than, I doubt, we shall ever live to see it." And it is an excellent reason you give, why
 Lab. p. 49. 96 the church of Rome doth impose her doctrine on the whole world under pain of damnation; "because it is not in her power to do otherwise." There is little hopes then of amendment in her, if she thinks so. But you tell us, Christ hath commanded her to do it. What hath he commanded her to do? to add to his doctrine by making things necessary which he never made to be so? Is it in that place where he bids the apostles to teach all that he commanded them, that he gives power to the church to teach more than he commanded? But this is a new kind of supererogation, to make more articles of faith than ever men were required to make. Where still is this command extant in scripture? Not, sure, any where, but in that most apposite place produced to that and all other good purposes which have nothing else to prove them; even *Dic ecclesie*, "if he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican;" therefore the church of Rome is commanded by Christ to impose her doctrine on the whole church upon pain of damnation. Sure you will pronounce men obstinate that dare in the least question this, after so irrefragable a demonstration of it. And you may well cry, scripture is not fit to decide controversies, when you consider the lame consequences you above all men derive from it.

Conf. p. 42. §. 6. His lordship shews the moderation of the church of
 sect. 14. n. 2. England, even in that canon which A. C. looks on as the most severe, where she pronounces excommunication on such as affirm, that the articles are in any part superstitious or erroneous, &c. by these things. 1. That it is not meant of men's private judgments, but of what they boldly and publicly affirm. 2. That it is one thing to hold contrary to some part of an article; and another positively to affirm, that the articles in any part are superstitious or erroneous. 3. The church of England doth this only for thirty-nine articles; but the church of Rome doth it for above a hundred in matter of doctrine. 4. The church of England never declared that every one of her articles are fundamental in the faith; but the church of Rome requires that all be believed as fundamental, when once

the church hath determined them. 5. The church of England prescribes only to her own children, and by those articles provides but for her own peaceable consent in those doctrines of truth: but the church of Rome severely imposes her doctrine upon the whole world under pain of damnation. To all these very considerable instances of our church's moderation, your answer is, "The question is not, whether the English congregation or the Roman church be more severe; but whether the English protestants' severity be not unreasonable, supposing she be subject to error in defining those articles." For after many words to the same, i. e. little purpose, the reason you give for it is, "that every unjust excommunication inflicted for opposing of doctrine, must necessarily suppose the doctrine opposed to be infallibly true, and absolutely exempt from error; otherwise the sentence itself would be unreasonable and unjust, as wanting sufficient ground." From whence you charge protestants with greater tyranny and injustice towards their people than they can with any colour or pretence of reason charge upon the Roman church, which excommunicates no man, but for denying such doctrine as is both infallibly true, and also fundamental, at least as to its formal object. This is the strength of all you say, which will be reduced to this short question, whether the proceedings of that church be more unreasonable, which excommunicates such as openly oppose her doctrine, supposing her fallible; or of that church, which excommunicates all who will not believe whatever she defines to be infallibly true. This is the true state of the controversy, which must be judged by the resolving another question, whether it be not a more unreasonable usurpation, to bind men upon pain of damnation hereafter, and excommunication here, to believe every thing infallible which a church defines; or to bind men to peace to a church's determinations, reserving to men the liberty of their judgments, on pain of excommunication if they violate that peace. For it is plain on the one side, where a church pretends infallibility, the excommunication is directed against the persons for refusing to give internal assent to what she defines: but where a church doth not pretend to that, the excommunication respects wholly that overt act whereby the church's peace is broken. And if a church be bound to look to her own peace, no doubt

Lab. p. 49.
n. 8.

97

she hath power to excommunicate such as openly violate the bonds of it; which is only an act of caution in a church, to preserve herself in unity; but where it is given out that the church is infallible, the excommunication must be so much the more unreasonable, because it is against those internal acts of the mind over which the church as such hath no direct power. And thus, I hope, you see how much more just and reasonable the proceedings of our church are than of yours; and that *eo nomine*, because she pretends to be infallible, and ours doth not.

Conf. p. 42.
sect. 15. n.
1.

§. 7. His lordship shews further in vindication of the church of England, and her grounds of faith, that the church of England grounded her positive articles upon scripture; and her negative do refute there, where the thing affirmed by them is not affirmed by scripture, nor directly to be concluded out of it. "And this," he saith, "is the main principle of all protestants, that scripture is sufficient to salvation, and contains in it all things necessary to it. The fathers are plain, the schoolmen not strangers in it. And Stapleton himself confesses as much." Nay, and you dare not deny it, as to all material objects of faith, and your formal here signifies nothing. And when A. C. saith, "That the church of England grounded her positive articles upon scripture, if themselves may be judges in their own cause;" his lordship answers, "We are contented to be judged by the joint and constant belief of the fathers which lived within the first four or five hundred years after Christ, when the church was at the best, and by the councils held within those times, and to submit to them in all those points of doctrine." This offer you grant to be very fair, and you do for yourselves promise the same, and say, you will make it good upon all occasions. Which we shall have trial of before the end of this book. To what his lordship saith concerning the negative articles, "that they refute where the thing affirmed by them is either not affirmed in scripture, or not directly to be concluded out of it," A. C. replies, "that the baptism of infants is not expressly (at least not evidently) affirmed in scripture, nor directly (at least not demonstratively) concluded out of it." Here two things his lordship answers: 1. To the expression; 2. To the thing.

Conf. p. 42.
sect. 15. n.

Lab. p. 51.
n. 9

1. To the expression; "That he is no way satisfied with

A. C. his addition, 'not expressly, at least not evidently:' for," Conf. p. 44-
sect. 15. n.
3. saith, he "what means he? If he speak of the letter of scripture, then whatsoever is expressly is evidently in the scripture, and so his addition is in vain. If he speak of the meaning of scripture, then his addition is cunning: for many things are expressly in scripture, which yet in their meaning are not evidently there." And as little satisfied his lordship declares himself with that other, "nor directly, at least not demonstratively," because many things are directly concluded which are not demonstratively. To the first you answer, "That a point may be expressed, yet not evidently expressed; Lab. p. 51.
n. 9. otherwise there could be no doubt concerning what were expressed in scripture, since men never question things that are evident. Now," say you, "the baptism of infants must not only be expressed, but evidently expressed, to prove it sufficiently, i. e. undeniably, by scripture alone." But the question being concerning matters of doctrine, and not mere words, those things are expressly affirmed which are evidently, and no other: for it is one thing for words to be expressly in scripture, and another for doctrines to be so. For these latter are no further expressly affirmed there, than as there is evidence 98 that the meaning of such words doth contain such a doctrine in them. As, to take your own instance, "This is my body," we grant the words to be express; but we deny that which he had then in his hands was his real body, (for his hands were part of his real body.) Now we do not say, that the doctrine of transubstantiation is expressly, but not evidently contained here; for we say, the doctrine is not there at all, but only that those are the express words, "This is my body," as it is in other figurative expressions in scripture. But that which causeth this litigation about words is, that you look upon that which is evident and undeniable to be all one, whereas there may be sufficient evidence where all men are not persuaded by it. And so you would put his lordship to prove out of scripture infant-baptism evidently and demonstratively, i. e. undeniably; whereas his lordship supposeth it enough for his purpose to prove it by such sufficient evidence as may convince any reasonable man. And this was all his lordship meant when he said, "that our negative articles do refute where the thing is not affirmed in scripture, or not directly concluded out of

it." And if you will stand to the strict sense of these words, you will be forced to prove all those doctrines of your church, which ours denies to be true, so evidently and demonstratively, i. e. undeniably, as you would put him upon for the proof of infant-baptism.

§. 8. To leave therefore this verbal dispute, and come to the thing. His lordship saith, "that it may be concluded directly out of scripture, that infants ought to be baptized, &c." For which he insists on two places of scripture, John iii. 8, "Except a man be born again of water, and of the Spirit, &c." which being interpreted according to the sense of the fathers and the ancient church, and as your own party acknowledge it ought to be interpreted, do evidently assert infant-baptism. By which your exception of a Pelagian ana-baptist, who denies original sin, and from thence saith that infants cannot be born again, is taken away; for the same tradition of the ancient church which from hence infers the baptism of infants, doth it upon that ground, because they are guilty of original sin, as you might have seen by his lordship's citations to that purpose. The other place he insists on is Acts ii. 38, 39, which, by the acknowledgment of Ferus and Salmeron, holds for infant-baptism. But when you say, "that you would not weaken the argument from John iii. for infant-baptism; because you only would shew, that it cannot be proved demonstratively from scripture alone against a perverse heretic:" you seem not much to consider what those perverse heretics (as you call them) hold as to infant-baptism, which is, not merely that infant-baptism is not commanded in scripture, but that it is a thing unlawful, as being a perverting of the institution of Christ as to the subject of baptism. For the main question between us and the antipædo-baptists is not concerning an absolute and express command for baptizing infants; but whether our blessed Saviour hath not by a positive precept so determined the subject of baptism, viz. adult persons professing the faith, that the alteration of the subject, viz. in baptizing infants, be not a deviation from and perversion of the institution of Christ in a substantial part of it: or in short thus, whether our Saviour hath so determined the subject of baptism as to exclude infants. And although, the question being thus stated, the proof ought

Conf. p. 45.
sect. 15. n.
4.

Lab. p. 52.
n. 10.

Conf. p. 46.
sect. 15. n.
4.

Lab. p. 53.
n. 11.

to lie on those who affirm it, yet taking in only the help of scripture and reason, it were no difficult matter to prove directly and evidently, that infants are so far from being excluded baptism by the institution of Christ, that there are as many grounds as are necessary to a matter of that nature, to prove that the baptizing them is suitable to the institution of Christ, and agreeable to the state of the church under the gospel. For if there were any ground to exclude them, it must be either the incapacity of the subject, or some express 99 precept and institution of our Saviour. But neither of these can be supposed to do it.

1. Not incapacity as to the ends of baptism: for clearing which, these two things must be premised; 1. That the rule and measure, as to the use and capacity of divine institutions, is to be fetched from the end of them. For this was the ground of the circumcision of the proselytes under the law: and this was the way the apostles did interpret Christ's commission for baptizing all nations, as to the capacity of the subjects of it, Acts x. 47, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" where the question was concerning the subject of baptism. For it might be made evident, that the apostles at first did interpret their commission of "baptizing all nations," only of the Jews of all nations: for after that St. Peter looked on the Gentiles as unclean; and the disciples at Jerusalem charged St. Peter with it as a great fault, for "going in to men uncircumcised," Acts xi. 3. Therefore we see, when the question was concerning the subject of baptism, the only argument is drawn from the design and ends of it; that they who were capable of the thing signified ought not to be denied the use of the sign. And thus by a parity of reason built on equal grounds, those who are capable of the great things represented in baptism and confirmed by it, viz. God's pardoning grace and acceptation to eternal life, ought not to be denied the external sign, which is baptism itself. And therefore, 2. Where there is a capacity as to the main ends of an institution, an incapacity as to some ends doth not exclude from it. As is most evident in the baptism of our blessed Saviour, in whom there was a greater incapacity as to the main ends of baptism than possibly can be in infants; for his

baptism could not at all be for the remission of sins. Now we see, although there were but one end, and that a very general one mentioned, "That he might fulfil all righteousness," Matt. iii. 15, yet we see that was sufficient to persuade John to baptize him. Whereby we see evidently in this practice of our Saviour, built on a general and common ground, that a capacity as to one end of a positive institution is sufficient to make such a practice lawful, and in some cases a duty.

§. 9. These two general principles being laid down, it were easy to shew, 1. That what incapacity there is in infants, is not destructive of the main ends of baptism; which is chiefly thought to be the incapacity of understanding the nature or ends of the institution; and if that exclude, it must either be, that it is a thing repugnant to reason, that any divine institution should be applied to persons uncapable of understanding the nature and ends of it, which would highly reflect on the wisdom of God in appointing circumcision for children eight days old, who were certainly as uncapable of understanding the ends of that as our children are of baptism; or else, that there is some peculiarity in the institution of baptism, which must exclude them from it under the gospel; which that there is not, will appear presently.

2. That there is a capacity in infants as to the main ends of baptism, which have either an aspect from God to us, in regard of its institution, or from us to God, in regard of our undertaking it. Now the chief ends of a divine institution as such, are such as respect God's intention in it towards us, in which respect it is properly a sign; but as it respects God from us, it is properly a ceremony betokening our profession and restipulation towards God. Now the ends of it as a sign are, to represent and exhibit to us the nature of the grace of the gospel as it cleanseth and purifieth, and to confirm the truth of the covenant on God's part, and to instate the partakers of it in the privileges of the church of God: now as to all these ends, there is no incapacity in infants to exclude
100 them from baptism because of them. So that nothing can seem wanting of the ends of baptism, but that which seems most ceremonial in it, which is the personal restipulation, which yet may reasonably be supplied by sponsors, so far as to make it of the nature of a solemn contract and covenant in

sight of the congregation. Thus far it appears from scripture and reason, that no incapacity in infants doth exclude them from baptism.

2. That there is no direct or consequential prohibition made by our blessed Saviour to exclude them. For granting that he had the power to limit and determine the subject of baptism, the question is, whether he hath so far done it as to exclude infants? And nothing of that nature is pretended before the last commission given to the apostles, of "teaching and baptizing all nations," Matt. xxviii. 19. And that by this expression there is no exclusion of infants will appear:

1. If our Saviour had intended the gathering of churches among the Gentiles according to the law of Moses, he could hardly have expressed it after another manner than thus, 'Go, proselyte all nations, circumcising them.' Now I appeal to any man's judgment and reason, whether in such words it could be imagined that the infants of such Gentile proselytes should be excluded circumcision: and what reason can there be then from these words to imagine that our Saviour did intend to exclude the infants of Gentile converts from baptism?
2. We must consider what apprehensions those whom our Saviour directed these words to, viz. the apostles, had concerning the church-state of such as were in an external covenant with God, which they measured by the general reason of that covenant which God made with the Jews: can we then think, that when our Saviour bid the apostles gather whole nations into churches, they should imagine the infants were excluded out of it, when they were so solemnly admitted into it in that dispensation which was in use among them?
3. The Gentiles being now to be first proselyted to Christianity, the order of the words was necessary: for who ever imagined but that such as were wholly strangers to Christianity, as those were whom Christ there speaks of, were to be first taught, or disciplined, before they were to be baptized? For suppose it should be said to such persons among whom infant-baptism is the most used, 'Go and disciple the Indians, baptizing them,' &c. could any one conceive the intention of such a commission was to exclude the infants of all those Indians from baptism, when it was well known that infant-baptism was used among those who came with that commis-

sion? And therefore neither these words here, nor those Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth and is baptized," &c., can in reason be so interpreted as to exclude infants, when the mere order of nature and necessity of the thing requires, that those who first own Christianity by being baptized ought, before such baptism, not only to believe, but to make profession of that faith: but this reacheth not at all to the case of such infants as are born of those persons. For if any one had said to Abraham, 'He that believes and is circumcised shall be saved,' could it have been so interpreted, that the intention was to exclude his children from circumcision? No more ought these words of our Saviour be strained to a greater prejudice of the right of infants to baptism, than those other to their right of circumcision. And thus far we see there is no ground from scriptures or reason why infants should be excluded.

§. 10. And were it not too large a digression, I might further shew how suitable the baptism of infants is to the administration of things under the gospel; but I shall only propound some considerations concerning it. 1. That if it had been Christ's intention to exclude infants, there had been far greater reason for an express prohibition, than of an express command, if his intention were to admit them; be-
 101 cause this was suitable to the general grounds of God's dispensation among them before. 2. It is very hard to conceive that the apostles thought infants excluded by Christ, when after Christ's ascension they looked on themselves as bound to observe the Jewish customs, even when they had baptized many thousand people. 3. If admission of infants to baptism were a mere relic of Judaism, it seems strange that none of the Judaizing Christians should be charged with it, who yet are charged with the observation of other Judaical rites. 4. Since the Jewish Christians were so much offended at the neglect of circumcision, Acts xxi. 21, can we in reason think they should quietly bear their children's being wholly thrown out of the church? as they would have been, if neither admitted to circumcision nor baptism. 5. Had it been contrary to Christ's institution, we should not have had such evidence of its early practice in the church as we have. And here I acknowledge the use of apostolical tradition to manifest

this to us ; in which sense I acknowledge what St. Austin saith, “ That the custom of our mother the church is not to be contemned or thought superfluous, neither is it to be believed but as an apostolical tradition.” For that the words are to be read so, (and not, as you translate them, “ nor at all to be believed unless it had been an apostolical tradition,” from thence inferring that infant-baptism were not to be believed at all, but for tradition,) appears by three ancient manuscripts at Oxford, as well as the course of the sentence and St. Austin’s judgment in other places, viz. that it ought to be read, *Nec omnino credenda nisi apostolica traditio esse*, and not *esset*. But we grant that the practice of the church from apostolical times is a great confirmation that it was never Christ’s intention to have infants excluded from baptism. And thus much may suffice to shew what evidence we have from scripture and reason, without recourse wholly to tradition, or building upon any more controverted places, to justify the church’s practice in infant-baptism, which is as much as is necessary for us to do. What follows, concerning the founding divine faith on apostolical tradition, will be fully considered in the succeeding controversy concerning the resolution of faith, to which we now hasten.

THE ROMANISTS' WAY OF RESOLVING FAITH.

The ill consequences of the resolution of faith by the church's infallibility.—The grand absurdities of it manifested by its great unreasonableness in many particulars.—The certain foundations of faith unsettled by it, as is largely proved.—The circle unavoidable by their new attempt.—The impossibility of proving the church infallible by the way that Moses, Christ, and his apostles were proved to be so.—Of the motives of credibility, and how far they belong to the church. The difference between science and faith considered, and the new art of men's believing with their wills.—The church's testimony must be, according to their principles, the formal object of faith.—Of their esteem of fathers, scripture and councils.—The rare distinctions concerning the church's infallibility discussed. How the church can be infallible by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, yet not divinely infallible, but in a manner and after a sort.—T. C. applauded for his excellent faculty in contradicting himself.

§. 1. **H**E that hath a mind to betray an excellent cause, may more advantageously do it by bringing weak and insufficient evidences for it, than by the greatest heat and vigour of opposition against it. For there cannot possibly be any greater prejudice done to a weighty and important truth, than to persuade men to believe it on such grounds which are, if not absolutely false, yet much more disputable than the thing itself. For hereby the minds of men are taken off from the native evidence which the truth inquired after offers to them, and build their assent upon the certainty of the mediums suggested as the only grounds to establish a firm assent upon. By which means, when upon severe inquiry the falsity and insufficiency of those grounds is discovered, the person so discovering lies under a dangerous temptation of calling into question the truth of that which he finds he assented to upon grounds apparently weak and insufficient. And the more refined and subtle the speculations are, the more sublime and mysterious

the matters believed, the greater still the danger of scepticism is upon a discovery of the unsoundness of those principles which such things were believed upon. Especially if the more confident and magisterial party of those who profess the belief of such things do with the greatest heat decry all other ways as uncertain, and obtrude these principles upon the world as the only sure foundation for the belief of them. It was anciently a great question among the philosophers, whether there were any certainty in the principles of knowledge; or supposing certainty in things, whether there were any undoubted *κριτήρια*, or rules to obtain this certainty of knowledge by. If then any one sect of philosophers should have undertaken to prove the certainty that was in knowledge upon this account, because whatever their sect or party delivered was infallibly true, they had not only shamefully begged the thing in dispute, but made it much more liable to question than before. Because every error discovered in that sect would not only prove the fondness and arrogance of their pretence of being infallible, but would, to all such as believed the certainty of things on the authority of their sect, be an argument to disprove all certainty of knowledge, when they once discovered the errors of those whose authority they relied upon. Just such is the case of the church of Rome in this present controversy concerning the resolution of faith. The 103 question is, what the certain grounds of our assent are to the principles and rule of Christian religion? The Romanists pretend that there can be no ground of true and divine faith at all but the infallible testimony of their church: let then any rational man judge whether this be not the most compendious way to overthrow the belief of Christianity in the world. For our assent must be wholly suspended upon that supposed infallibility, which when once it falls, (as it unavoidably doth upon the discovery of the least error in the doctrine of that church,) what becomes then of the belief of Christianity which was built upon that as its only sure foundation? So that it is hardly imaginable there could be any design more really destructive to Christianity, or that hath a greater tendency to atheism, than the modern pretence of infallibility, and the Jesuits' way of resolving faith.

§.2. Which was the reason why his lordship was so unwill-

ing to engage in that controversy, how we know the scriptures to be the word of God: not out of any distrust he had of solving it upon protestant principles, as you vainly suggest; nor out of any fears of being left himself in that labyrinth, which after all your endeavours you have lost yourself and your cause in; as appears by your attempting this way and that way to get out, and at last standing in the very middle of that circle you thought yourself out of. If his lordship thought this more a question of curiosity than necessity, it was because out of his great charity he supposed them to be Christians he had to deal with. But if his charity were therein deceived, you shall see how able we are to make good the grounds of our religion against all adversaries, whether papists or others. And so far is the answering of this question from making the weakness of our cause appear, that I doubt not but to make it evident that our cause stands upon the same grounds which our common Christianity doth; and that we are protestants by the same reason that we are Christians. And on the other side, that you are so far from giving any true grounds of Christian faith, that nothing will more advance the highest scepticism and irreligion, than such principles as you insist on for resolving faith. The true reason then why the archbishop declared any unwillingness to enter upon this dispute, was not the least apprehension how insuperably hard the resolution of this question was, (as you pretend,) but because of the great mischief your party had done in starting such questions you could not resolve with any satisfaction to the common reason of mankind; and that you run yourselves into such a circle in which you conjure up more spirits than ever you are able to lay, by giving those advantages to infidelity, which all your sophistry can never answer on those principles you go upon. That this was the true ground of his lordship's seeming averseness from this controversy appears by his plain words, where he tells you at first "of the danger of men's being disputed into infidelity by the circle between scripture and tradition, and by his expressing his sense of the great harm you have done by the starting of that question among Christians, how we know the scriptures to be the word of God." But although in this respect he might be said to be drawn into it, yet lest you should

Lab. p. 55.

Conf. p. 48.
sect. 16. n.
1.

think his averseness argued any consciousness of his own inability to answer it, you may see how closely he follows it ; with what care and accuracy he handles it, with what strength of reason and evidence he hath discovered the weakness of your way, which he hath done with that success, that he hath put you to miserable shifts to avoid the force of his arguments, as will appear afterwards. I am therefore fully of his mind, that it is a matter of such consequence it deserves to be sifted, were it for no other end but to lay open the jugglings and impostures of your way of resolving faith.

§. 3. Which we now come more closely to the discovery of ; 104
 for as you tell us, “ the bishop, propounding diverse ways of resolving the question, first falls to the attacking your way, who prove it by tradition and authority of the church.” of Conf. p. 48. sect. 16. n. 1. And his first onset is so successful, that it makes you visibly recoil and withdraw yourself into so untenable a shelter, as exposeth you to all the attempts which any adversary would desire to make upon you. For whereas you are charged by his lordship with running into the most absurd kind of argumentation, viz. by proving the scriptures infallible by tradition, and that tradition infallible by scripture ; you think to escape that circle by telling us, “ that you prove not the church’s infallibility by the scripture, but by the motives of credibility belonging to the church.” This then being your main principle which your following discourse is built upon, and in your judgment the only probable way to avoid the circle, that you may not think I am afraid of encountering you in your greatest strength, I dare put the issue of the cause upon this promise, That (besides the weak proofs you bring for the thing itself, which shall after be considered) if this way of yours be not chargeable with all the absurdities such an attempt is capable of, I will be content to acknowledge what you say to be true, which is, “ that your way of resolving faith hath no difficulty at all, and that ours is insuperably hard,” which I think are as hard terms as can be imposed upon me. Now there are two grand absurdities which any vindication of an opinion is subject to ; first, if it be manifestly unreasonable, and 2. if, supposing it true, it doth not effect what it was intended for : now these two I undertake to make good against this way of your resolving faith, that it is guilty of the highest unreason-

ableness ; and that, supposing it true, you are in a circle as much as before.

1. First, I begin with the unreasonableness of it, which is so great that I know not whether I may abstain from calling it ridiculous ; but, that I may not seem to follow you in asserting confidently and proving weakly, it will be necessary throughly to examine the grounds on which your opinion stands, and then raise our batteries against it. Three grand principles your discourse relies upon, which are your *postulata* in order to the resolving faith.

1. That it is necessary to the believing the scriptures to be the word of God with a divine faith, that it be built on the infallible testimony of the church.

2. That your church is that catholic church whose testimony is infallible.

3. That this infallibility is to be known and assented to upon the motives of credibility. These three, I suppose, if your confused discourse were reduced to method, would be freely acknowledged by yourself to be the principles on which your resolution of faith depends. And although I am sufficiently assured of the falseness of your two first principles, (as will appear in the sequel of this discourse,) yet that which I have now particularly undertaken is, the unreasonableness of resolving faith upon these principles taken together, viz. that the infallible testimony of your church is the only foundation for divine faith ; and that this infallibility can be known only by the motives of credibility. If then in this way of resolving faith you require assent beyond all proportion of evidence ; if you run into the same absurdities you would seem to avoid, if you leave men more uncertain in their religion than you found them ; you cannot certainly excuse this way from unreasonableness. And each of these I undertake to make good against this way of yours, whereby you would assure men of the truth and divinity of the scriptures.

105 § 4. 1. An assent is hereby required beyond all proportion or degree of evidence ; for you require an infallible assent only upon probable grounds, which is as much as requiring infallibility in the conclusion, where the premises are only probable. Now that you require an assent infallible to the nature of faith, appears by the whole series of your discourse : for to

this very end you require infallibility in the testimony of your church, because otherwise, you say, our faith would be uncertain: it is plain then you require an infallible assent in faith; and it is as plain that this assent, according to you, can be built only upon probable grounds, for you acknowledge the motives of credibility to be no more than such; yet those are all the grounds you give why the church should be believed infallible. If you say, That which makes the assent infallible is that infallibility which is in the church's testimony; I reply, That this is a most unreasonable thing, to go about to establish an infallible assent, merely because the testimony is supposed to be in itself infallible: for assent is not according to the objective certitude of things, but the evidence of them to our understandings. For is it possible to assent to the truth of a demonstration in a demonstrative manner, because any mathematician tells one the thing is demonstrable? for in that case the assent is not according to the evidence of the thing, but according to the opinion such a person hath of him who tells him it is demonstrable. Nay, supposing that person infallible in saying so, yet if the other hath no means to be infallibly assured that he is so, such a one's assent is as doubtful as if he were not infallible; therefore, supposing the testimony of your church to be really infallible, yet since the means of believing it are but probable and prudential, the assent cannot be according to the nature of the testimony considered in itself, but according to the reasons which induce me to believe such a testimony infallible. And in all such cases where I believe one thing for the sake of another, my assent to the object believed is according to my assent to the medium on which I believe it; for by the means of that, the other is conveyed to our minds. As our sight is not according to the light in the body of the sun, but that which presseth upon our organs of sense: so that, supposing your church's testimony to be in itself infallible, if one may be deceived in judging whether your church be infallible or no, one may be deceived in such things which he believes upon that supposed infallibility. It being an impossibility that the assent to the matters of faith should rise higher or stand firmer than the assent to the testimony is upon which those things are believed. Now that one may be deceived, according to your own principles,

in judging whether the church be infallible, appears by this, that you have no other means to prove the infallibility of your church but only probable and prudential motives. For I desire to know, whether an infallible assent to the infallibility of your church can be grounded on those motives of credibility? If you affirm it, then there can be no imaginable necessity to make the testimony of your church infallible in order to divine faith; for you will not, I hope, deny but that there are at least equal motives of credibility to prove the divine authority of the scriptures, as the infallibility of your church; and if so, why may not an infallible assent be given to the scriptures upon those motives of credibility, as well as to your church's infallibility? If you deny the assent built upon the motives of credibility to be infallible, how can you make the assent to your church's testimony to be infallible, when that infallibility is attempted to be proved only by the motives of credibility? And therefore it necessarily follows, that notwithstanding your bearing it so high under the pretence of infallibility, you leave men's minds much more wavering in their assent than before; in that, as shall after-
 106 wards appear, these very motives of credibility do not at all prove the infallibility of your church, which undoubtedly prove the truth and certainty of Christian religion. Thus, while by this device you seek to avoid the circle, you destroy the foundation of your discourse, That there must be an infallible assent to the truth of that proposition, that the scriptures are the word of God (which you call divine faith), which how can it be infallible, when that infallibility at the highest, by your own confession, is but evidently credible? and so I suppose the authority of the scriptures is, without your church's infallibility.

§. 5. And thus you run into the same absurdities which you would seem to avoid, which is the second thing to manifest the unreasonableness of this way; for whatever absurdity you charge us with for believing the doctrine of Christ upon the motives of credibility, unavoidably falls upon yourselves for believing the church's infallibility on the same grounds: for if we leave the foundation of faith uncertain, you do so too; if we build a divine faith upon the motives of credibility, so do you; if we make every one's reason the judge in the choice of

his religion, so must you be forced to do, if you understand the consequence of your own principles.

1. It is impossible for you to give a better account of faith by the infallibility of your church than we can do without it ; for if divine faith cannot be built upon the motives proving the doctrine of Christ, what sense or reason is there that it should be built on those motives which prove your church's infallibility ? So that if we leave the foundation of faith uncertain, you much more : and that I prove by a rule of much authority with you, by which you use to pervert the weak judgments of such who in your case do not discern the sophistry of it ; which is, when you come to deal with persons whom you hope to proselyte, you urge them with this great principle, " That prudence is to be our guide in the choice of our religion, and that prudence directs us to choose the safest way, and that it is much safer to make choice of that way which both sides agree salvation is to be obtained in, than of that which the other side utterly denies men can be saved in." How far this rule will hold in the choice of religion will be examined afterwards ; but if we take your word that it is a sure rule, I know nothing will be more certainly advantageous to us in our present case. For both sides, I hope, are agreed that there are sufficient motives of credibility as to the belief of the scriptures ; but we utterly deny that there are any such motives as to the infallibility of your church : it then certainly follows, that our way is the more eligible and certain, and that we lay a surer foundation for faith than you do upon your principles for resolving faith.

2. Either you must deny any such thing as that you call divine faith, or you must assert that it may have no other foundation than the motives of credibility, which yet is that you would seem most to avoid by introducing the infallibility of your church, that the foundation of faith may not be uncertain ; whereas, supposing what you desire, you must of necessity do what you would seem most fearful of, which is making a divine faith to rest upon prudential motives. Which I thus prove : It is an undoubted axiom among the great men of your side, that whatever is a foundation for a divine faith must itself be believed with a firm, certain, and infallible assent : now according to your principles, the infallibility of

the church is the foundation for divine faith; and therefore that must be believed with an assent infallible. It is apparent then, an assent infallible is required, which is that which in other terms you call divine faith: now when you make it your business to prove the church's infallibility upon your prudential motives, I suppose your design is by those proofs to induce men to believe it; and if men then do believe it upon those motives, do you not found an assent infallible, or a divine faith, 107 upon the motives of credibility? And by the same reason that you urge against us the necessity of believing the scriptures to be the word of God by divine faith, because it is the ground why we believe the things contained in the scripture, we press on your side the necessity of believing the infallibility of the church by a faith equally divine, because that is to you the only sufficient foundation of believing the scriptures, or any thing contained in them.

3. You make, by this way of resolving faith, every man's reason the only judge in the choice of his religion; which you are pleased to charge on us as a great absurdity: yet you, who have deserved so very ill of reason, are fain to call in her best assistance in a case of the greatest moment, viz. On what ground we must believe the scriptures to be the word of God. You say, "Because the church is infallible which delivers them to us." But how should we come to know that she is infallible? You tell us, "By the motives of credibility." Very good: but must not every one's reason judge whether these motives be credible or no? and whether they belong peculiarly to your church, so as to prove the infallibility of it as it is distinct from all other societies of Christians in the world? You tell us indeed, that these motives make it evidently credible; but must we believe it to be so because you say so? If so, then the ground of believing is not the credibility of the motives, but of your testimony, and therefore you ought to make it evidently true that whatever you speak is undoubtedly true, which whosoever reads your book will hardly be persuaded to. So that of necessity every man's reason must be judge whether your church be infallible or no; and thus at last you give reason the umpirage in the choice of religion. And what is there more than this that we contend for? If there be then any danger of scepticism, a private spirit, or what other

inconveniencies you object against our way of judging the truth of religion by the use of reason, it will fall much more heavily upon yourselves in this way of believing the infallibility of the church on the motives of credibility. Therefore I assure you it were much more consonant to the principles of your party to tell men the infallibility of your church ought to be taken for granted, and that men are damned for not believing it, though no reason be given for it, but only because you say it, (which is as much as to say, the reason of the point is, it must needs be so,) than thus to expose it to the scorn and contempt of the world by offering to prove it by your motives of credibility. For unawares you thereby give away the main of your cause; for by the very offer of proving it, you make him whom you offer to prove it to, judge whether these proofs be sufficient or no: and if he be capable to judge of his guide, certainly he may be of his way too, considering that he hath according to us an infallible rule to judge of his way; whereas according to you he hath but prudential motives in the choice of his guide. Thus by this opinion of yours you have gained thus much, that there is nothing so absurd which you charge upon us, but it falls unavoidably upon your own head.

§. 6. By this way of resolving faith you undermine it, and leave a sure foundation for nothing but scepticism; which is the last thing to shew the great unreasonableness of this way of yours, that when you are making us believe you are taking the greatest care to make our religion sure, you cancel our best evidences, and produce nothing but cracked and broken titles, which will not stand any fair trial at the bar of reason. And that you make the foundations of religion uncertain, I offer to prove by the reason of the thing; for if you require that as necessary for faith which was never believed to be so when the doctrine of faith was revealed, if upon the pretence of infallibility you assert such things which destroy all the rational evidence of Christian religion, and if at last you are far from giving the least satisfactory account concerning this infallibility of your church; then certainly we may justly charge you with unsettling the foundations of religion, instead of giving us a certain resolution of faith.

1. You make that necessary to faith which was not looked on as such when the doctrine of the gospel was revealed; and

what other design can such a pretence seem to have, than to expose to contempt that religion which was not received by a true divine faith, because it wanted that which is now thought to be the only sure foundation of faith, viz. the infallibility of the church of Rome? What then will become of the faith of all those who received divine revelations without the infallible testimony of any church at all? With what faith did the disciples of Christ at the time of his suffering believe the divine authority of the Old Testament? was it a true divine faith or not? If it was, whereon was it built? not certainly on the infallible testimony of the Jewish church, which at that time consented to the death of the Messiah, condemning him as a malefactor and deceiver: or did they believe it because of that great rational evidence they had to convince them that those prophecies came from God? If so, why may not we believe the divinity of all the scriptures on the same grounds, and with a divine faith too? With what faith did those believe in the Messiah who were not personally present at the miracles which our Saviour wrought, but had them conveyed to them by such reports as the woman of Samaria was to the Samaritans? Or were all such persons excused from believing merely because they were not spectators? But by the same reason all those would be excused who never saw our Saviour's miracles, or heard his doctrine or his apostles. But if such persons then were bound to believe, I ask on what testimony was their faith founded? was the woman of Samaria infallible in reporting the discourse between Christ and her? were all the persons infallible who gave an account to others of what Christ did? yet, I suppose, had it been your own case, you would have thought yourself bound to have believed Christ to have been the Messiah if you had lived at that time, and a certain account had been given you of our Saviour's doctrine and miracles by men faithful and honest, though you had no reason to have believed them infallible: I pray, sir, answer me, would you have thought yourself bound to have believed or no? If you affirm it, (as I will suppose you so much a Christian as to say so,) I pray then tell me whether persons in those circumstances might not have a true and divine faith, where there was no infallible testimony, but only rational evidence to build itself upon? And if those persons might have

a divine faith upon such evidence as that was, may not we much more, who have evidence of the same nature indeed, but much more extensive, universal, and convincing than that was? And how then can you still assert an infallible testimony of the conveyers of divine revelation to be necessary to a divine faith? Nay, further yet, how very few were there in comparison in the first ages of the Christian church who received the doctrine of the gospel from the mouths of persons infallible? and of those who did so, what certain evidence have men that all those persons did receive the doctrine upon the account of the infallibility of the propounders, and not rather upon the rational evidence of the truth of the doctrine delivered? and whether the belief of their infallibility was absolutely necessary to faith, when the report of the evidences of the truth of the doctrine might raise in them an obligation to believe, supposing them not infallible in that delivery of it, but that they looked on them as honest men who faithfully related what they had seen and heard? And this seems the more probable, in that the apostles themselves in their undoubtedly divine writings do so often appeal to their own sufficiency and integrity without pleading so much their infallibility. St. John saith, "That which we have seen and heard, and handled, declare we unto you." St. Peter appeals to his being an eyewitness to make it appear he delivered no cunningly devised fables. St. Luke makes this a ground, that the things were surely believed, because delivered from them who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word. If they insisted so much upon this rational evidence, and so sparingly on their own infallibility, certainly they thought the one afforded a good foundation for faith, though the other after believing it might highly advance it. And therefore I suggest not these things in the least to question the infallibility of the apostles, but to let us see that even at that time when there was a certainly infallible testimony, yet that is not urged as the only foundation for faith, but rational evidence produced even by those persons who were thus infallible. If we descend lower in the Christian church, or walk abroad to view the several plantations of the churches at that time, where do we read or meet with the least intimation of an infallible testimony of the catholic church, so called from its

¹ John i. 1.

109

² Pet. i. 16.

Lukei. 1, 2.

communion with that of Rome? What infallible testimony of that church had the poor Britons to believe on, or those barbarians mentioned in Irenæus, who yet believed without a written word? What mention do we meet with in all the ancient apologetics of Christians, wherein they give so large an account of the grounds of Christian faith, of the modern method for resolving faith? Nay, what one ancient father or council give the least countenance to this pretended infallibility, much less make it the only sure foundation of faith, as you do? Nay, how very few are there among yourselves who believe it, and yet think themselves never the worse Christians for it? If then your doctrine be true, what becomes of the faith of all these persons mentioned? upon your principles their faith could not be a true and divine faith; that is, let them all think they believed the doctrine of Christ never so heartily and obeyed it never so conscientiously, yet because they did not believe it on the infallibility of your church, their faith was but a kind of gilded and splendid infidelity, and none of them Christians because not Jesuits. And doth not this principle then fairly advance Christianity in the world, when the belief of it comes to be settled on foundations never heard of in the best and purest times of it; nay, such foundations, as for want of their believing them their faith must be all in vain, and Christ died in vain for them?

§. 7. 2. You assert such things upon the pretence of infallibility which destroy all the rational evidence of Christian religion: and what greater disservice could you possibly do to it, than by taking away all the proper grounds of certainty of it? and instead of building it *super hanc petram*, upon the rock of infallibility, you do it only upon a quicksand, which swallows up the edifice, and sucks in the foundations of it. You would have men to believe the infallibility of your church, that their faith might stand upon sure grounds; and yet, if men believe this infallibility of your church, you require such things to be believed upon it which destroy all kind of certainty in religion. And that I prove by some of those principles which are received among you upon the account of the church's infallibility.

1. That the judgment of sense is not to be relied on in matters of faith: this is the great principle upon which the

doctrine of transubstantiation stands in your church ; and this is all the most considerative men among you have to say, when all those contradictions are offered to them which that doctrine is so big of, both to the judgment of sense and reason, viz. That though it seem so contradictory, yet because the church, which is infallible, delivers it, they are bound not to question it. If this principle then be true, that the judgment of sense is not to be relied on in matters which sense is capable of judging of, it will be impossible for any one to give any satisfactory account of the grand foundations of Christian faith. For if we carefully examine the grounds of certainty 110 in Christian religion, we find the great appeal made to the judgment of sense, (“ that which we have seen and heard and handled.”) If then the judgment of sense must not be taken in a proper object, at due distance, and in such a thing wherein all men’s senses are equally judges, I pray tell me what assurance the apostles could have, or any from them, of any miracles which Christ wrought, of any doctrine which he preached ; especially because in his miracles there was something above nature, in which case men are more apt to suspect impostures than in things which are the continual objects of sense, as in the case of transubstantiation. Wherein if men are not bound to rely on the judgment of sense, you must say, that our faculties are so made that they may be imposed upon in the proper objects of them ; and if so, farewell all certainty, not only in religion, but in all things else in the world. For what assurance can I have of the knowledge of any thing, if I find that my faculties not only may be, but I am bound to believe that they actually are, deceived in a thing that is as proper an object of sense as any in the world. And if a thing which the judgment of all mankind (those excepted who have given away their sense and reason in this present case) doth unanimously concur in may be false, what evidence can we have when any thing is true ? For if a thing so plain and evident to our senses may be false, viz. that what I and all other men see is bread, what ground of certainty can we have, but that which my senses and all other men’s judge to be false may be true ? For by this means you take away the *κριτήριον* both of sense and reason in things, and consequently all things are equally true and false to us ; and

thence it follows, that truth and falsehood are but fancies, that our faculties have no means to difference the one from the other, that in things we all agree in as proper objects of sense, we not only may be but are deceived ; and then farewell sense, reason and religion together. For I pray tell me what assurance could the apostles have of the resurrection of Christ's individual body from the grave, but the judgment of sense ? What ways did he use to convince them that he was not a spectre or apparition, but by an appeal to their senses ? By what means did he reclaim Thomas from his infidelity, but by bidding him make use of his senses ? If Thomas had believed transubstantiation, he would easily have answered our Saviour's argument, and told him, If there were not a productive, yet there might be an adductive transmutation of some other person into him : and the disciples might all have said, It was true, there were the accidents of Christ's body, the external shape and figure of it ; but, for all they could discern, there might be some invisible spirit under those external accidents of shape : and therefore they must desire to be excused from believing it to be his body ; for *Hoc est corpus meum* had told them already, that the external accidents might remain where the substance was changed. Now therefore when the assurance of Christian religion came from the judgment of the senses of those who were eyewitnesses of the miracles and the resurrection of Christ, if the senses of men may be so grossly deceived in the proper objects of them in the case of transubstantiation, what assurance could they themselves have who were eyewitnesses of them ? and how much less assurance can we have who have all our evidence from the certainty of their report ? So that it appears upon the whole, that, take away the certainty of the judgment of sense, you destroy all certainty in religion ; for tradition only conveys to us now what was originally grounded upon the judgment of sense, and delivers to us in an undoubted manner that which the apostles saw and heard. And do not you then give a very good account of religion by the infallibility of your church, when if I believe your church to be infallible, I must, by virtue

111 of that infallibility, believe something to be true, which if it be true, there can be no certainty at all of the truth of Christian religion ?

§. 8. 2. Another principle is, That we can have no certainty of any of the grounds of faith, but from the infallibility of your present church. Whereby you do these two things : 1. Destroy the obligation to faith which ariseth from the rational evidence of Christian religion ; 2. Put the whole stress of the truth of Christianity upon the proofs of your church's infallibility : by which things any one may easily see what tendency your doctrine of resolving faith hath, and how much it designs the overthrow of Christianity. 1. You destroy the obligation to faith from the rational evidence of Christian religion, by telling men, as you do expressly in the very title of your next chapter, That there can be no unquestionable assurance of apostolical tradition, but for the infallible authority of the present church. If so, then men cannot have any unquestionable assurance that there was such a person as Christ in the world, that he wrought such great miracles for confirmation of his doctrine, that he died and rose again ; it seems we can have no assurance of these things if the present church be not infallible. And if we can have no assurance of them, what obligation can lie upon us to believe them ? for assurance of the matters of fact which are the foundations of faith, is necessary in order to the obligation to believe ; I mean such an assurance as matters of fact are capable of, for no higher can be required than the nature of things will bear. And what a strange assertion then is this, that matters of fact cannot be conveyed to us in an unquestionable manner, unless the present church stamp her infallibility upon them ! Cannot we have an unquestionable assurance that there were such persons as Cæsar and Pompey, and that they did such and such things, without some infallible testimony ? If we may in such things, why not in other matters of fact which infinitely more concern the world to know than whatever Cæsar or Pompey did ? But this will be more at large examined afterwards : I only now take notice of the consequence of this principle, and how fairly it destroys all rational evidence of the truth of our religion ; which whosoever takes away will be by force of reason a sceptic in the first place, and an infidel in the second. Neither is the danger merely in destroying the rational evidence of religion ; but, 2. In putting the whole weight of religion upon the proofs of the present church's infallibility, which whosoever considers

how silly and weak they are, cannot sufficiently wonder at the design of those men who put the most excellent religion in the world, and which is built upon the highest and truest reason, to such a strange kind of ordeal trial, that if she pass not through this St. Winifred's needle, her innocency must be suspected, and her truth condemned. So that whosoever questions the truth of this kind of purgation will have a greater suspicion of a juggle and imposture if she be acquitted, than if she had never submitted to such a trial. And when we come to examine the proofs brought for this infallibility, it will then further appear what uncertainty in religion men are betrayed to under this confident pretext of infallibility. Thus we see what scepticism in religion the principles owned upon the account of infallibility do bring men to.

§. 9. 3. When you have brought men to this, that the only sure ground of faith is the infallibility of your church, you are not able to give them any satisfactory account at all concerning it, but plunge them into greater uncertainties than ever they were in before. For you can neither satisfy them what that church is which you suppose infallible, what in that church is the proper subject of this infallibility, what kind of infallibility this is, nor how we should know when the church doth decide infallibly and when not; and yet every one of these questions 112 is no less than absolutely necessary to be resolved, in order to the satisfaction of men's minds as to the foundation of their faith.

1. You cannot satisfy men what that church is which you suppose to be infallible. Certainly, if you had a design to give men a certain foundation for their faith, you would not be so shy of discovering what it is you understand by that church which you would have infallible; if you had meant honestly, the first thing you should have done was to have prevented all mistakes concerning the meaning of the church, when you know what various significations it hath, not only in scripture, but among yourselves. Whether you mean the church essential, representative, or virtual, for every one of these upon occasion you make use of: and it was never more necessary to have explained them than in this place, and yet you with wonderful care and industry avoid any intimation of what you mean by that church which you would prove infallible.

When you plead so earnestly for the church's infallibility, I pray tell us what you mean by the church; do you intend the truly catholic and universal church which comprehends in it all such as own and profess the doctrine of Christ, in which sense it was well said by Abulensis, *Ecclesia universalis nunquam errat, quia nunquam tota errat*, "The universal church never errs, because the whole church is never deceived^r?" Or do you mean by your catholic church some particular part of it, to which you apply the name of *catholic*, not for universality of extent, but soundness of doctrine? then it will be necessary yet further to shew what part of the church that is, by what right and title that hath engrossed the name of catholic, so as to exclude other societies of Christians from it; and whether you must not first prove the absolute integrity and soundness of her doctrine, before you can attribute this title to it. For otherwise you will find that marvellously true which the same Tostatus saith, *Ecclesia Latinorum non est ecclesia universalis, sed quaedam pars ejus: ideo etiamsi tota ipsa errasset, non errabat ecclesia universalis, quia manet ecclesia universalis in partibus illis quæ non errant, sive illæ sint numero plures quam errantes, sive non^s*. So that if you prove the infallibility of the catholic church, this proves nothing at all as to the Roman church, which at most can be supposed to be but a part of it, and though that should err, the catholic church might not err, because that remains in those parts which err not, though they be more or less in number than those that err. This is the sense of his words; who seemed to have a much truer conception of the universal church than those now of your sect and party. If then we may believe the church to be infallible, and yet in the mean time condemn your church for the grossest errors, will it not be found necessary for you to tell us yet more distinctly what you mean by the church you would prove infallible? But supposing that only those parts you esteem catholic make up the catholic church, even among them the question will still return, what you mean by this catholic church? Do you mean all the individual persons in this number taken either distributively or collectively? or do you mean all those who are entrusted with the government of these? And

^r Præfat. in Matt. quæst. 13.

^s Quæst. 4. in Matt. ad proleg. 2.

then, whether all inferior pastors, or only bishops? And if bishops, whether all these collectively, or else by way of representation in a council? And still remember to make it good, that what you pitch upon as the acception of the church be not an effect of human policy, as Albertus Piggghius said all councils were no more; but that what you fasten the acception of the church catholic upon, you be sure to make it out that is the catholic church to whom the promises are made in scripture: and be sure to tell us how a church comes to be infallible by representation; whether as they who make the church representative deliver the sense of the church they represent, or by an immediate promise made to them upon
 113 their convention. If the former, whether it will not be necessary in order to the infallibility of the council, to know that it speaks the sense of all those particular churches whom they represent: if the latter, you must remember such places as belong to them as representing the church; for otherwise any company of Christians assembled together will challenge an equal interest in them; and then you will find it a hard matter to prove one infallible, and not the other. But if after all this your windmill should dwindle into a nutcracker, and this harangue concerning the infallibility of the catholic church should at last end in one particular person, which by a strange catachresis must be called the church, or else, as heir at law to her, doth take possession of all her privileges; then the testament must be produced wherein he is named so, and those clauses especially wherein the rights and privileges of her are devolved over to him and his heirs for ever. There being then so much ambiguity and uncertainty in the very name of the church catholic, which you would prove infallible, that if nothing else discovered your imposture, yet this would sufficiently, that you would undertake to resolve men's faith by the infallibility of the church, and yet never offer to shew what that church is.

2. Supposing you had shewn what the church is, yet you never tell us what the subject of infallibility is in that church. For when in this case you speak of infallibility, you must remember you are not to shew what that church is which is not deceived in judging concerning things necessary to salvation, but what that church is which is infallible in her direc-

tion of others to salvation: for you speak of such an infallibility as must be a guide to others, and whose infallible judgment must be known to all such who must resolve their faith into her testimony: you would have done then no more than was absolutely necessary, to have precisely shewn us where this infallibility is lodged in your church, whether in pope or council, or both together. I suppose it can be no news either to you or to the reader, what controversies there are among the greatest of your side, whether the pope or council be the greater, and to whom this infallibility belongs: neither are either side fully agreed in their own way; for some, that are for the infallibility of a general council, will make that infallible without the pope; others account that opinion, if not heretical, the next step to it. Those who are for the pope's infallibility are not agreed neither when he shall be said to be infallible: they who speak oracles tell us, when he doth define *ex cathedra*; but what that is neither they nor we can well tell: some say it is when he hath a congregation of chosen cardinals about him, others make the whole college of cardinals necessary; and therefore some in the late definition concerning the Jansenists were refractory, because it was defined only by a congregation of chosen cardinals, which, they said, was not defining *ex cathedra*: some again make neither of these necessary, but suppose the infallibility lodged in the pope himself. And are we not at a fine pass for the certainty of our faith, if it must rely upon the infallible testimony of your church, and yet you yourselves not at all agreed to whom this infallible testimony doth belong? Think not that we will be put off with that silly evasion, that these differences among you hinder not the certainty of faith, because it is not *de fide* either way. For 1. How shall we come to know among you what is *de fide*, and what not, till you are agreed to whom this infallibility belongs? And if it belongs to a general council, then it is *de fide*; for it was determined at the council of Basil in behalf of the council, and therefore, if one of the opinions be true, it must be *de fide*; for I suppose you make that to be so which is determined by the infallible testimony of your church. 2. How shall a man believe that any thing at all is *de fide* among you, if that on which your faith is to rest be not *de fide*? For, supposing a difference to happen, 114

which hath often done between the pope and council, and they decree contrary things to each other, if it be not *de fide* to believe either the one or the other distinctly to be infallible, upon what testimony at such a time must that which supposeth the infallible testimony of your church rely? 3. If it be said not to be *de fide* because not determined, by the same reason your church's infallibility cannot be *de fide*, because not determined neither: for if the determination of the church be necessary to make any thing *de fide*, it must by the same reason be necessary to make your church's infallibility *de fide*; and I suppose you will not readily instance in any decree of the catholic church, where the testimony of your church is determined to be infallible. And yet one would imagine that if there were such a necessity in order to faith, of the infallible testimony of your church, there would be an equal necessity of believing this infallibility on the same testimony: or, if one may believe one article, especially so important a one as that, without any precedent infallible testimony, why not any other, nay, why not all the rest? Thus you still see how uncertainties grow upon us when we search into your account of faith.

3. You are not certain neither what kind of infallibility
 Lab. p. 55. this is; for you offer to prove the church infallible by the
 n. 1. same way that Moses, Christ, and his apostles were proved
 infallible: a very fair offer, if you could make it good; but
 then we were in hopes you would have proved such a kind of
 Lab. p. 58. infallibility as they had; you tell us, No: for your infallibility
 n. 4. is supernatural, but not divine; that it is precise infallibility,
 but not absolute; that it is not by immediate revelation, but
 by immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost: something you
 would have, but you cannot tell what; an infallibility in the
 conclusion without any in the use of means; an infallibility
 by immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost, yet but in a sort
 divine; an infallibility yielding nothing to scripture in point of
 supernaturality and certainty, yet nothing so infallible as
 scripture. Are not these brave things to make wise men
 certain in their religion with? that they are to believe the
 scriptures upon a testimony infallible, yet not infallible;
 divine, yet not divine; and therefore certain, but not certain;
 true, but not true. But of the silliness of these distinctions
 afterwards. But can you think to persuade wise or rational

men to believe their religion on such terms as these are? Had they no other evidence than what you give them, would they not be shrewdly tempted to reject all religion as a mere imposture, as no doubt your doctrine of infallibility is? A strange kind of talisman, which secures your pope from a possibility of erring, but still he must be under the certain direction of his stars; for if he be not *in cathedra*, this telesm doth him no good at all. It were heartily to be wished, if he should once happen to be *in cathedra*, he would infallibly determine what it was to be *in cathedra* for ever after; for it would ease men's minds of a great many troublesome scruples, which they cannot without some infallible determination get themselves quit of. But still we are bound to believe your church infallible: but, I pray, whence comes this infallibility? comes it from heaven, or is it of men? From heaven, no doubt, you say; for it is by a promise of the Holy Ghost. This were something if it were proved; but yet you maintain this infallibility in such a manner, that none who read the scriptures could ever think it were promised there. For there they always read, that the Spirit of truth is a Spirit of holiness, and never dwells in those who are carnal or wicked men; but you tell us, that let the lives of popes be what they will, they have no promise to secure them from being wicked, but the Spirit of God doth by immediate assistance secure them from being fallible. But, I pray, which of these two is not only more contrary to scripture but to human nature, 115 wickedness or fallibility? This latter, so consequent upon the imperfection of our understandings, that till we put off the one, we can hardly be freed from the other; but wickedness is that which the whole design of Christian religion is against, and administers the highest motives and the greatest assistance for the conquest of: and can it then be thought suitable to such a doctrine, that the divine Spirit should, like Mahomet's dove, be always ready to whisper in the ear of the most profligate person, if it be but his fortune to sit *in cathedra*? Such a kind of infallibility as this, I assure you, will never prevail with any such persons who understand Christian religion, to believe the doctrine of it upon such pretences as yours are.

§. 10. 4. Supposing you could tell men intelligibly and suitably to the doctrine of Christianity what kind of infallibility this is,

yet if you cannot satisfy them when your church doth define infallibly, you leave them still in the same labyrinth, without any clue to direct them out of it. But if we consider what things are necessary to be believed before we can believe any definition of your church infallible, how impossible it is to be infallibly assured of any such definition of your church ! sure you cannot blame us for crying out of the labyrinth you have brought us into.

1. How many things in Christian religion are to be believed before we can imagine any such thing as an infallible testimony of your church ! And if the infallibility of that be the ground of faith, on what account must those things be believed which are antecedent to the belief of such an infallible testimony ? Now that many things, and some of them far from being clear, are to be believed antecedently to an infallible testimony, will appear if we do but consider what they commonly mean by that church which they suppose infallible, and what must be supposed that this infallibility be the rule of faith. By the church, they tell you, they mean the catholic church : but lest you should think them too honest in saying so, at next word it is the Roman catholic church (just as if one should say the German universal emperor). But lest you should think at least they meant the Roman church of all ages, and think you might have some relief from the primitive Roman church, they will soon rectify your mistakes by telling you it is the present Roman church they mean ; but if it be the present Roman church, it may be you would be willing to hear the judgment of all the honest men in that church, and that you hope many of the people and learned men (not in orders) may speak their minds freely. To prevent that, they tell you they mean only the representative church. But still the bishops who make up this representative church may in their several synods complain of abuses and rectify miscarriages ; therefore they understand not bishops by themselves or particular synods, but met together in general councils. But yet if the councils were truly œcumenical, there might be some hopes of redress. But for that they are sure, for they allow none to be members of the general councils which are in schism or heresy ; and their own church is to be judge what schism and heresy is ; and they are hugely to blame then if they admit any but

those of their own party. But yet some councils have stood upon their privileges in opposition to the pope, as those of Constance and Basil. Therefore, to make all sure, no council is lawful in itself, or its decrees bind the church, but such as is called and confirmed by the pope; who is strangely to blame then if he suffers any thing to pass to his own prejudice: so that this infallibility of the pope is the last resort in the resolution of faith; for all the rest, we see, are uncertain. And what a vast measure of faith (greater than that which our Saviour said would remove mountains) is necessary to believe this infallibility of the pope! For in the first place, unless he believes the particular Roman church to be the catholic church, he spoils all the conjuring afterwards with 116 not having faith enough about him. Again, he must believe that Christ hath promised an infallible assistance to the pastors of the church as distinct from the people; but this avails little still, unless he believes these credentials must not be opened but in full council; and that council such a one as the pope calls, and in which himself presides, either in person or by his legates, and that the decrees of the council oblige not the church without the pope's confirmation: and to that end you must believe that St. Peter was made monarch of the church by Christ; that this monarchy was to be derived to all his successors in all places: but as to this (wherever he was besides), he never had any successor any where but at Rome; and these successors of his at Rome cannot for their lives err, if they do but sit *in cathedra*. Certainly he that hath faith to swallow all these things is hugely to blame if he stick at any thing; and by that time a man's understanding is debauched sufficiently by these principles, I make no question but such a one will believe infallibility, transubstantiation, or any thing in the world. But beside these things, in order to the making the church's testimony the rule of faith to any one, there must another dose of principles be taken, which have opium enough in them to lay asleep all the remainders of reason: for he must infallibly believe the church to be infallible, though no infallible argument be brought for the proof of it; that this church doth judicially and authoritatively pronounce her sentence in matters of faith, though we know not what that church is which must so pronounce; that he infallibly

know that this particular sentence was so pronounced, though he can have no other than moral means of knowing it; and lastly, that the infallibility must be the first thing believed, although all these things must of necessity be believed before it. And if after this second purgation, he be not a true son of the church of Rome, he deserves to be anathematized as an obstinate person, for having any thing of reason in him. Therefore I wonder not that the doctrine of infallibility seems no strange thing to you; for a man must devour such giant-like absurdities before he comes to it, that when he comes at it he finds it nothing. But still, one would think it a little strange that this infallibility should be the only foundation of believing all things in religion, and yet so many things, and some of them very strange ones, must of necessity be certainly believed before it.

2. Supposing a man not only believes all these things before it, but doth really believe your church infallible, yet he is uncertain still how he should know when your church defines infallibly. For so many things are required in reference to the person defining, so many for the definition itself, that it will be no easy matter to remove those difficulties which lie in the way of his assent to such a definition. As to the person, if he be not a Christian, if he be not a priest, if not a lawful pope, all his definitions are far from being infallible; yet none of all these can any one be assured of according to your principles, of the intention of the priest being necessary in the administration of sacraments in order to the effect of them. (But the large train of consequences following from hence I forbear to urge you with, because they have been so often urged by abler pens.) But what will you say, when we are so far from assurance as to the pope's being legally chosen, that we have, if not great evidence, yet very high presumptions of the contrary, what becomes then of your pope's infallibility? Nay, from the illegality of one follows the illegality of all his successors, because they were chosen by cardinals made by him, who could be no lawful cardinals, because he was no legal pope, and consequently not they who were made by them. The case is this: There is a bull of pope Julius the Second against the simoniacal election of any pope, which the cardinals, upon their first entrance into the conclave, swear

solemnly to observe. In which bull it is expressly said, that “if any pope be simoniacally chosen by any of the cardinals, upon any gift or promise whatsoever, that such an election is *ipso facto* null; and the cardinals may oppose one so chosen, as if guilty of manifest heresy; and that none ought to receive or look on such a one as pope; neither can this simoniacal election be made good by inthronization, course of time, submission of cardinals, &c. And that they ought all to avoid him as a magician, heathen, publican, or the founder of heresy.” This is the substance of that bull. Now it is notoriously known that Sixtus the Fifth was simoniacally chosen pope. For that he might be chosen, he did under his hand promise to cardinal d’Este, who had a great interest in the conclave, that in the time of his popedom he would never create Jerome Matthew, the cardinal’s great enemy, a cardinal; upon which promise he was through his interest chosen pope. But when afterwards the pope violated his faith to him by creating his enemy cardinal, d’Este being highly incensed against him for it, sent the very instrument subscribed by the pope’s own hand to Philip the Second king of Spain, who in the year 1589 sent the duke of Suisse extraordinary ambassador to Rome, to intimate to Sixtus the Fifth his intention of calling a general council^t, according to the bull of Julius the Second, for declaring this simoniacal election. When this message was delivered to the pope, and he saw the instrument was discovered under his own hand, he fell into such a perplexity that he died soon after, which stopped the progress of the business. By this it evidently appears that Sixtus himself was no lawful pope, and therefore could create no cardinals: and because the cardinals created by him had a voice in the election of the subsequent popes, it follows that there hath been no legal pope since Sixtus the Fifth. For after the death of Sixtus, cardinal Montalto his nephew with forty votes entered the conclave, and chose Urban the Seventh, who lived but few days; after him Gregory the Fourteenth, who was pope but ten months; after him Innocentius the Ninth, who continued but two months; after him Clement the Eighth, who outlived the election thirteen years. But not to inquire any further

^t V. Supplicat. ad Imperat. Reg. cili convocandi contra Paulum V. Princip. super Causis generalis Con- Lond. 1613.

into the irregular election and the simoniacal bargains of Paul the Fifth after the death of Clement, this certainly may suffice to let men see what becomes of their faith when they pin it upon the pope's sleeve: for if we are to rely upon his infallible testimony, and he so far from being infallible, that by their own constitutions he was no pope, nor to be looked on as other than a magician, heathen, and heretic, is not our faith then settled on a sure foundation? For what assurance can any one have, that amidst all the enormities and secret practices of the conclave, any one is freely and legally chosen? But where will his faith stand, when it is notorious that a cardinal must say, *Dabo tibi claves*, and that not without a contract too? But suppose all the assurance that may be of the person who is to deliver this infallible testimony; yet at the utmost, the most men in the world can have no more than a moral certainty of the definition itself. If we can imagine that any one should know that great mystery, when the pope should define *ex cathedra*; yet can he have any greater evidence of such a definition, than we have concerning the things revealed in scripture. I cannot think that you will suppose any greater evidence of it than if one sees and hears it; and what do we desire less in reference to the doctrine of Christ? But how few in the world are there who stand by when the pope defines! May others be certain of such a definition or no, so as to be obliged to believe it? If not, what good can this infallibility do them? if they may, why do you quarrel with our way as uncertain? when if you grant your infallibility, you cannot prescribe any more certain way, but one much more liable to question and dispute than ours is. Thus you see what little advantage

118 you get by all these bravadoes about infallibility; and that you are so far from giving a satisfactory account of faith, that you expose Christian religion to more doubts, scruples, and uncertainties than ever before. Which may abundantly shew to all unprejudiced minds the great unreasonableness of your way of resolving faith, which was the thing to be proved.

§. 11. 2. But suppose your way to be never so reasonable, yet if it effect not that it was brought for, it deserves little favour from inquisitive persons, and that I now come to evince, viz. That supposing your church infallible, and that infallibility proved by the motives of credibility, you do not

escape the circle objected against your way. And really whosoever considers your way of management of things will find, that though you give out great words and pretend to prove the church's infallibility as Moses' and Christ's was proved, yet your eye was all the while on nothing but the circle, and thought if you could get rid of that, you should do well enough with any thing else. For, as though this circle had ridden you like an *ephiattes*, you tumble, and groan, and toss this way and that, and when you think yourself free from it, it sits as close upon you as ever. When you come so miserably off with the proofs of your church's infallibility, you satisfy yourself with this; "It is sufficient for the present to have declared how the catholics fall not into a circle, as his lordship here pretends they do." Though this could not be sufficient for your design, who had promised in the page foregoing to prove at large the infallibility of the church; yet you had done somewhat if you had done this, which, if I much mistake not, you are as much to seek in, as in the proofs of your church's infallibility. And that I prove by three things: from the nature of that faith whose resolution you promise, from the persons you prove it to, from the nature of that infallibility which you attempt to prove.

1. From the nature of that faith you are inquiring a resolution for, which is not that which you call a human faith, but a divine faith. When you go about to prove the church's infallibility by the motives of credibility, is it a divine faith or no which may be built on these motives? choose which part you please. If it be, then by your own confession a divine faith may be built on prudential motives; if it be not, then what is all this to the purpose? For the question is not, whether by any other kind of assent you cannot avoid the circle? but, whether in the resolution of divine faith you can or no? For I hope you deny not but the scriptures and the church's infallibility are both to be believed with the same kind of assent, built upon an infallible testimony; in this case I then ask, why, with a divine faith, you believe the scriptures to be the word of God? You answer, Because the church, which is infallible, delivers them so to us. If I then ask, why with a divine faith you believe the church's infallibility? answer me if you can any other way, than because the scriptures, which are infallible, say so. And thus you see, it is

only your running away from the question makes you think yourself out of the circle, and not any satisfactory answer to it. Will you, or dare you say, that is an assent of the same nature which is built on the motives of credibility, with that which is grounded on an infallible testimony? If it be not, bethink yourself of a new answer: if it be, bethink yourself of a new way to oppose us, and not to think it sufficient to charge us with building divine faith on prudential motives, when you do it yourself. But if you should assert that to be a divine faith which is built on the motives of credibility, you not only contradict yourself, but the great ones of your own party. For your Becanus saith^u, “that these motives are the foundation only of a prudent assent, but not infallible;” and Valentia^x goes much higher, and tells us, “the faith grounded on these motives is not divine or infused, but acquisite, that it is in its nature uncertain and fallible, that it cannot be the foundation of Christian faith.” If this be true, to what end do you go about to resolve faith upon such uncertainties, in hopes to escape the circle you see others in? Thus you see how insufficient your attempt is, because you speak not of the same kind of assent as to the scripture and the church.

Lab. p. 55.
n. 1.

2. You avoid not the circle by the different considerations of the persons you offer to prove the infallibility of the church and scripture to. You tell us, “that when you prove the infallibility of the church by scripture, you make use only of arguments *ad hominem*, and argue *ex principiis concessis* against sectaries who deny the infallibility of your church, but admit the divine authority of the scriptures, and therefore you may justly use scripture arguments against them.” I grant it: but still I say, you avoid not the circle by this subterfuge neither. For, 1. The question is not, which way you will prove the infallibility of the church against those who deny it? but, which way you resolve your own faith of the church’s infallibility? therefore this signifies nothing at all as to your question about the resolution of faith; for I suppose you build not that on any thing which your adversary grants or denies. Is there no difference between the way of proving a thing to an adversary, and the resolving one’s own faith? I question not but

^u Becan. sum. p. 2. tom. patr. de fide, c. 1. q. 2. sect. 8.

^x Valent. tom. 1. disp. 1. q. 1. punct. 1. sect. 8. colum. 35.

you may dispute with him upon principles he grants and you deny, but I should think you no wise man to build your faith upon such principles. So that this evasion comes not near the business. 2. Even in disputing against your adversaries you cannot avoid the circle; which I thus prove. You offer to prove to them the church to be infallible out of scripture; for this you bring them particular places, and think presently to vanquish them with *Super hanc petram, Pasce oves*, and *Dabo tibi claves*; but hence ariseth another question, How you come infallibly to know that this is the sense of those places? You know your adversaries presently deny any such as infallibility to be proved out of them. And what way have you to assure them this is the sense of them, but because your church, which is infallible, delivers this to be the sense of them? And is not this then a plain circle? You are to believe the church infallible because the scripture saith so; and you are to believe the scripture saith so because the church is infallible. If this be not still a plain circle, you may question whether there be any such figure in mathematics.

3. I prove you cannot avoid the circle, from your own confession of the nature of that infallibility which you say is in the church. For you tell us, "that the church's testimony Lab. p. 58. doth not suppose any new revelation from God, but only a ⁿ ⁴ supernatural assistance of the Holy Ghost, preserving her from all error in defining the points of Christian faith." By this assertion you destroy all possibility of avoiding the circle by the motives of credibility; for if these had proved an immediate divine revelation in the church, I confess you had proved the church's infallibility independently on scripture; but when you offer to prove only a divine assistance with the church in delivering former revelations, you cannot, and the reason is, because you can bring no ground at all why such an assistance should be necessary in the church, or why it should be expected, but from the promises made in scripture concerning such an assistance of God's Spirit to be with the church: and therefore the utmost your motives of credibility can pretend to is only to notify that church from others which you suppose infallible: but still the formal reason of your believing this infallibility cannot be from those motives, but upon those promises which you suppose to import such an assistance of

the Holy Ghost with the church which shall secure her from error: so that still the circle returns upon you; for you believe the scriptures infallible because of the church's testimony, and you believe the church infallible because of the promises in scripture concerning the assistance of the Holy Ghost with the church, so as to secure her from all error. And thus I hope I have made good this general attempt upon your way of resolving faith, by manifesting the great unreasonableness and manifest insufficiency of it.

§. 12. I now come to handle the particulars of this chapter, which consists of two things, proofs and evasions; the proofs you produce for your church's infallibility, and your evasions as to those arguments which are objected by his lordship. Both of these will deserve our consideration; and if it appear that your proofs are weak and your evasions silly, you will have no great cause to triumph in this attempt of yours. As to your proofs, two things are considerable, your method of proving, and the proofs themselves. I begin with the first, which you deliver in these words: "Wherefore as to the last demand (in which only there is difficulty), viz. How we know the church to be infallibly governed by the Holy Ghost? we answer, that we prove it first in general, not by the scripture, but by the motives of credibility which belong to the church, in the same manner as the infallibility of Moses and other prophets, of Christ and his apostles, was proved, which was by the miracles they wrought, and by other signs of an infallible Spirit, direction, and guidance from God which appeared in them. Whence it is clear that we incur no circle." That supposing all that true which you said before, yet thereby you avoid not the circle, I shall take it for granted I have already proved, till you better inform me: our business now therefore is, to consider which way you prove this infallibility of your church, which you tell us is not by scripture (for which I commend your ingenuity), but by the motives of credibility. But lest any should think this a weak way of probation, you tell us, "It is in the same manner that the infallibility of all persons divinely inspired was proved," not excepting Christ himself. A most heroical and generous attempt! for which the church of Rome is infinitely obliged to you, if you make it good: for then it necessarily follows, that there is as

great danger in not believing the infallibility of your church, as in not believing Moses and the prophets, Christ and his apostles. For where there is an equal obligation to believe, there is an equal sin in not believing; and where the sin is equal, it stands to reason that the punishment should be so too. I suppose you deny not but where there are equal motives inducing to believe, there results an equal obligation to faith, because the grounds obliging to assent can be no other than the motives inducing to it; and if these motives be as strong and evident for your church's infallibility as for that of Moses and Christ, men must be as much obliged now to believe your church infallible as that Moses and Christ were so. So that the denial of your church's infallibility must needs be accounted by you to be as high a piece of infidelity, as if one should call in question the infallibility of Christ himself; for you assert, that you have the same proofs for the infallibility of your church which there were to prove him infallible. I do not therefore wonder at your sharpness and severity in your censures of all out of your church, when, upon your principles, the denying your church's infallibility must needs be an offence of as high a nature as if one denied the infallibility of the sacred scriptures. But lest you should not think these any absurdities at all, we must come yet closer to the examination of your proofs: for which we must inquire into these two things: 1. Whether the same motives of credibility belong to your church, by which Moses and the prophets, Christ and his apostles, shewed their testimony to be infallible. 2. Whether, on supposition you had the same motives, there were the same reason to believe the testimony of your church infallible, as there was to believe them to be so.

1. Whether the same motives of credibility belong to your church or no. And here again these things offer themselves to consideration: 1. By what means their testimony was proved infallible; 2. Whether your church's testimony can be proved by the same motives or no. For the first, you are pleased to give us this account why Moses was accounted infallible; "for the Israelites seeing Moses to be a person very devout, mild, charitable and chaste, and endowed with the gift of working miracles, were upon that ground obliged to receive him for a true prophet, and to believe him infallible,"

by acknowledging as true and certain whatever he proposed to them from God." All which I acknowledge to be very true; but am much to seek how you will apply it to the proving your church's infallibility. What kind of miracles those are which your church pretends to will be examined afterwards; the other motives of credibility mentioned are devotion, mildness, charity, and chastity; and these, I suppose, you look on as those motives which must induce men to believe the infallibility of your church. But do you really think that every person who is devout, mild, charitable and chaste, is therefore infallible? If not, to what purpose do you produce them here? if you do, some out of your church may be as infallible as those in it. Especially if your superstitious ceremonies be the greatest part of your devotion; and your burning of heretics, the argument of your mildness; and your damning all out of your church, be the best evidence of your charity; and the lives of your popes, the most pregnant instances of your church's chastity. The rest of your discourse, wherein you endeavour, after your way, to prove that there were sufficient motives of credibility to believe the testimony of Christ and his apostles, I suppose no Christian will deny; and that the miracles wrought by them were proofs that their testimony was infallible, I am so far from questioning, that all your other motives signify nothing without them. Which, because it hath so great an influence on the present dispute, I think it necessary to be a little further cleared than it is by you, and chiefly for this end, to let you see how much you have befooled yourself in attempting to prove the infallibility of your church in the same manner that Christ and his apostles' infallibility was proved in, and yet insisting on that of miracles as the great evidence of their infallibility, which your church cannot with any face pretend to. I acknowledge it then as a great truth, that it was necessary that the testimony of all such who pretend to be infallible must be confirmed by such miracles as Christ and his apostles wrought; nay, that it is impossible without such evidence to prove any testimony infallible, where that infallibility is pretended to independently upon scripture, as it is in your present case. Which will be thus made evident: Absolute infallibility is not consistent with the shortness of the human understanding, for

such an infallibility must suppose an infinity of knowledge; for where there is a defect in the apprehension, there is a possibility of deception; therefore only an infinite being can be absolutely infallible. Now, man's understanding being so finite and limited in its conceptions, it is on that account apt to be imposed upon, and to form false notions of things; so that supposing no being in the world of greater perfections than man is, there never could be any such thing as infallibility among men. For though some men's understandings might outstrip others in the quickness of conception and solidity of judgment, yet the nature of man being thus finite, that presumption would lie against all pretence of infallibility. It being then impossible that man's understanding should be in itself infallible, we must consider, whether there be a possibility it should receive any infallibility from that infinite Being which is above it. This then must be taken for granted, that as an infinite understanding cannot be deceived, so infinite goodness cannot deceive. And therefore, whatever doth immediately proceed ¹²² from a being infinitely wise and good, cannot but be infallibly true. And there is no repugnancy at all in the nature of the thing, but that this infinite Being may, in a way certain, but imperceptible by us, communicate to the minds of men such notions of things which are the effects of his own wisdom and counsel: and this is that we call divine inspiration. But then we are still to consider, that the understanding of a finite creature cannot be any further infallible, than as it receives those notions which are imprinted upon it by the infinite and supreme intellect of the world; and such a person is no further infallible in what he speaks, than as he delivers to the world those very conceptions which are thus formed in his mind. And this is that which the apostle means when he says, that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by ² Pet. i. 21. the Holy Ghost." And so far as they were thus moved, so far they were infallible, and no further. But this infallibility being not intended merely for the satisfaction of the mind of him that hath it, but for the general good of the world, it is necessary that there be some way whereby men may come to understand who are infallibly assisted and who not. For otherwise the world would be more exposed to delusions under this pretext of infallibility, than if there were never any such thing in the world. Either therefore every man must be

infallibly assured in his mind that such a person is infallible in what he is to deliver, which is a needless piece of enthusiasm; or else such external evidences of it are to be used which may induce all rational and considerative persons to the belief of it. Which is the way that God in his infinite wisdom hath made choice of; by making those very persons, whose understandings are thus assisted by him, to be the instruments of doing some things above the power of nature. And nothing can be more reasonable than to believe their testimony true, who are employed as such immediate instruments of divine power; and if their testimony be believed true, their doctrine must be infallible; for the greatest part of their testimony is this, that they deliver not their doctrines from themselves, but immediately from God. And consequently their testimony must be owned as infallible in whatever they deliver as from God; it being very unreasonable to think that God would favour such persons with so extraordinary a power, who should falsify their message and deceive the world. Thus you see, that whatever motives of credibility you would blind the world with, there can be no motive independent on scripture, which is sufficient to prove infallibility, but such a power of working miracles which Moses and the prophets and Christ and his apostles had, which last, as you truly say, “received their commission from Christ to preach every where, and to confirm their words with signs that followed; by which signs all their hearers were bound to submit themselves unto them, and to acknowledge their words for infallible oracles of truth.”

Lab. p. 56.
n. 2.

§. 13. Now what reasonable man could otherwise expect, but that after you had so solemnly promised “to prove the infallibility of your church in the very same manner that Moses with other prophets, Christ and his apostles, were first proved to be infallible,” which are twice your words; and your at large shewing, “that the main ground why they were believed infallible was, because of the miracles wrought by them, whence they needed not the testimony of scripture;” you should have shewed us what kind of parallel miracles are wrought in your church to prove its infallibility. But instead of that, when you come to the purpose, you shuffle us off in a most ridiculous and impertinent manner: for you tell us, that “as therefore Moses, our

Lab. p. 55.
n. 1.

Lab. p. 56.
n. 2.

Lab. p. 57.
n. 2.

blessed Saviour and his apostles were proved infallible by their works, signs, and miracles, without scripture; so is the church without help of the same sufficiently proved to be infallible by the motives of credibility." Well, but what and where are ¹²³ these motives of credibility? Are they of the same kind and nature with the signs and miracles wrought by them, or not? If not, how can the way and manner be the same, which you promised to prove the church's infallibility? If not, what assurance can you give us, that those will prove infallibility as well as their works and miracles? This should have been demonstrated, and those motives produced to the view of the world, if you had designed any other than juggling with your readers. Instead of this, you tell us that "heretics, though they have the scripture, yet being out of the true church, they do wholly want these signs of infallibility; of which see Bellarmine, and other catholic authors, discoursing more at large *de notis ecclesie*. It is sufficient for the present to have declared how catholics fall not into a circle, as his lordship pretends they do." These are excellent ways of proof, and fit only for a church that pretends to be infallible, and then most of all when her infallibility was to be proved. What did you lead us this long dance for, if you never intended to prove your church infallible? Could you not have referred us to Bellarmine at first as well as at last? Nay, and now you do turn us off to him, you bid us go seek the notes of the church, and not the proofs of infallibility; which sure are different things, unless you suppose no church true but what is infallible. But however, you are sure not to miss the heretics, they must have a blow at parting; "they are out of the church, and do wholly want these signs of infallibility." What signs of infallibility? speak out, and tell us what they are, and where they lie, and how they may be known; for otherwise we may mistake in the physiognomy of your church, and instead of signs of infallibility, we may see shrewd signs of imposture and delusion in her. And it is the more suspicious, because you are so afraid of producing them after so solemn a promise to do it. However, you tell us, "It is sufficient for the present to have declared how catholics fall not into a circle." Well, I see, though we miss of the coals St. Laurence was broiled on, we shall have a feather from the wing of a seraphim; though you

fail of your promise, we shall have something as good, and as great a feat of activity as that had been, viz. to let us see how the papists dance in a round, and yet make no circle, Your demonstrations are so good in this kind, it is pity you do not employ your excellent wit in squaring mathematical circles as well as this; and I shall as soon hope to see you perform the one as the other. But can you, without smiling at our simplicity, tell us, (after such a wide-mouthed promise as you made in the page foregoing; “But, because we have often promised to prove the infallibility of the church, it will be necessary to insist somewhat longer upon this point, and declare the matter at large,”) that it is enough to vindicate yourselves from the circle? Was this the thing you promised, or the proofs of your church’s infallibility? I confess, *Quid feret hic tanto dignum promissor hiatu?* came into my mind at first reading those words, and it proves accordingly. You really meant no such thing as proving your church infallible: and you are very excusable in it, though you had promised it; for no promise can bind to impossibilities. But it may be yet, though these proofs do not come after the promise, they may have gone before it; for I find before a large catalogue mentioned of such signs and motives which may prove the church’s infallibility, as sanctity of life, miracles, efficacy, purity and excellency of doctrine, fulfilling of prophecies, succession of lawfully sent pastors, unity, antiquity, and the very name of catholic, &c.; number enough, if that would do it. But we shall see what force these motives are of by these following queries.

Lab. p. 56.
n. 2.

Lab. p. 55.
n. 1.

1. Is it all one with you, to know a church to be true, and to make it infallible? These you call the motives of credibility 124 for your church’s infallibility, were wont to be esteemed only the notes of distinction of the true church from all others. The question, I suppose, concerning these had this rise. There being, after the Reformation, several distinct societies of men pretending to be the true Christian church, to which every Christian ought to associate himself, there was a necessity of pitching on some way whereby the true Christian church might be distinguished from other communions; which begat a new controversy, what were the proper notes of this society. Those of your party, as Bellarmine tells you, differed

much in the number of them : some of which are those by you mentioned : but whether they be the true notes of the church or no, which hath been largely examined by others, what are these to the proof of infallibility, setting aside that of miracles ? Is it not possible that there should be a society of men joining together in the profession of Christian religion, but these men must presently be infallible in whatever they deliver as the sense of their society ? Their visible profession of Christian religion makes them a true church : but cannot men seem to profess our religion unless they have a visible infallible head to guide them ? Is infallibility the soul of a church, which gives it its being, I mean a present infallibility continually actuating and informing the body of it ? Cannot a man be known to be a true man unless he be inspired ? nor a church distinguished from other societies but by a spirit of infallibility ? The truth is, let Bellarmine multiply his fifteen notes of the church to fifteen hundred if he please, nay, let it pretend to what infallibility it please, if any society of men challenging the name of church to itself do destroy the end of its constitution, or hold any thing directly contrary to the foundation of its institution, all other notes in the world can never make it a true church. So that the only certain note of a true church is its agreement with the primary foundation of it in that doctrine which was infallible, and attested by miracles undoubtedly divine : that which holds the doctrine of Christ is the Christian church, and the nearer any society comes to that the purer it is ; the more it is distant from it, the more impure : and no man who honours the Christian religion can be bound to communicate with the impurities of such a church, let it bear it never so high under the pretence of infallibility. If you boast never so much of your unity, succession, antiquity, the name of catholic, &c., if your doctrine be repugnant to what was originally delivered by the founder of the Christian church, your society is not the true Christian church. But suppose it were, and that it were known so to be by such notes as these are, can you not conceive a church should be consonant to the doctrine of Christ, but it must be itself infallible in deciding controversies ? Cannot you imagine a society consisting of all true Christians in the world should be made up of such persons who all firmly believe that doctrine infallible which

Christ delivered, but yet judge themselves all fallible, and dare not usurp that royal prerogative of heaven, in prescribing infallibly in matters questioned, but leave all to judge according to the pandects of the divine laws, because each member of this society is bound to take care of his soul, and of all things that tend thereto? Is such an idea of a Christian church a thing unreasonable, inconsistent, or contrary to any law of its foundation? or rather, is it not a very true and just representation of that society of men which our blessed Saviour instituted as a church in the world?

§. 14. 2. Do you mean, that these motives should prove the Christian church at large infallible, or your present particular universal church of Rome? for some of your motives seem to respect the one, and the rest the other notion of it. When you mention miracles, efficacy, purity and excellency of doctrine, fulfilling of prophecies, do you really intend these for the
 125 proof of your present Roman church's infallibility, as that is distinct from all other churches of Christians in the world? If you do (as you must if you speak to the purpose) shew us what miracles, efficacy, purity and excellency of doctrine there are in your church beyond and beside all other churches in the world, what fulfilling of prophecies among you which makes your church infallible. Is it the prophecy that your church shall be infallible that is fulfilled? Shew then to us where that prophecy is, and how it appears to be fulfilled. Is it because your church pretends to be infallible? I do heartily acknowledge some prophecies are therein fulfilled, but such as your church hath little ground to be proud of their accomplishment. But to all impartial Christians, the accomplishment of those prophecies which speak of the degenerate state of the church, as they are a great confirmation of the infallibility of the divine revealer of them, when they see it so remarkably in the signatures of your church, so they are far from being any motive of credibility to them to prove your church to be infallible. Unless it be meant that the state of your church is an infallible evidence that those prophecies are fulfilled. But I pray, why should fulfilling of prophecies make your church infallible? I had rather thought if you could have proved your church to have been prophetic, it had been more to your purpose. And if your popes *in cathedra* had foretold

future events, which by their coming to pass had evidenced to the world they had a true spirit of prophecy, then indeed you had said something towards infallibility. But that the mere fulfilling of prophecies, owned divine by all Christians, should prove your church infallible, is such a motive of credibility concerning that infallibility, that it proves nothing but by this consequence, If Christ were infallible, then your church is. Or do you mean, because some prophecies concerning your church are fulfilled, therefore your church is infallible? by the same reason I hope you will not deny but that Antichrist is infallible, for whenever he did, doth, or shall appear, no doubt there will be fulfilling of prophecies, and those very clear ones too. And therefore Antichrist and your pope may go together for infallibility.

But it may be yet you have some other motives besides fulfilling prophecies, and those are miracles: now you speak indeed to the purpose. But yet still we poor infidels (because out of your church) desire a little satisfaction concerning them too. 1. We very reasonably desire, that he in your church who pretends most to infallibility should do these miracles himself. For that was always the way in scripture, for them whose testimony was to be believed infallible, to be the workers of those miracles which should induce men to believe such an infallibility. Do you think the Israelites would have believed Moses infallible, if any ordinary Israelite had wrought those miracles which he did? unless you would suppose that those miracles were purposely wrought to have attested that Moses was infallible. But yet God thought it much more fit that Moses himself should be the instrument of doing them, and so it was with our blessed Saviour. Let then your church produce the several miracles wrought by your popes to attest their infallibility; or, if you believe pope and council the subject of infallibility, produce the miracles to prove that. God was always so just and reasonable as not to expect the belief of any infallibility without such evidences given for it as might persuade men to believe it: and you acknowledge, that independently on scripture there can be no such proof of infallibility as miracles, and you require it from us to believe the present church infallible; where then are your present miracles wrought to attest this infallibility? For as long as you

require such an assent to the present church's infallibility, it is necessary on your own grounds that the present church should always work miracles in order to the proving this infallibility.

126 2. We desire such miracles as may sufficiently convince the infidels as to this point of your infallibility. For that was always the way used in scripture; the intention of miracles was to persuade those who did not believe. Would Pharaoh or the Egyptians have believed Moses, if all his miracles had been wrought in a corner where none but Israelites had been present? Would the Jews have believed in Christ, if he had not come in public among them and wrought such frequent, public and uncontrolled miracles, that his greatest enemies durst not deny them? If you would then have us believe your present church's infallibility, let your pope, or at least your priests, come and do such kind of miracles among us which may bear the examination of inquisitive men, and then try whether we will not believe your infallibility; but till then, excuse us. Think not we are of such easy faith that the pretended growing out of a leg in Spain, or any of your famous miracles wrought by your priests in Italy, will persuade us to believe your church infallible. It is always observed, your miracles are most talked on where people are most ignorant, and therefore most apt to be deceived. Your priests, like the devils in the primitive times, can do no feats when their opposers are by; it is an easy thing for a stump to grow a leg in its passage from Spain hither; for *fama crescit eundo*; such things are most believed where circumstances are least capable of examination. And the jugglings and impostures of your priests have been so notorious in this kind, that their pretences to miracles have made more infidels than catholics, by making men more apt to question whether ever there were any real miracles done, than believe the truth of yours. Very likely then it is that you should persuade the world your church is infallible because of the miracles wrought in it.

3. What discrimination do you put between those lying wonders which you are foretold shall be wrought at the coming of Antichrist, and those pretended miracles which are wrought among you? Convince us by sufficient evidence that the things which seem most confirmed by your miracles, viz. invo-

cation of saints, is a thing consonant to the doctrine established by the undoubted miracles of Christ and his apostles. If it be contrary to it, either you must prove that doctrine false, or, if you admit it true, you prove your miracles to be false; because contrary to a doctrine established by miracles undoubtedly divine. And God can never be supposed to attest with miracles the truth of doctrines contrary to each other. And thence the wisest of your church are so far from insisting on this of miracles for a motive of credibility concerning your church's infallibility, that they leave it out from being a note of the church; because heretics, as they say, may as to all outward appearance work as great miracles as the best catholics. And therefore Bellarmine saith, "No man can have an absolute certainty concerning the truth of miracles, because the devil, though he cannot work true miracles, can work as to appearance the greatest^y." Therefore, since the confirmation of Christian religion by miracles undoubtedly divine, there can be no reliance on the trial of miracles for the truth of any doctrine: for those very miracles and doctrine must be judged according to that rule of faith which was confirmed by divine miracles. Thus we have examined those motives which seem most to prove infallibility, and shewn how little they agree to the present church's infallibility.

§. 15. 3. As to the other motives, what evidence do you produce that wherever they are the church is infallible, and that these do infallibly belong to your church? for both these must be made evident, or you do nothing. Now these motives are, sanctity of life, succession, unity, antiquity, and the very name of catholic, &c. How hard is it to conceive the connection between these and infallibility! Nay, they are so far from it, that it hath been abundantly proved against 127 your party that these are no certain notes of the true church (which is a controversy I shall not now discuss). And if the church cannot be proved to be true by them, much less certainly will it be proved to be infallible. But suppose all this, is your church so remarkable for sanctity of life, that it should be a motive for your infallibility? Have your popes been indeed such holy men, that we may not question but they were

^y De Notis Ecclesiæ, cap. 14.

moved by the Holy Ghost when they spake? Certainly, you have some other way to know it than all histories both of friends and enemies, and the constant fame of the world, which hath then much abused us with stories quite of another nature. Or is the state of your church so pure and holy, that it must shew itself infallible by that? But whom will you be judged by in this case? I desire you not to stand to the verdict of your adversaries. Will you believe men of your own communion? pray read what sad complaints are made of the degenerate state of your church by Petrarch, Mantuan, Clemangis, Espenæus, Erasmus, Cassander, and several others, and judge you whether we have not reason to cry up the sanctity of your church. But these (it may be you will say) were discontented persons. Will you believe then your cardinals? and if ever you will believe them, it should certainly be when they meet to advise concerning the state of your church; and was not this the expression of the college of chosen cardinals for reformation of the church under Paul III., *Per nos, inquit, per nos nomen Christi blasphematur apud gentes?* Is not this a great evidence of your sanctity? If you will not believe the cardinals, you will not certainly question the judgment of him whom you would fain have to be infallible, the pope himself. And these are the words of Adrian VI. in his instructions to his legate at the diet of Norimberg, A. D. 1522, *Scimus in hac sede aliquot jam annis multa abominanda fuisse, abusus in spiritualibus, excessus in mandatis, et omnia denique in percursum mutata.* If ever pope was infallible, he was in saying so, and he could not but be *in cathedra* when he said it. You see then what evidence you have from yourselves concerning that sanctity of life which is in your church. But it may be still you do not mean real sanctity, but that the doctrine of your church tends more to promote it than that of any other church. I heartily wish the quite contrary could not be too truly said of it, and it is well known that one of your great artifices whereby you persuade great persons to your religion is, the liberty it indulgeth them in sin here, and yet the hopes it gives them of heaven hereafter. Our doctrine requires indispensable obedience to all the precepts of Christ: yours tells them, those which are the most strict and severe are not precepts, but counsels of per-

fection. Ours, that there is no hope of salvation without hearty amendment of life: yours, that penance is requisite, and external satisfaction to the church; and for internals, that contrition is very commendable, but if there be not that, attrition will serve the turn. Ours charges men to look to their salvation in this life, because when life is ended their estate is irrecoverable: yours, that though men die in their sins, yet they may be relieved by the prayers of the living, and that there is hope they may get through purgatory to heaven at last. So that supposing any persons to own Christianity to be true, it is hard to conceive there should be more artifices imagined to reconcile the love of the pleasures of sin here with the hopes of heaven at last, than are used by those of your profession. So that if I should suppose myself a heathen philosopher, and any of your profession should come and tell me these were the precepts and these the promises of Christian religion, but I could believe none of them but by the infallible proposition of your church, and that I was to know your church infallible by that sanctity of life which was in it; when I had thoroughly considered not only the impieties com- 128
mitted by the great ones of your religion, even in Rome in the first place, but the artifices used to enervate all the precepts of real sanctity, and so plainly to see what interest and design is carried on under all these disguises, I should be insuperably assaulted with the thoughts that those of your religion who were the authors of these things were so far from believing your church infallible, that they really believed neither Christian nor any other religion in the world. So much for that sanctity of life which is in your church. As for your other motives of unity, succession, antiquity, and the name of catholic, &c. they have so little affinity with any pretence of infallibility, and do equally agree to those churches, as the Greek and Abyssine, which you are so far from acknowledging infallible that you will not grant them to be true churches (notwithstanding these motives), that I cannot easily imagine to what end you produced them, unless to let us see you had the gift of saying something, though nothing to the purpose.

§. 16. When you have thus apparently failed in producing any shadow of proof for your church's infallibility by these motives of credibility, we now come to see how good you are

at the defensive part, who have been so unhappy in your attempts. Therefore we must consider what arts you use in putting by the force of those arguments which are produced against you by his lordship. After he had urged that question against you, how it may appear that your church is infallibly governed by the Holy Ghost, to which we have seen how impossible it is for you to give any satisfactory answer, he proceeds to another argument, which lies in these words; Besides, this is an inviolable ground of reason, ‘That the principles of any conclusion must be of more credit than the conclusion itself^z.’ Therefore if the articles of faith, the Trinity, the resurrection, and the rest, be the conclusions, and the principles by which they are proved be only ecclesiastical tradition, it must needs follow that the tradition of the church is more infallible than the articles of faith, if the faith which we have of the articles should be finally resolved into the veracity of the church’s testimony.” To this your answer is very considerable. 1. You tell us, “That the ground of all this discourse is the authority of Aristotle cited in the margin,” which you repeat after him. But I pray, whence learned you that this was all the ground of his discourse? for his lordship doth not say that Aristotle saith so, and therefore it is so; but says, “that it is an inviolable ground of reason,” (which words you prudently left out, that there might appear some shadow for such a cavil,) and cites only the concurrent testimony of Aristotle with that evidence of reason which is in it. And will you deny this to be an undoubted principle in reason, that that which is assumed as the ground and reason why I assent to any thing, must be more certain and evident than that is which I assent to on that ground? Certainly you must have an art above all other men to make the superstructure stronger than the foundation; the particular problems in mathematics more evident than the postulata; the conclusion surer than the premises. But you think to come off this absurdity; 2. By distinguishing between science and faith, or, as you express it, “between the proceeding of the understanding when it works naturally and necessarily, by and from the evidence and clearness of its object; and when it

Conf. p. 50.
sect. 16. n.
3.

Lab. p. 57.
n. 2.

^z Aristot. 1. Post. c. 2. tom. 16.

works supernaturally and produceth supernatural and free acts, merely or at least principally from the impulse and inclination of the will; for in such cases the maxim holds not, viz. 'That the principles of a conclusion must be of more credit than the conclusion itself.' Now the act of believing is such an act; that is, which the understanding elicits rather by a voluntary and free inclination and consent of the will, than from any evident certainty in the object whereto it assents." A most judicious and profound discourse! to which I know 129 not whether ever I can persuade my will, but I am sure I never shall my understanding. Lest you should think it is only some impulse of my will which hinders my assent, I shall fairly lay down the reasons which keep me from it.

1. That all assent of the understanding is grounded upon evidence.

2. That however that evidence proceeds, yet the foundation of assent must be more evident than the thing assented to. And these two I suppose will fully reach the scope of your answer, by shewing that your distinction of acts natural and supernatural is both untrue and impertinent.

1. That all assent is grounded upon evidence, i. e. that no man can assent to any thing merely because he will, but there must be sufficient reason inducing and persuading to that assent. You acknowledge this to be true in acts of knowledge, but not of faith; but what do you make to be the genus in your definition of faith? I suppose you will say it is an assent of the mind. If it be so, the mind cannot be supposed to elicit an act of the same nature in so repugnant a manner to itself, that it should assent to any thing without evidence. I know what discourses those of your party have concerning the obscurity which is necessary to faith. If you mean obscurity as to the object believed, i. e. that the matters to be believed are not so clear to us as demonstrations, I will not gainsay it: but if you mean obscurity or want of evidence as to the reason inducing me to believe, I utterly deny any such obscurity to belong to faith, or to be consistent with it. For God doth not require us to believe any thing without sufficient grounds for our believing it, and those grounds do bear a proportionable evidence to the nature of that assent which he requires. If he requires an infallible assent, he gives infallible grounds; if

he requires a firm and certain assent, he gives firm and certain grounds; if he requires only a probable assent, he gives only probable evidence. But still, such as the nature of the assent is, such is the evidence he gives for it. To make this plainer by an instance. That Christ was the true Messias, he requires an assent built upon infallible grounds, and therefore God gave such infallible evidence of it by the miracles which he wrought. That these miracles were once really done, he requires our firm assent, and therefore gives certain evidence by an universal and uncontrolled tradition; but whether St. Paul or any other apostolical person were author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, he requires only an assent built upon the most probable grounds, and therefore he hath given us no more for it. But still as the assent is, so the evidence must be. For faith being an act of the mind, whose nature is to judge according to reason, we cannot suppose any act of it to proceed in a brutish manner by a mere impulse of the will. I deny not but the will may be said to have some kind of influence upon the understanding, both in furthering and hindering assent; but it is not by any command it hath over the mind in its acts, but as it can divert the mind from or incline it to the searching into the evidence of the things. Therefore when we commonly say, *Facile credimus quæ volumus*, and so on the contrary, it is not because of the will's immediate power upon the understanding, but as the desire of a thing makes us inquisitive after it, so the dislike of it makes us unwilling to hear the reasons for it, and ready to entertain any pretence against it. Thus, I grant, the will may have power upon the mind as to the eliciting the act of faith, not that I can assent to a thing as true because I desire it to be true; but this inclination of the will removes those impediments which would obstruct my discovery of the evidence which is in it. You have certainly a mind of another mould than others have that can believe things which do not appear credible to you, yet such a kind of faith as this is very necessary for your
130 church's infallibility; and for that your discourse of believing by the impulse of the will is very proper and seasonable. But other persons may think it an imperfection in their minds, that they cannot believe any thing any further than it appears credible; that is, that they can go no further than they have

legs, nor see when their eyes are shut, or the room dark. But it may be you will tell me, all this discourse proceeds on supposition, that faith were a natural act of the mind, but you speak of a supernatural faith. It may be so ; but I hope you speak not of an irrational faith, which must believe things beyond the evidence of their credibility. Faith, whether natural or supernatural, acquired or infused, is still an act of the mind ; and let it have but what belongs to it as such, and call it what you will. I deny not a peculiar operation of grace in the eliciting the act of divine faith ; but still I say, the manner whereby it is wrought must be agreeable to the nature of the understanding, and by discovering the credibility which is in the objects of faith. If you say, the assent is infused, I must say, the evidence is first infused ; for as Christ when he healed the blind did not make them see objects which did not appear visible, so neither doth the Spirit of God in planting faith make men discern objects which do not appear credible ; and the stronger the assent is, the greater is the evidence and credibility of the object. And can you call then that any free inevent assent which goes no further than the object appears credible ? It cannot be then any act of the will, but merely of the mind, which yields assent to any object propounded as credible to it. So that in what way and manner assent is required, in that same manner doth God give proportionable evidence : I deny not but that assent is required to objects inevent to sense and reason ; but then I say, the assent is not required to what is obscure and inevent, but to what is evident to us, and therefore credible. In the incarnation of the Son of God, the manner of the hypostatical union is to us inevent, but then God doth not require our assent to the manner, but to the truth of the thing itself. Wherever God requires us to believe any thing as true, he gives us evidence that it is so : wherever it appears the thing is inevent, we may lawfully suspend our assent, and, for all that I know, it is our duty so to do.

§. 17. But yet you have not done with this profound discourse ; for you very learnedly distinguish a double proceeding in probations : the one is *per principia intrinseca*, which you very well English, “ by intrinsical principles,” i. e. “ such as Lab. p. 58. have a necessary, natural connection with the things proved, ^{n. 3.}”

and do manifest and lay open the objects themselves; the other is *per principia extrinseca*, 'by extrinsical principles,' that is, such as have no natural or necessary connection with, nor do produce any such evident manifestation of the things proved, but their efficacy (viz. whereby they determine the understanding to assent) doth wholly depend on the worth and virtue of that external principle whereby such probations are made." This you apply to "knowledge and faith, that as knowledge proceeds in the former way, so faith doth in the latter, which depends purely upon extrinsical principles, viz. the authority, veracity, goodness and knowledge of God affirming it; which was immediately known to the prophets and apostles, but mediately to us, which however must be infallibly conveyed to us, which can only be by the testimony of the church." This is the substance of your third section; to which I answer,

1. That all certainty in the acts of the mind, whether in knowledge or faith, must equally suppose the truth of some extrinsical principles, viz. the veracity and goodness of God: for otherwise we cannot certainly judge of those you call *principia intrinseca*, to know what things have necessary and natural connection with the things proved. For unless I suppose that

131 God is so true and good as not to suffer me to be deceived in the proper actings of my faculties, I may judge such things to have connections and dependencies one upon another which really have nothing so. And therefore so far your distinction concerning science and faith will not hold. But, 2. If the meaning of this distinction be only this, that there is a different proceeding in a demonstration from what there is in an act of faith, I deny it not, but suppose it nothing to your purpose. For though the evidence be discovered in a different way, yet there is in both proportionable evidence to the nature of the assent. When I assent because I know that the thing is true, the evidence of the thing itself is the ground of that assent; but when I assent upon the authority of any person, the credibility of his testimony is the evidence on which that assent is grounded. Though this latter evidence be of another kind, yet it is sufficient for that act of the mind which is built upon it; and that testimony which I establish a firm assent upon must be as evident in its kind, i. e. of credibility, as the evidence of a thing demonstrable in the nature of a demon-

stration. 3. The main strength of your answer seems to lie in this, that in such an assent as is built upon authority, as in the case of faith, when we do not immediately hear God speaking, but it is conveyed to us by the testimony of others, it is necessary that this testimony be infallible. But, good sir, this is not our present question, whether it be necessary that this testimony be infallibly conveyed to us; but, supposing such an infallible conveyance, whether that infallible testimony must not be more credible than the matters which are believed upon it? But as though never any such thing had been started, you give us a long discourse of the different proceeding of science and faith, but never offer to apply it to the business in hand. I must therefore ingenuously commend you for an excellent art of gliding insensibly away from a business you cannot answer, and casting out a great many words not to the purpose, that you may seem to touch the matter when you are far enough from it.

And therefore I say, secondly, that however the evidence proceeds in matters of faith, yet whatever is the foundation of assent must be more evident than the thing assented to: especially where you suppose the assent to be infallible, and the testimony infallible, which must ascertain it to us. This will be plainer by an instance. If I ask you, Why you believe the resurrection of the dead? your answer is, Because of the authority of him that reveals it: the next question then is, Why you believe that God hath revealed it? your answer is, Because the testimony of the church is infallible which delivers it. Whereby it is plain, that though your first answer be from God's authority, yet the last resolution of your faith is the infallibility of your church's testimony; and that being the last resolution, that infallibility must be the principle on which the belief of the rest depends. For, according to your principles, though God had revealed it, yet if this revelation were not attested by the infallible testimony of your church, we should not have sufficient ground to believe it. And if without that we can have no sufficient ground to believe, then this principle, The church is infallible, must be more credible than the resurrection of the dead. Which was the absurdity his lordship charged upon you, and you are far from being able to quit yourself of.

Lab. p. 58.
n. 4. 139

§. 18. The next thing which you busy yourself much in answering of is, that according to these principles of resolution of faith, you make the church's testimony the formal object of faith, which you acknowledge yourself to be a great absurdity, and therefore make use of many shifts to avoid. I shall reduce the substance of your verbose and immethodical answer into as narrow a compass as I can, without defalking any thing of the strength of it. You tell us then, "That our faith is resolved into God's revelations, whether written or unwritten, as its formal object; and our infallible assurance, that the things we believe as God's revelations are revealed from him, is resolved into the infallibility of the church's definitions, teaching us that they are his revelations; and that the formal cause of our assent in divine faith, is God's revelation delivered to the church without writing; but because that is as it were at distance from us, it is approximated or immediately applied to us by the infallible declaration of the present church. Hence it appears, our faith rests only upon God's revelation as its formal object, though the church's voice be a condition so necessary for its resting thereon, that it can never attain that formal object without it." And lastly you tell us, "the church's authority then being more known to us than the scriptures, may well be some reason of our admitting them, yet the scriptures still retain their prerogative above the church:" and thence you distinguish of the certainty of the object and subject; from all which you conclude, "that the church's definition is not the formal object of faith, but that our faith relies upon it as an infallible witness both of the written and unwritten word of God, which is the formal object." This is the substance, in your long answer, of what hath the face of reason and pertinency: which I come to a close and particular examination of. And that you may not say I pass over this important controversy without a thorough discussion of it, I shall first prove that it necessarily follows from your principles, that the church's infallible testimony must be the formal object of faith; and 2. that the answers you give are far from being satisfactory that it is not.

1. That it necessarily follows from your principles, that the church's infallible testimony must be the formal object of faith. In order to which we must consider what the scope and design

of this discourse is, concerning the resolution of faith. The question started by Mr. Fisher in the conference was, "how his lordship knew scripture to be scripture, or how the divine authority of the scriptures was to be proved?" To this his lordship returns a large answer, to which you attempt a reply in this chapter, and mention this to be the main question, How scriptures may be known to be the word of God. To this, you tell us, "no satisfactory answer can be given but from the infallible testimony of the church," and the great reason given by you in all your discourse is this, "That this is an article to be believed with divine faith, and divine faith must be built on an infallible testimony." The question then resulting hence is, Whether on these principles you do not make the infallible testimony of the church the formal object of faith? You deny, and we affirm it; but before I come to the particular evidences of the cause, some general *postulata* must be laid down, which by the very state of the controversy must be acknowledged by you, which are,

1. That the question in dispute is not concerning the formal object of all things divinely revealed, but concerning the believing this to be a particular divine revelation. For it is obvious to any one that considers what vast difference there is between those two questions, why you believe that to be true which God hath revealed: the plain and easy resolution of this is into the veracity and infallibility of God in all his revelations. But it is quite another question when I ask, Why you believe this to have been a true divine revelation? or that such particular books contain the word of God. And it is apparent by the whole process of the dispute? that the question is not concerning the first, but the second of these two.

2. That the question is not concerning any kind of persuasion as to this divine revelation, but concerning that which you call divine faith.

3. That this divine faith must be resolved into some ¹³³ testimony supposed infallible. These three are things agreed on between both parties, as appears by the whole management of this controversy. Only you suppose this infallible testimony to be the church, which your adversary denies, and saith it will

follow from thence that you make your church's testimony the formal object of faith, which I thus prove.

1. That which is the only ground and foundation whereon a divine faith is built, must be the formal object of faith: but the infallible testimony of your church is the only foundation whereon faith is built. By the formal object of faith, I suppose you and I mean the same thing, which is the foundation whereon the certainty of the assent is grounded, or the principal objective cause of faith, viz. not every account that may be given why men believe, but that which is the only certain foundation to establish a divine faith upon. Now, let any one but consider what the question is, and what your resolution is, and then judge whether you make not the church's testimony the formal object. The question is, How we know the scriptures to be the word of God? which in other terms is, What the ground is why I assent to the doctrine contained in scripture as a divine revelation? You say, the testimony of the scripture itself cannot be that ground; you say, the testimony of the Spirit cannot be it; you say, a moral certainty cannot be it, because then it is not divine faith: what then is the reason why you believe it? Do you not over and over say, it is because of the infallible testimony of the church, which gives us unquestionable assurance that this was a divine revelation? and yet for all this, this testimony is not the formal object of this divine faith! The most charitable apprehension I can have of you, when you write things so inconsistent, is either that you understand not or consider not what you write of, but take what hath been said in such cases by men of your own party, and right or wrong that serves for an answer.

Lab. p. 58. But for all this, you tell us confidently, "that your faith is not
n. 4. resolved into the voice of the church, as into its formal object; but it is enough to say, our faith is resolved into God's revelations (whether written or unwritten) as its formal object; and our infallible assurance that the things we believe are divine revelations, is resolved into the infallibility of the church's definitions." These are excellent notions if they would hang together. But,

1. We inquire not what is enough to say in such a case, but what ground you have for saying what you do. You have

enough to say upon many subjects in this book (or else your book would never have swelled to the bulk it hath), but you have generally very little reason for what you say.

2. Is that infallible assurance, that the things we believe as God's revelations are revealed from him, a thing called *faith* or no? If it be, as I hope you will not deny it, then by your own confession, faith is resolved into the church's testimony as its formal object; for, you say, "this infallible assurance is resolved into the infallibility of the church's definitions, teaching us that they are his revelations." These are your own words. And do you yet deny this testimony of the church to be the formal object of this infallible assurance?

3. What is it you mean when you say, "that faith is resolved into God's revelations as its formal object?" Is it that the reason why we believe is, because God hath revealed these things to us? But that, you know, is not the matter at all in question, but, how we come to assent to such a doctrine as a divine revelation? Answer me punctually to it; can you possibly resolve your faith into any thing else as its formal object? If you can, I pray do us the favour to name it. If you resolve this faith, as you seem to express your mind, into divine revelation, as its formal object, shew us where that 134 revelation is extant for which you believe scripture to be the word of God. Is it the scripture itself, or a revelation distinct from it? If you say, it is the scripture itself, then you must make the infallible testimony of your church needless; for then we may have infallible assurance that the things we believe are divine revelations without your church's testimony or definitions: then what is become of the unwritten tradition you mention in these words? If then it be demanded, why we believe such books as are contained in the Bible to be the word ^{Lab. p. 59.} of God? we answer, Because it is a divine unwritten tradition ^{11. +} that they are his word; and this divine tradition is the formal object whereon our faith relies. Well then, our last resolution of faith is into this divine unwritten tradition: but whence come you to know that this tradition is divine? Into what revelation is the belief of that finally resolved? Doth it appear to be so by itself, and then why may not the scripture? or hath it some other revelation and divine tradition to attest it? And then the same question returns concerning that, and

so *in infinitum*, or else of necessity you must acknowledge one of these two things; either that some divine revelation may sufficiently manifest itself without any infallible testimony of your church; or else, that this infallible testimony must be the formal object of faith. Of these two, choose which you please.

2. I prove that you must make the church's testimony the formal object of faith, because either you must make it so, or you must deny divine revelation to be the formal object of faith; because the reason is equal for both. I demand then, how you resolve your belief of the truth of the doctrine of Christ? You tell me, into divine revelation, as its formal object. I ask yet further, why you believe the revelation made by Christ to be divine? Your answer must be, either that your church's testimony gives you infallible assurance of it, and then the former argument returns; or else, that Christ manifested his testimony to be infallible, and therefore his revelation divine, because of the motives of credibility which accompanied his preaching. If this be your answer, as it must be by your former discourse, then by the same reason I prove your church's testimony to be the formal object of faith, because you have endeavoured to prove the church's infallibility by the same motives of credibility that Moses and Christ proved theirs. Either therefore retract all your former discourse, or else confess, that by the same reason that the divine revelation made by Christ is the formal object of faith, the infallible testimony of your church must be so too. For according to your own supposition there are equal motives of credibility, and therefore equal obligation to believe the infallibility of one as of the other.

3. If the only reason which makes any thing be the formal object agrees to the testimony of your church, then that testimony must be the formal object of faith to them that believe it. Now that which is the only reason which makes any thing to be the formal object of faith, is the supposition that it is infallible. For why do you resolve your faith finally into divine revelation? is it not because you suppose God to be infallible in all revelations of himself? And therefore if your church be infallible, as you say it is, by the same reason that must be the formal object of faith; as if it were by the reve-

lation of God himself. But here you think to obviate this objection by some strange distinctions concerning your infallibility. You tell us, therefore, "the church's infallibility is not absolutely and simply divine, or that God speaks immediately by her definitions; but only that she is supernaturally infallible, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost preserving her from all error in defining any thing as a point of Christian faith, that is, as a truth revealed from God, which is not truly and really so revealed." A rare distinction this! You say afterwards, "the church's definition is absolutely infallible, but yet this infallibility is not absolutely and simply divine:" I pray tell us what is it then? You say, "it is supernatural, but not divine, and this supernatural infallibility by the assistance of the Holy Ghost securing from all error, but yet not absolutely and precisely divine:" I pray tell us what kind of infallibility that was which the apostles had in delivering the doctrine of Christ; was that any more than such a supernatural infallibility as you fondly arrogate to your church, viz. such a one as might secure them from all error in defining any thing as a point of Christian faith which was not so, that is, as a truth revealed from God, which was not truly and really so revealed? And yet, I suppose, you will not deny but those who lived in the apostles' times might resolve their faith into that infallibility which they had as its formal object, and therefore why not as well into your church's infallibility, since you pretend to as great infallibility in your church as ever was in the apostles? Thus I hope I have shewn it impossible for you not to make the church's testimony the formal object of faith, since you make it infallible as you do.

2. We come now to consider the little evasions and distinctions whereby you hope to get out of this labyrinth. But having so manifestly proved that it follows from your principles that the church's testimony is the formal object of faith, all your distinctions fall of themselves; for thereby it appears, that your church's testimony is not merely a necessary condition of believing, but is the formal cause and reason of it; therefore your instance of approximation in natural causes is nothing to the purpose. No more is that of a commonwealth's practising the same laws being an argument that those were its primitive laws: unless you suppose it impossible, 1. that a

Lab. p. 58,
59. n. 4.

135

Lab. p. 59.
n. 4.

commonwealth should ever alter its laws; or, 2. that it should practise contrary to its primitive laws; or, 3. that it should be supernaturally infallible in judging which are primitive laws and which no: without these suppositions, I say, that instance signifies nothing to the business in hand; and when you have proved these true, I will give you a further answer. Your answer to Aristotle's text, or rather to that undoubted maxim of reason with which the citation of Aristotle concurred, hath been considered already. Your answer to the testimony of Canus is like the rest of your discourse, trivial, and not to the purpose; for Canus doth not only deny the church's testimony to be the formal object of faith, but the necessity of believing its testimony to be infallible. *Non intelligitur necessario, quod credo docenti ecclesie tanquam testi infallibili*, are the very words of the testimony cited in the margin of his lordship's books.

Conf. p. 50.
sect. 16. n.
4.

Your next section affords us some more words, but not one drachm more of reason. For how do you prove that the church's authority is more known to us than the scripture's? or how can you make it appear that there is any authority but what is relative to us? and therefore the distinction is in itself silly, of authority *in se*, and *quoad nos*. For whatever hath authority, hath thereby a respect to some it hath its authority over. And can any thing be a ground of faith simply and in itself, which is not so towards us? For the formal object of faith is that for whose sake we believe; and therefore if divine revelation be, as you say, the formal object of faith, then it must be more known to us than the testimony of the church: for that must be more known to us which is the main cause of believing. But if all your meaning be, that we must first know what the church delivers for scripture, before we can judge whether it were divinely revealed or no, I grant it to be true; but what is this to your infallibility? Will you prove
136 the infallibility of your church to be more known to us than that of the scriptures? and, on supposition that were true, can you then prove that the scriptures should still retain their prerogative above the church? What your authors distinguish concerning objective and subjective certainty pertains not to this place; for the worth and dignity of the scriptures may exceed that of tradition, yet, when the knowledge of that worth relies

on that tradition, your esteem of the one must be according to your esteem of the other. I will not here inquire whether the adhesion of the will can exceed the clearness of the understanding, nor whether Aristotle was unacquainted with subjective certainty, nor whether our adhesion to articles of faith be stronger than to any principles evident to natural reason; for I look upon all these assertions to serve you in no other capacity than as excursions from the matter in hand, and therefore I shall not gratify you so far as particularly to examine them. For all then that hath been yet produced by you, his lordship's argument remains good, that, according to your principles, the church's testimony must be made the formal object of faith, and I am the more confirmed in it by the weakness of your evasions; and I hope I have now made good those words which you challenge his lordship for, "that it were no hard thing to prove it."

§. 19. The next absurdity charged upon you by his lordship is, "that all the authorities of fathers, councils, nay of scripture too, must be finally resolved into the authority of the present Roman church: and though they would seem to have us believe the fathers, and the church of old, yet they will not have us take their doctrine from their own writings, or the decrees of councils, because, as they say, we cannot know by reading them what their meaning was, but from the infallible testimony of the present Roman church teaching by tradition." And this, he tells you, is the cunning of this device. To which you answer; "By what hath been said, it appears, that there is no device or cunning at all, either in taking away any thing due to the fathers, councils, or scripture, or in giving too much to the tradition of the present church. For we acknowledge all due respect to the fathers, and as much (to speak modestly) as any of our adversaries' party. But they must pardon us, if we prefer the general interpretation of the present church before the result of any man's particular fancy. As for scripture, we ever extol it above the definitions of the church, yet affirm it to be in many places so obscure, that we cannot be certain of its true sense without the help of a living infallible judge to determine and declare it, which can be no other than the present church. And what we say of scripture may, with proportion, be applied to ancient

Conf. p. 51.
sect. 16. n. 5.

Lab. p. 60,
61. n. 4.

general councils. For though we willingly submit to them all, yet where they happen to be obscure in matters requiring determination, we seek the assistance and direction of the same living infallible rule, viz. the tradition or the sentence of the present church." The question is, Supposing your church's testimony to be infallible, without which we can have no assurance of what fathers, scriptures and councils say, what authority remains among you to any or all of these? And it is not, what respect you tell us you give them, (for you may as easily speak as believe contradictions;) but what is really left to them, if your opinion concerning the present church's infallibility be true. And he that cannot see the cunning of this device of resolving all into the authority of the present Roman church, will never understand the interest of your church; but, it seems, you apprehend it so much as not to seem to do it, and have too much cunning to confess it. But this must not be so easily passed over, this being one of the grand artifices of your church, to make a great noise with fathers, scriptures and councils, among those most who understand them least, when yourselves resolve them all into the present church's testimony. Which is first to gag them, and then bid them speak.

- 137 First, for the fathers, you say, "you acknowledge all due respect to them;" but the question is, what kind of respect that is which can be due to them, when, let them speak their minds never so plainly, and agree in what they please, and deliver what they will as the judgment of the church, yet all this can give us no assurance at all on your principles, unless your church doth infallibly determine the same way. What then do the fathers signify with you? Doth the infallibility of your church's definition depend on the consent of the fathers? No, you tell us, "she is supernaturally assisted by the Holy Ghost;" and if so, I suppose the judgment of the fathers is not that which she relies on. But it may be you will say, this supernatural assistance directs the church to that which was the judgment of the fathers in all ages. This were something indeed, if it could be proved: but then I would never read the fathers to know what their mind is, but ask your church what they meant: and, though your church delivers that as their sense which is as opposite as may be both to

their words and judgments, yet this is part of the respect due to them, not to believe whatever they say themselves, but what your church tells us they say. A most compendious way for interpreting fathers, and making them sure not to speak any thing against your church. Therefore I cannot but commend the ingenuity of Cornelius Massus, the bishop of Bitonto, who spake that out which more wary men are contented only to think. *Ego, ut ingenue fatear, plus uni summo pontifici crediderim in his quæ mysteria fidei tangunt, quam mille Augustinis, Hieronymis, Gregoriis*^a: "That I may deal freely," saith he, "I would sooner believe the pope in matters of faith, than a thousand Augustines, Hieroms, and Gregories." Bravely said, and like a man that did heartily believe the pope's infallibility! And yet no more than every one will be forced to do that understands the consequence of his own principles. And therefore Alphonsus à Castro was not to be blamed for preferring an epistle of Anacletus (though counterfeit), because pope, "before Augustine, Hierom, or any other, however holy or learned^b." These men understood themselves, and the interest of their church. And although the rest of them make finer legs to the fathers than these do, yet when they seem to cross their way and entrench upon their church, they find not much kinder entertainment for them. We may guess at the rest by two of them, men of great note in their several ways, the one for controversies, the other for his commentaries, viz. Bellarmine and Maldonate, and let us see, when occasion serves, how rudely they handle the fathers. If St. Cyprian speaks against tradition, it was, saith Bellarmine, "in defence of his error, and therefore no wonder if he argued after the manner of erroneous persons^c." If he opposeth Stephen the bishop of Rome in the business of rebaptization, "he seemeth," saith he, "to have erred mortally in it^d." If St. Ambrose pronounce baptism in the name of Christ to be valid, without the naming other persons in the Trinity, Bellarmine is not afraid to say, "that, in his judgment, his

^a In cap. 14. Ep. ad Rom.

^b Huic Anacleto soli magis crediderim, &c. quam Hieronymo, Augustino, aut cuivis alii recentiori, quantumlibet docto et sancto. Advers. Hæres. l. 6. verbo Episcopos.

^c Respondeo, Cyprianum hoc

scripsisse cum errorem suum tueri vellet, et ideo non mirum si errantium more tunc ratiocinaretur. De Verbo Dei, l. 4. c. 11.

^d Videtur, mortaliter peccasse. De Pontif. R. l. 4. c. 7.

opinion is false^e." If St. Chrysostom saith, "that it is better not to be present at the eucharist, than to be present and not receive it;" "I say," saith Bellarmine, "that Chrysostom, as at other times, went beyond his bounds in saying so^f." If St. Augustine expound a place of scripture not to his mind, he tells him roundly, "he did not thoroughly consider what he said^g." Do not these things argue that due respect they had for the fathers? So long as they think they can make them serve their turns, then whobut the fathers? If they appear refractory, 138 and will not serve as hewers of wood and drawers of water to them, then who are the fathers? It is the church's judgment they rely on, and not the fathers. And therefore they never want ways themselves of eluding all the testimonies produced out of them: If they cannot say, those testimonies are forged, (as some of them say it, without any show of reason, concerning that part of the epistle of Epiphanius, about the tearing the veil in which an image was painted at Anablatha.) And as Bellarmine answers concerning the author of the imperfect work on Matthew, because he saith, "there is no way to the finding truth but reading the scriptures;" he therefore saith, this whole place was inserted by the Arians^h; as though that had been any part of the controversy between the Arians and others. If Origen, or Cyril, on Leviticus saith, it is necessary to follow the scriptures, then an answer is ready, that these homilies are of no great authorityⁱ; but if these will serve to defend the apocrypha^k, if they speak of the obscurity of scripture^l, if they mention the observation of Lent^m, if they speak of any thing tending to auricular confession or penanceⁿ, then they are good and authentic enough. Thus the price of the fathers rises and falls according to their use, like slaves in the market. If yet the fathers seem to deliver their judgments peremptorily in a matter contrary to the present sense of their church, then either they speak it in the heat of disputation, or, if not, they were contradicted by others as good as they; if many of

^e Hæc opinio falsa est, meo iudicio. De Pontif. l. 4. c. 12.

^f Dico, Chrysostomum ut quædam alia per excessum ita locutum esse. De Missa, l. 2. c. 10.

^g Respondeo, Augustinum non expendisse locum hunc diligenter. De Euch. l. 1. c. 11.

^h Bellarm. de Verbo Dei, l. 4. c. 11.

ⁱ Ibid.

^k Dict. D. l. 1. c. 9.

^l Ib. l. 3. c. 1.

^m Ib. l. 4. c. 9.

ⁿ De Pœnit. l. 3. c. 7. l. 4. c. 9.

them concur, yet it was but their private judgment, not the sense of the catholic church which they delivered. Still we see, the rate the fathers stand at is their agreement with the present Roman church; if they differ from this, they were men like others, and might be deceived, only the pope is infallible, or at least the present Roman church. For if Hilary, Gregory Nyssen, Chrysostom, Cyril, Augustine and others, say, that Christ, when he said, "Upon this rock will I build my church," understood Peter's confession or himself, *nihil magis alienum a sensu Christi cogitari potuit*, saith Maldonate^m, "nothing could be more incongruous than what they say." And in the next words tells us, "that all the ancient writers, except Hilary, expounded 'the gates of hell' one way, but he gives another sense of them." The same liberty he takes in very many other placesⁿ. By which we have a taste of that due respect which you owe to the fathers, which is, to value them as far as they concur with your church, and no more; otherwise they are but the results of men's particular fancies, and not to be compared with the infallible judgment of your church.

§. 20. But, though it may not be so evident that you give so great respect to the fathers, yet it is notorious what reverence you shew to the sacred scriptures. "As for scripture," you say, "we ever extol it above the definitions of the church:" What, ever! Do you think we have forgot the brave comparisons which have been made by your writers to shew the respect you bear to the scriptures? Is it not much for the honour of the scriptures, to be said to have no more authority than Æsop's fables, without the testimony of the church? Did not those extol it above the church, who called it a nose of wax^p? and were not these some of you? Doth not Bellarmine profess his high esteem of the scriptures, when he saith, that "the scripture is no more to be believed in saying it is from God, than Mahomet's Alcoran, because that says so too^q?" Did not Caranza prefer the scripture before the

^m In Matt. xvi. 18.

ⁿ In Matt. xxi. 9. et xix. 11. Joh. vi. n. 69. et 116.

^o Hermannus ait, Scripturas valere quantum fabulas Æsopi, si destituantur ecclesie autoritate: referente Brentio. V. Bailly tract. 1. q. 17.

^p Sunt scripturæ, quidam velut

nasus cereus, qui se horsum, illorum, trahi, retrahi, fingique facile permittit. Albert. Pighius, Hierarch. l. 3. c. 3.

^q Etiam si scriptura dicat, libros prophetarum et apostolorum esse divinos, tamen non credam esse, nisi prius hoc credidero scripturam

church, when he said^r, “that the scripture must be regulated by the church, and not the church by the scripture?” I need not mention Eckius his *evangelium nigrum* and *theologia atramentaria*, Pigghius his *plumbea Lesbiae regula*^s, Valentia his *139 lapis offensionis*^t, Bellarmine’s *commonitorium utile*^u, which, and many others, are remaining testimonies of that monstrous esteem which those of your party have of the sacred scriptures. But if the esteem you have of the scriptures be so great, why lock you them up so carefully from the people in an unknown language? is it lest such jewels should lose their lustre by too often using? Why are you so severe against your proselytes reading them? is it because you would not cast pearls before swine?

But still you extol the scripture above the definitions of the church: how is that possible, when you tell us, “the only authority it hath is from the church’s testimony?” For the authority of it supposeth it to be acknowledged for a divine revelation, and that, you tell us, we can have no assurance of but from your church’s definition: and we had thought, that which gave credit and authority had been greater than that which received it. There can be then little reason to take your word in a case of this nature, when your very next words give so palpable a reason to the contrary. For you suppose the scripture unable to express itself to any intent or purpose, unless your church be the interpreter. For the scripture, say you, “being in many places obscure, we cannot be certain of its true sense without the help of a living and infallible judge to determine and declare it; which can be no other than the present church.” I answer, 1. Your meaning is not so plain but that it wants the interpretation of your church too. For what do you understand by the scriptures being in many places obscure? Is it only that there are some passages which have their difficulties in them? But what is this to the purpose, unless you could prove that this obscurity is such as hinders it from being a rule of faith and manners? If you

esse divinam: nam in Alcorano Mahumetis, passim legimus ipsum Alcoranum de cœlo a Deo missum, et tamen ei non credimus. De Verbo Dei, l. 4. c. 4.

^r Scriptura debet ab ecclesia regu-

lari, et non contra. Caranza Controv. 1.

^s Pigh. Controvers. l. 1. c. 2.

^t Valent. l. 4. c. 2. de Analys. Fid.

^u Bellarm. l. 4. c. 12. de Verbo Dei.

prove that, you do something. The scripture we acknowledge hath its difficulties in it, but not such as hinder the great design God intended it for; no more than the *maculae* which are in the sun hinder it from giving light to the world, or some crabbed pieces in our laws hinder them from being owned as the laws of the land. 2. Are those places obscure or no which speak of the church's infallibility? at least such as you produce for it afterwards? This is evident, that there are no places whose sense is more controverted than theirs. Can these then be understood without a living and infallible judge, or no? If they may, so as we may be certain of their true sense, then why not all others which concern the rule of faith and manners, whose sense is far less disputed than of these? If not, then we must suppose a living and infallible judge, before we know whether there is such a one or no: for that is the thing inquired after in the meaning of these places, and you say, we cannot be certain of their sense without him, so that we must first suppose the thing to be true, and then prove it; or else you run back again into your old labyrinth. How know you that God hath promised there shall be such an infallible judge? By such places (say you) as you produce for it. Well, but the scripture being in many places obscure, how shall I be certain this is the true sense of them? You say, Because the present church is the living and infallible judge to determine and declare it. Do not you herein argue like a man that can square circles? 3. In those places whose sense, you say, is so obscure, where hath God made it necessary for us to have the certain sense of them? You can have no pretence for all this for an infallible judge, unless you could make it evident that God hath left no mysteries in his word, but he hath left your church a key to unlock them; and therefore I hope there is a *clavis apocalyptica* too hanging at your church's girdle. It is true indeed, your church is happily instrumental in explaining a mystery spoken of in scripture, but not much for your comfort, it is a "mystery of iniquity." But in good earnest, do you think that God hath promised a living and infallible judge to make us certain of the sense of obscure places in scripture? Then two things will necessarily follow from thence: 1. That it must be necessary, that all 140 those that believe this infallible judge must know the certain

sense of these obscure places : 2. That this infallible judge must give the certain sense of these places. But then, why hath your present church so neglected her talent this way, that she hath not decided all the controversies concerning the *difficiliora loca*? Such a commentary as this were worth inquiring after. But yet, supposing your church had done this, could we be more certain of the sense of your church, than we are now of the scriptures? I will suppose your church so charitable as to put so useful a thing in writing for the general good of the world; but all writings (you tell us) are obscure, and want a living judge to interpret them, and so consequently must that, and so *in infinitum*. But 4. All this while it is worth understanding how you prefer the scripture before the church, when you make the church the living and infallible judge to interpret the scriptures. You make the scripture a dead letter, but your church is a living judge; you make the sense of scripture obscure, uncertain, and therefore giving occasion to all the errors in the world, but your church is infallible to determine all controversies; and yet for all this you prefer the scripture before the church. It is plain you do not in regard of evidence and certainty; and one would have thought these had been the greatest excellencies of a rule of faith. Do you prefer it as such before your church? If not, you deny it the peculiar property and design of it; and therefore whatever else you attribute to it, you are guilty of the highest disparagement of it. Just as if one should commend a mathematician's square for the materials of it, or the excellency of the figures engraven on it; but in the mean time tell him it is oblique, crooked, uncertain, and he cannot draw a straight line by it: do you think he would believe you commended his square? Just so do you commend the scriptures; and can you then imagine that any rational man will believe that you do prefer the scriptures before the present church?

§. 21. It is next to be considered, what respect remains due to general councils if the present church be supposed

Lab. p. 61. infallible. For (say you) "though you willingly submit to them all, yet where they happen to be obscure in matters requiring determination, we seek the assistance and direction of the same living infallible rule, viz. the tradition or the sentence of the present church." But, 1. You say you submit to them

all : but do you submit to them all as infallible, or no ? which you must of necessity do, or else apparently contradict yourself (which yet is no novelty for you to do) ; for you spend a great deal of pains to prove general councils infallible ; and therefore I hope you own them as infallible yourself. If you own them to be infallible, what need of the sentence of the present church as to those decrees which you already acknowledge infallible ? Or do you really own them no further to be infallible than as they agree with the sentence of the present church ? and then, I pray, what doth the pretended infallibility of general councils signify, if your church give all the authority to them ? and what consents with your church is infallible, and what doth not is far from being so. 2. You say, " general councils may happen to be obscure in matters requiring determination ;" do you mean in things decreed by them, or not ? If not, it is no wonder if they be obscure in matters they never meddle with ; therefore, I suppose, you mean in things determined by them. Then I further ask, whether these decrees of general councils were the sentence of the present church to those who lived in the time of those councils ? If they were, how could the sentence of the present church declare and determine the sense of what is obscure in scripture, if, notwithstanding this determination, the sentence of the church remains as obscure as the sense of the scripture ? If it was not obscure then, but is so now, whence comes that obscurity ? The sentence of the council is supposed to be written then, that those who were not present at it might understand the decree of it ; and it is supposed we have the 141 very same authentical decrees of councils which they had who lived in the several ages of them. How come they then to be more obscure to us than they were to them ? 3. What do you mean by matters requiring determination ? Is it not enough that things be infallibly determined once, but they must be determined over again ? If the former determination were infallible, what need any more ? or doth the infallibility cease as soon as the church ceaseth to be the present church, and then that which comes to be the present church must convey an infallibility into it ? But how comes any thing which was once infallible to lose its infallibility ? which is a thing really so obscure, that your present church would do well to help us out in it. But if, notwithstanding all your pretence of the infalli-

bility of general councils, nothing is truly to be owned as such but what agrees with the sentence of the present church, then we plainly see what reverence you shew to all general councils, even as much as the present church will let you, and no more, which, supposing it never so great, is not shewed to the councils, but to your church. For the reason of that reverence cannot be resolved into the councils, but into that church for whose sake you reverence them. And thus it evidently appears, that the cunning of this device is wholly your own, and, notwithstanding these miserable shifts, you do finally resolve all authorities of the fathers, councils and scriptures into the authority of the present Roman church, which was the thing to be proved.

§. 22. The first absurdity consequent from hence which the archbishop chargeth your party with is, "that by this means they ascribe as great authority (if not greater) to a part of the catholic church as to the whole, which we believe in our Creed, and which is the society of all Christians. And this is full of absurdity in nature, in reason, in all things, that any part should be of equal worth, power, credit, or authority with the whole." Here you deny the consequence, which, you say, "depends upon his lordship's wilfully mistaken notion of the catholic church; which he saith is the church we believe in our Creed, and is the society of all Christians; which (you call) a most desperate extension of the church;" because thereby (forsooth) it will appear that a part is not so great as the whole, viz. that the Roman church in her full latitude is but a piece or parcel of the catholic church believed in our Creed. Is this all the desperate absurdity which follows from his lordship's answer? I pray, shew it to have any thing tending to an absurdity in it. And though you confidently tell us, "that the Roman church, taken as comprising all Christians that are in her communion, is the sole and whole catholic church;" yet I will contentedly put the whole issue of the cause upon the proof of this one proposition, that the Roman church in its largest sense is the sole and whole catholic church; or, that the present Roman church is a sound member of the catholic church. Your evidence from ecclesiastical history is such as I fear not to follow you in; but, I beseech you, have a care of treading too near the apostles' heels: that any were accounted catholics merely for their communion with the Roman church;

or that any were condemned for heresy or schism purely for their dissent from it; prove it when you please, I shall be ready (God willing) to attend your motions. But it is always your faculty, when a thing needs proving most, to tell us what you could have done: this, you say, you would have proved at large, if his lordship had any more than supposed the contrary: but your readers will think, that his supposition being grounded on such a maxim of reason as that mentioned by him, it had been your present business to have proved it: but I commend your prudence in adjourning it; and, I suppose, you will do it, as the court of Areopagus used to do hard causes, *in diem longissimum*. It is apparent the bishop speaks not of a part of the church by representation of the whole, which is an objection nobody but yourself would here have 142 fancied; and therefore your instance of a parliament is nothing to the purpose, unless you will suppose that councils in the church do represent in such a manner as parliaments in England do, and that their decision is obligatory in the same way as acts of parliament are; if you believe this to be good doctrine, I will be content to take the objector's place, and make the application.

The next absurdity laid to your charge is, as you sum it up, "that in your doctrine concerning the infallibility of your church, your proceeding is most unreasonable, in regard you will not have recourse to texts of scripture, exposition of fathers, propriety of language, conference of places, antecedents and consequents, &c. but argue that the doctrine of the present church of Rome is true and catholic, because she professeth it to be such, which, saith he, is to prove *idem per idem*." To this you answer, that as to all those helps, you use them with much more candour than protestants do: and why so? Because of their manifold wrestings of scriptures and fathers. Let the handling the controversies of this book be the evidence between us in this case, and any indifferent reader be the judge. You tell us you use all these helps: but to what purpose do you use them? Do you by them prove the infallibility of your church? If not, the same absurdity lies at your door still, of proving *idem per idem*. No, that you do not, you say. But how doth it appear? Thanks to these mute persons, the good motives of credibility, which

*Lab. p. 62.
n. 4.*

come in again at a dead lift, but do no more service than before. I pray, cure the wounds they have received already before you rally them again, or else, I assure you, what strength they have left, they will employ it against yourselves. You suppose, no doubt, your coleworts good, you give them us so often over; but I neither like proving nor eating *idem per idem*.

§. 23. But yet we have two auxiliaries more in the field, called *instances*. The design of your first instance is to shew, that if your church be guilty of proving *idem per idem*, the apostolical church was so too. For you tell us, "that a sectary might, in the apostles' times, have argued against the apostolical church, by the very same method his lordship here uses against the present catholic church." "For if you ask the Christians then, why they believe the whole doctrine of the apostles to be the sole true catholic faith? their answer is, Because it is agreeable to the doctrine of Christ. If you ask them how they know it to be so, they will produce the words, sentences and works of Christ who taught it. But if you ask a third time, by what means they are assured that those testimonies do indeed make for them or their cause, or are really the testimonies and doctrine of Christ? they will not then have recourse to those testimonies or doctrine, but their answer is, They know it to be so, because the present apostolic church doth witness it: and so by consequence prove *idem per idem*. Thus the sectary." I know not whether your faculty be better at framing questions or answers to them; I am sure it is extraordinary at both. Is it not enough to be in a circle yourselves, but you must needs bring the apostles into it too? at least, if you may have the management of their doctrine you would do it. The short answer to all this is, that the ground why the Christians did assent to the apostles' doctrine as true was, because God gave sufficient evidence that their testimony was infallible in such things where such infallibility was requisite. For you had told us before, that the "apostles did confirm their words with signs that followed, by which signs all their hearers were bound to submit themselves unto them, and to acknowledge their words for infallible oracles of truth." Was not here then sufficient ground for assent in the primitive Christians to the apostles' doctrine? Not, as you weakly imagine, because the doctrine of

Lab. p. 62,
63. n. 5.

Lab. p. 56.
n. 2.

the apostles was suitable to the doctrine of Christ; for the ground why they assented to the doctrine of Christ was, because of the testimony of the apostles. And therefore, to say they believed the doctrine of the apostles because it was agreeable to the doctrine of Christ, and then that they believed the doctrine of Christ because it was suitable to the testimony of the apostles, is a circle fit for none but yourself, and that silly person of your own moulding whom you call the sectary. It were worth considering too, how the works of Christ could prove the doctrine of the apostles suitable to his own. I had thought Christ's works had proved his own testimony to be true, and not the apostles' doctrine to be consonant to his: the works of Christ shew us the reason why he was to be believed in what he delivered; and did not the works of the apostles do so too? What need then any rational person inquire further, why the apostles' doctrine was to be believed? was it not on the same account that the doctrine of Christ was to be believed? But, say you, how should you know their doctrine was the same? What, do you want an infallible testimony for this too? or do you believe that God can contradict himself? or that Christ should send such to deliver his doctrine to the world, and attest it with miracles, who should falsify and corrupt it? Now, you will say, I am come over to you, and answer as you do, that the apostles' testimony was to be believed because of the pregnant and convincing motives of credibility. This I grant, but must be excused as to what follows, that these same motives moved the primitive Christians and us, in our respective times, to believe the church. Prove but that, and I yield the cause. But till then, I pray, give us leave to believe that still you prove *idem per idem*; and your answers are like your proofs; for this we have had often already, and have sufficiently examined before: as likewise your other coecysm about the formal object of faith, and certain inducements to accept the church's infallibility; which I shall not think worth repeating, till you think what I have said against it before worth answering.

Your second instance is *ad hominem*; whereby you would prove, "that if he acknowledge the church infallible in fundamentals, he must prove *idem per idem* as much as you do." ^{Lab. p. 63.} 5
For," say you, "if he be demanded a reason why he believes

such points as he calls fundamental, his answer is, Because they are agreeable to the doctrine of Christ. If he be asked, how he knows them to be so, he will, no doubt, produce the words, sentences and works of Christ, who taught the said fundamental points. But if he be asked a third time, by what means he is assured that these testimonies do make for him, then he will not have recourse to the words themselves, i. e. to the Bible, but his final answer will be, he knows them to be so, and that they do make for him, because the present church doth infallibly witness so much from tradition, and according to tradition, which is (say you) to prove *idem per idem* as much as we." Things are not always just as you would have them: if we allow you to make both objections and answers for us, no doubt you are guilty of no absurdity so great but we shall be equally guilty of it. But it is the nature both of your religion and arguments not to be able to stand a trial: but however, they must undergo it. I say then, that granting the church infallible in the belief of fundamentals, it doth not follow that we must prove *idem per idem*, as you do. For when we ask you, why you believe your doctrine to be the sole catholic faith? your final answer is, because your church is infallible; which is answering by the very thing in question, for you have no other way to judge of the catholic faith but by the infallibility of your church: but when you ask us, why we believe such an article to be fundamental; as for instance, that Christ will give eternal life to them that obey him? we answer, not because the church which is infallible in fundamentals delivers it to be so, which were answering *idem per idem*; but we appeal to that common reason which is in mankind, whether, if the doctrine of Christ be true, this can be other than a fundamental article of it, it being that without which the whole design of Christian

144 religion comes to nothing. Therefore you much mistake, when you think we resolve our faith of fundamentals into the church as the infallible witness of them; for, though the church may be infallible in the belief of all things fundamental, (for otherwise it were not a church, if it did not believe them,) it doth not thence necessarily follow, that the church must infallibly witness what is fundamental and what not. If is sufficient that the church doth deliver from the consent of universal

tradition that infallible rule of faith, (which, to be sure, contains all things fundamental in it,) though she never meddle with the deciding what points are fundamental and what not. If you therefore ask me, why I believe any point supposed fundamental? I answer, By all the evidence which assures me that the doctrine containing that point is of divine revelation: if you ask me, how I know that this point is part of that doctrine? I appeal to the common sense and reason of the world, as to things plainly fundamental; and therefore by this means your third question is prevented, how I know this to be the meaning of those words? for I suppose no one that can tell that two and two make four, can question but if the doctrine of Christ be true, the belief of it is necessary to salvation, which is it we mean by fundamental. Either therefore prove it necessary that the church must infallibly witness what is fundamental and what not, and that we must rely on such a testimony in the belief of fundamentals; or you prove nothing at all to your purpose, no more than your convincing motives of credibility, which, were they made into a grand salad, would know the way to the table they are served so often up: but I have found them so dry and insipid already, I have no encouragement to venture on them any more.

§. 24. But still you are deservedly afraid we should not think worthily enough of your church's infallibility. You therefore tell us very wisely, that this infallibility is not a thing that is not infallible; for, say you, "which infallibility Lab. p. 63. must come from the Holy Ghost, and be more than human or 11. 5. moral, and therefore must be truly supernatural, &c." It is well you tell us of such a rare distinction of infallibility, for else, I assure you, we had never thought of it, viz. of an infallibility that may be deceived, and an infallibility that cannot be deceived, or, in your words, a human and moral infallibility, and a supernatural divine infallibility. To ease you therefore of your fears, I solemnly promise you, that when I believe your church infallible, I will not believe it to have a human, moral infallibility, but supernatural and divine, that is, when I believe her infallible, I believe her infallible. Your mind being eased of this grand fear, you think all the difficulty is over, and that you are out of any possibility of a circle; but I have endeavoured before to shew you are not infallible in that: for the charge you exhibit against the bishop, as

though you had left him tumbling in the circle you had so easily got out of, I shall consider it in its due time and place; but if one may guess at being in a circle by tumbling, you will not seem very free from it, who seem to be at very little ease by your impatience of being held to the subject in hand.

Well, but yet your conceptions must once more be rectified as to the nature of this infallibility; before our danger was least, we should have believed it to be only a human, moral, and not supernatural infallibility, and now we are bid have a care lest we think it to be any more than in a sort and in some manner divine. But what kind of transcendental thing is this infallibility? It is not human, nor yet divine, and yet it is supernatural; which is scarce in some sort, or in a manner sense. How comes it to be supernatural, if it be not divine? or is it naturally supernatural, and humanly divine? It must not then be called divine, but in a manner and after a sort: "But yet," say you, "so far as concerns precise infallibility, or certain connection with truth, it is so truly supernatural and certain, that in this respect it yields nothing to the scripture itself." These are your own words: and if you did not believe
 145 transubstantiation, I should think this the greatest nonsense in the world. But what doth that infallibility which is more than in a sort divine import beyond, what you assert doth belong to the church? Is that any more than precise infallibility and certain connection with truth, and such as is in the scripture? and all this your church hath, and yet, when we say so, she drops a curtesy, and cries, No, forsooth, though she be infallible, yet she desires to be excused, she is not infallible, but only as if one should say in a manner and after a sort, and so forth. Just as if one should ask a new married woman, whether she were certainly married to such a man, and she should answer, As to what concerns marrying, she was certainly married, but yet she was not absolutely married, but only in a manner and after a sort. This is so great a mystery, you will oblige the world much to inform it a little more fully in these following questions: What kind of infallibility that is, which is supernatural, and by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, which is equal to the scripture itself in point of certainty and infallibility (your own words), and yet is not
 Lab. p. 64. divine, but "in a manner and after a sort?" and, What way
 n. 6.

we should come to understand that manner and sort, and what degrees and sorts there are in infallibility? Whether any thing, so far as it is infallible, be not absolutely as well as precisely infallible? and whether that which is but in a sort divine, be not in a sort not divine? Whether that which is in a sort not divine, be not likewise in the same sort not infallible, (since all this infallibility, by your own confession, is from the Holy Ghost,) and whether this be not an excellent way in a manner and after a sort to reconcile contradictions? For if a man should ask you, whether one might be and not be at the same time? you might easily tell him, that absolutely and precisely he cannot be and not be; but in a manner and after a sort he may be, and not be, together. You have cause therefore to make much of this distinction, and you never need fear baffling as long as you carry it about with you; it is a most excellent preservative against all the batteries of sense and reason. But lest yet, for all this, we should apprehend something by this "in a manner and after a sort," as though they were some odd diminishing terms; you tell us, No; catholic divines by this manner of speaking, do not intend to deny the church to be equal even to scripture itself in point of certainty and infallibility. What is now become of our manner and sort, when the church dares juggle with the scripture for the upper hand, at least for an equal place as to infallibility? What then is the intent of this distinction? It is to shew the prerogatives of scripture above the definitions of the church. This doth well however to follow the rest, it comes so near to a contradiction; for if the church be equal to scripture in point of certainty and infallibility, what prerogative can be left to the scripture above the church, when that which makes it scripture and the rule of faith is only its certainty and infallibility? Yes, you tell us, "the scripture doth much exceed the church in regard of its larger extent of truth; because there not only every reason, but every word and tittle is matter of faith: but in the definitions of the church, neither the arguments, reasons, nor words, are absolutely speaking matters of faith, but only the thing declared to be such." Excellent good still, and all of a piece! I commend you, that you would not offer to mix any thing of sense in so good a discourse: for 1. How comes the scripture to have a larger extent

of truth than the church, if we cannot know what truth is in the scripture but from the church? 2. How every word and tittle comes to be matter of faith in scripture and not in the church, when you say, the church is equal to the scripture in point of certainty and infallibility? 3. How any word and tittle can be any where a matter of faith? I had thought it had been the sense and thing understood by those words had been matters of faith; and then it is all one with the scripture and church; for you say, as to the church, the thing declared is a matter of faith. 4. What that thing is which is declared
 146 by the church, which is neither arguments, reasons nor words? and if it doth consist of these, how one can be believed and not the other? Doth your church declare things so nakedly, as to do it without arguments, reasons or words? That she can do it without words it is hard to believe, but very easy that she can do it without arguments or reasons. 5. Are men bound to believe what she so declares, without arguments and reasons too? If they be, shew whence that obligation comes; and when you attempt that, you endeavour to shew some argument and reason why they should believe it. 6. What do you mean, that these arguments, reasons and words are not, absolutely speaking, matters of faith? It should seem then that conditionally they may be so, and then shew the difference between them and those in scripture. 7. How is it possible for us to assent to any thing as a matter of faith, if we do not first assent to the arguments, reasons and words, by which you would persuade us to believe the thing to be declared by the church, and what is declared by the church is true. 8. Whether, when you say, "that in the scripture every word and tittle is matter of faith, at least implicitly and necessarily to be believed by all that knew it to be a part of scripture," this will not equally hold as to the church too, that every word and tittle is matter of faith, at least implicitly to all that know it to be a part of the church's definition? And where then lies the prerogative of scripture above the church? Besides, you tell us, "the church hath certain limits, and can define nothing but what was either revealed before, or hath such connection with it as it may be rationally and logically deduced from it, as appertaining to the declaration and defence of that which was before revealed." That herein you

Lab. p. 64.

ii. 5.

consult much for the honour of the scripture above the church, will appear when you have answered these queries : 1. When the belief and sense of scripture depend, according to you, upon the church's testimony, whether hath more limits, the church or scripture? For whatever is in scripture must, as to us, have its authority from the church; and therefore your church sets what bounds she pleases as to things revealed in scripture. 2. Who shall be judge whether your church define nothing but what was revealed before, when, according to you, we can have no assurance as to any divine revelation but from the judgment of your church? 3. When your church defines things to be matters of faith which we think are not only not logically and rationally deduced from scripture, but plainly repugnant to it, how can we believe that she doth not pretend to reveal something which was not revealed before? 4. Is that rational and logical deduction from scripture sufficient to persuade any rational man or no? If not, why use you those terms? if it be, what need your church's definition in a thing that is obvious to any one's reason? 5. Must we believe your church absolutely as to what is rationally and logically deduced from scripture? If so, then, when she declares her own infallibility, we must believe that to be rationally deduced because she declares it. 6. Doth your church make use of logic and reason in her deductions? then, why may not every one else? unless she hath only the gift of logic and reason, which, I suppose you will say, is but in a manner and after a sort.

Moreover, say you, "the church hath the receiving and interpreting scripture for its end, and consequently is in that respect inferior to it." But for whose end do you mean? the church's or the scripture's end? If the latter, shew us how any end of scripture is attained by your church's interpretation; if you mean the church's end, I verily believe you, that your church pretends to the receiving and interpreting scripture for her own ends, and consequently, in that respect, she makes the scripture inferior to her. Lab. p. 64.
n. 5.

Here again we meet with another piece of your errantry, in attempting to vindicate your doctrine from the enchantment of another contradiction. You say, you hold it necessary that we are to believe the scriptures to be the word of

147 God upon divine authority; and yet you tell us, that the church's authority on which we are to believe the scriptures is but in some sort and after a manner divine. This seems to have a huge resemblance to a contradiction; or else you must say, that it is not necessary that we believe the scriptures on a simply divine authority, but only on such a one as is in some sort and after a manner divine: for if you make the same authority to be divine absolutely in your pretence, and only after a sort in your application, you reach not the thing you promised. If there be not, as you say, any necessity of defending the church's authority to be simply divine in answering that question, how we know scripture to be scripture, then there can be no necessity of asserting that we are bound to believe the scriptures to be the word of God upon divine authority. Which yet is your assertion before; but yet you would fain distinguish between that which is absolutely infallible, and divine; the church's authority (you say) must be the former, but cannot be the latter; when yet this infallibility is, as you again tell us, by the promised assistance of the Holy Ghost. These are fit hedges to keep in cuckoos, but none else.

§. 25. But, as you are still off and on, sometimes seeming to go forward, and then stepping back again; sometimes answering, sometimes proving, which are great arguments of a disturbed mind, or a being in a labyrinth, which you take many steps in, but can find no way out of; lest you should seem not sufficiently to contradict yourself, you go about to prove, that the authority teaching scripture to be the word of God must be absolutely infallible; if you prove that, I will undertake to prove it must be simply divine: but let us see however how irrefragably you prove it. "And the immediate reason why the authority teaching scripture to be the word of God must be absolutely infallible is, because it is an article of Christian faith, that all those books which the church hath defined for canonical scripture are the word of God; and seeing every article of faith must be revealed, or taught by divine authority, this also must be revealed and consequently no authority less than divine is sufficient to move us to believe it as an article of faith." But, 1. Is it not possible for you to utter so many words without a contradiction? Were you not

just before distinguishing that authority which is divine from that which is absolutely infallible, and but in a manner and after a sort divine? And yet here, that authority which you call "absolutely infallible" in the former part of your argument, in the last you explain it, "no authority less than divine;" doth it not then follow, that an authority absolutely infallible is an authority no less than divine? But to let that pass among the rest of his brethren. 2. Why take you this needless pains to prove that which you say before you and your adversary are agreed in? 3. Supposing you should meet with some who should question this, as it is probable you may do before we part, I think it no difficult thing to answer this argument of yours, which in short is, Every article of faith must be believed upon divine authority, but that the scriptures are the word of God is an article of faith. To which I answer, if by an article of faith you mean that we must give an undoubted assent to, then I grant that this is an article of faith, but deny that every such article must be believed upon divine authority; if by an article of faith you mean something to be believed upon divine testimony, then I grant that every such article must be built on divine authority, but shall desire you to prove that that faith whereby I believe scripture to be scripture must be built on a divine testimony. For I cannot see how any who say so can free themselves from a circle: and of all persons, you have the least reason to say so; for you deny the church's testimony to be properly divine, and withal the argument is very easily retorted upon yourself. For, say you, whatsoever is an article of faith must be believed on divine authority: but that the church is infallible, I suppose, to you is an article of faith: name therefore what 148
divine authority the belief of that is built upon? But do not you say, the belief of that is built on the motives of credibility? and I suppose you distinguish them from divine authority, or else they can do you no service for avoiding the circle: either therefore deny that your church's infallibility is an article of faith, or else deny it to be necessary that every article of faith must be built on divine authority; and then farewell your old friends the motives of credibility; or else, you see how necessary it is for you, if you will vindicate yourself from contradiction, to answer this argument, and when you have done so,

Iab. p. 64.
n. 6.

you will believe I did not much dread the force of it. The rest of that paragraph is a bare repetition, the fourth or fifth time, of your distinction about the formal object of faith and the infallible assurance of it, which is a thing in itself so incongruous and unreasonable, that I had thoughts mean enough of you when I met with it first; but have much meaner now I meet with it so often, for I see, as pitiful a shift as it is, you have no other to make use of on all occasions.

Conf. p. 53.
sect. 16. n.
6.

His lordship goes on to prove that, since it is confessed between him and his adversary, "that we must be able to prove the scriptures to be the word of God by some authority that is absolutely divine, this authority cannot be that of the church. For the church consists of men subject to error; and all the parts being liable to mistaking, and fallible, the whole cannot possibly be infallible in and of itself, and privileged from being deceived in some things or other." To this

Iab. p. 65.
n. 6.

you answer, "His lordship's argument (that the whole may err, because every part may err) is disproved by himself, because in fundamentals he grants the whole church cannot err, and yet that any particular man may err even in those points." But is it not plain that his lordship's design is to prove, that if all the parts are fallible, the authority of the whole cannot be simply divine? and therefore he saith himself, that in fundamentals, in which the universal church cannot err, her authority is not divine, because the church is tied to the use of means. You must therefore prove, that when every part is acknowledged fallible, the authority of the whole in propounding any thing to be believed can be infallible in and of itself: I cannot therefore understand how the perfection of infallibility in the proposition of any object to be believed can be applied to the whole church, when every particular member

Conf. p. 53.
sect. 16. n.
6.

of it in such a proposition is supposed to be fallible. The archbishop therefore tells you, that there is special immediate revelation requisite to the very least degree of divine authority; to avoid which, you would fain prove that there may be absolute infallibility without divine authority, and immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost in delivering objects of faith, without immediate revelation. You tell us therefore, "though the church use means, yet she receives not her infallibility

from them, but from the assistance of the Holy Ghost, which makes her definitions truly infallible, though they be not new revelations." But how do you prove that any thing but an immediate divine revelation can make such a divine testimony which is supposed necessary for the belief of scripture to be scripture? How can you make it appear that there can be infallibility in the conclusion, where there was not infallibility in judging of the truth of the premises? You say, By the assistance of the Holy Ghost. But why should you not believe such an assistance in the one as well as the other? If therefore you assert that the Spirit of God doth not assist infallibly in the use of the means, but only in the conclusion, then it must be an immediate revelation; for what else it should be, is not intelligible. For I had thought the revelation had been immediate, when somewhat more was discovered than all use of means could attain to: therefore the church's infallibility must be a mere enthusiasm. No, say you, because it only declares what was formerly revealed. Though that be a question among some of yourselves; yet, supposing it to be so, it clears not the business. For, suppose that God had 149 supernaturally assisted the understanding of any prophet in declaring a prophecy which had been revealed before, would not this have been as immediate a revelation to that prophet as if it had been a new prophecy? And the case is the same here; for though you say, the material objects of faith be revealed before, yet we cannot know the formal object of faith without your church's declaration, so that on your principles there cannot lie an obligation to faith on us without your church's definition; and therefore that is as necessary to us as immediate revelation; and to the church itself, when you say, "the infallibility proceeds so immediately from God, that if the church should fall into error, that would be ascribed to God as much as in case of divine revelation," what difference can you make between them? For it is not whether the object be new or old which makes an immediate revelation, but the immediate impression of it on the understanding. For if the Spirit of God doth immediately discover to any one a thing knowable by natural causes, is it any thing the less an immediate divine revelation? So it must be in things already revealed, if the same things be discovered in an immediate

infallible manner to the mind of any, the revelation is as immediate as if they had never been revealed before.

Your last paragraph affords us still more evidence of your self-contradicting faculty; for which we need no more than lay your words together. Your words next before were, "If the church should fall into error, it would be as much ascribed to God himself, as in case of immediate divine revelation;" but here you add, "Neither is it necessary for us to affirm, that the definition of the church is God's immediate revelation; as, if the definition were false, God's revelation must be also such: it is enough for us to aver that God's promise would be infringed, as truly it would in that supposition." From which we may learn very useful instructions. 1. That God's promise may be infringed, and yet God's revelation not proved to be false: but whence came that promise? was it not a divine revelation? if it was undoubtedly such, can such a promise be false, and not God's revelation? 2. That though if the church err, God must be fallible, yet for all this, all God's revelations may remain infallible. 3. That though the only ground of infallibility be the immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost, which gives as great an infallibility as ever was in prophets and apostles; yet we must not say, that such an infallibility doth suppose an immediate revelation. 4. That though God's veracity would be destroyed if the church should define any thing for a point of catholic faith which were not revealed from God, which are your next words; yet we are not to think, if her definition be false, God's revelation must be also such, which are your words foregoing. Those are excellent corollaries to conclude so profound a discourse with. And if the bishop (as you say) had little reason to accuse you for maintaining a party, I am sure I have less to admire you for your seeking truth; and whatever animosity you are led by, I hope I have made it evident you are led by very little reason.

OF THE INFALLIBILITY OF TRADITION.

Of the unwritten word, and the necessary ingredients of it.—The instances for it particularly examined and disproved.—The fathers' rule for examining traditions.—No unwritten word the foundation of divine faith.—In what sense faith may be said to be divine.—Of tradition being known by its own light and the canon of the scripture.—The testimony of the Spirit, how far pertinent to this controversy.—Of the use of reason in the resolution of faith.—T. C.'s dialogue answered, with another between himself and a sceptic.—A twofold resolution of faith, into the doctrine and into the books.—Several objections answered from the supposition made of a child brought up without sight of scripture.—Christ no ignoramus nor impostor though the church be not infallible.—T. C.'s blasphemy in saying otherwise.—The testimonies of Irenæus and St. Augustine examined and retorted.—Of the nature of infallible certainty as to the canon of scripture; and whereon it is grounded.—The testimonies produced by his lordship vindicated.

§. 1. **Y**OU begin this chapter with as much confidence, as if you had spoken nothing but oracles in the foregoing. Whether the bishop or you were more hardly put to it, let any indifferent reader judge: if he did, as you say, tread on the brink of a circle; we have made it appear, notwithstanding all your evasions, that you are left in the middle of it. The reason of his falling on the unwritten word, is not his fear of stooping to the church to shew it him, and finally depend on her authority; but to shew the unreasonableness of your proceedings, who talk much of an unwritten word, and are not able to prove any such thing. If he will not believe any unwritten word, but what is shewn him delivered by the prophets and apostles, I think he hath a great deal of reason for such incredulity, unless you could shew him some assurance of any unwritten word that did not come from the apostles. Though he desired not to read unwritten words in their books, which is a wise question you ask, yet he reason-

ably requested some certain evidence of what you pretend to be so, that he might not have so big a faith as to swallow into his belief, that every thing which his adversary says is the unwritten word is so indeed. If it be not your desire he should, we have the greater hopes of satisfaction from you ; but if you crave the indifferent reader's patience till he hear reason from you, I am afraid his patience will be tried before you come to it. But, whatever it is, it must be examined.

Though your discourse concerning this unwritten word be, as the rest are, very confused and immethodical, yet I conceive the design and substance of it lies in these particulars, as will appear in the examination of them.

1. That there is an unwritten word, which must be believed by us, containing such doctrinal traditions as are warranted by the church for apostolical.

2. That the ground of believing this unwritten word, is from the infallibility of the church, which defines it to be so.

3. That our belief of the scriptures must be grounded on such an unwritten word which is warranted by the church. Under each of these I shall examine faithfully what belongs to them in your indigested discourse.

151 The first of these is taken from your own words, where you tell us, "that our ensurancer in the main principle of faith concerning the scriptures being the word of God is apostolical tradition ; and well may it be so, for such tradition declared by the church is the unwritten word of God." And you after tell us, "that every doctrine which any particular person may please to call tradition, is not therefore to be received as God's unwritten word, but such doctrinal traditions only as are warranted to us by the church for truly apostolical, which are consequently God's unwritten word." So that these three things are necessary ingredients of this unwritten word :

1. That it must be originally apostolical, and not only so, but it must be of divine revelation to the apostles too. For otherwise it cannot be God's word at all, and therefore not his unwritten word. I quarrel not at all with you for speaking of an unwritten word if you could prove it ; for it is evident to me, that God's word is no more so by being written or printed, than if it were not so : for the writing adds no authority to the word, but only is a more certain means of conveying it to

us. It is therefore God's word, as it proceeds from him; and that which is now his written word was once his unwritten word: but however, whatever is God's word must come from him, and since you derive the source of the unwritten word from the apostles, whatever you call an unwritten word you must be sure to derive its pedigree down from them. So that insisting on that point of time when this was declared and owned for an unwritten word, you must be able to shew that it came from the apostles, otherwise it cannot be owned as an apostolical tradition. 2. That what you call an unwritten word must be something doctrinal; so you call them yourself doctrinal traditions, i. e. such as contain in them somewhat dogmatical or necessary to be believed by us: and thence it was this controversy rose, from the dispute concerning the sufficiency of the scriptures as a rule of faith, whether that contained all God's word, or all matters to be believed, or no; or whether there were not some objects of faith which were never written, but conveyed by tradition. 3. That what is thus doctrinal must be declared by the church to be an apostolical tradition; which you in terms assert.

§. 2. According then to these rules we come to examine the evidences by you produced for such an unwritten word. For which you first produce several instances out of St. Austin, of such things which were in his time judged to be such, i. e. doctrinal traditions derived from the apostles, and have ever since been conserved and esteemed such in the whole church of Christ. The first you instance in is that we now treat of, that scripture is the word of God, for which you propose the known place wherein he affirms, he should not believe the gospel but for the authority of the church moving him thereto^a. But this proves nothing to your purpose, unless you make it appear that the authority of the church could not move him to believe the gospel, unless that authority be supposed to be an unwritten word. For I will suppose that St. Austin, or any other rational man, might be sufficiently induced to believe the gospel on the account of the church's authority, not as delivering any doctrinal tradition in the nature of an unwritten word, but as attesting that universal

^a C. ep. fund. c. 5.

tradition which had been among all Christians concerning it. Which universal tradition is nothing else but a conveying down to us the judgment of sense and reason in the present case. For the primitive Christians being best able to judge as to what authentic writings came from the apostles, not by any unwritten word, but by the use of all moral means, it cannot reasonably be supposed that the successive Christians should embezzle these authentic records, and substitute others in the place of them. When therefore Manichæus pretended the authenticalness of some other writings besides those then
 152 owned by the church, St. Austin did no more than any reasonable man would do in the like case, viz. appeal to the universal tradition of the catholic church; upon the account of which, he says, he was induced to believe the gospel itself, i. e. not so much the doctrine, as the books containing it. But of this more largely elsewhere. I can hardly excuse you from a falsification of St. Austin's meaning in the ensuing words, which you thus render: "If any clear testimony were brought out of scripture against the church, he would neither believe the scripture nor the church;" whereas it appears by the words cited in your own margin, his meaning is only this,
 Lab. p 67. "If you can find," saith he, "something very plain in the gospel
 n. l. concerning the apostleship of Manichæus, you will thereby weaken the authority of those catholics who bid me that I should not believe you; whose authority being weakened, neither can I believe the gospel, because through them I believed it." Is here any thing like what you said, or at least would seem to have apprehended to be his meaning? which is plainly this: If against the consent of all those copies which the catholic Christians received, those copies should be found truer which have in them something of the apostleship of Manichæus, this must needs weaken much the authority of the catholic church in its tradition, whom he adhered to against the Manichees; and their authority being thus weakened, his faith as to the scriptures delivered by them must needs be much weakened too. To give you an instance of a like nature: the Mahometans pretend, that in the scripture there was anciently express mention of their prophet Mahomet, but that the Christians, out of hatred of their religion, have erased all those places which spake of him: suppose now a

Christian should say, if he should find in the gospel express mention of Mahomet's being a prophet, it would much weaken the authority of the whole Christian church; which being so weakened, it must of necessity weaken the faith of all those who have believed our present copies authentic upon the account of the Christian church's authority. Is not this plainly the case St. Austin speaks of? and is it any more than any man's reason will tell him? Not that the church's authority is to be relied on as judicially or infallibly, but as rationally, delivering such an universal tradition to us. And might not St. Austin, on the same reason, as well believe the Acts of the Apostles as the gospel, when they were both equally delivered by the same universal tradition? What you have gained then to your purpose from these three citations out of St. Austin in your first instance, I cannot easily imagine.

§. 3. Your second tradition is, that the Father is not begotten of any other person. St. Austin's words are^b: *Sicut Patrem in illis libris nusquam ingenitum legimus, et tamen dicendum esse defenditur.* "We never read in the scriptures that the Father is unbegotten, and yet it is defended that we must say so." And had they not good reason with them to say so, who believed that he was the Father by way of exclusion of such a kind of generation as the eternal Son of God is supposed to have? But must this be an instance of a doctrinal tradition containing some object of faith distinct from scripture? Could any one, whoever believed the doctrine of the Trinity as revealed in scripture, believe or imagine any other, that though it be not in express terms set down in scripture, yet no one that hath any conceptions of the Father, but this is implied in them? If it be therefore a tradition because it is not expressly in scripture, why may not *trinity, hypostasis, person, consubstantiality*, be all unwritten traditions as well as this? You will say, Because, though the words be not there, yet the sense is: and I pray, take the same answer for this of the Father's being unbegotten.

Your third is, of the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary. This indeed, St. Austin saith, is to be believed *fide integra*, but he saith not *divina*; but do you therefore make 153

^b Tom. 2. ep. 114.

this a doctrinal tradition and an unwritten word? If you make it a doctrinal tradition, you must shew us what article of faith is contained in it. That it was not looked on as an unwritten word, will appear by the disputations of those fathers who writ most eagerly about it, who make it their design to prove it out of scripture. Those who did most zealously appear against the opinion of Helvidius were St. Hierom and St. Ambrose, of the Latin church; St. Austin only mentions it in the places by you cited: of the Greek church, Epiphanius and St. Basil. And yet every one of these contends to have it proved out of scripture. St. Hierom enters his dispute against Helvidius upon those terms of confuting him out of scripture; and towards the conclusion of that discourse, see what a friend St. Hierom is to doctrinal traditions. "As," saith he, "we deny not the things which are written, so we embrace not the things which are not written. We believe the incarnation because we read it; we believe not the marriage of Mary after her delivery, because we read it not^c." St. Ambrose in his epistle to Theophilus and Anysius, where he first mentions this opinion, argues against it wholly from the testimony of scripture^d, and the unreasonableness of the thing. To the same purpose Epiphanius^e discourseth of this subject, whose utmost arguments are only probabilities: whether the Antidicomariani were the same with Helvidians, as St. Austin supposeth^f, or whether they were the disciples of Apollinarius^g, who broached the same doctrine in the east at the time Helvidius did in the west, as others suppose, is not material to our purpose; but this latter seems to be the opinion of Epiphanius^h; who, in his epistle written in confutation of that opinion, chargeth the first authors of it with great ignorance of the scriptures, and urgeth many places to prove the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary; and therefore did not

^c Ipsa scripturarum verba ponenda sunt ut ipsis quibus adversum nos usus est testimoniis revincatur. Advers. Helv. prim.

Sed ut hæc quæ scripta sunt non negamus, ita ea quæ non sunt scripta renuimus: natum Deum esse de virgine credimus, quia legimus; Mariam nupsisse post partum, non credimus quia non legimus. Hieron.

advers. Helv. tom. 2. p. 6. col. 1. ed. P. 1533.

^d V. Ambros. tom. 3. ep. 9. Basil. 1555.

^e Epiphanius. hæres. 78. tom. 1. l. 3. edit. Petav.

^f Aug. de Hæres. 84.

^g V. Vasquez in 3. p. Thom. tom. 2. disp. 121. c. 6.

^h Epiph. hæres. 78. s. 7. p. 1038.

look on it as an unwritten word. St. Basil, in his discourse concerning the human generation of Christ, falls upon this subject, and goes about to prove it from the importance of $\xi\omega\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\delta$, which (saith he) “although it seems to speak some circumscription of time, yet it really denotes τὸ ἀόριστον, an indefinite time, as in that, ‘I will be with you always to the end of the world¹.’” But he ushers in this discourse with this remarkable expression: “Although this be no hinderance to the doctrine of piety; for till the economy of her delivery was accomplished, her virginity was necessary, but what became of it afterwards is not pertinent to this mystery; however, because the ears of those who love Christ will hardly entertain this, that Mary ceased to be a virgin, we suppose these proofs sufficient for it^k.” Judge then whether St. Basil^l did believe this to be a doctrine of faith, or an unwritten word. This testimony Fronto Ducaeus is much troubled with, and would go about to prove this to be an article of faith from the councils of Constantinople and the Lateran; in the first of which she is only called ἀεὶ παρθένος. But doth that note it to be an article of faith? As for his evasion of this testimony, it is so impertinent that I shall not repeat it, although he voucheth Vasquez for the author of it. It cannot be denied but that afterwards St. Basil produceth a tradition for it concerning Zachary’s placing the Virgin Mary after her delivery among the virgins, for which he was slain of the Jews between the temple and the altar. But we may guess at the credit of this tradition by what St. Hierom saith of it, that it came *ex apocryphorum somniis*^m, and withal gives a sufficient lash at all traditions by reason of this, in the next words: *Hoc quia* 154 *de scripturis non habet auctoritatem, eadem facilitate contemnitur, qua probatur.* “Which having no authority from the scriptures, it is as easily contemned as produced.” And think you not then that St. Hierom was a great friend to your doc-

¹ Homil. 25. p. 509. tom. 1.

^k Ἡμεῖς δὲ εἰ καὶ μηδὲ τῶ τῆς εὐσεβείας παραλυμαίνεται λόγῳ (μέχρι γὰρ τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν ὑπηρεσίας ἀναγκαῖα ἡ παρθενία, τὸ δὲ ἐφεξῆς ἀπολυπραγμόνητον τῶ λόγῳ τοῦ μυστηρίου καταλείβωμεν), ὁμῶς διὰ τὸ

μὴ καταδέχεσθαι τῶν φιλοχρίστων τὴν ἀκοήν, ὅτι ποτὲ ἐπαύσατο εἶναι παρθένος ἡ θεοτόκος, ἐκείνας ἡγούμεθα τὰς μαρτυρίας αὐτάρκεις. Ibid.

^l Not. in Basil. tom. 3. p. 49. ed. Paris. 1638.

^m Comment. in Matt 23. tom. 9.

trinal traditions and unwritten word? “But,” say you still, “the virginity of Mary must be an article of faith, because those who denied it are called heretics; and St. Augustine calls Helvidius his opinion blasphemy.” But, though Helvidius be listed among the heretics, yet I suppose you will not say that all who are listed in those catalogues are defined to be heretics by the catholic church. It is very apparent, that any one who seemed to broach any new fancies, and thereby disturbed the church’s peace, were called heretics by themⁿ. And Vasquez confesseth that Aquinas^o calls it an error, and not an heresy in Helvidius. If it were so, he was not the first author of it; for Tertullian is not only cited by Helvidius for it, and St. Hierom casts away his testimony as of a man out of the church, but Vasquez confesseth he delivers it so often, that Pamelius could make no antidote for those places. One would therefore think, that one so near the apostles as Tertullian was might easily have learned such a tradition, and so great a friend to virginity as he was (while a Montanist) should not have been apt to believe the contrary. That which was accounted blasphemy in Helvidius was the rashness of his assertion, which seemed dishonourable to the blessed Virgin, and not as though he did thereby overthrow any article of faith. For the other part of your tradition, that she was a virgin in the birth of Christ, you will find it a greater difficulty to make it out to have been believed as a tradition, much less as an unwritten word. For not only Tertullian, but Ignatius, Irenæus, Origen, Epiphanius, Ambrose, Theophylact oppose you in it; and judge you then, whether this were owned as a constant tradition or no. But it is not worth while to insist upon it.

§. 4. Your fourth instance is concerning the rebaptization of heretics. Concerning which, two things are to be considered, the custom itself, and the right and law on which that custom was grounded. In the places by you cited out of St. Austin, it is plain he speaks of the custom and practice of the church, which (saith he) did not use the “iteration of baptism; which custom he believed did come from apostolical tradition, as many other things which are not found in the

ⁿ Ubi supra.

^o In 3. p. Thom. tom. 2. q. 28. art. 3. cap. 7.

writings of the apostles, nor in following councils, yet because they are observed by the universal church, are believed to be delivered and commended by them^p." To the same purpose is the other testimony. But what is this to doctrinal traditions concerning matters of faith? That there were many ecclesiastical customs observed in the church as apostolical traditions, I deny not, but that is not our present question. If you therefore inquire into that which is only doctrinal in this case concerning the right and lawfulness of practice in this case, that he fixeth wholly upon the scriptures. The practice of the church in admitting heretics without baptizing them again might be known by tradition, but whether the church did well or ill in it, must be by St. Austin's own confession determined out of scripture. And in that latter place by you cited there is mentioned no such thing as an unwritten word, or that the apostles had left any command that heretics should not be baptized again. *Nihil quidem exinde praeceperunt apostoli*, are his own words: there being then neither written nor unwritten word for it, St. Austin takes the likeliest course he could think of, which was, from the custom of the church to judge most probably what was most agreeable to the apostles' minds^q. But still, when he comes to urge most home against the Donatists, he makes his recourse to the scriptures. And offers to prove the matter in dispute from them, and would have all tried by the balance of the Lord. And expressly saith, "it is against the Lord's command, that those who have had lawful baptism already should be rebaptized^r." So that we see St. Augustine did not himself think it a sufficient proof of apostolical tradition, that it was a custom of the church, unless he did likewise produce certain evidence out of scripture for the confirmation of it. Neither then will your fourth instance prove what it was brought for.

Your fifth, concerning infants' baptism, you have given us

^p Contra Donatist. l. 2. c. 7.

^q Ex evangelio profero certa documenta. l. 1. c. Donatist. cap. 6.

^r Quid sit perniciosius, utrum non baptizari an rebaptizari, judicare difficile est, veruntamen recurrens ad illam stateram dominicam, ubi non ex humano sensu sed ex divina auctoritate rerum momenta pensan-

tur, invenio de utraque re Domini sententiam, nempe in scripturis. l. 2. c. 14. Huc accedit quia bene perspectis ex utroque latere disputationis rationibus, et scripturarum testimoniis, potest etiam dici, Quod veritas declaravit hoc sequimur. l. 4. c. 7. vid. l. 4. c. 24. l. 5. c. 4. l. 6. c. 1. l. 5. c. 23, 26.

occasion to consider largely already ; your sixth depends upon that ; your seventh is only a rite of the church. To your eighth I answer, Though the tradition of the church be a great confirmation of the apostolical practice in observation of the Lord's day, yet that very practice and the ground of it are sufficiently deduced from scripture. Among all these instances therefore, we are yet to seek for such a doctrinal tradition as makes an unwritten word. But methinks an author who would seem so much versed in St. Augustine might, among all these instances, have found out one more which would have looked more like a doctrinal tradition than most of these, which is, the necessity of the eucharist to baptized infants : the places are so many and so express in him concerning it, that it would be a needless task to produce them. I shall only therefore refer you to your Espenceus^s, who hath made some collection of them. When you have viewed them, I pray bethink yourself of some convenient answer to them, which either must be by asserting that St. Augustine might be deceived in judging of doctrinal and apostolical traditions ; and then to what purpose are your eight instances out of him ? or else that might be accounted an apostolical tradition in one age which may not in another ; and then, since, according to your judgment, the present church is infallible in every age, that was infallibly an apostolical tradition in one age which infallibly is not so in another. Which leaves us in a greater dispute than ever, what these apostolical traditions are, when the church in several ages doth so much differ concerning them.

Lab. p. 68. §. 5. After you have in your way attempted to prove such
 D. I. unwritten words, or doctrinal traditions, you fall upon a high charge against his lordship, and not without a severe reflection on all protestants, in these words. " It is so natural to protestants to build upon false grounds, that they cannot enter into a question without supposing a falsehood ; so his lordship here feeds his humour, and obtrudes many." It is well yet his lordship meets with no worse entertainment than all protestants do : you think all protestants still build upon false grounds because not *supra hanc petram*, and that they still suppose falsehoods, because they suppose your church fallible,

^s Espenc. de Eucharist. ad Orat. l. 2. c. 12.

whether she undertakes to explain written or define unwritten words. But whether his lordship feeds his humour in obtruding falsehoods, or you yours in calumniating, will appear upon examination. You say, "He makes Bellarmine and all catholic doctors maintain, that whatever they please to call tradition must presently be received by all as God's unwritten word." Upon which you go about to vindicate Bellarmine, by repeating his distinctions concerning traditions, viz. "That Lab. p. 68. some are divine, others apostolical, and others ecclesiastical; ^{n. 1.} and that some belong to faith, others to manners." But all this doth not serve your turn. For, 1. His lordship doth not deny that Bellarmine useth these distinctions, but reduceth all these several traditions under the same common title *de verbo Dei non scripto*; and that his design therein is to impose upon unwary readers, that all the traditions mentioned by him are 156 God's unwritten word. Upon which his lordship had good reason to go about to undeceive them, and to make it appear so evidently as he hath done, that tradition, and God's unwritten word, are not convertible terms; both because there may be justly supposed to have been many unwritten words which were never delivered over to the church; and that there are many things which go for traditions in your church, which have no shadow of pretence from an unwritten word. 2. There may be yet further cunning in all this; for although Bellarmine and you distinguish of traditions, divine, apostolical and ecclesiastical, yet when you come to put the difference between these, I suppose you would not leave it to every particular person to judge which of these traditions is of these several natures, but the church must be judge of them. So that a tradition is ecclesiastical when your church will have it so, that is, when it is disused among you, as the three dippings in baptism, the participation of eucharists by infants, &c. But when any tradition is still in use by your church, then your church's practice being in this case a sufficient definition as to all those things so used by your church, they must be accounted apostolical, if not divine. 3. Of what kind or nature soever these traditions are supposed to be, whether divine, apostolical, or ecclesiastical, prove any of them to contain any thing necessary for faith and salvation, and you will then come near an unwritten word. Your ecclesiastical traditions you discard

yourself from being such ; inform us then what divine and apostolical traditions those are which are founded on such an unwritten word. Whether any of your ecclesiastical traditions contradict God's word or no, is not here a place to examine ; we are now inquiring whether there be any such thing as an unwritten word at all, which contains any matter necessary for us to believe or practise. The only pretence you have here for it is, That we believe by divine faith that scripture is God's word, and that there is no other word of God to assure us of this point but the tradition delivered to us by the church, and that such tradition so delivered must be the unwritten word of God. How far we are to believe scriptures to be the word of God with divine faith, will be throughly examined in its due time ; and likewise how far any word of God is necessary for the foundation of this faith : only I cannot here but take notice, what it is which makes a tradition be the unwritten word of God ; and what becomes then of your former distinction concerning traditions ? for we see that which makes them the word of God, is their being delivered by the church ; so that let their author, nature, or matter be what it will, according to this principle any tradition being delivered by your church becomes an unwritten word. So I come to the second proposition.

§. 6. 2. That the ground of believing any unwritten word is the infallibility of your church defining it to be so. For you say,

Lab. p. 68. n. 2. " As the church was infallible in defining what was written, so is she also infallible in defining what was not written. And so she can neither *tradere non traditum*, nor can she be unfaithful to God in not faithfully keeping the *depositum* committed to her trust : neither can her sons ever justly accuse her of the contrary, but are bound to believe her tradition, because she being infallible, the tradition she delivers can never be against the word of their Father." The substance of all which is that which I laid down as your proposition, That the ground of believing any tradition to be apostolical, or any unwritten word, is your church's infallibility in defining it to be so. Which being built on a principle I have already manifested to be so fallacious and uncertain, I might without further trouble quit my hands of it : but I shall, however, shew how inconsistent this is with the rules of the ancients for

discerning when traditions are apostolical, and when not. The great rule we meet with among the ancients for judging 157 apostolical traditions is that of Vincentius Lirinensis, *In ipsa item catholica ecclesia magnopere curandum est, ut id teneamus quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est: hoc est enim vere proprieque catholicum*^t. If this be a certain rule to judge of catholic and apostolical traditions by, viz. That which hath been held every where, always, and by all, then the judgment of your church cannot be the infallible definer of apostolical traditions; unless you will suppose that your church only can tell us what was held every where, always, and by all: and if your church alone can infallibly determine what traditions are apostolical, to what purpose should we be put to such a wild-goose chase, to inquire universality, antiquity and consent in all things which pretend to be traditions? But to any reasonable man, as to any thing which pretends to be a matter necessary to be believed or practised, which is not expressly revealed in scripture, this rule of Vincentius seems very just and equitable, that before we believe it necessary, it be made appear that it was universally believed by Christians to be so, and that in all ages. And I assure you, I am so far convinced of the reasonableness of this proposal, that if you will make out any of those things controverted between us, such as invocation of saints, worship of images, transubstantiation, adoration of the eucharist, purgatory, indulgences, the pope's supremacy, &c. by these rules, and make it appear to me that these were held by all Christian churches at all times, or have antiquity, universality and consent; I shall be very inclinable to embrace what your church would impose upon me. But when I know how impossible a task this is, I do not at all wonder that you should quit this formerly magnified saying of Vincentius, and resolve all into the infallibility of the present church. But hereby we see how far you are from the judgment of antiquity, as to this very point of the trial of doctrinal traditions, since you can see no security any where but in yourselves and your church's infallibility; I will therefore reduce the controversy yet shorter: prove but this infallibility of your church in defining the written and unwritten word by these rules of Vincentius,

^t Commonit. c. 3.

universality, antiquity and consent, and I will yield you all the rest. But what unreasonable men are you, if you must be parties and judges too; or if we must believe an unwritten word because your church is infallible; and believe your church infallible because that is an unwritten word! And well may you call it so: for, search the whole book of scriptures, and all the records of the primitive church, and you find nothing at all of it. We see plainly then you are resolved to be tried by none but yourselves, and so you are catholics because you say you are so, and your church infallible because she pretends to be so.

§. 7. 3. That our belief of the scriptures must be resolved into an unwritten word, which is defined by your church to be such. This is that for whose sake all your other discourse is brought in, and is the main thing to the purpose; although you pretend likewise to a power in your church to declare what Christ said when he held his peace. (But are you sure your church will be infallible in that too?) For when his lordship had said, "that wherever Christ held his peace, and that his words are not registered, no man may dare without rashness to say they were these or these;" you very gravely add, Lab. p. 68. "that his lordship must give you leave to tell him you must n. 2. bind up his whole assertion with this proviso, But according as the church shall declare." Your church then must declare when Christ held his peace, and when he did not; when he spake so that others might hear him, and when he did not; when any thing was taken notice of that he said, and when not. But when it is apparent Christ both spake and did much more than ever was written, how well doth your church acquit 158 her office in being Christ's remembranceer! And therefore I believe your church will be guilty of the same rashness with any private person in St. Augustine's opinion, in offering to determine what Christ said when either he held his peace, or his words are not registered. As for those things which you mention Lab. p. 69. for traditions not contrary to God's written word, which yet n. 2. are not an unwritten word, "such as the ceremonies of baptism" by you mentioned, they are therefore not pertinent to our purpose, because they are only rites and ceremonies, and our discourse is about doctrinal traditions; neither yet if I would spend time in the inquiry, could you derive them from

apostolical tradition, notwithstanding what either you or Belarmine say. But the substance of all you have to say pertinent to your purpose is, that though every tradition be not God's unwritten word, yet it being necessary for us to believe the scripture to be the word of God, we must believe it either for some word written or unwritten, or we shall have no divine faith at all of the point, because all divine faith must rely upon some word of God. This being a great novelty with you, that is, something like argumentation, it obliges me to take a little more particular notice of it. Any one that considers the force of this argument will find that it lies wholly upon your notion of divine faith: for, it appearing unreasonable to you that our belief that the scripture is the word should be resolved into the written word itself, therefore you find out an unwritten word of God for a divine faith to fix itself upon, which can be nothing but some word of God. To this therefore I answer, that when you say, it is necessary we must believe the scriptures to be the word of God with divine faith, this divine faith must be taken in one of these three senses; either, first, that faith may be said to be divine, which hath a divine revelation for its material object, as that faith may be said to be a human faith, which is conversant about natural causes and the effects of them; and in this sense it cannot but be a divine faith which is conversant about the scripture, because it is a divine revelation: or secondly, a faith may be said to be divine in regard of its testimony or formal object; and so that is called a divine faith which is built on a divine testimony, and that a human faith which is built on a human testimony: thus I assert, all that faith which respects particular objects of faith, supposing the belief of the scriptures, is in this sense divine, because it is built on a properly divine testimony; but the question is, whether that act of faith which hath the whole scripture as its material object, be in that sense divine or no. Thirdly, faith may be said to be divine, in regard of the divine effects it hath upon the soul of man: as it is said in scripture to purify the heart, overcome the world, resist Satan and his temptations, receive Christ, &c. And this is properly a divine faith; and there is no question but every Christian ought to have this divine faith in his soul, without which the other sorts of divine faith will never bring

men to heaven. But it is apparent, that all who heartily profess to believe the scriptures to be the word of God, have not this sort of divine faith, though they have so firm an assent to the truth and authority of it that they durst lay down their lives for it. The assent therefore, we see, may be firm, where the effects are not saving: the question now is, whether this may be called a divine faith in the second sense, that is, whether it must be built on a testimony infallible? For clearing which, we must further consider the meaning of this question, how we know scripture to be scripture? which may import two things, how we know that all these books contain God's word in them? or secondly, how we know the doctrine contained in these books to be divine? If you then ask me, whether it be necessary that I believe with such a faith as is built on divine testimony, that these books called the scripture contain the prin-
 159 ciples of the Jewish and Christian religion in them (which we call God's word)? I deny it, and shall do so till you shew me some further necessity of it than you have done yet; and my reason is, because I may have sufficient ground for such an assent, without any divine testimony. But if you ask me, on what ground I believe the doctrine to be divine which is contained in those books? I then answer affirmatively, On a divine testimony; because God hath given abundant evidence that this doctrine was of divine revelation. Thus you see, what little reason you have to triumph in your argument from divine faith, inferring the necessity of an unwritten word of God. But the further explication of these things must be reserved till I come to the positive part of our way of resolution of faith. I now return.

§. 8. Having, after your way (that is, very unsatisfactorily) attempted the vindicating your resolution of faith, from the objections which were offered against it by his lordship, you come now to consider the second way propounded by him for the resolving faith, which is, "that scripture should be fully and sufficiently known, as by divine and infallible testimony, by the resplendency of that light which it hath in itself only, and by the witness it can so give to itself;" against which he gives such evident reasons, that you acknowledge the relator himself hath sufficiently confuted it, and you agree with him in the confutation. Yet herein you grow very angry with him,

for saying, “that this doctrine may agree well enough with ^{Lab. p. 69.} your grounds, in regard you hold that tradition may be known ^{n. 3.} for God’s word by its own light, and consequently the like may be said of scripture.” This you call aspersing you, and obtruding falsehoods upon you. Whether it be so or no, must appear upon examination. Two testimonies are cited from A. C. to this purpose; the first is, “Tradition of the church is of a company, which by its own light shews itself to be infallibly assisted.” Your answer is, “that the word ‘which’ must properly relate to the preceding word, ‘company,’ and not to the more remote word, ‘tradition.’” But what of all this? Doth any thing the less follow which the bishop charged A. C. with? For, it being granted by you, “that there can be no knowing an apostolical tradition but for the infallibility of the present church,” the same light which discovers the infallibility of that company doth likewise discover the truth of tradition. If therefore your church doth appear infallible by its own light, which is your own confession, may not the scripture as well appear infallible by its own light? For is there not as great self-evidence at least that the scripture is infallible, as that your church is infallible? And therefore that way you take to shift the objection makes it return upon you with greater force: for I pray tell me, how any company can appear by its own light to be assisted by the Holy Ghost, and not much more the holy scripture to be divine? especially seeing you must at last be forced to derive this infallibility from the scriptures. For you pretend to no other infallibility than what comes by a promise of the immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost. How then can any company appear by its own light to be thus infallibly assisted, unless it first appear by its own light that there was such a promise? and how can that, unless it antecedently appear by its own light that the scripture in which the promise is written is the word of God? You tell us, A. C.’s intention is only to affirm, that the church is known by ^{Lab. p. 70.} her motives of credibility, which ever accompany her, and may ^{n. 3.} very properly be called her own light. How well you are acquainted with A. C.’s intention I know not, neither is it much matter; for, granting this to have been his intention, may not the scripture be known by her motives of credibility, as well as the church? and do not these accompany her, as

much as the church? and may they not be called her light, as properly as those of the church? It is plain then, by all the senses and meanings you can find out, in the very same that
 160 you say the church may be known by her own light, the scripture may much more; and therefore you have no reason to quarrel with his lordship for affirming it.

The second testimony produced is, that a tradition may be known to be such by the light it hath in itself; in which (you say) you find not one word of tradition being known by its own light. But who are so blind as those who will not see? I pray, what difference is there between a tradition being known to be such by its own light, and a tradition being known by its own light? Yes, say you, "known to be such" implies, that is to be God's unwritten word; but are not doctrinal traditions, and an unwritten word, with you the same thing? Can therefore a tradition be known to be an unwritten word by its own light, and not be known to be a tradition by its own light? Nay, how can it possibly be known to be an unwritten word, unless it first appears to be a tradition? For tradition containing under it both those that are unwritten words and those that are not, it must in order of nature be known to be a tradition, before it can be known to be the other: as I must first know you to be a living creature, before I can know you to be a reasonable creature; and I may much sooner know the one than the other. You do therefore very well when you have given us such occasion for sport, to give us leave to laugh at it, as you do in your next words.

§. 9. But before you leave this point you have some graver matter to take notice of, which is, that you desire the reader to consider what the relator grants, viz. that the church now admits of St. James' and St. Jude's Epistles, and the Apocalypse, which were not received for divers years after the rest of the New Testament. From which you wisely infer, that if some books are now to be admitted for canonical which were not always acknowledged to be such, then upon the same authority some books may now be received into the canon, which were not so in Ruffinus his time. And therefore the bishop doth elsewhere unjustly charge the church of Rome, that it had erred in receiving more books into the canon than were received in Ruffinus his time. To which I answer. 1. By your own confession

then, the church of Rome doth now receive into the canon more books than she did in Ruffinus his time; from whence I inquire, whether the present church of Rome were infallible in Ruffinus his time in determining the canon of the scripture? If not, then the present church is no infallible propounder of the word of God, and then all your discourse comes to nothing. If she were infallible then, she cannot be now, for now she determines otherwise as to a main point of faith than she did then; unless you will say your church can be infallible in determining both parts of a contradiction to be true. 2. Is the integrity of the canon of scripture an apostolical tradition, or no? I doubt not but you will say, it is; if so, whether were these books, which you admit now and were not admitted then, known to be of the canon by this apostolical tradition? If not, by what right come they now to be of the canon? If so, then was not your church in Ruffinus's time much to seek for her infallibility in defining what was apostolical tradition and what not? 3. Your main principle, on which the lawfulness of adding more books to the canon of the scripture is built, is, that it is in the power of your church judicially and authoritatively to determine what books belong to the canon of the scripture, and what not, which I utterly deny. For it is impossible that your church, or any in the world, can by any definition make that book to be divine which was not so before such a definition: for the divinity of the book doth merely arise from divine revelation. Can your church then make that to be a divine revelation which was not so? All that any church in the world can do in this case is, not to constitute any new canon, which were to make books divine which were not so, but to use its utmost diligence and care in searching into the authenticalness of those copies which have any pretence to be
of the canon, and whether they did originally proceed from such persons as we have reason to believe had an immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost; and according to the evidence they find that the church may declare and give in her verdict. For the church in this case is but a jury of grand inquest to search into matters of fact, and not a judge upon the bench to determine in point of law. And that is the true reason why the books of the New Testament were gradually received into the canon, and some a great while after others, as St. James,

St. Jude, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse ; because at first the copies being not so publicly dispersed, there was not that occasion ministered to the church for examination of them ; upon which, when by degrees they came to be more public, it caused scruples in many concerning them, because they appeared no sooner : especially if any passages in them seemed to gratify any of the sects then appearing ; as the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Novatians ; and the Apocalypse, the Millenaries : but when upon a thorough search and examination of all circumstances, it did appear that these copies were authentical and did originally proceed from divine persons, then they came to be admitted and owned for such by the universal church, which we call being admitted into the canon of the scripture. Which I take to be the only true and just account of that which is called the constituting the canon of scripture, not as though either the apostles met to do it, or St. John intended any such thing by those words in the end of the Apocalypse ; (for that book being as much liable to question as any, how could that seal the canon for all the rest ?) much less, that it was in the power of any church or council, and least of all of the pope, to determine what was canonical and what not : but only that the church upon examination and inquiry did, by her universal reception of these books, declare itself satisfied with the evidence which was produced, that those were true and authentic copies which were abroad under such names or titles, and that there was great reason to believe, by a continued tradition from the age and time these books were written in, that they were written by such persons who were not only free from any design of imposture, but gave the greatest rational evidence that they had a more special and immediate assistance of God's Spirit. You see then to how little advantage to your cause you made this digression.

Lab. p. 70, §. 10. As to the third way propounded for resolving the
71. n. 5. question, How we know the scriptures to be the word of God ? viz. by the testimony of the Holy Ghost ; three things you object against the bishop's discourse about it ; first, that his discourse is roving and uncertain. 2. That notwithstanding his brags, he must have recourse to a private spirit himself. 3. That though the bishop would seem to deny it, divers

eminent protestants do resolve their faith into the private spirit. This being the substance of what you say, I shall return a particular answer to each of them. For the first, you tell us, "He delivers himself in such a roving way of discourse, as signifies nothing in effect as to what he would drive at." No? that is strange, when that which his lordship drives at is, to shew how far this opinion is to be allowed and how far not, which he is so far from roving in, that he clearly and distinctly propounds the state of the question and the resolution of it: which in short is this; If by the testimony of the Spirit be meant any special revelation of a new object of faith, then he denies the truth of it at least in an ordinary way, both because God never sends us to look for such a testimony, and because it would expose men to the danger of enthusiasms: but if by the testimony of the Spirit be meant the habit or the act of divine infused faith, by virtue of which they believe the object which appears credible, then he grants the truth, but denies the pertinency of it, because it is quite out of the state of the question, which inquires only after a sufficient means to make this object credible against all impeachment of folly and temerity in believing, whether men do actually believe or not. 162

And withal adds, that the question is of such outward and evident means, as other men may take notice of as well as ourselves. Judge you now whether this may be called roving; if it be so, I can freely excuse you from it in all the discourses I have met with in your book, who abhor nothing more than a true stating and methodical handling any question.

"But yet" (say you) "the bishop cannot free himself from that imputation of recurring to the private spirit, against any that should press the business home." Sure you refer us here to some one else who is able to press a business home, for you never attempt it yourself; and instead of that, only produce a large testimony out of A. C., that he did not acquit the bishop wholly of this. Whether he did or no is to little purpose, and yet those very words which his lordship cites are in your testimony produced out of him. Only what you add more from him, that he must be driven to it, that his lordship denies, and neither A. C. or you have been able to prove it.

"But though the bishop seems not only to deny any such

private revelation himself, but will not confess that any protestants hold it, yet," you say, "there can be no doubt in this, since Calvin and Whitaker do both so expressly own it." But according to those principles laid down before, both these testimonies are easily answered. For, 1. Neither of them doth imply any private revelation of any new object, but only a particular application of the evidence appearing in scripture to the conscience of every believer. 2. That these testimonies do not speak of the external evidence which others are capable of, but of the internal satisfaction of every one's conscience. Therefore Calvin saith, *Si conscientiis optime consultum volumus*^u, &c. ; "If we will satisfy our own consciences ;" } not, If we will undertake to give a sufficient reason to others of our faith. So Whitaker : *Esse enim dicimus certius et illustrius testimonium quo nobis persuadeatur hos libros esse sacros*^x, &c. ; "There is a more certain and noble testimony by which we may be persuaded that these books are sacred," viz. that of the Holy Ghost. 3. Neither of these testimonies affirm any more than the more judicious writers among yourselves do. Your Canus^y asserts the necessity of an internal efficient cause, by special assistance of the Spirit moving us to believe, besides and beyond all human authorities and motives, which of themselves are not sufficient to beget faith, and this (a little after) he calls *divinum quoddam lumen incitans ad credendum*, "a divine light moving us to believe ;" and again, *interius lumen infusum a Spiritu Sancto*, "an inward light infused by the Spirit of God." There is nothing in the sayings of the most rigid protestants is more hard to explain or vindicate from a private revelation than this is ; if, as you say, one would press it home. Nay, hath not your own Stapleton Calvin's very phrase of the necessity of the secret testimony of the Spirit that one believe the testimony and judgment of the church concerning scripture^z ? And is there not then as much danger of enthusiasm

^u Institut. l. i. c. 7. sect. 4.

^x Controv. de Script. q. iii. c. 1.

^y Id statuendum est, auctoritatem humanam et incitamenta omnia illa prædicta, sive alia quæcunque adhibita ab eo qui proponit fidem, non esse sufficientes causas ad credendum ut credere tenemur, sed præterea opus est interiori causa efficiente, i. e. Dei speciali auxilio moventis ad cre-

dendum. Locor. Theolog. l. ii. c. 8. Resp. ad 4. arg. l. ii. c. 8. sect. Jam si hæc.

^z Arcanum hoc divini Spiritus testimonium prorsus necessarium est, ut quis ecclesiæ testimonio ac iudicio, circa scripturarum approbationem credat. Triplicat. advers. Whitak. cap. 3.

in believing the testimony of your church, as in believing the scriptures? Nay, doth not your Gregory de Valentia rather go higher than the testimonies by you produced out of Calvin and Whitaker on this very subject, in the beginning of his discourse of the resolution of faith? "It is God himself," saith he, "in the first place, which must convince and persuade the minds of men of the truth of the Christian doctrine, and consequently of the sacred scriptures, by some inward instinct and impulse; as it appears from scripture itself, and is fully explained by Prosper^a." If you will then undertake to clear this inward instinct and impulse upon the minds of men, whereby they are persuaded of the truth of Christianity and scripture, from enthusiasm and a private spirit, you may as 163 easily do it for the utmost which is said by Calvin or Whitaker, or any other protestant divine. This therefore is only an argument of your desire to cavil, and as such I will pass it over. For what concerns the influence which the Spirit hath in the resolution of faith, it will be inquired into afterwards.

§. 11. The last way mentioned in order to the resolution of faith is that of reason, which (his lordship saith) cannot be denied to have some place to come in and prove what it can. According to which (he tells us) "no man can be hindered from weighing the tradition of the church, the inward motives in scripture itself, all testimonies within, which seem to bear witness to it; and in all this" (saith he) "there is no harm: the danger is, when a man will use no other scale but reason, or prefer reason before any other scale. Reason then can give no supernatural ground into which a man may resolve his faith, that the scripture is the word of God infallibly; yet reason can go so high as it can prove that Christian religion, which rests upon the authority of this book, stands upon surer grounds of nature, reason, common equity and justice, than any thing in the world which any infidel or mere naturalist hath done, doth, or can adhere unto, against it, in that which he makes, accounts, or assumes as religion to himself."

Conf. p. 61.
sect. 16. n.
13.

Conf. p. 62.
sect. 16. n.
14.

^a Et vero Deus ipse imprimis est qui Christianam doctrinam, atque adeo scripturam sacram veram esse, voce revelationis suæ, et interno quodam instinctu et impulsu humanis

mentibus contestatur atque persuadet; ut in ea ipsa scriptura multis in locis est expressum, et præclare a Prospero Aquitanico explicatur. De *Analysi Fidei*, l. i. c. 1.

This is the substance of his lordship's discourse about the use of reason ; in which we observe :

1. That he doth not make reason a means sufficient to ground an infallible belief that scripture is the word of God. And therefore you are guilty of notorious oscitaney, or wilful calumny, in telling us, "that natural reason is introduced by the bishop for that end." By which we may guess at the truth of what you say at the end of your interlocutory discourse between the bishop and the heathen, that you have not wronged him, "by either falsely imposing on him, or dissembling the force of his arguments;" wherein you are so guilty, that the only extenuation of your crime had been never to have professed the contrary. For you give us a hopeful specimen of your fair dealings at your entrance on this subject.

2. Though reason cannot give a supernatural ground whereby to resolve faith as to the scripture's being God's word infallibly, yet reason may abundantly prove to any one who questions it, the truth and reasonableness of Christian religion. By which, if you please, you may take notice of a double resolution of faith: the one is into the truth and reasonableness of the doctrine of Christianity considered in itself; and the other is, into the infallible means of the conveyance of that doctrine to us, which is the scripture. When therefore his lordship offers to deal with a heathen, he doth not as you either sillily or wilfully would make him say, that he would prove infallibly to him that the Bible is God's word, but that Christian religion hath so much the advantage above all others, as to make it appear that it stands upon surer grounds of nature, reason, common equity and justice, than any thing in the world which any one who questions it doth adhere unto. Which I think is a thing that no one who understands Christian religion would be afraid to undertake against any infidel of what sort or nature soever. These things being premised, your grand piece of sophistry in the dispute between the heathen and the bishop, whom you so solemnly introduce at a conference about religion, doth evidently discover itself. Wherein you bring in your learned heathen as one desiring satisfaction in matter of religion; but being not versed in Christian principles, desires to be satisfied by the evidence of natural

Lab. p. 72.
l. 9, 10.

Lab. p. 75.
l. 5.

Lab. p. 72.
ll. 5.

reason ; which when the bishop hath condescended to, your very next thing is, that your heathen understands by his lordship's book, that the sole foundation of our faith is a book called the Bible ; which, saith he, you tell me must be believed infallibly, with every part and parcel in it, to be the undoubted word of the true God, before I can believe any other point of religion as it ought to be believed. As to which, your heathen 164 sees no ground to assent that it is God's word. But by this way of management of your dispute, we may easily discern which way the issue of it is like to go. Doth his lordship anywhere undertake to prove this in the first place infallibly to a heathen, That the Bible must be infallibly believed to be God's word ? No ; he offers to prove, first, the excellency and the reasonableness of the Christian religion considered in itself. From whence you might easily conceive how the dispute ought to be managed ; shewing first that the precepts of Christianity are highly just and reasonable, the promises of it such as may induce any reasonable man to the practice of those precepts ; and that the whole doctrine is such as may appear to any considerative person to have been very wisely contrived : that there is nothing vain or impertinent in it, but that it is designed for great and excellent purposes, the bringing men off from the love of sin to the love of God ; that it is impossible to imagine any doctrine to be contrived with more advantage for promoting these ends, because it represents to us the highest expressions of the kindness and goodness of God to man, and that the promises made by God were confirmed to the world by the death of his only Son ; that since men's natures are now so degenerate, God hath made a tender of grace and divine assistance, whereby to enable men to perform the excellent duties of this religion. That those things which seem most hard to believe in this doctrine are not such things as might have been spared out of it, (as though God did intend only to puzzle men's reason with them,) but they are such mysteries, as it is impossible the wit of man can conceive they should have been discovered upon better reasons or for more excellent ends ; as, that a Virgin should conceive by the immediate power of God, to bring him into the world who should be the Saviour of it ; that there should be a resurrection of bodies, in order to a complete felicity of them who

obey this doctrine ; and so for others of a like nature : that supposing it possible such things should be, it is impossible to conceive they should be done upon better grounds or for better purposes than they are in Christian religion. This being now a short draught or idea of Christianity, is the first thing which I suppose any learned or inquisitive heathen or infidel should be acquainted with ; if he finds fault with this, let him in any thing shew the incongruity or unreasonableness of it. If he acknowledge this model of the doctrine reasonable, his next scruple is, whether this be truly the model of it or no ; for that end I tell him we have a book among us, which is and ever hath been by Christians taken for granted to comprise in it the principles of Christian religion ; I bid him take it and read it seriously, and see if that which I have given him as the idea of Christian doctrine, do not perfectly agree with that book. I do not bid him presently absolutely and infallibly believe this book to be God's word, which is a very preposterous way of proceeding ; but only compare the doctrine with the book, as he would do a body of civil law with the institutes of it, or the principles of any science with the most approved authors of it. If after this search he be satisfied that the representation I gave him of Christian religion agrees with those books we call the Bible, he yet further adds, that he acknowledges the principles of our religion to be reasonable, but desires to be satisfied of the truth of them ; I must further inquire whether he doth believe any thing else to be in the world besides what he hath seen and heard himself ? I may justly suppose his answer affirmative ; I then demand upon what grounds ? A. Upon the certain report of honest men, who have seen and heard other things than ever he did. But why do you think honest men's reports to be credible in such cases ? A. Because I see they have no design or interest to deceive me in it. Will you then believe the report of such men, who, I can make it appear, could have no interest in deceiving you ? A. I can see no reason to
165 the contrary. Will you then believe such men who lost their lives to make it appear that their testimony was true ? A. Yes. Will you believe such things wherein persons of several ages, professions, nations, religions, interests, are all agreed that they were so ? A. Yes, if it be only to believe a

matter of fact on their testimony ; I can see no ground to question it. That is all I desire of you, and therefore you must believe that there was in the world such a person as Jesus Christ, who died and rose again ; and, while he lived, wrought great miracles to confirm his doctrine with ; and that he sent out apostles to preach this doctrine in the world, who likewise did work many miracles ; and that some of these persons, the better to preserve and convey this doctrine, did write the substance of all that Christ either did or spake, and withal penned several epistles to those churches which were planted by them. These are all matters of fact, and therefore on your former principle you are to believe them. There are then but two scruples left ; supposing all this true, yet this doth not prove the doctrine divine, nor the scriptures which convey it to be infallible. To which I answer, 1. Can you question whether that doctrine be divine, when the person who declared it to the world was so divine and extraordinary a person, not only in his conversation, but in those frequent and unparalleled miracles which he wrought in the sight and face of his enemies, who, after his death, did rise again and converse with his disciples, who gave evidence of their fidelity in the testimony they gave of it, by laying down their lives to attest the truth of it ? Again, can you question the divinity of that doctrine which tended so apparently to the destruction of sin and wickedness and the power of the evil spirit in the world ? For we cannot think he would quit his possession willingly out of the bodies and souls of men : that therefore which threw him out of both must be, not only a doctrine directly contrary to his interest, but infinitely exceeding him in power ; and that can be no less than divine. But still, you will say, is it not, besides all this, necessary to believe these very books you call the scripture to be divinely inspired ? and how should I know that ? To that I answer, 1. That which God chiefly requires from you is, the belief of the truth and divinity of the doctrine ; for that is the faith which will bring you to obedience, which is the thing God aims at. 2. If you believe the doctrine to be true and divine, you cannot reasonably question the infallibility of the scripture. For in that you read, that not only Christ did miracles, but his apostles too ; and therefore their testimony, whether writing or speak-

ing, was equally infallible; all that you want evidence for is, that such persons writ these books, and that being a matter of fact was sufficiently proved and acknowledged before. Thus you see, if we take a right method, and not jumble things confusedly together, as you do, what a satisfactory account may be given to any inquisitive person, first, of the reasonableness; next, of the truth; and lastly, of the divinity, both of the doctrine and the books containing it, which we call the scripture.

§. 12. Let us now again see how you make the bishop and heathen dispute. The substance of which is, that you make your heathen desire no less than infallible evidence that the Bible is God's word by conviction of natural reason; whereas his lordship attempts only to make the authority of scriptures appear by such arguments as unbelievers themselves could not but think reasonable, if they weighed them with indifferency.

Conf. p. 63.
sect. 16. n.
15.

“For though,” saith he, “this truth, that scripture is the word of God, is not so demonstratively evident *a priori* as to inforce assent, yet it is strengthened so abundantly with probable arguments, both from the light of nature itself and human testimony, that he must be very wilful and self-conceited that shall dare to suspect it.” And sure any reasonable man
166
in the world would think it sufficient to deal with an adversary upon such terms. But, says your heathen, a man cannot be infallibly certain of what is strengthened with but probable arguments, since that which is but probably true may also be said to be probably false. Which being a thing so often objected against us by your party, must be somewhat further explained. How far infallibility may be admitted in our belief may partly be perceived by what hath been said already, and what shall be said more afterwards. That there is and ought to be the highest degree of actual certainty, I assert as much as you: but, say you, “the very arguments being but probable, destroy it:” to which I answer by explaining the meaning of probable arguments in this case, whereby are not understood such kind of probabilities which cannot raise a firm assent, in which sense we say, That which is probable to be, is probable not to be; but by probabilities are only meant such kind of rational evidence which may yield a sufficient foundation for a firm assent, but yet notwithstanding,

to which an obstinate person may deny assent. As for instance, if you were to dispute with the atheist concerning the existence of a Deity, which he denies, and should proceed with you just as your heathen doth with the bishop. 'Sir, all that religion that you talk of is built only upon the belief of a God, but I cannot be infallibly convinced by natural reason that there is such a one.' You presently tell him, that there is so much evidence for a Deity from the works of nature, the consent of all people, &c. that he can have no reason to question it. But still he replies, 'None of these are demonstrations, for notwithstanding I have considered these, I believe the contrary; but demonstrations would make me infallibly certain; these then are no more but probable arguments, and therefore since it is but probably true, it may be probably false.' How then will you satisfy such a person? can you do it any otherwise than by saying, that we have as great evidence as the nature of the thing will bear, and it is unreasonable to require more? unless you will tell him, it is to no purpose to believe a God, unless he believe it infallibly; and there being no infallible arguments in nature, he must believe it on the infallibility of your church. And do you not think this were an excellent way to confute atheists? But when we speak of probable arguments, we mean not such as are apt to leave the mind in suspense whether the thing be true or no; but only such as are not proper and rigid demonstrations, or infallible testimony, but the highest evidence which the nature of the thing will bear, and therefore may cause an undoubted certainty of assent. As it is in all matters of fact; for will you say, that it is as probable that there is not such a place as Rome, as that there is, because the only argument you have to be convinced of it is but in itself a probability, which is the fame and report of people. It is a piece therefore of great weakness of judgment to say, that there can be no certain assent, where there is a mere possibility of being deceived. For there is no kind of assent in the human understanding as to the existence of any thing, but there is a possibility of deception in it. Will you say, because it is possible all men's senses may deceive them, therefore there can be no certainty of any object of sense? And as well may you say it, as destroy any certainty of assent in religion,

where you suppose a possibility of being deceived. But if I be not much deceived (though I suppose you will account it a grand paradox), an assent may be as firm and certain upon moral grounds as upon a demonstration, that is, when the matter is capable of no more than moral grounds. For the reason why we suspend assent is, the unproportionateness of the evidence to the matter to be proved: so when the matter is capable of more evidence than is produced, and I know it to be so, my understanding cannot firmly assent on such evidence; but when the matter is capable of no more than moral evidence, and I know it, I may as firmly assent to the truth of such a thing, as to the truth of a clearer thing upon
 167 clearer evidence. Thus I may as firmly assent that there are such places as the East and West Indies, upon the constant report of men, as that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles: I say not the evidence is the same, but that the assent may be as firm. You cannot then destroy the certainty of assent which is required to Christian religion, by telling men that the arguments they rely on are but moral arguments: and by this you may see, there may be a degree far beyond probability in the assent, where the arguments in themselves considered may be called *probable*; or rather, that moral certainty may be a most firm, rational, and undoubted certainty. Your following discourse between the bishop and heathen runs upon the former mistake, as though his intention were to prove first the Bible to be God's infallible word, before he would prove Christian religion to be true, which I have already shewed you is a mistake, which appears sufficiently by his own words, of proving the Christian religion to stand upon surer grounds than any other religion; not only than that one which the heathen believed, but any other in the world: and therefore, your objection is answered, that for all this, a third religion may be truer than both. Your remaining discourse proves nothing at all, but on the former supposition; and therefore, supposing his intention be to prove Christianity to be true and divine, his argument from the power of it over the devil follows plainly enough. And when he mentions the evidence of it out of scripture, he doth not suppose the belief of it as an infallible word of God, but only as of any other history, and therefore is far from such a

petitio principii as you imagine. That which the bishop saith may reasonably be supposed as a principle in divinity, (as there are *postulata* in other sciences,) is not the infallibility of the doctrine, or revelation, but the credibility of both, in order to further conviction concerning their infallibility; for, unless the credibility of it be first assumed as a principle, men will not use the means in order to conviction of its infallibility. And in this sense he doth not contradict himself, nor unsay what he had said before; and that this was his sense, appears by the last words of that discourse, “that a mere natural man may be thus far convinced that the text of God is a very credible text.” Thus we see how much, notwithstanding your protestation to the contrary, you have wronged the bishop, both by falsely imposing on him, and dissembling the force of his argument: and how unjust that imputation is, that if his doctrine had been held in the primitive church, it would have laid the world under an impossibility of being converted to Christianity; whereas I have shewed how consonant his way is, as I explained it, both to reason, and the proceedings of the primitive Christians in the conversion of learned heathens.

Conf. p. 64.
sect. 16. n.
18.

§. 13. But since you will needs set the bishop to convert a learned heathen, I will see what an excellent faculty you have according to your principles of satisfying an atheist or a sceptic in religion, whom, for your sake, I will suppose more desirous of satisfaction than commonly such persons are. Let us see then how he accosts you.

Scept. Sir, I understand by a great book of yours, that you have only taken the right course to convince such persons as myself, who are a little doubtful concerning the received principles of religion in the world; for the wisest I have conversed with of those who own those things do offer only to prove them by reason and arguments, which, I understand, you decry, as a way to make all men such as I am: but that you have an excellent recipe for men under my distemper; for you promise them no less than infallible certainty in all things you require them to believe, which is a thing I have been so long seeking for, and have yet so unhappily missed of, that I cannot but rejoice in meeting with such a healing priest, who offers nothing short of infallibility in all matters of religion.

168 *T. C.* Sir, I question not but before you and I part, I shall cure those distorted joints of your mind, and instead of being a sceptic, make you a sound catholic. For indeed it is true what you say, that those who would convince you by reason do but offer to make you more a sceptic than you are—at least, you can have no divine faith at all upon such principles; but if you will follow my counsel, I doubt not but to make you infallibly certain in the things we require you to believe.

Scept. I see then there is hope of a cure for me; but I pray tell me what that is I must be infallibly certain of, and by what means I shall attain it. I would therefore in the first place be infallibly certain of the being of God, and the immortality of souls, for these I take to be the principles of all religion.

T. C. You take a wrong method; you should first inquire after the means of this infallible certainty, for when once you have got that, it will make you infallibly certain of whatever you desire; but as long as you use still so much reason as to demand infallible certainty in principles before conclusions, there is little hopes of your being a true Roman catholic. But I must tell you this is not the way: you must first believe the church, and then you may believe any thing.

Scept. But would you have me attain infallible certainty without any reason that is infallible? But because you quarrel with my method, I will yield to yours, but let me desire to know first, what those things are which I must believe upon this infallibility; and then, whether nothing short of this infallible certainty will serve in order to faith; for if so, I must confess myself not only a sceptic but an infidel.

T. C. All objects of faith must be believed with infallible certainty, and nothing short of that can be true faith, for true divine faith must rely on divine authority, or some word of God: now because you cannot rely on God's written word for the divine authority of itself, you must rely on some divine unwritten word; which can be no other but what is delivered by the infallible testimony of the present Roman church.

Scept. I was in hopes you intended my cure, but now I perceive you aim at making me worse; for I never heard so many things uttered in a breath with so great confidence and so little show of reason; that if I were not a sceptic already, I

should commence one now. You tell me indeed very magisterially, that I cannot believe without infallibility, because faith must rely on a divine testimony; this divine testimony is not in scripture (as you call it), but in the infallibility of your present Roman church: I find my doubts so increase by this discourse of yours, that they all crowd so to get out, I know not how to propose them in order, but as well as I can. You tell me the ground why you require infallible certainty is, because faith must rest on divine authority, and that this authority must be that of your church, which you say is infallible: these things therefore I desire of you, first, to shew how your church's authority comes to be divine; 2. how her testimony comes to be infallible; 3. how I may be infallibly certain of this infallibility; 4. supposing the catholic church's testimony to be so, how such a sceptic as I am should know your Roman church to be that catholic church.

T. C. Your first question is, how our church's authority comes to be divine? I see there is little hopes of doing good on you that ask such questions as these are; you ought quietly to submit your faith to the church, and heartily believe all these things without questioning them; for I must tell you, such kind of questions have almost ruined us, and hath made scrupulous men turn heretics, and others atheists: but since I hope your questions may go no further than my answers, nor be any better understood, I must tell you, that though we say that it is necessary that divine faith must rely on divine authority because that seems to promise infallibility, yet 169 when we come to our church's testimony, we dare not for fear of the heretics call it divine, but infallible, and in a manner and after a sort divine, hoping they would never take notice of any contradiction in it; but still we say, as far as concerns precise infallibility, it is so truly supernatural and certain, that it comes nothing short of the divinest testimony; but yet this is not divine, though it be by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, and yet is no immediate revelation; but still it is so much, as, if the church should err, God's veracity may be called in question as soon as the church's.

Scept. I took you for a priest before, but now I take you for an absolute conjurer: but I confess I like this discourse well, for I perceive your religion is built on such grounds, as you

never intend should be understood, wherein I commend your discretion ; for these distinctions will doubtless do your work among silly and ignorant people, which are a great part of mankind, and much the greatest of your church. I am therefore infinitely satisfied with this answer to my first question ; answer but the rest so, and I promise you to be less a sceptic than ever I was.

T. C. To your second, how her testimony comes to be infallible ; because I perceive you are an understanding person, I will acquaint you with our way. The heretics trouble us with this question above all others : for they presently cry out, If you know the scripture to be infallible by the church, and the church infallible by scripture, we run into a circle ; and this we know as well as they, but do not think fit to let the people know it, and therefore we tell them of things being known in themselves and to us, between the formal object and the infallible witness, between the principal cause and a condition prerequisite, between proving of it to heretics and to ourselves : but I see some of my brethren of late have been much beholding to some things with vizards upon them called motives of credibility, and the generality are so frightened with them, that they will rather say they are satisfied than ask any more questions ; but if they do, these do so little in truth belong to our church, that then we storm and sweat, and cry out upon them as atheists, and that it is impossible they should believe any religion who question them ; and if that doth it not, then we patter over the former distinctions as we do our prayers, and hope they are both in an unknown tongue.

Scept. Well, I see you are the man like to give me satisfaction ; I pray to your third question, how I may be infallibly certain of this infallibility ?

T. C. That is a question never asked by catholics, and if we find any propounding it whom we hoped to proselyte, we give them hard words and leave them ; for because we offer to prove our infallibility by only motives of credibility, they presently ask us, whether our infallibility be an article of faith ? if it be, then they may believe an article of faith without infallible certainty, and then what need our church's infallibility ? and then to what end do we quarrel with their faith for being built on greater motives of credibility ? which being such unto-

ward questions we see there is no good to be done on them, and so leave them: but in our books we are sure to cry out of the fallibility and uncertainty of the faith of protestants, because they acknowledge their church is not infallible, and cry up our church because she pretends to it; if they ask how we prove it, we seek to confound the state of the question, and run out into the necessity of an unwritten word, or bring such motives as hold only for the primitive and apostolical church, and make them serve ours too. If all this will not do, we have other shifts still, but it is not yet fit to discover them.

Scept. To your fourth question (and then I will tell you my judgment), how your church comes to be called or accounted the catholic church?

T. C. For this, though it seems strange to the heretics how a part should be called or accounted the whole, yet to all true catholics, who must wink hard that they may see the 170 better, we make no great difficulty of it; for we tell them the pope is Christ's vicar, and it is the head which gives the denomination, and so *catholic* is nothing else but a name to denote persons who are in our church; and if they question this, they thereby are out of the church, and so under damnation; but for the sturdy heretics who deride our thunderbolts, we are put to a greater trouble, and are fain to gather all the citations of the fathers against the poor Donatists, and apply them to the heretics; and whatever they say belongs to the catholic church we confidently arrogate it to ourselves, as though our church now were the same with the catholic church then: and chiefly we have the advantage of the protestants by this, that whatever corruptions they charge us with, they had the good hap to be almost generally received at the time Luther appeared, and upon this we thunder them with the succession and visibility of our church; as the Samaritans were much to blame they did not serve the Israelites so, after their return from captivity; for they had a continual succession in the same place, and a greater visibility than the Israelites under their bondage; but yet we had the advantage of them by a larger spread, a longer prescription, and a fairer show.

Scept. Sir, I am hugely taken with these discourses of yours, and easily perceive (whatever they that believe Christian

religion to be true think) that you are men of wit and parts ; and understand your interest—I mean your religion. I understand now thoroughly, to what intent it is you say, that those who build their faith on rational grounds go about to destroy religion. I confess, you have taken the only way to reclaim me from any thing of *scepticism*. I suppose you understand my meaning, as I do yours.

In this discourse I pretend not, as you did, to deliver his lordship's words, and so wrong him by falsely imposing them on him in another sense than he intended them, but collect from your former managery of this controversy, what your real sense and meaning is, and how excellent a way this is, instead of reclaiming atheists, to make them so. If I have mistaken your meaning, I pray speak more clearly, and then we shall think you mean honestly ; but as long as you walk so much in the dark, you will give us leave to suspect your design is either upon our purses or our religion. I now return to your church tradition.

Lab. p. 75.
n. 6.

§. 14. You begin your sixth section with a fair supposition, and carry it on accordingly, which is of a child brought up in your church who is commanded to believe the scriptures and all other articles of faith on the authority of your church, whom you suppose to die without once looking into the scriptures : your question is, whether he had saving faith or no : if so, then the church's authority is a sufficient ground for infallible faith ; if not, then he had none at all, and consequently could not be saved. I answer, we pry not into divine secrets, on which account we dare not pronounce of the final condition of such who through ignorance cannot be acquainted with God's written word ; we therefore say, that an hearty assent to the doctrine of the gospel is the faith which God requires, and if this faith lead men to obedience to God's will, we assert the sufficiency of it for salvation, and not otherwise ; for faith is not therefore saving because built on an infallible ground, as you fondly seem to imagine ; but when it attains its end, when it brings men to a hearty obedience to the precepts of the gospel. And if some among you may believe that which is in itself true, but upon weak and insufficient grounds, as the advantages of education, (which are much rather the foundation of the faith of such a one as you speak of, than any infallibility

supposed by him in the church,) yet such and so great is the goodness of God, that if a faith standing on such grounds do attain its end, that is, make such a one universally holy, we deny not but God may accept of it for salvation. But still we 171 say, such a faith is so far from being infallible, that it is not built on any sufficient or satisfactory ground, for the motive of it is that which may be false as well as true; for he that assents to any thing on the authority of any church before he doth judge whether her authority be to be relied on absolutely or no, may believe a falsehood as soon as truth upon that authority, and the more he makes this his foundation, the more he is in danger of being deceived. As suppose a child brought up in Turkey and instructed in that religion, he is told that he must without examination believe Mahomet's Alcoran to be divine; and he must neither doubt of this nor of any other article of faith universally received among Mahometans: may not such a one as invincibly believe the authority of the Turkish church (if we may call it so) as your child doth the authority of your church? Where then lies the difference? you see plainly it cannot be in the motive to faith, for the authority is supposed equally infallible in both; but it lies in the evidence of truth in one religion above the other, and this requires something more than the authority of the church, viz. judgment and diligent examination. And then faith is built on a sure ground. Remember then that we inquire not what abatements God makes for the prejudices of education in believing or not believing any religion; nor how God intends to deal with them, who, through age or other invincible prejudices, are incapable of judging the evidence of truth in any religion; but what are the certain grounds of faith which sober and understanding men may and ought to build their belief of true religion upon. But you proceed, and "suppose ^{Lab. p. 75.} your young Christian to live, and apply himself to study, and ^{n. 6.} becomes a learned man, and then upon the church's recommendation betakes himself to the reading the scriptures, upon which by the light he discovers in it he finds the faith he had before was but a human persuasion and not a divine faith, and consequently that he had no saving faith of any article of Christian belief, and so was out of the state of salvation; from whence," you say, "will spring gripes and torture of spirit

among Christians." And why so? What, because they discern greater reason to believe than ever they did, must they find gripes and torture of spirit? I had thought the more light men had found, i. e. the more reason for believing, the more peace and contentment they had in their minds. And so I verily believe it is: but probably your meaning is, this doctrine will cause gripes and torture of spirit in those who have no other foundation of faith but your church's authority, and never inquire after more: if it does so, much good may they do them; and I verily believe, such doubts may tend more to their satisfaction at last, than their present security; and a doctrine which tends to convince the world of the folly and unreasonableness of such a kind of implicit faith, the unsuitableness of it to the nature of religion in general, but more especially the Christian, (whose great commendation is, that it puts men upon so much searching and inquiry into the truth of it,) would tend more to the good of the Christian world than any of those soft and easy principles which you seek to keep men in obedience by, and that I am afraid more to your church than to Christ. Why then such a doctrine should cause needless gripes and tortures of spirit, I cannot imagine: it must certainly be a great confirmation to the mind of any good man to see still further reason for his faith, by which it grows more radicated and confirmed. Or would you have a man disquiet himself because he is not still a child? Much such a kind of thing this is, that a man's mind must be tortured because his faith grows stronger; for we assert that there are degrees in faith, which you who make all faith infallible cannot do, unless you suppose an infallible thing may grow more infallible. And if all true faith be infallible, how can men pray for the increase of faith, unless
 172 they pray for the increase of their infallibility, which is a prayer, I suppose, not many in your church are allowed to make; for then what becomes of your pope's prerogative, when not only every one among you is supposed to be infallible, but hopes as well as prays to be more infallible? which is more than your pope or your church dares pretend to.

But whether doctrine tends more to inward gripes and tortures of spirit, yours or ours, let any reasonable man judge; for we assert that true faith is capable of degrees of augmentation,

but you assert that there is no divine faith but what is infallible; when therefore men by reflection upon themselves are so far from finding such an infallibility in their assent, that they combat with many doubts and fears, as we see the apostles did even after the resurrection of Christ; you must pronounce that the apostles when they questioned Christ's resurrection from the dead had no divine faith at all: for it is plain they were far from an infallible assent to it, when Christ "upbraided Mark xvi. them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they ¹⁴ believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." Were they infallible in their assent then or no? I hope you will not contradict Christ so much as to say so: or had they no divine faith then at all? what, not St. Peter, for whom Christ prayed that his faith should not fail, and from the indefectibility of whose faith you derive that of the pope? (but here you may see what a certain foundation you have for it, when it is so apparent here that St. Peter's faith did fail, and that as to so important an article of faith as Christ's own resurrection; for certainly, St. Peter was one of the eleven.) Nay, doth not Christ upbraid them for their unbelief in not believing them that had seen him after he was risen? We see then, Christ chides them for not resolving their faith into a human and moral testimony; if you had been there, no doubt you must have told him, he was mistaken in the nature of faith, which could rest on nothing but an infallible testimony; and unless he shewed you by sufficient motives that those persons who saw him risen were infallible, for all his haste you were not bound to believe him. But whether Christ or you be the more infallible, judge you. We see our blessed Saviour requires no more assent than the nature of the thing will bear; nay, he upbraids those who will not believe upon moral and human testimony; but you say just the contrary, as though you were resolved to contradict him: but that is sufficient argument to all Christians, of the falsity and folly of your doctrine, which tends to no other end but to make all considering men sceptics or atheists. For when you lay it down as a certain maxim, that no faith can be divine but what is infallible, and they find no such infallibility in the grounds or the nature of men's assent, what then follows, but those worst sort of gripes and tortures, such as argue an inward

convulsion of mind, and bring men to a greater question, whether there be any such thing as that you call true divine faith in the world? You go on with your catechumen's discourse, who must suppose, "either that the church taught that he was to believe scripture infallible upon her own infallible testimony, or not; if so, then he reflects, that this church hath plainly deceived him and all others who believed upon that supposition, and so exposed them all to the hazard of eternal damnation; and therefore was no true church, but a

Lab. p. 75,
76. n. 6.

deceiver. From whence," say you, "he gathers, that her recommendation of scripture is as much as nothing, and so at last is left to the sole letter of scripture, and so must gather from thence its authority, or there can be no means left him on the bishop's own principles to believe infallibly that scripture is divine, and the true word of God." This discourse of yours consists of three absurdities, which will follow upon one of your church's questioning her infallibility. 1. That then your church will be guilty of imposture. 2. Then the church's testimony signifies nothing. 3. That then the sole letter of

173 scripture must assure men of its divine authority. For the first, I must confess him whom before you supposed a child, to be now grown to years of understanding, since he doth so wisely reflect on himself as to your church's gross imposture, in her pretence of infallibility; and, no doubt, it is one of the greatest which hath been known in the Christian world, which you cannot yourself deny, supposing that it be not true that she is infallible. For, can there be any higher cheat in the world, than under a pretence of infallibility, to impose things upon men's faith which are contrary to the sense and reason of mankind, to keep them from that inward satisfaction which their souls might find from a serious consideration of the excellent nature of Christian religion and a diligent practice of it, to contradict thereby the very scope of Christianity, which courts our esteem by offering itself to the fairest trial; when, I say, under this pretence Christian religion is apparently dishonoured, the welfare of men's souls hindered, and the greatest corruptions obtruded without possibility of amendment of them, excuse your church from imposture if you can; for my part, I cannot, nor any one else who thoroughly considers it. For the second, it will follow indeed, that the tes-

timony of your church is as much as nothing as to any infallible foundation of faith ; but yet it may be of great use for conveying universal tradition to us, and so by that delivering the scripture into our hands as the infallible rule of faith. To the third ; it by no means follows, that there is nothing but the sole letter of scripture left to convince us of the divine authority of scripture ; I hope the working miracles, fulfilling prophecies, the nature and reasonableness of the doctrine of scriptures, are all left besides the bare letter of scripture ; and these, we say, are sufficient to make us believe that the scripture contains the infallible word of God.

§. 15. Now your profound Christian begins to reflect on the bishop's way, which is (say you) "that the testimony of the church is human and fallible, and that the belief of the scripture rests upon the scripture itself." But it will be more to our purpose to hear the bishop deliver his own mind, than to hear you so lamely deliver it ; which, in short, he sums up thus : ' A man is probably led by the authority of the present church, as by the first informing, inducing, persuading means to believe the scripture to be the word of God : but when he hath studied, considered and compared this word with itself and with other writings, with the help of ordinary grace and a mind morally induced and reasonably persuaded by the voice of the church, the scripture then gives greater and higher reasons of credibility to itself, than tradition alone could give. And then, he that believes resolves his last and full assent, that scripture is of divine authority, into internal arguments found in the letter itself, though found by the help of tradition without, and grace within.' This is the substance of his lordship's opinion, against which we shall now consider what your discourser hath to object.

Conf. p. 68.
sect. 16. n.
21.

1. The first, is from the case of ignorant and illiterate persons ; "such, who either through want of learning could not read the scripture and examine, or else made little use of it, because they supposed they might have infallible faith without it ; what then becomes of millions of such souls, both in former and present times?" To this I answer ; Although the ignorance and carelessness of men in a matter of so great consequence, be so great in all ages as is not to be justified, because all men ought to endeavour after the highest ways of

Lab. p. 76.
n. 6.

satisfaction in a matter so nearly concerning them, (and it is none of the least things to be blamed in your church, that she doth so much countenance this ignorance and neglect of the scripture,) yet for such persons, who either morally or invincibly are hindered from this capacity of examining scripture, there may be sufficient means for their faith to be built upon. For although such illiterate persons cannot themselves see
 174 and read the scripture, yet, as many as do believe, do receive the doctrine of it by that sense by which faith is conveyed, that is, hearing; and by that means they have so great certainty, as excludes all doubting, that such doctrines and such matters of fact are contained in these books, by which they come to the understanding of the nature of this doctrine, and are capable of judging concerning the divinity of it. For the light spoken of in scripture is not a light to the eye, but to the mind; now the mind is capable of this light, as well by the ear as by the eyes. The case then of such honest illiterate persons as are not capable of reading scripture, but diligently and devoutly hear it read to them, is much of the same nature with those who heard the apostles preach this doctrine before it was writ. For, whatever was an argument to such to believe the apostles in what they spake, becomes an argument to such who hear the same things, which are certainly conveyed to us by an unquestionable tradition: so that nothing hinders, but such illiterate persons may resolve their faith into the same doctrine and motives which others do, only those are conveyed to them by the ear, which are conveyed to others by the eyes. But if you suppose persons so rude and illiterate, as not to understand any thing, but that they are to believe as the church believes; do you, if you can, resolve their faith for them; for my part, I cannot, and am so far from it, that I have no reason to believe they can have any.

Lab. p. 76. 2. The second thing objected by your discourser is, "that if
 11. 6. the church's judgment be fallible, then much more one's own judgment is fallible. And therefore, if, notwithstanding all the care and pains taken by the doctors of the church, their persuasion was only human and fallible; what reason hath any particular person to say, that he is divinely and infallibly certain by his reading the scripture that it is divine truth?" But, 1. is there no difference between the church's persuasion

and the church's tradition? Doth the bishop deny, but the persuasion of the doctors of the church is as infallible as that of any particular person? But this he denies, that they can derive that infallibility of the grounds of their persuasion into their tradition, so as those who are to receive it on their testimony, may be competent judges of it. May we not then suppose their tradition to be human and fallible, whose persuasion of what they deliver is established on infallible grounds? As a mathematician is demonstratively convinced himself of the truth of any particular problem; but, if he bids another believe it on his testimony, the other thereby hath no demonstrative evidence of the truth of it, but only so great moral evidence, as the testimony of that person carries along with it. The case is the same here: suppose those persons in the church in every age of it, have to themselves infallible evidence of the divinity of the scripture, yet when they are to deliver this to be believed by others, unless their testimony hath infallible evidence in it, men can never have more than human or moral certainty of it. 2. It doth not at all follow, that if the testimony of the church be fallible, no particular person can be infallibly assured of the divinity of the scripture, unless this assurance did wholly depend upon that testimony; indeed, if it did so, the argument would hold, but otherwise it doth not at all. Now, you know, the bishop denies that the faith of any particular person doth rest upon the judgment of the church; only he saith, this may be a motive and inducement to men to consider further; but that which they rely upon, is, that rational evidence which appears in the scripture itself.

3. He goes on, and argues against this use of tradition, thus: "If the light of the scripture be insufficient to shew Lab. p. 76. itself unless it be introduced by the recommendation of the 11. 6. church, how came Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Husse, &c. to discover this light in it, seeing they rejected the authority of all visible churches in the world?" &c.

Sure your discourser was not very profound in this, that 175 could not distinguish between the authority of universal tradition, and the authority of the present visible church, or between the testimony of the church and the authority of it. Shew us where Luther, Calvin, &c. did ever reject the authority

of an uncontrolled universal tradition, such as that here mentioned concerning the scripture's being the word of God : shew us where they deny that use of the testimony of those churches whose authority in imposing matters of faith they denied, which his lordship asserts, viz. to be a means to introduce men to the knowledge and belief of the scriptures ; and unless you shew this, you do nothing.

4. He argues against that light in scripture, because it is not sufficient to distinguish canonical books from such as are not so ; “ for,” says he, “ had not the ancient primitive fathers in the first three hundred years as much reason and ability to find this light in scripture as any particular person ? Yet many books which do appear to us to be God's word by their light, did not appear to be so to them by it, till they were declared such by the catholic church.” I answer, 1. Where doth his lordship ever say or pretend, that any person by the light contained in the books can distinguish books that are canonical from such as are not ? All that can be discovered as to particular books in question, is, the examination of the doctrine contained in them by the series of that which is in the unquestionable books ; for we know that God can never speak contradictions : but still this will only serve to exclude such books as contain things contrary, but not to admit all which have no doctrine contrary to scripture. 2. The reason why the primitive fathers questioned any books that we do not, was not because they could not discover that light in them which we do ; for neither can we discover so much light in any particular book as merely from thence to say it is canonical ; but there was not sufficient evidence then appearing to them that those copies did proceed from apostolical persons ; and this was therefore only an argument of that commendable care and caution which was in them, lest any book should pass for canonical which was not really so. 3. When the catholic church declared any controverted book to be canonical, did not the church then see as much light in it as we do ? but that light which both the church and we discover, is not a discriminating internal light, but an external evidence from the sufficiency and validity of testimony. And such we have for the canonical books of the Old Testament ; and therefore you have no cause to quarrel with us for receiving them from

the Jewish synagogue ; for who, I pray, are so competent witnesses of what is delivered, as they who received it? and the apostle tells us, that to the Jews were committed the oracles of God.

5. Hence your discoursing Christian argues, That if one take up the scripture on the account of tradition, then, if one should deny St. Matthew's Gospel to be the written word of God, he could not be accounted a heretic, because it was not sufficiently propounded to him to be God's word. Whether such a person may be accounted a heretic in your sense or no, I am sure he is in St. Paul's, because *αὐτοκατάκριτος*, self-condemned, and that for the very contrary reason to what you give, because this is sufficiently propounded to him. I pray, tell me, what way you would have such a thing sufficiently propounded as a matter to be believed that this is not propounded in? Would you have an unquestionable evidence, that this was writ by one of Christ's apostles, called St. Matthew? so you have. Would you have all the churches of Christ agreed in this testimony in all ages from the apostles' times? so you have. Would you have it delivered to you by the testimony of the present church? so you have. What then is or can be wanting, in order to a proposition of it to be believed? Why, forsooth, some infallible, authoritative sentence of the present 176 church, which shall make this an object of faith. See what a different mould some men's minds are of from others! For my part, should I see or hear any church in the world undertaking such an office as that, I should be so far from thinking it more sufficiently propounded by it, that I should not scruple to charge it with the greatest presumption and arrogance that may be. For, on what account can it possibly be a thing credible to me, that St. Matthew's Gospel contains God's written word, any further than it is evident that the person who wrote it was one chosen by Christ to deliver the sum of his proceedings, as an apostle, to the world? And therefore I have no reason to think he would deceive men in what he spake or writ: the only question then is, how I should know this is no counterfeit name, but that St. Matthew writ it? Let us consider what possible means there are to be assured of it. I cannot imagine any but these two; either that God should immediately reveal it either to myself, or to some

church to propound it to me; or else, that I am to believe those persons who first received those copies from his hands, by whose means they were dispersed abroad in the world, from whence they are conveyed by an unquestionable tradition down to us. Of these two, choose whether you please: if the first, then particular immediate revelations are necessary to particular persons, to have such an object of faith sufficiently propounded to them, and then the church cannot authoritatively pronounce any books of scripture to be canonical without immediate revelation to her, that this book was written by such a person who was divinely assisted in the writing of it. And this you have denied before to belong to the church. If you take up with the second, the unquestionable testimony of all ages since the apostles; then judge you whether St. Matthew's Gospel be not sufficiently propounded to be believed; and consequently, whether any one who should question or deny it, be not guilty of the greatest peevishness and obstinacy imaginable. From hence we may see, with what superfluity of discretion the next words came from you; "Nay, hence it follows, that even our blessed Saviour, who is wisdom itself, would have been esteemed by all the world, not a wise law-giver, but a mere ignoramus and impostor." For shame, man, forbear such insolent expressions for the future, and repent of these. For, must Christ's wisdom be called in question, and he liable to be accounted an ignoramus and impostor, if he doth not make your church infallible? I have told you often before, how much your doctrine of infallibility tends to atheism, and now you speak out. For the meaning of your words plainly is,—If God hath not intrusted your church with a full and absolute power to declare what is his will, and what not, Christ was an ignoramus and impostor. For that is the substance of your next words. "For, had he not framed, think you, a strange and chimerical commonwealth, were it alone destitute of a full and absolute power to give an authentical and unquestionable declaration, which is the true and genuine law?" Now, it is evident from all your discourse foregoing, you only plead for this full and absolute power in your church; and judge you then what the consequence is (to all those who cannot see any shadow of reason for this your pretended infallibility), neither more nor less, than that Christ's

Lab. p. 77.
n. 6.

Ibid.

is liable to be accounted by all the world an ignoramus and impostor: nay, that they are fools, who account him not so, if they do not believe this present infallibility of your church; "for it is apparent," say you, "that he hath ordered his commonwealth worse than ever any one did." And now let any that consider what pitiful silly proofs you have produced for this present infallibility, (nay, such, that I am confident that you cannot think yourself you have in the least measure proved it,) then judge, what thoughts of Christ you are forced to entertain yourself upon your own argument, viz. as of an ignoramus and impostor. Hath not your infallibility led you now a fine dance? Is not this the way to make 177 faith certain, and to reclaim atheists? I had thought it had been enough for your canonists to have charged Christ with indiscretion, if he had not left a vicar on earth; but now, it seems, the profound philosophers, learned divines, and expert historians (for such a one, you told us, your discoursing Christian was supposed by you to be in whose name these words are spoken) do charge Christ with folly and imposture, if he hath not made your church infallible. For, shift it off as you can, you cannot deny but that must be the aim of these words: for you are proving the necessity of an infallible declaration by the present church, in order to a sufficient proposition of the scripture to be believed; and it is notorious you never pretend that any church hath any share in this infallibility but your own; and therefore the consequence unavoidably follows, that since there can be no sufficient proposition, that the scripture is to be believed without this infallible testimony; since no church pretends to this infallibility but yours; since, without such provision for the church, Christ would have been esteemed by all the world, not a wise lawgiver, but a mere ignoramus and impostor; what then follows, but that if your church be not infallible, he must be accounted so? And if you dread not these consequences, I hope all Christians do, and have never the better thoughts of your infallibility for them.

6. Let us see, how he comes closer to the matter itself; and examines "how this light should be infallible and divine, Lab. p. 77. supposing the church's testimony to be human and fallible." n. 6.
The substance of which is this; If the church may err, we may

suppose she hath erred in testifying some books to be God's word; in that case, books that were not God's word would be equally recommended with those that were: and that it would be impossible for any particular person, by reading them, to distinguish the one from the other. To which I answer, 1. It is all one with you to suppose a church fallible, and suppose that she hath erred. To put a case of a like nature. The testimony of all mankind is fallible; may you therefore suppose that all mankind hath erred in something they are agreed in? The testimony of all those persons who have seen Rome is fallible; may I therefore question whether they were not all deceived? But of this afterwards. 2. When you speak of the church erring, do you mean the church in every age since Christ's coming, concerning all the books of scripture? or the present church, concerning only some books of scripture? If you suppose the church of all ages should be deceived, you must suppose some who were infallible should be deceived; those were the apostles in writing and delivering their books to the churches of their time; or else you must suppose all the apostolical churches deceived in taking those books to have come from the apostles, which did not; and is not this a congruous supposition? Well then, if it be unreasonable to suppose the apostolical churches deceived, and impossible to imagine the apostles deceived, in saying they writ what they did not: where then must such an universal error as this come in? Or, is it not equally unreasonable to suppose all the Christian churches in the world should be deceived, without any questioning of such a deceit, supposing but the goodness and common providence of God in preserving such records, and the moral industry used by Christians, in a matter of such importance? It is therefore a very absurd and unreasonable thing to imagine, that all the churches of Christ, in all ages, should err in receiving all the books of scripture. Let us then see as to the present church's erring as to particular books: 1. Either the records of former ages are left to judge by, or no: if they be, as certainly they are, we thereby see a way to correct the error of the present church, by appealing to these records of the church in former times; if they be not left, how could any of these books be derived from apostolical tradition, when we have no means to

trace such a tradition by? 2. Supposing only some books questioned, or that the present church errs only in some particular books; then it appears that there remains a far greater number of such books whose authority we have no reason at all to question, and by comparing the other with these we may easily prevent any very dangerous error; for if they contain any doctrine contrary to the former, we have no reason to believe them; if they do not, there can be no very dangerous error in admitting them. Thus you see how easily this error is prevented, supposing the church's testimony not only fallible, but that it also should actually err in delivering some books for canonical which are not so: but supposing a church pretends to be infallible, and is believed to be so, and yet doth actually err in delivering the canon of scripture, what remedy is there then? for while we look on the church's testimony as fallible, there is scope and liberty left for inquiry and further satisfaction, but if it be looked on as infallible, all that believe it to be so are left under an impossibility of escaping that error which she is guilty of. And the more dangerous such an error is, the worse the condition is of all such who believe the church's testimony infallible. Now this is that we justly charge your church with, that while she pretends to infallibility, she hath actually erred in delivering such books for canonical which are not so, as hath been abundantly manifested by the worthies of our church. The remainder of this discourse of yours concerning knowing canonical books by the light in them is vacated by our present answer; and so is the other, concerning apostolical traditions, by our former, upon that subject. As to that scruple, how the light should be infallible and divine, when the church's testimony is human and fallible, it signifies nothing, unless the light be only supposed to rise from the testimony, which his lordship denies.

§. 16. 7. The judgment of the fathers is inquired into concerning the present subject; out of whom only Irenæus and St. Augustin are produced, as affirming in many places, That the tradition of the church is sufficient to found Christian faith even without scripture, and that for some hundreds of years after the canon of scripture was written. But must we stand only to the judgment of these two concerning the sense of the primitive church in this present controversy? We may

easily know the judgment of the fathers, if two such lame citations as these are, are sufficient to discover it. But your unhappiness is great in whatever you undertake: if you meddle with reason, you soon find how little it becomes you; if you fly to the fathers, they prove the greatest witnesses against you; as will appear in this debate, if we first examine the citations you produce, and then shew how fully and clearly these very persons whom you have picked out of all the chorus do deliver themselves against you. The first citation is that known one, out of Irenæus, concerning those “barbarous nations who believed without the scriptures, adhering to the tradition of the apostles, having salvation written without paper and ink^b.” But what it is you would hence infer, I cannot imagine, unless it be one of these two things; 1. that if we had no scriptures left us, it would be necessary for us to believe on the account of apostolical tradition; that is, that the grounds of our faith were so clear and evident of themselves, that though they had never been written, yet if they had been conveyed by an unquestionable tradition from the apostles, there had lain an obligation on us to believe the doctrine of Christ. But is this our case? hath not God infinitely better provided for us, when (as your other witness St. Augustine speaks) “whatever our Saviour would have us read of his actions or speeches, he commanded his apostles and disciples as his hands to write^c.” Christian religion is
 179 now no cabala to us, God hath consigned his will over to us by codicils of his own appointing; and must we then be now in the like case, as if his will had never been written at all? 2. But what if the barbarous nations did believe without the books of scripture; what doth that prove, but only this; that there may be sufficient reason to believe in Christ where the scriptures are not known? Is that contrary to us who say, The last resolution of faith is into the doctrine of Christ as attested by God? now if that attestation be suffi-

^b Quid autem, si neque apostoli quidem scripturas reliquissent nobis, nonne oportebat ordinem sequi traditionis, quam tradiderunt iis quibus committebant ecclesias? Cui ordinationi assentiunt multe gentes barbarorum, qui in Christum credunt, sine charta et atramento scriptam

habentes salutem, et veterem traditionem custodientes. Iren. l. 3. c. 4.

^c Quicquid Servator de suis factis et dictis nos legere voluit, hoc scribendum illis tanquam suis manibus imperavit. De Consens. Evang. l. 1. c. ult.

ciently conveyed, there is an obligation to believe ; but withal we say, that to us who enjoy the scriptures as delivered down to us, the only certain and infallible conveyance of God's word to us is by them. So that the whole Christian world is obliged to you for your civil comparison of them with those barbarians who either enjoyed not the scriptures, or in probability were not able to make use of them, as being probably ignorant of the use of letters. 3. Doth Irenæus in these words say, that even these barbarians did believe upon the infallible testimony of the present church ? No ; he mentions no such thing, but that they believed that tradition of doctrine which was delivered them from the apostles. I ask you then, suppose at that time some honest but fallible persons should have gone into Scythia, or some such barbarous places, and delivered the doctrine of the gospel, and attesting the matters of fact as being eyewitnesses of Christ's miracles, death, and resurrection, whether would these barbarians have been bound to believe or no ? If not, then, for all I know, infidelity is a very excusable sin ; if they were, I pray tell me what it was their faith was resolved into ; was it an infallible testimony of fallible men ? And the same case is of such who should preach the same doctrine from these eyewitnesses in another generation, and so on ; for although there might be no reason to question their testimony, yet I suppose you will not say it is infallible. So that still this makes nothing for your purpose. 4. Who better understood Irenæus his mind, than himself ? Let us therefore see what he elsewhere tells us is the foundation and pillar of our faith who have received the scriptures. Doth not he tell us, but three chapters before this, "that we have received the method or doctrine of our salvation from those persons who preached it, which by God's command they after delivered in the scriptures, which were to be the foundation and pillar of our faith^d ?" Could any thing be more fully spoken to our purpose than this is ? Whereby he shews us, now the scriptures are consigned unto us, what that is which our faith must stand upon : not the infallibility of the church,

^d Non per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos, per quos evangelium pervenit ad nos; quod quidem tunc præconiave-

runt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum. Iren. lib. 3. cap. 1.

but that word of God which is delivered to us. This therefore he elsewhere calls the “unmoveable canon of our faith,” as St. Augustine calls it *divinam stateram*, the divine balance we must weigh the grounds of our belief in.

By which we may guess, what little relief you are like to have from your second witness St. Augustine. Two citations you produce out of him ; and I question not but to make it appear, that neither of those testimonies do make for you ; and those very books afford us sufficient against you.

The first is out of his books of Christian Doctrine, which lest we should think not pertinent, you care not to produce it ; but we must. “A man who strengthens himself with faith, hope, and charity, and retains them unshaken, needs not the scriptures, but only to instruct others ; for by these three many live without books in a desert^f.” His meaning is, that he who hath a principle of divine life within him, which discovers itself in the exercise of those three graces, needs not so much the external precepts, because that inward principle will carry
180 him to actionssuitable to it ; only, for convincing or instructing others, these books are continually useful ; but for themselves, those good men who first through the fury of their persecution were driven, and after, others, who, in imitation of that piety they shewed there, did withdraw into remote places, did live in the exercise of their religion without them. But what is there in all this to infer, that not the scriptures but the infallibility of the church is the foundation of faith ? Doth St. Augustine suppose that men may have faith, hope, and charity without believing ; or that men may believe without the scriptures, when in the precedent chapter he hath this remarkable expression concerning faith, “that it will soon stumble if the authority of the sacred scriptures be weakened^g :” and doth not this imply that faith stands on the authority of the scriptures as its proper foundation ? But this were pardonable, if the very design of all that treatise did not so evidently refute all your pretensions as nothing can do it more

^e Irenæus, lib. 4. cap. 69. Augustin. 2. cont. Donat. cap. 7.

^f Homo itaque fide, spe et charitate subnixus, eaque inconcusse retinens, non indiget scripturis nisi ad alios instruendos. Itaque multi

per hæc tria, etiam in solitudine sine codicibus vivunt. De Doctr. Christiana, lib. 1. cap. 39.

^g Titubabit autem fides, si divinarum scripturarum vacillat auctoritas. De Doctr. Christ. l. 1. c. 38.

effectually. For can you possibly persuade any reasonable man to think, that St. Augustine dreamt of any such thing as the infallible testimony of the present church to be the ground of faith, who when he purposely discourseth concerning the Christian doctrine, the principles of it, and the best means to understand it, never so much as mentions any such thing; but on the contrary directs to no other but those you call moral and fallible means? For understanding the principles of Christian doctrine, he shews us the several natures of things, some to be enjoyed, some to be used, and others both: that the main thing we are to enjoy is God, and therefore begins with him as our last end, in whom our happiness lies, and then shews the means to come to this enjoyment of God, by explaining the principles of faith and the efficacy of it. In his second book, he shews how we may come to the sense of scripture; and first discovers the nature of signs which represent things, and of letters which are signs of words; and since there are diversities of tongues, how necessary the translation of scripture is into them; (a good citation for you to justify your Bibles and prayers in an unknown language with;) and then shews what great reason there was why there should be some doubtful and obscure places left in scripture, “to conquer our pride by industry, and to keep the understanding from nauseating, which commonly slights things that are easily understood^h.” Then shews what preparation and disposition of soul is requisite for divine wisdom, and so comes to the understanding the scriptures: for which, first is requisite a serious and diligent reading of them; in order to which he must carefully distinguish such as are canonical from such as are not; and for judging of these, he never so much as mentions, much less sends us to the infallible testimony of the Roman church, but bids us follow the authority of the most catholic churches among which those are which are worthy to be called apostolical sees, and had epistles sent to themⁱ. What authority then had the church of Rome to judge of

^h Ad edomandam labore superbiam, et intellectum a fastidio revocandum, cui facile investigata plerumque vilescent. l. 2. c. 6.

ⁱ In canonicis autem scripturis

ecclesiarum catholicarum quamplurimum auctoritatem sequatur, inter quas sane illæ sunt, quæ apostolicas sedes habere, et epistolas accipere meruerunt. l. 2. c. 8.

canonical scriptures more than Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, &c. ? To be sure then, St. Augustine was not of our discourser's mind as to the judgment of canonical books : and why should he send men to those churches which received the epistles, but that there they were like to meet with greater satisfaction as to the authenticalness of the copies of those epistles ? After this, he gives directions for understanding hard places, first by diligent reading and remembering the plainest places ; " for in them," saith he, " are found all those things which contain matters of faith and practice^k." An excellent citation for you for several purposes, especially when you would prove the
 181 obscurity of scripture, the necessity of an infallible judge, or your doctrine of fundamentals out of St. Augustine. And then bids them compare obscure and easy places together, to understand the proprieties of words, to get knowledge in the tongues, to compare versions, antecedents and consequents, to be skilled in all human arts and sciences ; these and several other instructions to the same purpose are the scope of his following books. Would any one now but T. C. have ventured so unluckily upon this treatise of St. Augustine above all others, to prove the infallibility of the church's testimony as necessary to faith by ? Could any protestant have delivered his mind more punctually and plainly than he doth ? And can you, or any one else that doth but look into that book, imagine that St. Augustine ever imagined that any such thing should ever be thought of in the world, as that the testimony of the church of Rome must be owned as the infallible foundation of faith, and the infallible interpreter of scripture ? But this it is, to converse with the fathers only by retail, as they are delivered out in parcels to you with directions upon them what use they are for, by Bellarmine and such artists as himself. This is, instead of quoting the fathers, to challenge them ; and you see they are not afraid to appear, though to your shame and confusion.

But for all this you have a reserve in St. Augustine still : let us see what quotation that is which lies so in *ambuscado* behind the hedges, and is so loath to come out. There is good reason for so much reservedness ; for when we come to

^k In iis enim quæ aperte posita in scriptura sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia, quæ continent fidem, moresque vivendi. l. 2. c. 9.

search, we find only bushes instead of soldiers. I have thoroughly examined the place you refer us to, and cannot meet any thing the least pertinent to your purpose, unless the question of the lawfulness of heretics' baptism prove your church's testimony to be infallible^l. But it may be it is but a venial mistake of a chapter or two, forward or backward, and there we may find it. Which when I look into, I cannot but suspect that some protestant had trepanned you into this book and place of St. Augustine, there being scarce any book or place in him more begirt with arguments against you than this is. I was at first fearful you had quoted fathers at a peradventure, but upon my further considering the place, I soon rectified that mistake. I will therefore reckon you up some of the most probable citations out of St. Augustine's books of baptism against the Donatists; and choose which of them you please to prove the necessity of an infallible testimony of the present church as a foundation of faith by. I suppose that you intended is in the next chapter but one following, where St. Augustine cites that passage of Cyprian, "that we ought to recur to the fountain, i. e. to apostolical tradition, and thence derive the channel into our own times; this," saith St. Augustine, "is the best, and without doubt to be done^m." No doubt you think you owe me great thanks, for finding out so apposite a place for you, so near that you intended; but before we have done with it, you will see what little reason you have to thank me for it: the place you see is cited by St. Augustine out of Cyprianⁿ, in whose epistle it is, to Pompeius, against Stephanus bishop of Rome: we therefore consider, that it was Stephen who pleaded custom and tradition; to which Cyprian replies, "Whence comes this tradition? doth it descend from the Lord's authority, or from the commands and epistles of the apostles? for those things are to be done which are there written." And again, "If it be commanded in the Gospel, or the Epistles, and Acts of the Apostles, then let this holy tradition be observed^o." We see then what St. Cyprian meant by his apostolical tradition, not

^l De Baptism. c. Donatist. l. 5. c. 24.

^m Quod autem nos admonet, ut ad fontem recurramus, i. e. ad apostolicam traditionem, et inde canalem in nostra tempora di-

rigamus, optimum est, et sine dubitatione faciendum. l. 5. c. 26.

ⁿ Cypr. ep. 74.

^o Unde traditio hæc, utrumne de Dominica autoritate descendens, an de apostolorum mandatis et

one infallibly attested by the present church, but that is clearly derived from scripture as its fountain: and therefore 182 brings in the foregoing words on purpose to correct the errors of traditions, that, as when channels are diverted to a wrong course, we must have recourse to the fountain; so we must in all pretended traditions of the church run up to the scriptures as the fountain-head. And whereas Bellarmine's only shift to avoid this place of Cyprian, is by saying that Cyprian argued *more errantium*, i. e. could not defend one error but by another; see how different the judgments of St. Augustine and Bellarmine are about it: for St. Augustine is so far from blaming it in him, that he saith, *Optimum est et sine dubitatione faciendum*, i. e. it was the best and most prudent course to prevent errors. And in another place where he mentions that saying of Cyprian, "It is in vain for them to object custom who are overcome by reason, as though custom were greater than truth; or as though that were not to be followed in spiritual things which is revealed by the Holy Ghost p." "This," saith St. Augustine, "is evidently true, because reason and truth is to be preferred before custom." He doth not charge these sayings on him as Bellarmine doth, as part of his errors, but acknowledgeth them, and disputes against his opinion out of those principles. And when before the Donatists objected the authority of St. Cyprian, in the point of rebaptization, what kind of answer doth St. Augustine give them? the very same that any protestant would give. "¶ Who knows not that the sacred canonical scripture of the Old and New Testament is contained within certain bounds; and ought so far to be preferred before the succeeding writings of bishops, that of that alone we are not to doubt

epistolis veniens? Ea enim esse facienda quæ scripta sunt testatur, &c.

Si in evangelio præcipitur, aut in Apostolorum Epistolis aut Actibus invenitur, observetur etiam sancta hæc traditio.

¶ Proinde, inquit, frustra quidam qui ratione vincuntur, consuetudinem nobis objiciunt, quasi consuetudo major sit veritate; aut non id sit in spiritualibus sequendum quod in melius fuerit a Spiritu Sancto revelatum. Hoc plane ve-

rum est, quia ratio et veritas consuetudini præponenda est. Aug. de Baptism. c. Donat. l. 4. c. 5.

¶ Quis autem nesciat sanctam scripturam æronicam, tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti certis suis terminis contineri, eamque omnibus posterioribus episcoporum litteris ita præponi, ut de illa omnino dubitari et disceptari non possit, utrum verum, vel utrum rectum sit, quicquid in ea scriptum esse constiterit. l. 2. de Bapt. cont. Donat. cap. 3.

or call in question any thing therein written, whether it be true and right, or no." But, as he saith in the following words, "all the writings since the confirmation of the canon of scripture are liable to dispute, and even councils themselves to be examined and amended by councils." Think you then, that St. Augustine ever thought of a present infallibility in the church? or if he did, he expressed it in as odd a manner as ever I read: how easily might he have stopped the mouths of the Donatists with that one pretence of infallibility! how impertinently doth he dispute through all those books, if he had believed any such thing! It were easy to multiply the citations out of other books of St. Austin, to shew how much he attributed to scripture, as the only rule of faith; and consequently, how far from believing your doctrine of infallibility. But these may suffice to shew, how unhappily you light on these books of St. Augustine for the proof of your opinion out of the fathers.

§. 18. The last thing your discourser objects against his lordship's way, is, "If the church be fallible in the tradition of scripture, how can I ever be infallibly certain, that she hath not erred *de facto*, and defined some book to be the word of God, which really is not his word?" To which I answer: If you mean by infallible certainty, such a certainty as must have some infallible testimony for the ground of it, you beg the question: for I deny any such infallible testimony to be at all requisite for our believing the canon of scripture, and therefore you object that as an inconvenience, which I apprehend to be none at all. For I do not think it any absurdity to say, that I cannot believe upon some infallible testimony, that the church hath not erred, in defining the canon of scripture. If by infallible certainty, you mean such a certainty as absolutely excludes a possibility of deception; you would do well, first to shew how congruous this is to human nature in this present state, before you make such a certainty so necessary for any act of human understanding. But if by infallible certainty, you mean only such as excludes all possibility of reasonable doubting, upon the consideration of the validity and sufficiency of that testimony I am to believe the canon of scripture upon; then I assert, that upon making 183 the church's testimony to be fallible, it doth not at all follow, but that I may have so great a certainty as excludes the

possibility of all reasonable doubting concerning the canon of scripture. For when I suppose the church's testimony fallible, I do not thereby understand, as though there were as great reason to suspect her deceived as not (nay, I say there can be no reason to suspect her deceived); but by that I understand only this, that the church hath not any supernatural infallibility given her in delivering such a testimony, or that such infallibility must be the foundation of believing the thing so delivered. For whether I suppose your particular church of Rome or the catholic church to be supernaturally infallible in her traditions, there will be the same difficulty returning, and an equal impossibility of vindicating our faith from the entanglements of a circle. For still the question unavoidably returns, from whence I believe such a supernatural infallibility in the church. For in that it is supernatural it must suppose some promise on which it depends, that promise must be somewhere extant, and that can be nowhere but in scripture; therefore when I am asked, why I believe the canon of the scripture to be true; if I answer, Because the tradition of the catholic church is infallible, the question presently returns, Since human nature is in itself fallible, whence comes the church to have this infallibility? If I answer, By the assistance of God's Spirit; I am presently asked, Since no man by the light of nature and mere reason can be assured of this, how know you that you are not deceived in believing such an assistance? If to this I answer, Because God who is infallible hath made this promise in his word, I am driven again to the first question, how I know this to be God's word; and must answer it as before, Upon the infallible testimony of the catholic church. Thus we see, how impossible it is to avoid a circle in the supposition of a supernatural infallibility in the church's tradition. But if no more be meant but a kind of rational infallibility (though those terms be not very proper), i. e. so great evidence, as, if I question it, I may upon equal grounds question every thing which mankind yields the firmest assent to, because I cannot imagine that so great a part of the wisest and most considerative part of the world should be so grossly deceived in a matter of such moment (especially supposing a divine providence), then I freely and heartily assert, we have such a kind of rational infallibility; or rather the highest degree of actual certainty concerning the truth of

the canon of scripture; and that the catholic church hath not *de facto* erred in defining it. Thus I have followed your discoursing Christian through all his doubts and perplexities, and upon the result can find no ground at all either of doubting concerning the scripture, or of believing the testimony of your church, or any, to be an infallible ground of faith. Your next passage is, to tell us how his lordship's Dedalian windings Lab. p. 78. (as you finely call them) are disintricated: a happy man n. 6. you are at squaring circles, and getting out of labyrinths. And thus it appears in the present case. For when his lordship had said, "that the tradition of the church is too weak, because that is not absolutely divine;" you repeat over Conf. p. 65. sect. 16. n. 19. your already exploded proposition, that there may be "an infallible testimony which is not absolutely divine;" which, when I have your faculty of writing things, which neither you nor any one else can understand, I may admit of; but till then, I must humbly beg your pardon, as not being able to assent to any thing which I cannot understand, and have no reason to believe. And withal, contrary to your second answer, it appears, that if the testimony of the primitive were absolutely divine, because infallible, the testimony of the present church must be absolutely divine, if it be infallible.

§. 19. The rest of this chapter is spent in the examining 184 some by-citations of men of your own side chiefly, and therefore it is very little material as to the truth or falsehood of the present controversy; yet, because you seem to triumph so much as soon as you are off the main business, I shall briefly return an answer to the substance of what you say. His lordship having asserted the tradition of the primitive apostolical church to be divine, and that the church of England doth embrace that as much as any church whatsoever, withal adds, that "when St. Augustine said, 'I would not believe the gospel unless the authority of the catholic church moved me';" some of your own will not endure it should be understood, save of the church in the time of the apostles only; and some, of the church in general, not excluding after-ages: but sure to include Christ and his apostles." In your answer to this, you insult strangely over his lordship in two things, first, that

^r Ego vero Evangelio non credem, nisi me catholicæ ecclesiæ commoveret autoritas. Aug. l. 1. c. ep. fund. c. 5.

he should say "some," and mention but one in his margent ;
 Lab. p. 78. 2. that that one doth not say what he cites out of him. To
 11. 7. the first I answer, you might easily observe the use his lord-
 ship makes of his margent is not so much to bring clear and
 distinct proofs of what he writes in his book, but what hath
 some reference to what he there says : and therefore it was no
 absurdity for him to say in his book indefinitely "some," and
 yet in his margent only to mention Oecham. For when his
 lordship writ that, no doubt his mind was upon others who
 asserted the same thing, though he did not load his margent
 with them. And that you may see I have reason for what I
 say, I hope you will not suppose his lordship unacquainted
 with the testimonies of those of your side, who do in terms
 assert this. That I may therefore free you from all kind of
 suspicion, what think you of Gerson, when, speaking of the
 greater authority of the primitive church than of the present,
 he adds, "And by this means we come to understand what
 St. Augustine said, 'I would not believe the Gospel,' &c. For
 there," saith he, "he takes the church for the primitive
 congregation of believers who saw and heard Christ, and were
 witnesses of what he did^s." Is not this testimony plain enough
 for you? But, besides this, we have another as evident, in
 whom are those very words, which his lordship by a lapse of
 memory attributes to Oecham: for Durandus plainly says,
 "that for what concerns the approbation of scripture by the
 church, it is understood only of the church which was in the
 apostles' times, who were filled with the Holy Spirit, and
 withal saw the miracles of Christ, and heard his doctrine; and on
 that account were convenient witnesses of all which Christ did,
 or taught, that by their testimony, the scripture containing
 the actions and speeches of Christ might receive approbation^t."

^s Et sic aperitur modus intelli-
 gendi illud Augustini, Evangelio non
 crederem, nisi me auctoritas ecclesie
 compulsisset. Ibidem enim ecclesiam
 sumit, pro primitiva congregatione
 fidelium eorum, qui Christum viderunt,
 audierunt, et sui testes fuerunt.
 Gerson. lect. 2. de Vita spirituali an.
 coroll. 7.

^t Hoc autem quod dictum est de
 approbatione scripturæ per eccle-

siam, intelligitur solum de ecclesia
 quæ fuit tempore apostolorum, qui
 fuerunt repleti Spiritu Sancto, et
 nihilominus viderunt miracula Chris-
 ti et audierunt ejus doctrinam, et
 ob hoc fuerunt convenientes testes
 omnium quæ Christus fecit aut do-
 cuit, ut per eorum testimonium scrip-
 tura, continens facta et dicta Christi,
 approbaretur. Durand. l. 3. dist. 24.
 q. 1. sect. 9.

Do you yet desire a testimony more express and full than this is, of one who doth understand the church exclusively of all successive to the apostles, when he had just before produced that known testimony of St. Augustine? You see then, the bishop had some reason to say, some of your church asserted this to be St. Augustine's meaning; and therefore your instances of some, where but one is meant, are both impertinent and scurrilous. For where it is evidently known there was but *one*, it were a solecism to say *some*; as to say, that *some* of the apostles betrayed Christ, when it is known that none but Judas did it. But if I should say that some Jesuits had writ for the killing of kings, and in the margent should cite Mariana, no person conversant in their writings would think it a solecism; for though I produce him for a remarkable instance, yet that doth not imply that I have none else to produce, but only that the mentioning of one might shew I was not without proof of what I said. For your impudent 185 oblique slander on the memory of that excellent prelate archbishop Cranmer, when you say, "If a catholic to disgrace the protestant primacy of Canterbury should say, some of them carried a holy sister locked up in a chest about with them, and name Cranmer only in the margent;" his memory is infinitely above your sliest detractions; and withal, when you are about such a piece of criticism, I pray, tell me, what doth "some of them" relate to? Is primacy the name of some men? Just as if one should disgrace the see of Rome and say, some of them have been atheists, magicians, debauched, &c. Though, I confess, it were a great injury in this case to cite but one in the margent, unless in pity to the reader; yet, you may sooner vindicate some of them from a solecism in language, when the see of Rome went before, than any of them from those solecisms in manners which your own authors have complained of.

But, say you, "what if this singular-plural say no such thing as the words alleged by the bishop signify?" I have already granted it to have been a very venial mistake of memory in his lordship of Oeccham for Durandus, in whom those very words are which are in the margent of his lordship's book, as appears in the testimony already produced. I acknowledge therefore, that Oeccham in that place of his

Lab. p. 79.
n. 7.

Dialogues, doth speak of the catholic church of all ages, comprehending the apostles and evangelists in it; and in this sense he saith, that place of St. Augustine is to be understood. But, what advantage this is to your cause, I cannot imagine. For, what if the catholic church be taken in that comprehensive sense, to include not only the apostles, but the church successively from their times? doth it hence follow, that it is not day though the sun shines? or rather, doth it not follow, that you are not so quicksighted as you would seem to be? And, whether his lordship or you come nearer the meaning of Oecham's words, let any one judge. For they who speak of the church in that comprehensive sense, do only suppose the infallibility to have been in the primitive apostolical church, but the successive church to be only the channel of conveyance of that testimony down to us, and so they say no more than we do. Thus Driedo expounds that place of St. Augustine; "who understands it of the catholic church, which was from the beginning of the Christian faith, increasing according to the course of succession of bishops to these times, which church comprehends in it the college of apostles". Do you think that these men did believe a present infallibility in the church? If so, to what end are they so careful to carry it so high as the apostles? Whereas on your principle we can have no assurance concerning any thing that the apostles did or said, but only for the infallibility of the present church. You must therefore understand the present church exclusively of the apostolical church; and therefore if St. Augustine be understood in their sense, he is far enough from serving your purposes. But, say you, it is evident that St. Augustine must speak of the church in his time, because he speaks of that church which said to him, *Noli credere Manichæo*, which was not true of the apostolical church. But, why might not the apostolical church be a reason to St. Augustine not to believe Manichæus, because he found no footsteps of his doctrine in the records of that church? Again, suppose he means the present church, doth

^u Augustinus cum dicit, Ego evangelio, &c. intelligit de ecclesia catholica quæ fuit ab initio Christianæ fidei, secundum seriem successionis

episcoporum crescens ad hæc usque tempora, quæ sane ecclesia complectitur collegium apostolorum. Driedo, tom. 1. lib. 4. cap. 4.

he mean the infallible testimony of the present church? Might not the testimony of the church, supposing it fallible, be sufficient for what St. Augustine saith of it? I doubt it not: and you seem to have no great confidence in this testimony yourself, when you add, "that though it be a point of faith to believe that the church is infallible in delivering scripture to us, yet it is not a point of faith that her infallibility is proved out of the cited place of St. Augustine." But when you say, "it is sufficient that it be clear and manifest out of the text itself," what text do you mean? St. Augustine's or the scripture's? If St. Augustine's, you would do well to shew by what engines you force infallibility out of his words; if the scripture's, what becomes of our good motives of credibility?

§. 20. When his lordship objects, "that according to your principles the tradition of the present church must be as infallible as that of the primitive," you very learnedly distinguish, "that if he means, the one must be as truly and really infallible, *quoad substantiam*, as the other, you grant it: but if he mean, the one must be as highly and perfectly infallible as the other, *quoad modum*, you deny it." Very good still! It seems there are higher and lower degrees in infallibility. I pray tell us, what that is which is more than infallible? "The present church," you say, "is infallible, but not so highly and perfectly infallible," therefore there must be degrees in infallibility; and since the lowest degree is infallible, that which is highly infallible must be more than infallible. Again, what difference is there between the substance and the mode in infallibility? I had thought the substance of infallibility had lain in the mode; and I should rather think infallibility itself to be a mode of apprehension, than talk of substances and modes in it. But, it may be, you mean such kind of modes of infallibility, as absolute and hypothetical. If you do so, explain yourself by them; and that we may better understand your meaning, shew us whether the church be at all capable of absolute infallibility; if not, what difference there is in degrees between the hypothetical infallibility of the present and primitive church, supposing both infallible in delivering their testimony and no otherwise. For you yet again add, "of the church's testimony being infallible, but not simply divine," but

Lab. p. 79.

n. 7.

186

Conf. p. 67.

sect. 16. n.

21.

Lab. p. 80.

n. 7.

it is the infallible testimony of a desperate cause, to have but one bad shift, and to use it so often.

Lab. p. 82.
n. 7.

Because you would be apt to say, that upon his lordship's rejecting the infallibility of tradition, he left no use at all of it; he therefore tells you, "notwithstanding that, it is serviceable for very good ends, that it induces infidels to the reading and consideration of scripture, and that it instructs novices and doubters in the faith; which two ends," you say, "fall short of the end of tradition; for," say you, "it founds and establishes believers, even the greatest doctors of the church;" for which you cite again this same place of St. Augustine. But did not his lordship tell you, that some of your own understood that very place either of novices or infidels? For which, besides the testimony of some of your own party, he adds this reason, "Because the words immediately before are, If thou find one *qui ecangelio nondum credit*, which did not yet believe the Gospel, what wouldst thou do to make him believe? *Ego vero non, &c.*" To which you very prudently say nothing.

Concerning Jacobus Almayn's opinion, "that we are first, and more bound to believe the church than the scripture;" you would seem in terms to disavow it, though very faintly; it is not altogether true; and hope to salve it by a distinction of priority of time and nature: and you acknowledge, that in priority of nature we are first bound to believe the church; and, I suppose, in priority of time too, if we believe the scripture for the church's sake: yet you would not have it said, that we are more bound to believe the church than scripture; but it is not what you would have properly said, but what follows from that antecedent which Jacobus Almayn puts. "It is certain," saith he, "that we are bound to believe all things contained in the sacred canon, upon that account alone, because the church believes them; therefore we are first, and more bound to believe the church than the scripture;" which is so evident a consequence, that nothing but shame would make you deny it.

187 Touching Almayn's and Gerson's reading *compelleret* for *commoveret*, his lordship saith, that Almayn falsifies the text notoriously; you say, No; but you had rather charitably think they both read it so in some copies; his lordship pro-

duceth a very ancient MS. for the common reading, you none at all for that, but only the concurrent testimonies of some schoolmen, who must be confessed to be excellent critics, and well versed in ancient MSS., unless where they met with a little Greek, or some hard Latin words; and among whom the mistake of one would pass current for want of examining copies, let the reader therefore judge whether judgment be more probable: but I think it not worth while to say more about it.

In your vindication of the authority of Canus, you make use of a very silly piece of sophistry; for, say you, "though he make infidels and novices in the faith to be convinced by the authority of the church; yet," you say, "it doth not follow that he makes the said authority a fallible, but a certain and sure way to make them believe it." But, 1. the question is, whether Canus doth understand that place of St. Augustine, of infidels and novices or no? 2. Suppose he says, It is a sure way, doth it therefore follow, that it is an infallible way? Is nothing certain but what is infallible? I hope you are certain that the church of Rome is the catholic church; but are you infallible that she is so? If you advance all certainty to infallibility, or bring down all infallibility to certainty, every Christian is as infallible as your church is: for I make no question but that every good Christian is certain of the grounds and principles of his religion. The same thing you return upon again (after to little purpose you multiply words about Canus and Stapleton's testimonies). For, say you, because St. Augustine speaks of a sure way, therefore he must mean an infallible way, as though what was not supernaturally infallible was presently unsure. I pray, tell me, are you sure that two and two make four? Yet I hope you will not say, you are supernaturally infallible that they do so. I hope you are sure there is a pope at Rome, and a goodly college of cardinals there; but are you infallible in this? It is not then certainly the same, to deny a thing to be infallible, and to make it unsure: and you are either very weak or very wilful in saying so. In what sense this so much controverted place of St. Augustine is to be understood, will be afterwards discussed; and whether it be intended wholly for infidels or no: only I shall take notice now, how, in the last words of this chapter,

you would again infer infallibility from undoubted certainty. "For," say you, "the church in St. Augustine's time esteemed herself undoubtedly certain that the Gospel was the infallible word of God; for otherwise she might be deceived herself, and deceive others in commanding them to believe that to be God's word, which was only the word of man:" but what is it you would infer from all this? For we believe the church as undoubtedly certain as may be that the scriptures are God's word; yet we are far enough from believing that her testimony now is supernaturally infallible.

THE PROTESTANT WAY OF RESOLVING FAITH.

Several principles premised in order to it.—The distinct questions set down, and their several resolution given.—The truth of matters of fact, the divinity of the doctrine and of the books of scripture, distinctly resolved into their proper grounds.—Moral certainty a sufficient foundation for faith, and yet Christian religion proved to be infallibly true.—How apostolical tradition made by his lordship a foundation of faith.—Of the certainty we have of the copies of scripture, and the authority of them.—St. Augustine's testimony concerning church authority, largely discussed and vindicated.—Of the private spirit, and the necessity of grace.—His lordship's way of resolving faith vindicated.—How far scripture may be said to be known by its own light—The several testimonies of Bellarmine, Brierly, and Hooker, cleared.

§. 1. **H**AVING thus far followed you through all your intricacies and windings, and shewed with what diligence and subtilty you would juggle men out of their faith, under a pretence of infallibility; it will be necessary for the vindicating our doctrine, and the clearing this important controversy with all evidence and perspicuity, to lay down those certain grounds which we build our faith upon. And although it be one of the greatest of your modern artifices to persuade the world that protestants have no certain grounds of faith at all, yet I doubt not but to make it evident that the way taken by the most judicious and considerative protestants, is as satisfactory and reasonable, as I have already made it appear that yours is unreasonable and ridiculous. Which I shall the rather do, because, through the want of a clear and distinct apprehension of the true way of resolving faith, no controversy in religion hath been more obscure and involved than this hath been. Therefore for our more distinct method of proceeding, I shall first endeavour to prevent misunderstanding, by premising several things which are necessary for a through opening the state of the controversy, and then come to the resolution of it. The things then I would premise are these following :

1. That we inquire not after the reason why we assent to what is divinely revealed, but after the reason why we believe any thing to be a divine revelation. Therefore when men speak of the last resolution of faith into the veracity of God revealing, they speak that which is undoubtedly true, but it reacheth not our present inquiry. I freely grant, that the ultimate reason why any thing is believed, is upon the testimony of him from whom it comes; and the greater the knowledge and fidelity is of him whose testimony I believe, the stronger my assent is, supposing I have sufficient evidence that it is his testimony. But that is not our present question; for it being taken for granted among all Christians, that God's testimony is absolutely infallible, there can no dispute arise concerning the ground of resolving faith, supposing God's revelation to be sufficiently known. For no one questions but God's veracity, however discovered, is a sufficient ground for faith; but all the question is, how we come to know wherein this veracity of God doth discover itself, or what those things are which are immediately revealed by him. Therefore to tell us, that the resolution of faith is into God's infallible testimony, without shewing on what account this testimony is to be believed to be from God, is to tell us that which no one
 189 doubts of, and to escape that which is the main question. For in case Isaac should have denied submission to his Father's will when he went to be sacrificed, till he could be satisfied concerning the lawfulness of that action which his father went about; do you think it had been satisfactory to him, if Abraham had told him that God had power to relax his own laws, and therefore he need not question the lawfulness of the action; might not Isaac have presently answered, that he did not question but what God commanded was lawful, but that he desired, was, some evidence that he had a revelation for what he did. And the answer to this had been only pertinent and satisfactory. So that he might have no reason to question it, although he did not believe any thing more than common fidelity in his father's testimony. For God never (when revelations were most common) thought it necessary to multiply revelations so far, as to make one necessary to attest another; but that revelation which was communicated to one was obligatory to all concerned in it, though

they could have nothing but moral certainty for it. By this it appears, that when we now speak of the resolution of faith, though the utmost reason of our assent is that infallibility which is supposed in divine testimony, yet the nearest and most proper resolution of it is into the grounds inducing us to believe that such a testimony is truly divine; and the resolution of this cannot be into any divine testimony without a process *in infinitum*.

2. That when we speak of the resolution of faith, by *faith* we understand a rational and discursive act of the mind. For faith being an assent upon evidence, or reason inducing the mind to assent, it must be a rational and discursive act; and such a one that one may be able to give an account of to another. And this account which men are able to give why they do believe, or on what ground they do it, is that which we call *resolving faith*. And by this it appears, that whatever resolves faith into its efficient cause, (which some improperly call *the testimony of the Spirit*;) though it may be true, yet comes not home to the question. For if by *the testimony of the Spirit* be meant that operation of the Spirit whereby saving faith is wrought in us, then it gives no account from the thing to be believed, why we assent to it, but only shews how faith is wrought in us by way of efficiency; which is rather resolving the question about the necessity of grace than the grounds of faith. Our question is not then concerning the necessity of infused habits of grace, but of those rational inducements which do incline the mind to a firm assent. For faith in us, however it is wrought, being a persuasion of the mind, it is not conceivable how there should be any discursive act of the mind without some reason causing the mind to assent to what is propounded to it. For without this, faith would be an unaccountable thing, and the Spirit of revelation would not be the Spirit of wisdom; and religion would be exposed to the contempt of all unbelievers, if we were able to give no other account of faith, than that it is wrought in us by the Spirit of God. When we speak therefore of the resolving faith, we mean, what are the rational inducements to believe, or what evidence there is in the object propounded to make us firmly assent to it.

3. According to the different acts of faith, there must be

assigned a different resolution of faith. For every act being rational and discursive, must have its proper grounds belonging to it; unless we suppose that act elicited without any reason for it, which is incongruous with the nature of the human understanding.

§. 2. There are then in the question of resolution of faith, these three questions to be resolved. First, why I believe those things to be true which are contained in the book called the scripture? 2. Why I believe the doctrine contained in that book to be divine? 3. Why I believe the books themselves to
190 be of divine revelation? Now every one of these questions admits of a different way of resolution; as will appear by the handling each of them distinctly.

1. If I be asked, on what grounds I believe the things to be true which are contained in scripture, my answer must be, From the greatest evidence of truth which things of that nature are capable of. If therefore the persons who are supposed to have writ these things were such who were fully acquainted with what they writ of; if they were such persons who cannot be suspected of any design to deceive men by their writings; and if I be certain that these which go under the name of their writings are undoubtedly theirs; I must have sufficient grounds to believe the truth of them. Now that the writers of these things cannot be suspected of ignorance, appears by the time and age they writ in, when the story of these things was new, and such multitudes were willing enough to have contradicted it if any thing had been amiss: besides, some of the writers had been intimately conversant with the person and actions of him whom they writ most of. That they could have no intent to deceive, appears from the simplicity and candour both of their actions and writings, from their contempt of the world, and exposing themselves to the greatest hazards to bear witness to them. That these are the very same writings, appears by all the evidence can be desired; for we have as great, if not much greater reason to believe them to be the authors of the books under their names, than any other writers of any books whatsoever; both because the matters are of greater moment, and therefore men might be supposed more inquisitive about them; and that they have been unanimously received for theirs from the very time of

their being first written, (except some very few, which upon strict examination were admitted too;) and we find these very books cited by the learned Christians under these names in that time when it had been no difficulty to have found out several of the original copies themselves. When therefore they were universally received by Christians, never doubted of by Jews or heathen philosophers, we have as great evidence for this first act of faith as it is capable of. And he is unreasonable who desires more.

2. If I be asked, why I believe the doctrine contained in these books to be divine; I must give in two things for answer. 1. That in the age when the doctrine was delivered, there was sufficient reason to believe it divine. 2. That if there was sufficient reason then, we have sufficient reason now.

1. That in the age when the doctrine was delivered, there was sufficient reason to believe it divine; supposing then, that we already believe upon the former answer, that all the matters of fact be true. I answer, that if Christ did such unparalleled miracles, and rose from the dead, they who heard his doctrine had reason to believe it to be of God: and this I suppose the greatest infidel would not deny, if himself had been one of the witnesses of his actions and resurrection.

2. That if they had reason then, we have so now; because tradition to us doth only supply the want of our senses as to what Christ did and spake; i. e. that tradition is a kind of derivative and perpetuated sensation to us; it being of the same use to us now which our eyes and ears had been, if we had been actually present when Christ delivered his doctrine and wrought his miracles. Which that we may better understand, we may consider what the use of our senses had been, if we had been then present; and consequently what the use of tradition is now to us. Now it is apparent, that the use of the senses to those who saw the miracles and heard the doctrine of Christ, was not to give any credibility to either of them, but only to be the means of conveying to them those things which might induce them to believe: the same doth tradition now to us; it doth not in itself make the doctrine 191 more credible, but supplies the use of our senses in a certain conveyance of those things to us which were the motives to

believe then. For the motives to faith both to them and us are the same, only the manner of conveyance is different; but our case is much the same with those who lived in the same age, but by reason of distance of place could not be personally present at what Christ did or said. Now if those persons were obliged to believe, and had sufficient reason for faith, who by reason of distance of place could not exercise their senses about Christ's doctrine and miracles, the same reason and obligation have we, who cannot do it by reason of distance of time. And if there be any advantage on either side, it is on ours, because though the tradition doth not in itself give any credibility to the doctrine, yet there are such circumstances accompanying this tradition which may much facilitate our belief above theirs: because by such a continued tradition we have an evidence of the efficacy of this doctrine, which had so continual a power as to engage so many in all ages since its first appearance to be the propagators and defenders of it. And therefore this hath very much the advantage of the report of any credible persons in that age, who might report to any at distance the miracles and doctrine of Christ. And this is the way of resolution of faith, which the scripture itself directs us to. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" Where we plainly see, the resolution of faith as to the divinity of the doctrine was into the miracles wrought for the confirmation of it (which was the proper witness or testimony of the Holy Ghost), but the means of conveyance was by the tradition of those who were eye and ear-witnesses of what Christ said or did. As therefore it was not supposed necessary for them who saw the miracles of Christ either to have some inward testimony of the Spirit, or some external infallible testimony of the church to assure them that these miracles were really done by Christ, but God left them to the judgment of sense; so proportionably neither of those two is now necessary for the resolution of our faith, but God, instead of the judgment of sense, leaves us to the evidence of tradition.

§. 3. Object. But all this is (you say) no more than moral certainty, which being fallible, we cannot from thence be assured that Christian religion is infallibly true. Answ. This being the great bugbear wherewith you would fright men out of their religion, I shall in this place shew, that it serves only to scare fools and children with. For, 1. what greater certainty had they who lived in the time of Christ and his apostles, and did not see their miracles? Had they, or could they have, any more than this you call moral certainty? and do you really think, that all such could not be sufficiently assured that Christian religion was infallibly true? 2. Moral certainty may be a sufficient foundation for the most firm assent; and therefore, if the matter to be believed be the infallible truth of a doctrine upon suitable evidence, though we have now but moral certainty of that evidence, the assent may be firm to such a doctrine as infallible. And therefore the grand mistake lies here, as though our faith were resolved finally into this moral certainty; or, as if the faith of those who saw Christ's miracles were resolved into their eyes, and not into the miracles; for as their eyes were but the means of conveyance of that evidence which was infallible, so is that tradition to us by which we have our certainty of those evidences of the infallible truth of Christian religion. And we are further to consider that the nature of certainty is not so much to be taken from the matters themselves, as from the grounds inducing the assent; that is, whether the things be mathematical, physical, 192 or moral; if there be no reason to question the grounds of belief, the case is all one as to the nature of the assent. So that moral certainty may be as great as mathematical and physical, supposing as little reason to doubt in moral things as to their natures, as in mathematical and physical as to theirs. Therefore this great quarrel about moral certainty is very unreasonable; unless it be proved, that there is no cause of firm assent upon moral grounds; now, if the cause of the assent may be as equal and proportionable to their nature in moral things as in mathematical, there may be as firm an assent in the one as in the other, as I have already shewed. For which, this reason is plain and evident, that certainty implies the taking away all suspicion of doubt: but there can be no taking away all suspicion of doubt in mathematical things,

without mathematical evidence; but in moral things, all suspicion of doubt is removed upon moral evidence, and therefore the certainty may be as great in the assent to one as the other. Thus, we see, how unjustly, and how much to the dishonour of religion you quarrel with moral evidence, as an uncertain thing. But, I answer yet further, 3. That the greatest assurance we can desire, that any religion is infallibly true, is from moral certainty; and that upon these three grounds: 1. Because the grounds of all religion are capable of no more; 2. Because the highest evidence of any religion must depend upon it; 3. Because this in itself may evidently demonstrate that Christian religion is infallibly true.

1. There can be no greater than this moral certainty of the main foundations of all religion, which are, the being of God, and immortality of souls; without the supposition of which, there can be no such thing as infallibility in the world; and therefore from thence I may easily prove, that there can be no more than moral certainty of the existence of a Deity. For if the very notion of infallibility doth suppose a God, then you cannot infallibly prove that there is one (in your sense of infallibility); for then you must beg the question, and suppose that already to be, which you are proving the existence of: now that infallibility in us doth suppose the existence of God appears most evidently, because man's understanding being of itself fallible, it cannot be supposed in any thing infallible without the supernatural assistance of a being infallible, which can be nothing else but God. But if you think you have infallible proofs, produce them, and convince the world of atheists by them: we acknowledge we have as great evidence and certainty as human nature is capable of, of a being of such a nature as God is, from the consideration of his works; but all this still is moral certainty; for the grounds are neither mathematically demonstrative nor supernaturally infallible. What folly and madness then is it for your party to cry out so much against moral certainty in religion, when the foundation of all religion is capable of no more! and may not this justly increase our suspicion, that under moral certainty you strike at the foundation of all religion?

2. Suppose God give the most infallible evidence of any

religion, it is not possible but that some who are bound to believe that religion can have any more than moral certainty of it. And, for all that, I know the greatest physical certainty is as liable to question as moral; there being as great a possibility of deception in that, as a suspicion of doubt in this, and oftentimes greater. What advantage then had those who stood by, and saw the miracles of Moses and Christ, above those who did not, but had the report of them conveyed to them in an unquestionable manner? Besides, it is apparent, God's great aim, in any religion, is most at the good of those who can have only a moral certainty of the great evidences of the truth of that religion; because it being God's intention, that the religion delivered by him should be not merely for 193 the benefit of those very few persons who could be present at such things, but for the advantage of those incomparably greater numbers, who, by reason of distance of place and age, could not be present; it would argue a strange want of provision for men's faith, unless moral certainty were sufficient. Only you indeed will suppose that which God himself never thought necessary, viz. an infallible testimony of the present church; but to what good purposes you have introduced this, hath largely appeared already.

3. Moral certainty yields us sufficient assurance, that Christian religion is infallibly true: and that I prove, because moral certainty may evidently shew us the credibility of the Christian religion, which you deny not, nor any else; and that from the credibility of it the infallible truth of it may be proved, will appear by these two things:

1. That where there is evident credibility in the matter propounded, there doth arise upon men an obligation to believe: and that is proved both by your own confession (as to the church's infallibility being believed on the motives of credibility) and from God's intention in giving such motives, which was, to persuade them to believe, as appears by multitudes of places of scripture; and withal, though the mere credibility of the motives might at first suppose some doubts concerning the infallibility of the doctrine, yet it is not consistent with any doubt, as to the infallibility of the obligation to believe; because there can be no other reason assigned of

these motives of credibility, than the inducing on men an obligation to faith.

2. That where there is such an obligation to believe, we have the greatest assurance that the matter to be believed is infallibly true: which depends upon this manifest proof, that God cannot oblige men to believe a lie; it being repugnant to all our conceptions of the veracity and goodness of God, to imagine, that God should require from men (on the pain of eternal damnation for not believing) to believe something as infallibly true which is really false. Thus, you see, what a clear and pregnant demonstration we have of the infallible truth of Christian religion from moral certainty: how injurious then have those of your party been who have charged this opinion, of believing upon moral certainty with betraying religion, and denying Christian religion to be infallibly true! Thus much for this grand objection: I now come to the last question considerable in the resolution.

§. 4. 3. On what account do I believe these particular books of scripture to be God's word? Which may admit of a double sense: 1. On what account I do believe the doctrine contained in these books to be God's word? 2. On what account I do believe the books containing this doctrine to be God's word? As to the first, I have answered already, viz. upon the same rational evidence which God gave that the testimony of those who delivered was a divine and infallible testimony. To the second, I answer in these two propositions:

1. That the last resolution of faith is not into the infallibility of the instrument of conveyance, but into the infallibility of that doctrine which is thereby conveyed to us. For the writing of this doctrine is only the condition by which this revelation is made manifest to us; it being evident, from the nature of the thing, that the writing of a divine revelation is not necessary for the ground and reason of faith, as to that revelation: because men may believe a divine revelation without it; as is not only evident in the case of the patriarchs, but of all those who in the time of Christ and the apostles did believe the truth of the doctrine of Christ before it was written. If therefore the writing be only the condition of the manifestation of the object in a certain way to us, the ground

and reason of faith is not to be resolved into that which is only the mode of our knowledge of the object to be believed ; but into that which is properly the ground and reason why we believe that doctrine or revelation to be divine which is con- 194
tained in those books. And this is still the case of all illiterate persons, who cannot resolve their faith properly into the scripture, but into the doctrine delivered them out of scripture. Hence we may discern the difference between the formal object and the rule of faith ; the formal object is that evidence which is given of the infallibility of the testimony of those who delivered the doctrine ; the infallible rule of faith to us is the scripture, viz. that which limits and bounds the material objects of faith, which we are bound to believe ; and this doth therefore discover to us what those things are which on the account of the formal object we are obliged to believe.

2. Those who believe the doctrine of scripture to be divine, have no reason to question the infallible conveyance of that doctrine to us in those books we call the scripture. Therefore, whatever things we are to believe in order to salvation, we have as great evidence as we can desire that they are infallibly conveyed to us.

§. 5. 1. If the doctrine of Christ be true and divine, then all the promises he made were accomplished : now that was one of the greatest, that his Spirit should lead his apostles into all ^{John xvi.} truth. Can we then reasonably think, that if the apostles ^{13.} had such an infallible assistance of the Spirit of God with them, in what they spake in a transitory way to them who heard them, that they should want it in the delivering those records to the church which were to be the standing monuments of this doctrine to all ages and generations ? If Christ's doctrine therefore be true, the apostles had an infallible assistance of God's Spirit ; if they had so in delivering the doctrine of Christ by preaching, nothing can be more unreasonable than to imagine such should want it who were employed to give an account to the world of the nature of this doctrine, and of the miracles which accompanied Christ and his apostles. So that it will appear an absurd thing to assert that the doctrine of Christ is divine, and to question whether we have the infallible records of it. It is not pertinent to our question, in what way the Spirit of God assisted them that

wrote, whether by immediate suggestion of all such things which might be sufficiently known without it; and whether in some things, which were not of concernment, it might not
 John vi. 19. leave them to their own judgment; (as in that place, “when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs,” when, no doubt, God’s Spirit knew infallibly whether it was, but thought not fit to reveal it;) whether in some lighter circumstances the writers were subject to any inadvertencies (the negative of which is more piously credible); whether mere historical passages needed the same infallible assistance that prophetic and doctrinal; these things, I say, are not necessary to be resolved, it being sufficient in order to faith, that the doctrine we are to believe, as it was infallibly delivered to the world, by the preaching of Christ and his apostles, so it is infallibly conveyed to us in the books of scripture.

2. Because these books were owned for divine by those persons and ages who were most competent judges whether they were so or no. For the age of the apostles was sufficiently able to judge whether those things which are said to be spoken by Christ, or written by the apostles, were really so or no. And we can have no reason at all to question but what was delivered by them was infallibly true. Now from that first age we derive our knowledge concerning the authority of these books, which being conveyed to us in the most unquestionable and universal tradition, we can have no reason in the world to doubt, and therefore the greatest reason firmly to assent, that the books we call the scripture are the infallible records of the word of God. And thus much may suffice in general concerning the protestant way of resolving faith. I now return to the examination of what you give us by way of answer to his lordship’s discourse.

195 The first assault you make upon his lordship is for making apostolical tradition a ground of faith; but because your peculiar excellency lies in the involving plain things, the best service I can do is to lay things open as they are; by which means we shall easily discern where the truth lies. I shall therefore first shew how far his lordship makes apostolical tradition a ground of faith, and then consider what you have to object against it. In that section which your margent refers to, all that he says of it is, “that the voice and

tradition of that church which included in it apostles, disciples, and such as had immediate revelation from heaven, was divine, and the word of God from them is of like validity written or delivered. And as to this tradition," saith he, "there is abundance of certainty in itself; but how far it is evident to us shall after appear." At the end of the next n. 21. he saith, "that there is double authority, and both divine, that confirms scripture to be the word of God. Tradition of the apostles delivering it, and the internal worth and argument in the scripture obvious to a soul prepared by the present church's tradition and God's grace." But, n. 23. he saith, "that this apostolical tradition is not the sole and only means to prove scripture divine; but the moral persuasion, reason, and force of the present church is ground enough for any one to read the scripture, and esteem reverently of it. And this once done, the scripture hath then in and home arguments enough to put a soul that hath but ordinary grace out of doubt that the scripture is the word of God, infallible and divine." I suppose his lordship's meaning may be comprised in these particulars: 1. That to those who lived in the apostolical times, the tradition of scripture, by those who had an infallible testimony, was a sufficient ground of their believing it infallibly true. 2. That though the conveyance of that tradition to us be not infallible, yet it may be sufficient to raise in us a high esteem and veneration for the scripture. 3. That those who have this esteem for the scripture, by a through studying and consideration of it, may undoubtedly believe that scripture is the divine and infallible word of God. This I take to be the substance of his lordship's discourse. We now come to examine what you object against him. Your first demand is, How comes apostolical primitive tradition to work upon us, if the present church be fallible? Which I shall answer by another, How come the decrees of councils to work upon you, if the reporters of those decrees be fallible? If you say, It is sufficient that the decree itself be infallible, but it is not necessary that the reporter of those decrees should be so; the same I say concerning the apostolical tradition of scripture, though it were infallible in their testimony, yet it is not necessary that the conveyance of it to us should be infallible. And if you think yourself bound to believe the

Conf. p. 69.
sect. 16. n.
21.

Conf. p. 70.
sect 16. n.
23.

Lab. p. 82.
If n. 1.

decrees of general councils as infallible, though fallibly conveyed to you; why may not we say the same concerning apostolical tradition? Whereby you may see, though tradition be fallible, yet the matter conveyed by it may have its proper effect upon us. Your next inquiry (if I understand it) is to this sense, whether apostolical tradition be not then as credible as the scriptures? I answer freely, (supposing it equally evident,) what was delivered by the apostles to the church by word or writing, hath equal credibility: you attempt to prove, that there is equal evidence, because the scripture is only known by the tradition of the church to be the same that was recommended by the apostolical church, which you have likewise for apostolical tradition. But, 1. do you mean the same apostolical tradition here or no, which the archbishop speaks of, i. e. that act of the apostles whereby they delivered the doctrine of Christ upon their testimony to the world? If you mean this tradition, for my part, I do not understand it as any thing really distinct from the tradition of the scripture itself. For although I grant that the apostles did deliver that doctrine by word as well as writing, yet if that tradition
196 by word had been judged sufficient, I much question whether we had ever had any written records at all. But because of the speedy decay of an oral tradition, if there had been no standing records, it pleased God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, to stir up some fit persons to digest those things summarily into writing, which otherwise would have been exposed to several corruptions in a short time. For we see presently in the church, notwithstanding this, how suddenly the Gnostics, Valentinians, Manichees and others, did pretend some secret tradition of Christ or his apostles distinct from their writings. When therefore you can produce as certain evidence for any apostolical tradition distinct from scripture, as we can do that the books of scripture were delivered by the apostles to the church, you may then be hearkened to, but not before. 2. We have other ways to judge of the identity of the copies of scripture (which we have) with those delivered by the primitive church, besides the testimony of the present church. And the judgment of the present church considered merely as such can be no argument to secure any man concerning the integrity and incorruption of the books of scrip-

ture. We do therefore justly appeal to the ancient copies and MSS. which confirm the incorruption of ours. But, say you, "what infallible certainty have we of them besides church tradition?" Very wisely said in several respects, as though no certainty less than infallible could serve men's turn as to ancient copies of scripture, and as though your church could give men infallible certainty which copies were ancient and which were not. But for our parts, we should not be at all nearer any certainty, much less infallibility, concerning the authenticalness of any ancient copies, because your church declared itself for them; neither can we imagine it at all necessary in the examination of ancient copies to have any infallible certainty at all of them. For as well you may pretend it as to any other authors, when all that we look after in such copies is only that evidence which things of that nature are capable of. But you make his lordship give as wise an answer to this question of yours; "They may be examined and approved by the authentical autographas of the very apostles." Where is it that this answer is given by his lordship? If you may be allowed to make questions and answers too, no doubt the one will be as wise as the other. But I suppose you thought nothing could be said pertinent in this case but what you make his lordship say: and then by the unreasonableness of that answer, because none of these autographas are supposed extant, and because if they were so, all men could not be infallibly certain of them, you think you have sufficient advantage against your adversary, because thereby it would appear there can be no certainty of scripture but from the authority of your church. To which because it may seem to carry on your great design of rendering religion uncertain, I shall return a particular answer.

§. 6. 1. Supposing we could have no certainty concerning the copies of scripture but from tradition, this doth not at all advantage your cause, unless you could prove that no other tradition but that of your church can give us any certainty of it. Give me leave then to make this supposition, that God might not have given this supernatural assistance to your church, which you pretend makes it infallible; whether men, through the universal consent of persons of the Christian church in all ages, might not have been undoubtedly certain that the scrip-

ture we have was the same delivered by the apostles? i. e. whether a matter of fact, in which the whole Christian world was so deeply engaged, that not only their credit, but their interest was highly concerned in it, could not be attested by them in a credible manner? Which is as much as to ask, whether the whole Christian world was not at once besotted and
197 infatuated in the grossest manner, so as to suffer the records of those things which concerned their eternal welfare to be embezzled, falsified, or corrupted, so as to mistake them for apostolical writings which were nothing so? If it be not then credible that the Christian world should be so monstrously imposed upon and so grossly deceived, then certainly the universal tradition of this society may yield unquestionable evidence to any inquisitive person, as to the integrity and incorruption of the body of scriptures. And if it may yield such evidence, why doth it not so? when we see this was the very case of the Christian world in all ages. Some writings were delivered to the church of the age they lived in, by the apostles; these writings were so delivered as that the Christians understood they were of things of more concernment to them than the whole world was; these writings were then received, embraced, and publicly read; these writings were preserved by them so sacred and inviolable, that it was accounted a crime of the highest nature to deliver the copies of them into the hands of the heathen persecutors; these writings were still owned by them as divine, and the rule and standard of faith; these were appealed to in all disputes among them; these were preserved from the attempts of heretics, vindicated from the assaults of the most learned infidels, transcribed into the books of the most diligent Christians, transmitted from one generation to another, as the most sacred *depositum* of Heaven; and yet is it possible to suppose that these writings should be extorted out of their hands by violence, abused under their eyes by fraud, or suffered to be lost by negligence? Yet no other way can be imagined, why any should suspect the books of scripture which we have are not the same with those delivered by the apostles. All which are such unreasonable suppositions, that they could hardly enter into any head but yours, or such whose cause you manage in these disputes; the most profligate atheists, or most unreason-

able sceptics. If then we entertain but mean and ordinary thoughts of the Christians of all ages, if we look upon them as silly men, abused into a religion by fraud and imposture ; yet we cannot doubt, but that these persons were careful to preserve the records of that religion, because they were so diligent in the study of it, so venturous for it, such enemies to the corrupters of it, so industrious in propagating the knowledge of it to their friends and posterity. Do you think our nation did ever want an infallible testimony to preserve the Magna Charta, supposing no authentic record of it kept in the public archives of the nation ? Would not men's interest make them careful to preserve it inviolable, especially considering the frequency of causes whose decision depends upon it, and the dispersion of the copies abroad, and the diligence of such whose profession leads them to look to such things. And will not the same reasons hold in a greater measure for the integrity and incorruption of scriptures ? Do not the eternal concerns of all Christians depend upon those sacred records, that if those be not true, they were of all men most miserable ? Were not innumerable copies of these writings suddenly dispersed abroad, and all Christians accounted it a part of their religion to search and inquire into them ? Hath there not always been a succession of diligent and faithful persons, whose office and profession it hath been to read, interpret, and vindicate these books, and who have left excellent monuments of their endeavours in this nature ? Is it then possible to suppose all those copies at once embezzled, all those Christians in one age deceived, all those divines so secure and negligent that there should be any considerable alteration, much less any total depravation of these writings ? When once I see a whole corporation consent to burn their public charter, and substitute a new one in the place of it, and this not be suspected or discovered ; when I shall see a Magna Charta foisted, and neither king nor people be sensible of such a cheat ; when all the world shall conspire to deceive themselves 198 and their children : I may then suspect such an imposture as to the scripture ; but not before. And will not all this persuade you that there is no necessity of making your church infallible in order to our certainty that we have the same books of scripture which were delivered by the apostles ? If

not, the next news I shall expect to hear from you will be, that we can have no certainty of the being of God, or the foundation of all religion, but from your church's infallibility; there being every jot as much reason to say that all mankind should be deceived into the belief of a Deity by some cunning politicians, as that all Christians should be deceived as to the belief of such books to be scripture which were universally corrupted; and if you understood consequences you would have urged one as soon as the other. But still remember into what precipices this good doctrine of infallibility leads you.

§. 7. But it may be your meaning is more gentle and easy than to suppose there could be no certainty as to all the books being the same, but only that we cannot have any infallible certainty that there are no corruptions crept into these books which we have, but from your church's testimony. To which I answer, 1. that there is no reason to suppose this should be your meaning: 2. supposing it were your meaning, there is no reason in the thing.

1. There is no reason to suppose this should be your meaning; for you are speaking of such things which are necessary to be believed, and therefore are properly objects of faith; but that there are no kind of corruptions crept into the copies of scripture cannot with you be an object of faith. For those of your party do, some of them, confess, and others contend, that there are many corruptions crept into the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and the Greek of the New; and that there are abundance of corruptions in your vulgar Latin is not only abundantly proved by our writers, but acknowledged by the learnedest of your own, and irrefragably demonstrated by the different editions of Sixtus and Clement.

Suppose this were your meaning, there were no reason in the thing; for, 1. your church cannot infallibly assure us there are no corruptions; 2. we may be sufficiently assured of it without the testimony of your church.

1. Your church cannot assure us at all, much less infallibly, that there are no such corruptions. For what reason can there be why we should rely on the judgment of only a part of the whole society of Christians, and that part at great opposition with many other considerable churches; must we then believe your church where it agrees with, or it differs from the

rest? If only where it agrees with the rest, then it is not the testimony of your church we rely on, but the universal consent of all: if where it differs, shew us some reason why we should believe your church in opposition to all others. Especially, 1, when we consider what contradiction there hath been in the testimony of your church about this very thing; as appears not only by the great difference among your writers concerning the authentic copies, some still defending the Hebrew and Greek texts, and others standing up for that great Diana of Rome the vulgar Latin. Considering then, that by the decree of the council of Trent the vulgar Latin is looked on by you as the most authentic copy of the scripture, let any one judge whether ever this could be judged more authentic, than when the pope himself *in cathedra* doth revise any edition of it, and use all possible care for the setting it forth, not only comparing it with the best ancient MSS. but taking the pains to correct it with his own hand both before and after the press, and all this was done by Sixtus V. as himself declares in the preface to his edition of the vulgar Latin, A. D. 1590. Yet within little more than two years after comes out the edition of Clement VIII. which, as appears by the computation of such who have taken the pains to compare them, differs from the other 199 in some thousands of places. Now I pray tell me what infallible certainty are we like to have concerning the copies of scripture being the same with those delivered by the apostles, from the infallibility of your church, when this testimony of your church doth so finely contradict itself within little more than two years' time? Nay, when Sixtus V. his care was so great and extraordinary in his edition, that an inscription was made in the Vatican, *in perpetuam rei memoriam*, which is in letters of gold in these words:

SACRAM PAGINAM EX CONCILII TRIDENTINI
PRÆSCRIPTO QUAM EMENDATISSIMAM
DIVULGARI MANDAVIT.

Which inscription, as Angelus Roccha tells us^a, was purposely made to set forth that infinite care and pains which the pope took in that edition, "which were so great," saith

^a Biblioth. Vatican. p. 229.

he, "that it is impossible that any should recount them, and for his own part he stood astonished when he saw them:" for he not only carefully corrected the copy before the impression, but reviewed it sheet by sheet after, that the edition might be the more faithful. And shall we after all this believe that Sixtus V. never lived to see this edition complete, which is the miserable shift some of your party have to avoid this evident contradiction; or shall we think, what others pretend, that he never lived to authorize this edition of his, whereas his brief doth in terms declare this to be the authentic vulgar Latin, which the decree of the council of Trent had respect to; but this brief, others say, though provided, was never proclaimed; it seems then the pope's infallibility depends upon proclamation; but was not this bull sufficiently proclaimed which is extant in those editions of Sixtus V. with an injunction, that this Bible be read in all churches *ne minima quidem particula, mutata, addita, vel detracta*, without any the least alteration. Now then when the vulgar Latin is owned by the council of Trent for the authentic copy of scripture; when the pope, whose testimony must be supposed infallible, takes great pains in prosecution of the decree of that council to declare and set forth the true authentic edition of this vulgar Latin, when should we ever, if not now, expect some infallible certainty of the true copy of the scripture? yet so far are we from it, that, not long after, men are forbidden the use of that edition under the penalty of the greater excommunication. And all this, forsooth, under the pretence of typographical faults; and what then must we think of that pope who took such incessant pains to correct them? Thus we see how far we are from any certainty at all, much more from any infallible certainty, concerning the true copies of scripture from the authority of your church. 2. The authenticalness of those copies set forth by the appointment of the council of Trent and the approbation of the pope, hath no greater evidence of certainty than any other copies of scripture, if they have so much. For all that Sixtus V. pretends for the authenticalness of that copy is, the agreement of it with the ancient and approved copies, both printed and MSS. which he had caused to be diligently searched in libraries, "than which," saith he, "there can be no more firm or certain

argument of the true and genuine text^b." Well said however in this ! But if the Latin copies be so sure a rule to judge of the authenticalness of the text by, shall not much more the ancient copies of the original Hebrew and Greek ? especially when we consider that the vast difference of the Clementine and Sixtine Bibles lay in this, that Clement the VIIIth did correct the vulgar Latin according to the original in above 200 two thousand places, when the contrary reading was established by Sixtus. For the pope, where he pleased, took the marginal annotations in the Lovain Bibles, and inserted them into the text ; which marginal annotations contain the different readings which were observed from the comparing the vulgar Latin with the originals, as appears by the preface to the Lovain Bibles. And although the pope, *ex apostolica potestate plenitudine*, (as Sixtus V. phraseth it in the bull before his Bibles,) did take and leave where he pleased himself, yet it is evident, from those who have compared them, that above two thousand places are reformed according to the originals ; and more than twice as many more might have been, if his holiness had thought good. For our industrious Dr. James^c, who had taken the pains accurately to compare, not only the Sixtine and Clementine Bibles, but the Clementine edition with the Lovain annotations, doth in the defence of his *Bellum papale* challenge Gretser the Jesuit to join issue with him, if he dared, on the point, viz. of making it appear that there were ten thousand differences in the Lovain annotations from the vulgar Latin, and that these differences arise from the comparing it with the Hebrew, Greek, and Chaldee. Are we not then at a fine pass for our infallible certainty concerning the copies of scripture, if the judgment of your church must be relied on ? Was that sufficient ground for pope Clement to reform two thousand places, and would it not serve for all the rest ? If those were truer, because they agreed more with the originals, were not the rest so too ? And have not we the greatest reason to rely on the originals, when the

^b In hac autem germani textus pervestigatione, satis perspicue inter omnes constat, nullum argumentum esse certius ac firmitus, quam antiquorum probatorumque codicum Latinorum fidem, quos tam impressos,

quam MSS. ex bibliothecis variis conquirendos curavimus. Sixtus V. Præfat.

^c James on the Corruption of Scripture, Councils, &c. part 3. p. 49.

pope himself appeals to them, and reforms by them? According then to the judgment of your pretended infallible church, we have as great certainty as they; for certainly the Hebrew and Greek are as obvious to us as them; and I never yet heard that your popes did challenge to themselves, among other apostolical prerogatives, the gift of tongues.

2. We may be sufficiently assured that there are no material corruptions in the books of scripture without your church's testimony. Not that we pretend the apostle's autographa are still extant for us to compare our copies with, (although some of your side^d tell us, among other rarities of the Vatican, that the true ancient Greek text is there extant, which the pope would do well to oblige the world with,) but we whose eyes are not blessed with such noble sights as are there locked up from all such who have not a good dose of implicit faith about them, pretend to no such thing: but by the diligent comparing the present copies with the most ancient MSS. by the observation of what citations of scripture are produced by those of the fathers who lived when some of these autographa were extant, (as it is apparent some were in Tertullian's time, and some tell us that the authentic Apocalypse was preserved in the church of Ephesus in Honorius his time,) by the diligence of the primitive writers in taking notice of the least attempt for falsification or corruption of the text; for when Marcion began to clip and falsify the text, Irenæus presently takes notice of it, and gives him a sufficient rebuke for it: and so doth Tertullian afterwards; and Epiphanius^e particularly takes notice of all those places which had violent hands laid upon them, and rescues them from those impure attempts; so that we still enjoy them in their integrity. So that whatever endeavours were made, they were presently discovered; as that of the Arians by St. Ambrose, that of Tatianus his Monotessaron by Theodoret^f. Insomuch, that Bellarmine himself confesseth; *Etsi multa depravare conati sunt hæretici, tamen nunquam defuerunt catholici, qui eorum corruptelas detexerint, et non permiserint libros sacros corrumpi*^g. That the catholics were as vigilant as the heretics malicious, and therefore could

^d Bailius contr. Catech. q. 15. tr. 1. Huntl. Controv. 1. c. 13. sect. 9.

^e Iren. l. 1. c. 29. Tertul. c. Marcion. l. 5. Epiph. Hæres. 42.

^f Ambros. de Sp. S. l. 3. c. 11 Theodoret. de Hæret. Fab. l. 1.

^g Bellar. l. 2. de V. D. c. 7.

never effect their design in corrupting the scripture. Besides, it is observable, that among those multitudes of various lections in the New Testament, of which R. Stephens made a collection out of sixteen MSS. of 2384, (which probably were 201 occasioned by the general dispersion of copies, and the multitudes of transcriptions by such as were either ignorant or careless,) yet there are none which are material, so as to entrench upon the integrity and authority of the copies as a rule of faith and manners: they are therefore but razings of the skin, but no wounds of any vital part. Abating therefore only what must necessarily be supposed in the multitudes of copies transcribed, there is so great integrity and incorruption in those copies we have, that we cannot but therein take notice of a peculiar hand of Divine Providence in preserving these authentic records of our religion so safe to our days. But it is time now to return to you.

You would therefore persuade us, that we have no ground of certainty as to the copies of scripture, but comparing them with the apostles' autographa; but I hope our former discourse hath given you a sufficient account of our certainty without seeing the apostles' own hands. But I pray what certainty then had the Jews after the captivity of their copies of the law? yet I cannot think you will deny them any ground of certainty in the time of Christ that they had the true copies both of the Law and the Prophets; and I hope you will not make the sanhedrin, which condemned our Saviour to death, to have given them their only infallible certainty concerning it. If therefore the Jews might be certain without infallibility, why may not we? for if the oracles of God were committed to the Jews then, they are to the Christians now.

§. 8. You yet further urge, "that there can be no certainty Lab. p. 83. concerning the autographas of the apostles, but by tradition: ^{n. 1.} and may not every universal tradition be carried up as clearly at least to the apostles' times, as the scriptures, by most credible authors who wrote in their respective succeeding ages?" I answer, we grant there can be no certainty as to the copies of scripture but from tradition; and if you can name any of those great things in controversy between us, which you will undertake to prove to be as universal a tradition as that of the scriptures, you and I shall not differ as to the belief of

it. But think not to fob us off with the tradition of the present church, instead of the church of all ages; with the tradition of your church, instead of the catholic; with the ambiguous testimonies of two or three of the fathers, instead of the universal consent of the church since the apostles' times. If I should once see you prove the infallibility of your church, the pope's supremacy, invocation of saints, veneration of images, the necessity of celibate in the clergy, a punitive purgatory, the lawfulness of communicating in one kind, the expediency of the scriptures and prayers being in an unknown tongue, the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, (to name no more,) by as unquestionable and universal a tradition as that whereby we receive the scriptures, I shall extol you for the only person that ever did any thing considerable on your side, and I shall willingly yield myself up as a trophy to your brave attempts. Either then for ever forbear to mention any such things as universal tradition among you as to any things besides scriptures, which carry a necessity with them of being believed or practised; or once for all undertake this task, and manifest it as to the things in controversy between us. Your next paragraph (besides what hath been already discussed in this chapter concerning apostolical tradition of scripture) empties itself into the old *mare mortuum* of the formal object and infallible application of faith, which I cannot think myself so much at leisure to follow you into, so often as you fall into it. When once you bring any thing that hath but the least resemblance of reason more than before, I shall afresh consider it, but not till then.

What next follows concerning "resolving faith into prime
202 apostolical tradition infallibly, without the infallibility of the present church," hath been already prevented by telling you, that his lordship doth not say that the infallible resolution of faith is into that apostolical tradition, but into the doctrine which is conveyed in the books of scripture from the apostles' times down to us, by an unquestionable tradition. Your
Lab. p. 84. stale objection, "that then we should want divine certainty,"
n. t. hath been over and over answered; and so hath your next paragraph, "that if the church be not infallible, we cannot be infallibly certain that scripture is God's word:" and so the remainder concerning canonical books. It is an easy matter

to write great books after that rate, to swell up your discourses with needless repetitions; but it is the misery that attends a bad cause and a bad stomach, to have unconcocted things brought up so often, till we nauseate them.

§. 9. Your next offer is at the vindication of the noted place of St. Austin, "I would not believe the gospel, &c. which," you say, "cannot rationally be understood of novices, weaklings, and doubters in the faith." This being then the place at every turn objected by you, and having before reserved the discussion of it to this place, I shall here particularly and throughly consider the meaning of it. In order to which, three things must be inquired into:

1. What the controversy was which St. Austin was there discussing of?

2. What that church was which St. Austin was moved by the authority of?

3. In what way and manner that church's authority did persuade him?

1. Nothing seems more necessary for understanding the meaning of this place, than a true state of the controversy which St. Austin was disputing of; and yet nothing less spoke to on either side than this hath been. We are therefore to consider, that when Manes or Manichæus began to appear in the world, to broach that strange and absurd doctrine of his in the Christian world, which he had received from Terebinthus or Buddas, as he from Seythianus, (who, if we believe Epiphanius^s, went to Jerusalem in the apostles' times to inquire into the doctrine of Christianity, and dispute with the Christians about his opinions,) but easily foreseeing what little entertainment so strange a complexion of absurdities would find in the Christian world as long as the writings of the apostles and evangelists were received every where with that esteem and veneration; two ways he or his more cunning disciples be-thought themselves of, whereby to lessen the authority of those writings, and so make way for the doctrine of Manichæus. One was to disparage the credulity of Christians, because the catholic church insisted so much on the necessity of faith, whereas they pretended they would desire men to believe nothing but what they gave them sufficient reason for.

^s Epiph. Hæres. 66.

But all this while, since the Christians thought they had evident reason for believing the scriptures, and consequently none to believe the doctrine which did oppose them; therefore they found it necessary to go further, and to charge those copies of scripture with falsifications and corruptions, which were generally received among Christians. But these are fully delivered by St. Austin in his book *de Utilitate credendi*, as will appear to any one who looks into it; but the latter is that which I aim at; this he therefore taxeth them for, that with a great deal of impudence, or, to speak mildly, with much weakness, they charged the scriptures to be corrupted; and yet could not at so small a distance of time prove any corruption by any copies which were extant^b. “For,” saith he, “if they should say they would not embrace their writings, because they were written by such who were not careful of writing truth, their evasion would be more shy, and their error more pardonable.” But thus, it seems, they did by the Acts of the Apostles, utterly denying them to contain matter of truth in them; and the reason was very obvious for it, 203 because that book gives so clear an account of the sending the Spirit upon the apostles, which the Manichees pretended was to be only accomplished in the person of Manichæus. And both before and after St. Austin mentions it as their common speech, “that before the time of Manichæus, there had been corrupters of the sacred books, who had mixed several things of their own with what was written by the apostlesⁱ.” And this they laid upon the Judaizing Christians, because their great pique was against the Old Testament, and probably some further reason might be from the Nazarene Gospel; wherein many things were inserted by such as did Judaize. The same thing St. Austin^k chargeth them with, when he

^b Nihil mihi videtur ab iis impudentius dici, vel ut mitius loquar, incuriosius et imbecillius, quam scripturas divinas esse corruptas, cum id nullis, in tam recenti memoria, extantibus exemplaribus possint convincere. D. August. de Utilit. cred.

c. 3.

ⁱ Quam multa soleant dicere immixta esse scripturis divinis, a nescio quibus corruptoribus veritatis.

Volunt enim nescio quos corruptores divinarum librorum ante ipsius Manichæi tempora fuisse. Id. ib.

Corrupisse autem illos, qui Judæorum legem evangelio miscere cupiebant.

^k Ipsiusque Novi Testamenti scripturas tanquam infalsatas ita legunt, ut quod voluerint inde accipiant, quod nolunt rejiciant. Aug. Hæres. 46.

gives an account of their heresy. And this likewise appears by the management of the dispute between St. Austin and Faustus, who was much the subtlest man among them. Faustus “acknowledged no more to be gospel, than what contained the doctrine delivered by our Saviour, and therefore denied the genealogies to be any part of the gospel¹ ;” and afterwards disputes against them, both in St. Matthew and St. Luke. And after this St. Austin notes it “as their usual custom, when they could not avoid a testimony of scripture, to deny it^m.” Thus we see what kind of persons these were, and what their pretences were which St. Austin disputes against; they embraced so much of scripture as pleased them, and no more. To this therefore St. Austin returns these very substantial answersⁿ, “that if such proceedings might be admitted, the divine authority of any books could signify nothing at all for the convincing of errors. That it was much more reasonable, either with the pagans to deny the whole Bible, or with the Jews to deny the New Testament, than thus to acknowledge in general the books divine, and to quarrel with such particular passages as pinched them most; that if there were any suspicion of corruption, they ought to produce more true copies and more ancient books than theirs, or else be judged by the original languages; with many other things to the same purpose.” To apply this now to the present place in dispute, St. Austin in that book against the epistle of Manichæus begins with the preface to it, which is made in imitation of the apostles’ strain, and begins thus, *Manichæus apostolus Jesu Christi, providentia Dei Patris, &c.* To this St. Austin saith, “he believes no such thing, as that Manichæus was an apostle of Jesus Christ, and hopes they will not be angry with him for it; for he had learned of them not

¹ Evangelium quidem a prædicatione Christi et esse cœpit et nominari: at vero genealogia adeo non est evangelium, ut nec ipse ejus scriptor ausus fuerit eam evangelium nominare. Faustus apud August. c. Faustum, l. 2. init. l. 3. init. l. 5. init.

^m Ubi sic manifesta veritate isti præfocantur ut obsessi de lucidis verbis sanctarum scripturarum, exi-

tum in iis fallaciæ suæ reperire non possint; id testimonium, quod prolatum est, falsum esse respondent, c. Faustum, l. 11. c. 2.

ⁿ Quæ autoritas literarum aperiiri, quis sacer liber evolvi, quod documentum cujuslibet scripturæ ad vincendos errores exeri potest, si hæc vox admittitur, si alicujus ponderis æstimatur? Id. ib.

to believe without reason." And therefore desires them to prove it: "It may be," saith he, "one of you may read me the gospel, and thence persuade me to believe it. But what if you should meet with one, who, when you read the gospel, should say to you, I do not believe it. But I should not believe the gospel if the authority of the church did not move me: whom therefore I obey in saying, Believe the gospel, should I not obey in saying, Believe not Manichæus^o?" The question, we see, is concerning the proving the apostleship of Manichæus, which cannot in itself be proved, but from some records which must specify such an apostleship of his; and to any one who should question the authenticalness of those records, it can only be proved by the testimony and consent of the catholic church, without which St. Austin professeth he should never have believed the gospel, i. e. that these were the only true and undoubted records which are left us of the doctrine and actions of Christ. And he had very good reason to say 204 so; for otherwise the authority of those books should be questioned every time any one, such as Manichæus, should pretend himself an apostle: which controversies there can be no other way of deciding, but by the testimony of the church, which hath received and embraced these copies from the time of their first publishing. And that this was St. Austin's meaning, will appear by several parallel places in his disputes against the Manichees. For in the same chapter, speaking concerning the Acts of the Apostles, "which book," saith he, "I must believe, as well as the gospel, because the same catholic authority commends both^p:" i. e. the same testimony of the universal church, which delivers the gospel as the authentic writings of the evangelists, doth likewise deliver the Acts of the Apostles for an authentic writing of one of the same evangelists: so that there can be no reason to believe the one and not the other. So when he disputes against Faustus, who denied the truth of some things in St. Paul's

^o Si ergo invenires aliquem, qui evangelio nondum credit, quid faceres dicenti tibi, Non credo? Ego vero evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicæ ecclesiæ comoveret auctoritas. Quibus ergo obtemperavi dicentibus, Credite evangelio, cur eis

non obtemperem dicentibus mihi, Noli credere Manichæo? c. Ep. Fundam. c. 5.

^p Cui libro necesse est me credere, si credo evangelio; quoniam utramque scripturam similiter mihi catholica commendat autoritas. lb.

Epistles ; he bids him shew a truer copy than that the catholic church received, which copy if he should produce, he desires to know how he would prove it to be truer to one that should deny it. “What would you do?” saith he, “whither would you turn yourself? What original of your book could you shew? What antiquity, what testimony of a succession of persons from the time of the writing of it?” But on the contrary, what huge advantage the catholics have, who by a constant succession of bishops in the apostolical sees, and by the consent of so many people, have the authority of the church confirmed to them for the clearing the validity of its testimony concerning the records of scripture^r.” And after lays down rules for the trying of copies, where there appears any difference between them, viz. “by comparing them with the copies of other countries, from whence the doctrine originally came; and if those copies vary too, the more copies should be preferred before the fewer, the ancients before the latter: if yet any uncertainty remains, the original language must be consulted^s.” This is in case a question ariseth among the acknowledged authentical copies of the catholic church, (in which case we see he never sends men to the infallible testimony of the church for certainty as to the truth of the copies,) but if the question be, whether any writing itself be authentical or no, then it stands to the greatest reason that the testimony of the catholic church should be relied on, which by reason of its large spread and continual succession from the very time of those writings, cannot but give the most indubitable testimony concerning the authenticalness of the writings of the apostles and evangelists. And were it not for this testimony, St. Austin might justly say, He should not believe

^r Quid ages? quo te convertes? quam libri a te prolati originem, quam vetustatem, quam seriem successionis testem citabis? Aug. c. Faustum, l. II. c. 2.

^s Et vides in hac re quid ecclesie catholice valeat autoritas, que ab ipsis fundatissimis sedibus apostolorum usque ad hodiernum diem succedentium sibi metepiscoporum serie, et tot populorum consensione firmatur. Id. ib.

^s Ita si de fide exemplarium quaes-

tio verteretur sicut in nonnullis, quae et paucæ sunt, et sacrarum literarum studiosis notissimæ sententiarum varietates, vel ex aliarum regionum codicibus, unde ipsa doctrina comēavit, nostra dubitatio dijudicaretur: vel, si ibi quoque codices variarent, plures paucioribus, aut vetustiores recentioribus preferrentur: et si adhuc incerta varietas, præcedens lingua unde illud interpretatum est consuleretur. Id. ib.

the gospel ; i. e. suppose those writings which contain the gospel in them (for it is plain he speaks of them, and not the doctrine abstractly considered) should have wanted that consent of the catholic church, that it had not been delivered down by a constant succession of all ages from the apostles, and were not received among the Christian churches, but started out from a few persons who differ from all Christian churches, as this apostleship of Manichæus did ; he might justly question the truth of them. And this I take to be the truest and most natural account of these so much controverted words of St. Austin ; by which sense the other two questions are easily answered : for it is plain St. Austin means not the judgment of the present church, but of the catholic church, in the most comprehensive sense, as taking in all ages and places, or in Vincentius his words, succession, universality, and consent ; 205 and it further appears, that the influence which this authority hath, is sufficient to induce assent to the thing attested in all persons who consider it, in what age, capacity, or condition soever. And therefore if in this sense you extend it beyond novices and weaklings, I shall not oppose you in it ; but it cannot be denied that it is intended chiefly for doubters in the faith, because the design of it is to give men satisfaction as to the reason why they ought to believe. But neither you, nor any of those you call catholic authors, will ever be able to prove that St. Austin by these words ever dreamed of any infallible authority in the present church, as might be abundantly proved from the chapter foregoing, where he gives an account of his being in the catholic church, from the “ consent of people and nations, from that authority which was begun by miracles, nourished by hope, increased by charity, confirmed by continuance,” which certainly are not the expressions of one who resolved his faith into the infallible testimony of the present church. And the whole scope and design of his book *de Utilitate credendi* doth evidently refute any such apprehension, as might be easily manifested, were it not too large a subject for this place, where we only examine the meaning of St. Austin in another book. The substance of which is, that that speech of his doth not contain a resolution of his faith, as to the divinity of Christ’s doctrine ; but the resolution of it, as to the truth and authenticalness of the writings of the apostles and

evangelists, which we acknowledge to be into the testimony of the catholic church, in the most large and comprehensive sense.

§. 10. The next thing we come to consider is, an absurdity ^{Lab. p. 85.} you charge on his lordship, viz. “that if the infallible authority ^{n. 3.} of the church be not admitted in the resolution, he must have recourse to the private spirit, which,” you say, “though he would seem to exclude from the state of the question, yet he falls into it under the specious title of grace; so that he only changeth the words, but admits the same thing,” for which you cite, p. 83, 84. that therein his lordship should aver, that where others used to say, they were infallibly resolved that scripture was God’s word by the testimony of the Spirit within them, that he hath the same assurance by grace. Whether you be not herein guilty of abusing his lordship by a plain perverting of his meaning, will be best seen by producing his words. “A man,” saith he, “is probably led by the ^{Conf. p. 68.} authority of the present church, as by the first informing, ^{sect. 16. n. 21.} inducing, persuading means, to believe the scripture to be the word of God: but when he hath studied, considered, and compared this word with itself and with other writings, with the help of ordinary grace, and a mind morally induced, and reasonably persuaded by the voice of the church, the scripture then gives greater and higher reasons of credibility to itself, than tradition alone could give. And then he that believes resolves his last and full assent, that scripture is of divine authority, into internal arguments found in the letter itself, though found by the help and direction of tradition without, and grace within.” Had you not a great mind to calumniate, who could pick out of these words, that the bishop resolved his faith into grace? Can any thing be more plain than the contrary is from them, when in the most perspicuous terms he says, “that the last resolution of faith is into internal arguments, and only supposeth tradition and grace as necessary helps for the finding them?” Might you not then as well have said, that his lordship, notwithstanding his zeal against the infallibility of tradition, is fain to resolve his faith into it at last, as well as say, that he doth it into grace; for he joins these two together? But is it not possible to assert the use and necessity of grace in order to faith, but the last resolution of

it must be into it? Do not all your divines, as well as ours, suppose and prove the necessity of grace in order to believing? and are they not equally guilty of having recourse to the private spirit? Do you really think yourself, that there is any
 206 thing of divine grace in faith or no? If there be, free yourself then from the private spirit, and you do his lordship. For shame, then, forbear such pitiful calumnies; which if they have any truth in them you are as much concerned as your adversary in it. You would next persuade us, that the relater
 Lab. p. 85. never comes near the main difficulty, "which," say you, "is, if the church be supposed fallible in the tradition of scripture, how it shall be certainly known whether *de facto* she now errs not in her delivery of it? If this be your grand difficulty, it is sufficiently assailed already, having largely answered this question *in terminis* in the preceding chapter.

n. 4.

You ask further, what they are to do who are unresolved which is the true church? as though it were necessary for men to know which is the true church before they can believe the scriptures to be the word of God. But when we assert the tradition of the church to be necessary for believing the scriptures, we do not thereby understand the particular tradition of any particular church whose judgment they must rely on, but the universal tradition of all Christians, though this must be first made known in some particular society by the means of some particular persons, though their authority doth not oblige us to believe, but only are the means whereby men come acquainted with that universal tradition. And therefore your following discourse concerning the knowing the true church by its motives is superseded; for we mean no other church than the community of Christians in this controversy; and if you ask me, by what motives I come to be certain which is a community of Christians and which of Mahometans, and how one should be known from another; I can soon resolve you: but we are so far from making it necessary to know which particular society of Christians, in opposition to others, is the true church for resolving this question, that we look on it as a great argument of the credibility as well as universality of this tradition, that all these differing societies consent in it. And not only they, but the greatest opposers of Christianity, Jews, or philoso-

phers, could never see any reason to call in question such a tradition.

His lordship, the better to represent the use of tradition in the last resolution of faith, makes use of this illustration, “that as the knowledge of grammar and logic is necessary in order to the making a demonstration, yet the knowledge of the conclusion is not resolved into grammar or logic, but into the immediate principles out of which it is deduced: so a man’s first preparative to faith is the church’s tradition, but his full and last assent is resolved into the internal arguments of scripture.” This you quarrel with, and tell us, “there is not the same analogy between logic and church-tradition;” your meaning, I suppose, is, because logic doth physically by enlarging the understanding fit men for demonstrations, but church-tradition cannot enable men to understand the scripture. But cannot you easily discern that analogy which his lordship brought this illustration for, which is, that some things may be necessary preparatives for knowledge, which that knowledge is not resolved into. Is not this plain in logic, and is it not as plain between tradition and scripture? For though tradition doth not open our eyes to see this light, yet it presents the object to us to be seen, and that in an unquestionable manner. “But for all this,” say you, “a man must either receive it on the sole authority of church-tradition, or be as much in the dark as ever.” Why so? Is there any repugnancy in the thing that scripture should be received first upon the account of tradition, and yet afterwards men resolve their faith into the scripture itself? May not a man very probably believe that a diamond is sent him from a friend upon the testimony of the messenger who brings it, and yet be firmly persuaded of it by discerning the sparklings of it? But, say you further, “the scriptures themselves appear no more to be the word of God than the stars to be of a certain determinate number, or the distinction of colours to a blind man.” If this approach not to the highest blasphemy against the scripture, I know not what doth. He that shall compare this saying of yours with that in the precedent chapter, “that if Christ had not left the church infallible, he might be accounted an impostor and deceiver,” may easily guess how much of religion you believe in your heart, when on so small occasions

Conf. p. 68
sect. 16. n.
21.

Lab. p. 86.
n. 4.

Lab. p. 86.
n. 4.
207

you do so openly disparage both Christ and the scriptures. It is well yet, your church's infallibility can stand on no better terms than these are, which will be sufficient to keep any who have any true sense of the truth and excellency of Christ and the scriptures from hearkening to it. But are you in good earnest when you say, that "scriptures themselves appear no more to be the word of God, than the distinction of colours to a blind man," which is as much as nothing at all? Is there nothing at all in the excellency of the doctrine and precepts contained in the scriptures, nothing in those clear discoveries of God and ourselves, nothing in all those transactions between God and men, nothing in that covenant of redemption between God and man through Christ, nothing in the clear accomplishment and fulfilling of prophecies, nothing in that admirable strain and style which is in the writings, nothing in that harmonious consent which is discovered in writers of several ages, interests, places, and conditions; nothing in that admirable efficacy which the doctrine of it hath upon the souls of men to persuade them to renounce sin, the world, and themselves for the sake of it; is there nothing more, I say, in all these, which makes the scripture appear to be the word of God, than the distinction of colours to a blind man? Could you as soon think to account the stars as discern any thing of divinity from these things in the scriptures? If your eyes were as blind as your understanding, could you as soon distinguish white from black, as the scripture from the Alcoran, if they were both presented to you to read, and judge of them according to the evidence you found in them? Is it possible a man that owns himself a Christian should utter such opprobrious language of the scripture? You had been before speaking what honour you give to the scripture, notwithstanding you pretend your church infallible, and I had mentioned some of those passages which occur in your writers in disparagement of them: but I must needs say they all fall short of this; the nose of wax, the inky divinity, the Lesbian rule, are courtlike expressions to this of yours; for this puts no difference in the world between the scripture and the Alcoran, if your church should propound the one as well as the other. For you could not possibly say worse of the Alcoran, than that of itself it appeared no more to be the word of God,

than distinction of colours to a blind man. I might here send you to be chastised for this insolent atheistical expression to the primitive fathers, who speak so much in admiration of the excellency of scriptures, who did vindicate them from all assaults of the heathen philosophers. I might send you to those of your own party, who, if they have any love or tenderness for Christian religion, will not suffer such passages to pass without the most severe rebukes; I might sufficiently prove the contrary from the arguments used against atheists by Bellarmine and others; but I shall content myself with that noble and Christian confession of your Gregory de Valentia, from whom you might learn more piety and modesty towards the sacred scriptures: "There being many things in the doctrine of Christianity itself, which of themselves may conciliate belief and authority, yet that seems the greatest to me, (as hath been 208 observed by Clement of Alexandria, Lactantius and others,) that I know not with what admirable force, but most divine, it affects the hearts of men, and stirs them up to virtue. It is written with great simplicity, and without almost any artifice or ornament of speech; which is an argument that its authority is not human but divine, for no human writing hath any power on the minds of men without a great deal of art and eloquence^t." How many things are there in this ingenuous and pious confession of this learned Jesuit, which might, if you have any shame left, make you sensible of the blasphemy of your former expression! For, 1. he saith, there are many things in the doctrine of Christianity which for themselves may conciliate our belief, and manifest their authority: if for themselves, then certainly the scriptures of themselves have a great deal more evidence, that they are the word of God, than the distinction of colours to a blind man. 2. That the peculiar strain and genius of scripture argues something

^t Cum multa sint in ipsa doctrina Christiana quæ ipsa per se fidem illi et auctoritatem conciliare possint, tamen mihi maximum illud esse videtur, (ut a Clement. Alex. et a Lactant. et ab aliis est observatum) quod sua nescio qua admirabili vi, divine prorsus hominum animos afficit, atque ad virtutem impellit. Est scripta verbis simplicibus, et caret

fere artificio orationis et ornamentis; nihilominus ita vehementer lectoris mentem commovet, ut nulla alia doctrina. Quod argumento est, illius auctoritatem omnino divinam esse, et non humanam; hæc enim sine verborum arte, et orationis quasi lenociniis, ad efficiendum animorum motum non valet. Greg. de Valentia, *Analys. Fidei*, l. 1. c. 25.

divine in it, because, notwithstanding its simplicity, it hath so great power and efficacy on the minds of men; far beyond any human art or rhetoric. 3. That this may be discerned in the very books of scripture without the supposition of the authority of any church; for he mentions the doctrine merely as written, and what may be found by the reading of it. Go then, and learn some piety and ingenuity (where it is so seldom to be learned) from a Jesuit, and think not that we shall ever have the meaner thoughts of the scripture for such bold expressions; but we can easily see that the infallibility of the church and the honour of scripture cannot possibly stand together.

Your subsequent discourse consists of some rare pieces of subtilty, which may be resolved into these consequences: If your church of Rome hath erred as to the number of canonical books, then the catholic church ever since Christ's time hath erred; if the church may err, then we cannot be certain but she hath erred; if we can have no infallible certainty, then we can have none at all: these consequences your discourse to n. 5. may be resolved into; and make good ever a one of them, I will say you have proved something; which is more than you have done yet.

Lab. p. 87.
n. 5. §. 11. n. 5. You object against his lordship, "that he requires so many things in order to the resolution of faith, that he makes none capable of it, but men of extraordinary parts and learning." To which I answer, that his lordship is not undertaking to give an account of the faith of rude or illiterate persons, but such a one as may satisfy men of parts and learning; i. e. he endeavoured to lay down the true rational account of it, and not to inquire how far God obligeth every man that comes to heaven to a critical resolution of his faith. And therefore, for the generality of such persons who heartily believe the truth of scriptures, but are not able to give a clear and satisfactory account of it to others, I answer, as St. Austin did in the same case, *Cateram quippe turbam non intelligendi vivacitas, sed credendi simplicitas tutissimam facit*^u: that God requires not from the common sort of believers the subtilty of speculation, but the simplicity of faith; which may

^u Aug. c. ep. Fund. c. 4.

be very firm, even in them, from the reading of scriptures, and hearing the doctrine of it plainly delivered to them, though they are not able to give such accounts of their faith which may be satisfactory to any but themselves. So we say, that the way is so plain, that mean capacities may not err therein. But I wonder at you of all men, that you should charge our way with intricacy, who lead men into such perplexities and difficulties before they can be satisfied that they ought to believe; for to this end you make the infallible testimony of the church necessary; and how many insuperable difficulties are there before one can be assured of that! First, he must know your church to be the true church, and this must be proved by a continual succession of pastors in your 209 church, and by a conformity of your doctrine with the ancients; and do you think these two are not very easy introductions to faith, like the taking Rome in one's way, to go from York to London! But though a man should pull down a house to find a key to open it, and after he had searched in all the rubbish of antiquity, find enough to persuade him yours may be a true church, yet he is as far from believing as ever, unless he finds a way through another trap-door for his faith, which is, that yours, though a particular church, is yet the only catholic church, i. e. that the first room he comes in, is infallibly the whole house, and therefore he never needs look further. But supposing this, yet if he doth not believe this church to be infallible in all it says, he had as good never come into it; and therefore he must believe strenuously, that whatever it says is infallibly true, which being so hard a task, (as for a man that sees a house half down before his eyes, to believe it can never fall,) it had need have some good buttresses to support it, and at last finds nothing but some feeble motives of credibility, which signify nothing as to the church, but might have been strong enough, if set in the right place, viz. not to support the church, but to prove the truth of Christian doctrine. These, and many other intrigues which I have formerly discovered, do unavoidably attend the resolution of your faith among all persons who profess to believe on the account of your church's infallibility.

What follows next, concerning grace, is already answered: what certainty we have that scripture is of divine revelation,

and consequently what obligation lies upon men to believe it, are things largely discoursed on in the beginning of this chapter; and I shall suppose sufficiently cleared, till you shew me reason to the contrary: by which it will appear, (contrary to what follows, n. 6.) that we have the highest reasons, or motives of credibility, to assent to the truth and divine authority of the scriptures.

§. 12. But you proceed to an attempt of something new; which is in a long harangue to disprove his lordship's opinion of resolving faith into that divine light which appears in scripture: This you insist on from n. 6. to n. 8. the substance of all which discourse, I suppose, may be reduced to these three things: 1. That though the scripture be called a light, yet that is to be understood only of those who own its authority: 2. That the scripture cannot shew itself to be an infallible light: 3. That if there were such light in scripture, all others would see it as well as he. Before I come to a particular handling of each of these, it will be necessary to consider what it is which his lordship means by this divine light in scripture; for there is nothing causeth more confusion in the discourses and apprehensions of men, than the applying metaphors taken from the sense to the acts of the understanding: for by this means we are apt to judge of our intellectual acts in a way wholly suitable to those of sense. We are not therefore to conceive there can be any thing in divine truths which so immediately doth discover itself to the mind, as light doth to the eye. But that only which bears proportion to the light in the mind, is reason; for men's minds being discursive, and not intuitive. they do not behold the truth of things by immediate intuition, but by such reason and arguments as do induce and persuade to assent. We are not therefore to imagine any such light in scripture that doth as immediately work upon the understanding, as the light of the sun doth on the organs of sight; and therefore that common speech, that light doth discover itself as well as other things, is in this sense improperly applied to the understanding; for whatever is discovered to the mind in a discursive manner, 210 as all objects of faith are, must have some antecedent evidence to itself, which must be the ground of the act of assent. That therefore which is called the divine light of scripture, is,

I suppose, that rational evidence which is contained in the books of scripture, whereby any reasonable man may be persuaded that these books are of divine authority. Now that herein I say nothing beyond or besides his lordship's meaning and intention will appear by his own discourse on this subject. For, 1. his lordship designedly disproves that opinion that "scripture should be fully and sufficiently known as by divine and infallible testimony, *lumine proprio*, by the resplendency of that light which it hath in itself only, and by the witness that it can so give to itself. Because, as there is no place in scripture that tells us such books, containing such and such particulars, are the canon and infallible will of God; so, if there were any such place, that could be no sufficient proof;" for "a man may justly ask another book to bear witness to that, and so *in infinitum*. Again, this inbred light of scripture is a thing coincident with scripture itself, and so the principles and the conclusion in this kind of proof should be entirely the same, which cannot be. Besides, if this inward light were so clear, how could there have been any variety among the ancient believers, touching the authority of St. James' and St. Jude's Epistles, and the Apocalypse, &c. ? For certainly the light which is in the scripture was the same then which now it is." On these reasons then, we see, his lordship not only disclaims, but disproves such knowing the scripture merely by the light within. Two things then I hence infer, which will be very necessary to clear his lordship's meaning. 1. That he nowhere attributes such an inward light to scripture, that by itself it can discover that these books are from God. 2. That where his lordship mentions this light most, he supposeth tradition antecedent to it, as appears by his whole discourse. From whence I gather this to have been the plainest account of his way of resolving faith, as I have already intimated, viz. that the resolution of faith may be considered two ways; into the books, and into the doctrine contained in them. The resolution into the books must of necessity suppose tradition, and rely upon it; and this kind of resolution of faith cannot be into any self-evidence, or internal light: but, supposing the books owned on the account of tradition, if the question be concerning the divinity of the doctrine, then he asserts, that the resolution of this is into the divine light of scripture,

Conf. p. 57.
sect. 16. n.
10.

i. e. into that rational evidence which we find of the divinity of it, in these books which are owned on the account of tradition.

Conf. p. 82.
sect. 16. n.
32.

And that this is his lordship's meaning appears, 2. by his own testimony, who was best able to explain himself; for, when he goes about to confirm his opinion by the testimonies of the fathers, he tells us, "this was the way which the ancient church ever used, namely, tradition or ecclesiastical authority first, and then all other arguments, but especially internal from the scripture itself;" and for this first, instanceth in St. Augustine, "who," saith he, "gives four proofs, all internal to the scripture itself; which are, first, the miracles; secondly, that there is nothing carnal in the doctrine; thirdly, fulfilling the prophecies; fourthly, the efficacy of it for conversion of the world." All these we see he instanceth in as internal arguments, and therefore make up that which he calls divine light. So that all that he means by this light of scripture is only that rational evidence of the divinity of the doctrine which may be discovered in it or deduced from it.

Having thus explained his lordship's meaning, it will be no matter of difficulty to return an answer to the particulars by you alleged.

1. You say, "that when scripture is said to be a light by the royal prophet, it is to be understood in this sense, because after we have once received it from the infallible authority of the church, it teacheth what we are to do and believe." But, 1. doth not the scripture sufficiently teach what we are to do and believe, supposing it not received on the infallible authority of the church? doth that add any thing to the light of scripture? or do you suppose the necessity of infallibly believing it on the church's authority before one can discern what it teacheth us to do and believe?

2. What ground have you in the least to imagine, that David ever believed the scripture on the infallible authority of the church? That he doth suppose it to be God's word when he saith it is a light to his feet, I deny not; but that he should suppose it to be so because the church did infallibly tell him it was so, is a most ungrounded assertion. Had he not sufficient evidence that the law was from God, by those many unquestionable and stupendous miracles which attended the delivery of it? Was not the

whole constitution and government of the Jewish nation an impregnable argument that those things were true which were recorded in their books? Did ever the Jewish sanhedrin, high priest, or others arrogate to themselves any infallible testimony, in delivering the books of Moses to the people? The most you can suppose of a ground of certainty among them was from that sacred record of the book of the law which was kept in the ark: and how could they know that was authentic, but from the same tradition which conveyed the miracles of Moses to them? So that nothing like any infallible authority of a church was looked on by them as necessary to believe the law to have been from God. 3. Supposing it from tradition unquestionable, that the law was from God, those incomparable directions which were in it might be a great confirmation to David's faith, that it was his word. Which is that he intends in these words, "Thy word is a light to my feet," &c. to shew that excellency and perspicuity which was in his word, that it gave him the best directions for ordering his conversation. And this is all which his lordship means, that to those, who by the advantage of tradition have already venerable thoughts of scripture, the serious conversing with it doth highly advance them and establish their belief of it, as that faith is thereby clinched which was driven in by education. And therefore, when he saith, "that light discovers itself as well as other things," he presently adds, "not till there hath been a preparing instruction what light it is." "Thus," he saith, "the tradition of the church is the first moral motive to belief: but the belief itself, that scripture is the word of God, rests upon scripture, when a man finds it to answer and exceed that which the church gave in testimony." For this, his lordship cites Origen, who, though much nearer the prime tradition than we are, yet being to prove that the scriptures were inspired from God, he saith, *De hoc assignabimus ex ipsis scripturis divinis, quæ nos competentèr moverint*, &c.^x "We will mention those things out of the sacred scriptures which have persuaded us," &c. To this you answer, Though Origen "prove by the scriptures themselves, that they were inspired from God; yet doth he never avow, that this could be proved out of them, unless they were

Conf. p. 69.
sect. 16. n.
21.

Lab. p. 88.
n. 6.

^x Orig. *περὶ ἀρχῶν*, l. 4. c. 1.

received by the infallible authority of the church." Which answer is very unreasonable. For, 1. It might be justly expected that when his lordship had produced an express testimony to his purpose out of Origen, you should have brought some other as clear for his believing scripture on the church's infallibility; which you are so far from, that you would put us to prove a negative: but if you will deal fairly, and as you ought to do, produce your testimonies out of him and the rest of the fathers concerning your church's infallibility. Till then, excuse us if we take their express words, and leave you to gather infallibility out of their latent meanings. 2. What doth your infallibility conduce to believing scriptures for themselves? for you say, "the scriptures cannot be proved
212 by themselves to be God's word, unless they were received by the infallible authority of the church:" it seems, then, if they be so received, they may be proved by themselves to be God's word. Are those proofs by themselves sufficient for faith or no? If not, they are very slender proofs: if they be, what need your church's infallibility? unless you will suppose no man can discern those proofs without your church's testimony; and then they are not proofs by themselves, but from your church's infallibility: which may serve for one accession more to the heap of your contradictions. His lordship asserting the last resolution of faith to be into simply divine authority, cites that speech of *Henr. a Gandavo*, "that in the primitive church, when the apostles themselves spake, they did believe principally for the sake of God, and not the apostles;" from whence he infers, "If, where the apostles themselves spake, the last resolution of faith was into God, and not into themselves on their own account; much more shall it now be into God, and not the present church, and into the writings of the apostles, than into the words of their successors made up into
tradition." All that you answer is, "that this argument must be solved by the bishop as well as you, because he hath granted the authority of the apostles was divine as well as you." Was there ever a more senseless answer! Doth *Gandavo* deny the apostles' authority to have been divine? Nay, doth he not imply it, when he saith, "men did not believe for the apostles' sakes, but for God's, who spake by them." As *St. Paul* said, "You received our word, not as the word of men,

but as it is indeed, the word of God." How the bishop should be concerned to answer this, is beyond my skill to imagine. If Origen speaks to such as believed the scriptures to be the word of God, so doth the bishop too, viz. on the account of tradition and education. If Origen endeavoured by those proofs to confirm and settle their faith, that is all the bishop aims at, that a faith taken up on the church's tradition may be settled and confirmed by the internal arguments of scripture. But how you should from this discourse assert, "that the authority of the church must be infallible in delivering the scriptures," is again beyond my reach, neither can I possibly think what should bear the face of premises to such a conclusion. Unless it be, if Origen assert, that the scriptures may be believed for themselves, if Gandavo saith, that the resolution of faith must be into God himself, then the church's authority must be infallible; but it appears already, that the premises are true, and what then remains but therefore, &c. which may indeed be listed among your rare argumentations for infallibility.

§. 13. 2. That scripture cannot manifest itself to be an infallible light; the proof of which is the design of your following discourse. Wherein you first quarrel with the bishop for his arguing from the scriptures being a light; "for thence," you say, "it will only follow, that the scripture manifests itself to be a light, which you grant, but that it should manifest itself to be an infallible light you deny; for," say you, "unless he could shew that there are no other lights, save the word of God, and such as are infallible, he can never make good his consequence. For in Seneca, Plutarch, Aristotle, you read many lights, and those manifest themselves to be lights; but they do not therefore manifest themselves to be infallible lights." The substance of your argument lies in this: The scripture discovers the being of God; so doth the Talmud and Alcoran as well as it; the scripture delivers abundance of moral instructions, but these may be found in multitudes of other books, both of Christians and Jews and heathens; and as we do not thence infer, that these books are infallible, so neither can we that the scriptures are. This is the utmost of sense or reason which I can extract out of your discourse; which reduced into form will come to this: If the scriptures contain nothing in them but what may be found in other books

213 that are not infallible, then the scriptures cannot shew themselves to be infallible; but the antecedent is true, and therefore the consequent. I could wish you would have taken a little more pains in proving that which must be your assumption, viz. that scripture contains nothing in it but what may be seen in Seneca, Plutarch, Aristotle, the Talmud, Alcoran, and other books of Jews and heathens. These are rare things to assert among Christians, without offering at any more proof of them than you do, which lies in this syllogism: If scripture contain some things which may be seen in these books, then it contains nothing but what may be seen in these books; but the scripture contains some things which may be seen in other books, viz. the existence of God, and moral instructions; therefore it contains nothing but what is in them. And do you really think that you have now proved that there is nothing in scripture that can shew itself to be infallible, because some things are common to other writings? Would you not take it very ill that any should say that you had no more brains than a horse, or a creature of a like nature, because they have sense and motion as well as you? Yet this is the very same argument whereby you would prove that the scriptures cannot shew themselves to be divine, because the Talmud, Alcoran, and philosophers, have some things in them which the scripture hath. But can you prove that the scripture hath nothing else in it but what may be found in any or all of these books? Will you undertake to shew any where such representations of the being and attributes of God, so suitable to the conceptions which naturally flow from the idea of a supreme and infinite Being, and yet those attributes discovered in such contrivances for man's good, which the wit of man could never have reached to; above all, in the reconciliation of the world to himself by the death of his Son? Will you find out so exact a rule of piety, consisting of such excellent precepts, such encouraging promises, as are in scripture, in any other writings whatsoever? Can you discover any where such an unexpressible energy and force in a writing of so great simplicity and plainness as the scripture is? Is there any thing unbecoming that authority which it awes the consciences of men with? Is there any thing mean, trivial, fabulous, and impertinent in it? Are not all things written with

that infinite decorum and suitableness, as do highly express the majesty of Him from whom it comes, but in the most sweet, affable, and condescending manner? Are there any such arguments in the writings of Seneca, Plutarch, Aristotle, for the being of God and immortality of souls as there are in scripture? Are there any moral instructions built on such good grounds, carried on to so high a degree, written with that life and vigour in any of the heathen philosophers, as are in the scriptures? How infinitely do the highest of them fall short of the scripture in those very things, which they seem most to have in common with it! as, were it here a fit place, might be at large discovered. But, besides and beyond all these, are there not other things which evidence the divine revelation of the doctrine contained in scripture, which none of the writings you mention can in the least pretend to, viz. the accurate accomplishment of prophecies, and the abundance of miracles wrought for the confirmation of the divine testimony of those who delivered this doctrine to the world. And these very things now to us are internal to the scripture, the motives of faith being delivered to us in the same books that the doctrine of faith is: in which sense the scriptures may well be said to be proved divine by themselves, and that they appear infallible by the light which is in them, notwithstanding you most pitifully pretend to the contrary. And if your church will again pardon you for such opprobrious language of scripture, as not only to compare the writings of Seneca, Plutarch, and Aristotle with it, which yet are commendable in their kind for moral virtue and natural knowledge; but those wretched 214 and notorious impostures of the Alcoran, and the fabulous relations of the Talmud; if, I say, your church will pardon such expressions as these, because they tend to enhance her infallibility, well fare that pope who said, *Heu quam minimo regitur mundus!*

As for your following instance, of a candle lighted in a room, which shews that it is a light, but not who lighted it; so the sentences in scripture are lights, and shew themselves to be such, but they cannot shew themselves to be such infallible lights which are produced by none but God himself: I answer; that I commend your discretion in making choice of a candle rather than of the light of the sun to set forth the scripture by. For a candle yields but a dim uncer-

tain light, may be put into a dark lanthorn and snuffed at pleasure ; so would your church fain pretend of the scripture, that its light is very weak and uncertain, that your church must open the sides of the lanthorn that it may give light, and make use of some apostolical snuffers of the pope's keeping to make it shine the clearer, though they often endanger the almost extinguishing of it ; at least as to the generality of those who should enjoy the benefit of it. But because that poor light of a candle cannot shew who lighted it, will not the light of the sun manifest itself to be no greater than that of a candle ? Cannot any one infer from the vast extent of that light, from the vanishing of it upon the sun's setting, and its dispersing itself at his rising, that this light can proceed only from that great luminous body which is in the heavens ? And may we not proportionably infer from the clearness, greatness, majesty, coherency of those truths revealed in scripture, that they must certainly come from none but God ; especially being joined with those impregnable evidences which himself, by the persons who delivered them, hath given that they were employed by himself for that end ? But because this is a matter of great consequence, give me leave to propound these questions to you : and after you have considered them seriously, return me a rational answer to them : 1. Doth it imply any repugnancy at all in the nature of the thing, or to the nature of God, that he should reveal his mind to the world ? 2. If it doth not, as I suppose you will grant that, whether is it possible that God should make it evident to the world that such a revelation is from himself ? 3. If this be not impossible, is it not necessary that it should be so, supposing that God should require the belief of a doctrine so revealed on pain of eternal damnation for not believing it ? 4. Whether God may not give as great evidence of a revelation that he makes of his mind to the world, as he doth of his being, from the wisdom, goodness, and power, which may be seen in the works of creation ? 5. Whether any other way be conceivable that it should be evident that a doctrine comes from God, but that it contains things highly suitable to the divine nature, things above the finding out of human reason, things only tending to advance holiness and goodness in the world, and this doctrine to be delivered by persons who wrought unparalleled miracles ? 6. Whether all these be not in the most evident manner

imaginable contained in the doctrine of Christianity, and in the books of scripture? which I leave any man that hath common sense to judge of. 7. Whether then it be not the highest disparagement of this divine doctrine to make it stand in need of an infallible testimony of any company who shall take the boldness to call themselves the catholic church, in order to the believing of it; and whether there can be any greater dishonour done it, than to say it hath no more light to discover itself divine, than the writings of philosophers, not to add, of Jews and Mahometans? These things I leave you and the reader to consider of, and proceed. What follows concerning the fathers and others proving the scriptures to 215 be the word of God by themselves, after they have believed them infallibly on other grounds, is *gratis dictum*, unless you can prove from the fathers that they did believe the scriptures infallibly on other grounds. Which when you shall think fit to attempt, I make no question to answer; but in the mean time, to a crude assertion it is enough to oppose a bare denial. Your following absurdities, concerning the private spirit, infallible assurance, apostolical tradition, have been frequently examined already. Only what you say, “that you read, esteem, nay ^{Lab. p. 90.} very highly reverence the scripture,” is but *protestatio contra* ^{n. 6.} *factum*, as may appear by your former expressions, and therefore can have no force at all with wise men, who judge by things, and not by bare words.

§. 14. 3. You say, “that if there were such sufficient light in Ibid. n. 7. scripture to shew itself, you should see it as well as we; seeing you read it as diligently and esteem it as highly as we do.” What! you esteem the scripture as highly as we, who say, that the scripture appears no more of itself to be God’s word, than distinction of colours to a blind man! you, who but in the page before had said, there was “no more light in scripture to discover itself, than in Seneca, Plutarch, Aristotle, nay, as to some things, than the Talmud and Alcoran! you, who say, that notwithstanding the scriptures, Christ would have been esteemed an ignoramus and impostor, if your church be not infallible! Are you the man, who esteem as highly of the scriptures as we do? May we not therefore justly return you your own language; and say, that if you do not see this light in scripture, it is because your eyes are perverse, your

understanding unsanctified, which instead of discovering such divine light in scripture as to make you love and adore it, can have the confidence to utter such expressions which tend so highly to the disparagement of it. But did not his lordship give before a sufficient answer to this objection, by saying,

Conf. p. 70. 1. "That the light is sufficient in itself, but it doth not follow
sect. 16. n. that it must be evident to every one that looks into it; for
24. the blindness or perverseness of men's minds may keep them from the discovery of it." 2. He saith, "this light is not so full a light as that of the first principles; as, that the whole is greater than the part; that the same thing cannot be and not be at the same time." And yet such is your sincerity, you would seem at first to persuade the reader of the contrary in your next paragraph; but at last you grant that he denies it to be evidently known as one of the principles of the first sort. (For you with your wonted subtilty distinguish principles known of themselves, into such as are either evidently and such as are probably known of themselves; i. e. principles known of themselves, are either such as are known of themselves, or such as are not; for what is but probably known, is not certainly known of itself, but by that probable argument which causeth assent to it.) But when you deny that the scripture is so much as one of the second sort of principles, and say expressly, "that of itself it appears not so much as probably to be more the word of God, than some other book that is not truly such;" were you not so used to contradictions, I would desire you to reconcile this expression with what you said a little before of your high esteem and reverence of the scriptures.

3. The bishop saith, "that when he speaks of this light in scripture, he only means it of such a light as is of force to breed faith, that it is the word of God; not to make a perfect knowledge. Now faith, of whatsoever it is, this or other principle, is an evidence, as well as knowledge; and the belief is firmer than any knowledge can be, because it rests upon divine authority, which cannot deceive; whereas knowledge (or at least he that thinks he knows) is not ever certain in deductions from principles; but the evidence is not so clear. Now God doth not require a full demonstrative knowledge in us that the scripture is his word, and therefore in his providence

hath kindled in it no light for that, but he requires our faith ²¹⁶ of it, and such a certain demonstration as may fit that." Now what answer do you return to all this? Why, forsooth, we must have certainty, nay an infallible certainty, nay such an infallible certainty as is built on the infallible authority of the church, yet such an infallible authority as can be proved only by motives of credibility; which is a new kind of climax in rhetoric, viz. a ladder standing with both ends upon ground at the same time. All the answer I shall therefore now give it, is, that your faith then is certain, infallibly certain, and yet built on but probable motives, and therefore on your own principles must be also uncertain, very uncertain, nay undoubtedly and infallibly uncertain. What again follows concerning canonical books and the private spirit, I must send them, as constables do vagrants, to the place from whence they came, and there they shall meet with a sufficient answer.

§. 15. The remainder of this chapter consists of a tedious ^{Lab. p. 91, &c. n. 8, 9.} vindication of Bellarmine and Brierely, which being of little consequence to the main business, I shall return the shorter answer. I shall not quarrel much with you about the interpretation of those words of Bellarmine^y in the sense you give them, viz. if they be understood of absolute necessity, not of all Christians, and only in rare cases, that it is not necessary to believe that there is scripture, on supposition that the doctrine of scripture could be sufficiently conveyed to the minds of any without it, as in the case of the barbarous nations mentioned by Irenæus. But for you who make the tradition of the present church infallible, and at the least the infallible conveyer of the formal object of faith; I do not see how you can avoid making it as absolutely necessary to be believed as any other object of faith: unless your church hath some other way of conveying objects of faith, than by propounding the scripture infallibly to us. If therefore men are bound to believe things absolutely necessary to salvation, because contained in that book, which the church delivers to be the infallible word of God; I cannot possibly see, but the belief of the scripture on the church's infallible testimony must be as necessary *necessitate mediæ* as any thing contained in it. As

^y De Eccles. l. 3. c. 14.

for the citation of Hooker by Brierely, whether it be falsified or no will best be seen by producing the scope and design of that worthy author in the testimonies cited out of him. Upon an impartial view of which in the several places referred to, I cannot but say, that if Brierely's design was to shew that Hooker made the authority of the church that into which faith is lastly resolved, he doth evidently contradict Mr. Hooker's design, and is therefore guilty of unfaithful representing his meaning. For where he doth most fully and largely express himself he useth these words, which for clearing his meaning must be fully produced^z: "Scripture teacheth all supernaturally revealed truth, without the knowledge whereof salvation cannot be attained. The main principle whereupon our belief of all things therein contained dependeth, is, that the scriptures are the oracles of God himself. This in itself we cannot say is evident. For then all men that hear it would acknowledge it in heart, as they do when they hear that every whole is more than any part of that whole, because this in itself is evident. The other we know that all do not acknowledge when they hear it. There must be therefore some former knowledge presupposed, which doth herein assure the hearts of all believers. Scripture teacheth us that saving truth which God hath discovered unto the world by revelation, and it presumeth us taught otherwise, that itself is divine and sacred. The question then being by what means we are taught this; some answer, that to learn it we have no other way than only tradition; as namely, that so we believe because both we from our predecessors and they from theirs have so received. But is this enough? That which all men's experience
217 teacheth them may not in any wise be denied. And by experience we all know, that the first outward motive leading men so to esteem of the scripture is the authority of God's church. For when we know the whole church of God hath that opinion of the scripture, we judge it even at the first an impudent thing for any man bred and brought up in the church to be of a contrary mind without cause. Afterwards, the more we bestow our labour in reading or hearing the mysteries thereof, the more we find that the thing itself doth answer our received

^z Hooker, vol. i. book 3. p. 375. Keble's edit. Oxford 1841.

opinion concerning it. So that the former inducement prevailing somewhat with us before, doth now much more prevail, when the very thing hath ministered further reason." Can any thing be more plain (if men's meaning may be gathered from their words, especially when purposely they treat of a subject) than that Hooker makes the authority of the church the primary inducement to faith, and that rational evidence which discovers itself in the doctrine revealed to be that which it is finally resolved into? For, as his lordship saith on this very place of Hooker, "the resolution of faith ever settles upon the farthest reason it can, not upon the first inducement." By this place then, where this worthy author most clearly and fully delivers his judgment, we ought in reason to interpret all other occasional and incidental passages on the same subject. So in that other place^a, "For whatsoever we believe concerning salvation by Christ, although the scripture be therein the ground of our belief, yet the authority of man is, if we mark it, the key which openeth the door of entrance into the knowledge of the scripture." I will not dispute whether here he speaks concerning the knowledge of scripture to be scripture, or concerning the natural sense and meaning of scripture: suppose I should grant you the latter, it would make little for your purpose; for when he adds, "The scripture doth not teach us the things that are of God, unless we did credit men who have taught us that the words of scripture do signify those things;" you need not here bid us stay a while: for his sense is plain and obvious, viz. that men cannot come to the natural sense and importance of the words used in scripture, unless they rely on the authority of men for the signification of those words. He speaks not here then at all concerning church-tradition properly taken, but merely of the authority of man, which he contends must in many cases be relied on, particularly in that of the sense and meaning of the words which occur in scripture. Therefore with his lordship's leave and yours too, I do not think that in this place Hooker by "the authority of man" doth understand church-tradition, but, if I may so call it, human tradition, viz. that which acquainteth

^a Hooker, vol. i. book 2. p. 321. Oxford 1841.

us with the force and signification of words in use. When therefore you prove, that it is tradition only which is all the ground he puts of believing scripture to be the word of God, from those words of his, "that utterly to infringe the force and strength of man's testimony, were to shake the very fortress of God's truth. Now," say you, "how can that fortress (the scripture) be shaken, were not that authority esteemed by him the ground of that fortress?" That may very easily be shewn, viz. by calling in question the truth of human testimony in general; for he plainly speaks of such a kind of human testimony as that is, whereby we know there is such a city as Rome, that such and such were popes of Rome, wherein the ground of our persuasion can be nothing else but human testimony; now take away the credit and validity of this testimony, the very fortress of truth must needs be shaken; for we could never be certain that there were such persons as Moses, the prophets, Christ and his apostles in the world, we could never be certain of the meaning of any thing written by them. But how far is this from the final resolution of faith into church-tradition? But the place you lay the greatest force on is that which you first cite out of him^b, "Finally, we all believe that the scriptures of God are
218 sacred, and that they have proceeded from God; ourselves we assure that we do right well in so believing. We have for this point a demonstration sound and infallible. But it is not the word of God which doth or possibly can assure us, that we do well to think it his word." From hence you infer, "that either he must settle no infallible ground at all, or must say that the tradition of the church is that ground." No infallible ground in your sense, I grant it, but well enough in his own; for all the difficulty lies in understanding what he means by *infallible*; which he takes not in your sense for a supernatural, but only for a rational infallibility; not such a one as excludes possibility of deception, but all reasonable doubting. In which sense he saith of such things as are capable only of moral certainty^c, "that the testimony of man will stand as a ground of infallible assurance;" and presently instanceth in these, "That there is a city of

^b Hooker, vol. i. book 2. p. 295.
book 2. p. 320.

^c Hooker, vol. i.

Rome, that Pius V. was pope there, &c.” So afterwards he saith, “that the mind of man desireth evermore to know the truth according to the most infallible certainty which the nature of things can yield:” by which it is plain, that the utmost certainty which things are capable of, is with him infallible certainty; and so a sound and infallible ground of faith is a certain ground, which we all assert may be had without your church’s infallible testimony. Whether therefore Brierely and you are not guilty, if not of falsifying Hooker’s words, yet of perverting his meaning, let the impartial reader judge.

CHAP. VIII.

THE CHURCH'S INFALLIBILITY NOT PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE.

Some general considerations from the design of proving the church's infallibility from scripture.—No infallibility in the high priest and his clergy under the law; if there had been, no necessity there should be under the gospel.—Of St. Basil's testimony concerning traditions.—Scripture less liable to corruption than traditions.—The great uncertainty of judging traditions when apostolical, when not.—The church's perpetuity being promised in scripture proves not its infallibility.—His lordship doth not falsify A. C.'s words, but T. C. doth his meaning.—Producing the Jesuits' words no traducing their order.—T. C.'s miserable apology for them.—The particular texts produced for the church's infallibility examined.—No such infallibility necessary in the apostles' successors as in themselves.—The similitude of scripture and tradition to an ambassador and his credentials rightly stated.

§. 1. **T**HE main design of this chapter being to prove the infallibility of the church from the testimonies of scripture; before I come to a particular discussion of the matters contained in it, I shall make some general observations on the scope and design of it, which may give more light to the particulars to be handled in it. 1. That the infallibility you challenge to the church, is such as must suppose a promise extant of it in scripture: which is evident from the words of A. C. (which you own) to his lordship, "that if he would consider the tradition of the church, not only as it is the tradition of a company of fallible men, in which sense the authority of it is human and fallible, but as the tradition of a company of men assisted by Christ and his Holy Spirit; in that sense he might easily find it more than an introduction, indeed as much as would amount to an infallible motive." Whence I infer, that in order to the church's testimony being an infallible motive to faith, it must be believed that this company of men which make the church, are assisted by

Christ and his Holy Spirit ; now I demand, supposing there were no scripture extant, (the belief of which you said before, in defence of Bellarmine, was not necessary to salvation,) by what means could you prove such an infallible assistance of the Holy Spirit in the catholic church in order to the persuading an infidel to believe? Could you, to one that neither believes Christ nor the Holy Ghost, prove evidently that your church had an assistance of both these? You tell him that he cannot believe that there is a Christ or a Holy Ghost, unless he believes first your church to be infallible ; and yet he cannot believe your church to be infallible, unless he believes there are such things as Christ and the Holy Ghost ; for that infallibility, by your own confession, doth suppose the peculiar assistance of both these. And can any one believe their assistance before he believes they are? If you say, as you do, By the motives of credibility you will prove your church infallible, (setting aside the absurdity of that which I have fully discovered already,) is it possible for you to prove your church infallible, unless antecedently to the belief of your church's infallibility you can prove to an infidel the truth of these things :

1. That the names of Christ and the Holy Ghost are no chimerical fancies and ideas, but that they do import something real : otherwise an infidel would speedily tell you, these names imported nothing but some kind of magical spells which could keep men from error, as long as they carried them about with them. That as well might Mahomet, or any other impostor, pretend an infallible assistance from some tutelar angels, with hard Arabic names, as you of Christ and the Holy Ghost, unless you can make it appear to him that really there are such beings as Christ and the Holy Ghost ; and when you have proved it to him, and he be upon your proof inclinable to believe it, you are bound to tell him by your doctrine, that for all these proofs he can only fancy there are such beings, but he cannot really believe them, unless he first believes your church infallible. And when he tells you, He cannot, according to your own doctrine, believe that infallibility unless he believes the other first, would he not cry out upon you as either lamentable fools, that did not understand what you said, or egregious impostors, that play fast and

loose with him, bidding him believe first one thing, and then another, till at last he may justly tell you, that in this manner he cannot be persuaded to believe any thing at all? 2. Supposing he should get through this, and believe that there were such beings as Christ and the Holy Ghost, he may justly ask you, 1. whether they be nothing else but such a kind of *intellectus agens*, as the Arabian philosophers imagined, some kind of being which did assist the understanding in conception? You answer him, No, but they are real distinct personalities of the same nature and essence with God himself; then he asks, 2. Whence doth this appear? for these being such grand difficulties, you had need of some very clear evidence of them. If you send him to scripture, he asks you, To what end? for the belief of that must suppose the truth of the thing in question, that your church is infallible in delivery of this scripture for divine revelation. But he further demands, 3. Whence comes that church which you call infallible to have this assistance of both these? Do they assist all kind of men to make them infallible? You answer, No. But, do they assist, though not all men separately, yet all societies of men conjunctly? You answer, No. Do they assist all men only in religious actions, of what religion soever they are? Still you answer, No. Do they assist then all men of the Christian religion in their societies? No. Do they assist all those among the Christians who say they have this assistance? No. Do they thus assist all churches to keep them from error? No. Whom is it then that they do thus infallibly assist? You answer, The church. But what church do you mean? The catholic church. But which is this catholic church? (for 220 I hear there are as great controversies about that as any thing.) You must answer confidently, That church which is in the Roman communion is the true catholic church. Have then all in that communion this infallible assistance? No. Have all the bishops in this communion it? No. Have all these bishops this assistance when met together? Yes, say you, undoubtedly, if the pope be their head, and confirm their acts. Then it should seem to me, that this infallible assistance is in the pope, and he it is whom you call the catholic church: but surely he is a very big man then, is he not? But, say you, "these are controversies which are not necessary for

you to know, it sufficeth that the catholic church is the subject of infallibility." But I had thought nothing could have been more necessary than to have known this: but I proceed then, How comes this catholic church to have this infallible assistance? Cannot I suppose that Christ and the Holy Spirit may exist without giving this assistance? cannot I suppose that Christian religion may be in the world without such an infallibility? Is this assistance therefore a necessary or a free act? A free act. If a free act, then, for all you know, your catholic church may not be so assisted. "No," you reply, "you are sure it is so assisted." But whence can you be sure of an arbitrary thing, unless the authors of this assistance have engaged themselves by promise, to give your catholic church that infallible assistance? Yes, that they have, you reply, and then produce Luke x. 16. Matt. xxviii. 20. John xiv. 16. But although our infidel might ask some untoward questions still; as, how you are sure these are divine promises, when the knowledge that they are divine must suppose the thing to be true which you would prove out of them, viz. that your church is infallible? Supposing them divine, how are you sure, that, and no other, is the meaning of them, when from such places you prove that your church is the only infallible interpreter of scripture? But I let pass these and other questions, and satisfy myself with this, That it is impossible for you to prove such an infallible assistance of Christ and the Holy Spirit, unless you produce some express promise for it.

2. This being impossible, it necessarily follows, that the only motives of credibility which can prove your church infallible, must be such as do antecedently prove these promises to be divine. This is so plain and evident a consequence from the former, that it were an affront upon human understanding to go about to prove it: for if the infallibility doth depend upon the promise, nothing can prove that infallibility but what doth prove that promise to be true and divine: true, or else not to be believed; divine, or else not to be relied on for such an assistance; none else being able to make a promise of it, but the author of it. As therefore my right to an estate as given by will depends wholly upon the truth and validity of that will, which I must first prove, before I can challenge

any right to it ; so your pretence of infallibility must solely depend upon the promises which you challenge it by. By which it appears, that your attempting to prove the infallibility of your church by motives of credibility, antecedent to and independent on the scripture, is vain, ridiculous, and destructive to that very infallibility which you pretend to. Which, being by a free assistance of Christ and his Spirit, must wholly depend on the proof of the promise made of it. For, if you prove no promise, all your motives of credibility prove nothing at all, as I have at large demonstrated before, and shall not follow you in needless repetitions.

3. No right to any privilege can be challenged, by virtue of a free promise made to particular persons, unless it be evident that the intention of the promiser was, that it should equally extend to them and others. For the promise being free, and the privilege such as carries no necessity at all along with it, in order to the great ends of Christian religion ; it is intolerable arrogance and presumption to challenge it, with-
 221 out manifest evidence that the design of it was for them, as well as the persons to whom it was made. Indeed, in such promises which are built on common and general grounds, containing things agreeable to all Christians, it is but reasonable to infer the universal extent of that promise to all such as are in the like condition. Hence the apostle infers from the particular promise made to Joshua, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," the effect of it upon all believers. Although, had not the apostle done it before us, it may seem questionable on what ground we could have done it, unless from the general reason of it, and the unbounded nature of divine goodness, in things necessary for the good of his people. But in things arbitrary, and such as contain special privilege in them, to challenge a right to a promise of the same privilege without equal evidence of the descent of it as the first grant, is great presumption, and a challenge of the promiser for partiality, if he doth not make it good. Because the pretence of the right of the privilege goes upon this ground, that it is as much due to the successor, as to the original grantee.

4. Nothing can be more unreasonable, than to challenge a right to a privilege, by virtue of such a promise which was

granted upon quite different considerations from the grounds on which that right is challenged. Thus I shall after make it evident, that the promise of an infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost had a peculiar respect to the apostles' present employment and the first state of the church, that it was not made upon reasons common to all ages, viz. for the government of the church, deciding controversies, foundation of faith, all which ends may be sufficiently attained without them. But, above all, it seems very unreasonable, that a promise made to persons in one office must be applied in the same manner to persons in a quite different office; that a promise made to each of them separate, must be equally applied to others only as in council; that a promise made implying divine assistance must be equally applied to such, who dare not say, that assistance is divine (but infallible, and after a sort divine); that a promise made of immediate divine revelation, and enabling the persons who enjoyed the privilege of it, to work miracles to attest their testimony to be infallible, should be equally applied to such as dare not challenge a divine revelation, nor ever did work a miracle to attest such an infallible assistance. Yet all this is done by you in your endeavour of fetching the infallibility of your church out of those promises of the assistance of Christ and his Spirit, which were made to the apostles. These general considerations do sufficiently enervate the force of your whole chapter, which yet I come particularly to consider.

§. 2. His lordship tells A. C. "that in the second sense of church-tradition, he cannot find that the tradition of the present church is of divine and infallible authority, till A. C. can prove that this company of men (the Roman prelates and clergy he means) are so fully, so clearly, so permanently assisted by Christ and his Spirit, as may reach to infallibility, much less to a divine infallibility, in this or any other principle which they teach." In answer to this you tell us, "that the bishop declines the question by withdrawing his reader from the thesis to the hypothesis; from the church, to the church of Rome." But is it not sufficiently known to all persons who deal in this controversy what you mean by the catholic church in this controversy, that it shall not be lawful for his lordship in a parenthesis to show where you place this infallibility, but

Conf. p. 74.
sect. 16. n.
26.

Lab. p. 98.
" 1.

he must be charged with declining the question? This only shews a desire to cavil at little things, when you were unable to answer greater. Besides, in the way you take of proving the church's infallibility by the motives of credibility, there is a necessity even in this controversy of declaring what that catholic church is, which must be known by these motives; and therefore you have no cause to look upon this as running away from the question. That A. C., after a long and silent attention, did merely through the heat of his zeal become earnest in this business to do his adversary good; I must believe it because you tell me so, though I see no great motive of credibility for it. And on that account did desire him to consider the tradition of the church as of a company of men infallibly assisted. "For such assistance," you say, "is necessary, as well to have sufficient assurance of the true canon of holy scripture, as to come to the true meaning and interpretation thereof." But this is as easily denied as said. We wait therefore for your proofs.

That which only seems here intended for that end, is, that "when the relater had said, the prophets under the old testament, and the apostles under the new, had such an infallible divine assistance; but neither the high priest with his clergy in the old, nor any company of prelates or priests in the new, since the apostles, ever had it." To this you reply, "that the like assistance" with the prophets and apostles, "the high priest with his clergy had in the old testament, as we gather out of Deut. xvii. 8, &c.; where in doubts the people were bound, not only to have recourse to the high priest and his clergy, but to submit and stand to their judgment. Much more then ought we to think, that there is such an obligation in the new testament; which could not stand without infallibility. Witness the infinite dissensions and divisions in points of faith amongst all the different Christians that deny it."

Two things the force of this argument lies in: 1. That there was infallibility in the high priest and his clergy under the law: 2. That if there were so then, there ought to be so now. Both these must be considered.

1. That there was infallibility in the high priest and his clergy under the law, which you prove from Deut. xvii. 8.

Conf. p. 74.
sect. 16. n.
26.

Lab. p. 97.
n. 1.

Because there the people were not only to have recourse to them, but to submit and stand to their judgment. This argument in form is this: Where there is to be not only a recourse, but an obligation to submission, there must be infallibility; but there were both these among the Jews, as to the high priest and his clergy; *ergo*.—You may see how forcible this argument is in a like case: Where there is to be not only a recourse in matters of difficulty, but an obligation to submit and stand to their judgment, there must be infallibility; but to the parliament of England there ought to be not only a recourse in matters of difficulty, but a submission to their judgment; therefore the parliament of England is as infallible as the high priest and clergy under the law, by the very argument by you produced. The same will hold for all courts of justice. But can you by no means distinguish between an obligation to submission, and an obligation in conscience to assent to what is determined as infallibly true? Is every person in all judiciary cases where submission is required, bound to believe the judge's sentence infallible? If so, we need not go over the Alps for infallibility, we may have it much cheaper at home: but I suppose you will reply, the case is very different, because in the text by you produced, 1. not civil matters, but religious are spoken of; 2. that not any civil magistrates, but the high priest and his clergy are the judges mentioned; 3. that not every kind of judgment, but an infallible judgment is there set down. But if every one of these be false, you will see what little advantage comes to your cause by this testimony; which I shall in order demonstrate.

1. That this place speaks not of religious causes as such, but of civil causes, i. e. not of matters of doctrine to be decided as true or false, but matters of justice to be determined as to right and wrong. Not but that some things concerning the ecclesiastical polity of the nation might be there decided; for it was impossible, in a nation whose laws depended on their religion, to separate the one from the other: but, that the judgment given there did not determine the truth and falsehood of things, so as to oblige men's consciences to believe them; but did so peremptorily decide them, that the persons 223 concerned were bound to acquiesce in that determination.

Deut. xvii.
8.

For the proof of this, one would think, the very reading of the place were sufficient. “If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose,” &c. Which words are so generally expressed, on purpose to take in all manner of controversies which might rise among them, whether civil, criminal, or ceremonial. And herein God makes provision against any rupture which might be among them upon any emergent controversy, by establishing a court of appeals, to which all such causes should be brought, in which the lesser courts could not agree; for that seems to be the main scope of the words, by the following expression of “controversies within thy gates,” by which it seems evident, that the controversies were such as could come to no resolution in those inferior courts which sat in the gates of the cities; by which it appears, that these could be no momentous controversies of religion, which never came under the cognizance of those inferior and subordinate courts. By these words, then, God doth erect a supreme court of judicature among them, to which they might appeal, not only in case of injury, but in case of difficulty; and those lesser courts as well as particular persons were to submit to the decree of the great sanhedrin, sitting in the place which God should choose, which was Shilo first, and Hierusalem after. And thence Maimonides so often saith, “that the establishment and coagmentation of all the Israelites did depend upon this place; for hereby God set up such a tribunal, to which the last resort should be made, and from whose determinations there should remain no further appeal. And according to the tradition of the Jews, these appeals were to be gradual, i. e. in case any priest should be to seek as to any ceremonial cause, as that of leprosy brought before him, he was to take advice of the court of the triumvirate where he lived; if that did not agree, then he was to appeal to the lesser sanhedrin of twenty-three in the neighbour city; if there it could not be ended, to the sanhedrin of twenty-three at the entrance of the mount of the temple; if not there neither, then appeal was made to the great sanhedrin,

whose sentence was final and peremptory, and was instead of a law in the case.

2. You are greatly mistaken in supposing that all this is spoken of the high priest and his clergy: I deny not but express mention is made of the priests and Levites, as those who were supposed most acquainted with all matters of difference which should happen among them; and therefore were probably the greatest part of the great sanhedrin (for it is a groundless fancy to suppose two distinct courts, the one civil, and the other ecclesiastical among the Jews). Nay the high priest himself was so far from being the constant president of this court, that, if we believe the tradition of the Jews, he was not admitted to sit there without the same previous examination and trial which others underwent. Indeed, in the decay of the Jewish polity, in the time of the Assomanean family, the chief civil power was in the hands of the high priest, on which account he might then preside in the sanhedrin, but that is nothing to this place where mention is made, verse 9, of the priests and Levites, and then of the judge, which is, in case God should raise up among them an extraordinary person, who should be judge over Israel, then the appeals might be to him: but otherwise, v. 10, they were to do "according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall shew thee," which was the great sanhedrin. According therefore to the sentence of this court, whether pronounced by a priest or other, they were to act; and they that refused were punished with death.

3. Whoever the persons were who gave this sentence, yet ²²⁴ it was not looked on as infallible; for it is not said, whosoever doth not believe the judgment given, to be infallibly true; but, whosoever acts contumaciously in opposition to it. "And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not Dent. xvii. hearken unto the priest, or unto the judge, even that man shall ^{12.} die." Besides, we are so far from reading of any promise of infallibility made to the high priest and his clergy, or to the sanhedrin, that God himself doth suppose a possibility of error in the whole congregation of Israel, Levit. iv. 15. And all along the books of the prophets, we see how much God chargeth the priests with ignorance, and forsaking his way. And, I pray, where was that infallibility of the high priest

and his clergy, not only when our blessed Saviour was condemned by him and the sanhedrin both; but in that time, ² Chron. xv. when Israel for a long season had been without the true God, ³ and without a teaching priest, and without law? So that we see what very little relief you have out of this place for the infallibility of the high priest and his clergy. But suppose we should grant them infallible, and that infallibility proved from this place, what is that to us? Might not you as well challenge the oracular responses by Urim and Thummim to belong to you, as the high priest's infallibility, supposing he had any? If God thought it fit to make them infallible, and gave such express command concerning obedience and submission to their judgment, is it not very reasonable to think, that under the gospel there should be express mention made of the subject of this infallibility, the place whither we should resort for final judgments, as there is here? Nay, had it not been far more necessary to have specified and determined these circumstances, since they are of such vast importance for the peace of the Christian world? How easily had all our debates been ended, if God had said any where in the New Testament, 'When any controversy of faith ariseth, go to the place which I shall choose, viz. Rome, and there inquire the judgment of the bishop that shall sit there; and whatever he determines, that believe as infallibly true:' if we had met with any thing so express, nay, that had any seeming tendency this way, how readily should we submit our controversies to his determination! But when there is so little ground or foundation for it there, that you are fain to deduce your infallibility, from God's settling a court of appeals among the Jews; can you think that we are presumptuous and deserve to be cut off, if we do not believe? For, for all that I know, you may challenge the sanction of the law, as well as the privilege of it; and your former practices would persuade us, that you believe the sanction to be as valid as the other.

"But," say you, "the infinite dissensions and divisions among those that deny it, make this necessary." 1. I pray, doth your pretence of infallibility put an end to all your divisions? Nay, are there not many among yourselves, raised merely on the account of this infallibility? Have not many among you grown so weary of it, that they have wished the

name had never been mentioned? Are not others so ashamed of the threadbare impertinent places of scripture commonly produced, that they have ventured the censure of your church for disowning them, and have sheltered themselves under the infallibility of universal tradition? Have not some ingenuously confessed, that there is no avoiding the circle on the common grounds? Are those no differences at all concerning the subject of infallibility and the superiority of pope and council? Happy men! that have so many coincident distinctions, and such agreeing differences! 2. Were there not dissensions and divisions in the apostles' times? And had it not been, think you, much better for the apostle, instead of saying, "There must be heresies, or divisions, among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest," to have told them, There must be an infallible judge among you, that there may be no heresies²²⁵ or divisions? If you had been at his elbow, what prudent advice you would have given St. Paul for ending all the divisions in the Corinthian, Colossian, Galatian churches, &c.! You must have told him, that it was to very little purpose to woo them by the many arguments he useth to exhort them so often to unity, and chide them as carnal, while they had dissensions, when one word of an infallible judge had ended all of them. But poor St. Paul knew of no such thing, which made him give as good counsels as the Spirit of God directed him to; but, alas! they were but sorry things in comparison of an infallible judge. Give us leave therefore to reckon ourselves among those primitive Christians, who knew no more than we of any such way to end differences, as infallibility in a constant judge, for all they had dissensions and divisions among them as well as we.

But you are very angry with his lordship for taxing this pretence of infallibility with insolency, and a design to lord it over the faith of Christendom. And therefore tell him, you go no further than Christ himself leads you by promises made of this infallibility; that is the thing in question, and must not be taken upon the trust of your infallibility, in interpreting the places by you alleged. When you can prove the pastors of your church to be as infallible as the apostles were, and to have the same Spirit which they had, I shall as little suspect them of lording it over others as the apostles: but if it appear

Lab. p. 9.
n. 1.

quite otherwise as to the pastors of your church; name, if you can, a greater insolency than to usurp a power of prescribing to the faith of the Christian world. As to what follows concerning your church's testimony being again infallible by the assistance of Christ and his Spirit, and yet not divinely infallible, it is so subtle and scholastical a distinction, that I now begin not to admire your so often using it; for I see plainly if that wedge, how blunt soever, doth not rive asunder the knot, it is like to remain for any thing you have to say to it.

§. 3. His lordship having given one instance of the insolency of your pretence of infallibility, by the "dangerous errors which your church doth hold, particularly in equalling the tradition of the present church to the written word of God, which," saith he, "is a doctrine unknown to the primitive church, and which frets upon the very foundation itself, by justling with it." But, being well acquainted with the arts of your party in making a great noise with the fathers, and particularly in this controversy, with a citation out of St. Basil's books de Spirit. Sanct. ad Amphiloehium, and especially those words, *parem vim habent ad pietatem*, speaking of traditions; he therefore in his margin so far takes notice of them, as to return this threefold answer to them: 1. That he speaks of apostolical tradition, and not the tradition of the present church. 2. That exceptions are taken at this book as corrupted. 3. That St. Basil makes scripture the touchstone of tradition. To this you return a threefold answer: 1. That it is true he speaks of apostolical traditions, but of such as were come down to their present times. 2. That the exceptions against the book are unreasonable. 3. That St. Basil doth not make the scripture so to be the touchstone of tradition, as that scripture must needs therefore be of greater force and superior dignity than that of tradition. Because therefore this is the chief place in antiquity which is produced on your side in behalf of traditions, it will deserve a more careful examination in the particulars by you mentioned.

1. You acknowledge that he speaks of apostolical traditions, and such as the present church judged apostolical; now you say that the present church is infallible in judging apostolical traditions, and what traditions are so judged are necessary to

Conf. p. 75.
sect. 16. n.
26.

Lab. p. 97.
n. 1.

be practised. Now I pray consider what difficulties and self-contradictions you have brought yourself into, by acknowledging these traditions to have been judged apostolical by the present church. For either that church at that time was not infallible in judging traditions, and so the present church of every age is not infallible; or if that was infallible, yours is not; for your church differs from the church in St. Basil's time about these very traditions by him mentioned, your church not judging them apostolical. Which will appear by an inspection into those things which are here accounted traditions by him. Among which he not only mentions "signing believers with the sign of the cross, praying toward the east, the oil and the abrenunciation used in baptism," but "the consecration of the person to be baptized, the standing at prayers until Pentecost," and, above all, "the trine immersion in baptism," all which he saith come ἐκ τῆς ἀδημοσιεύτου ταύτης, καὶ ἀπορρήτου διδασκαλίας, ἣν ἐν ἀπολυπραγμογήτῳ καὶ ἀπεριεργάστῳ συγῆ οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἐφύλαξαν^a, "out of a secret and unpublished tradition, which our fathers preserved in a quiet and silent manner." Are these three last then acknowledged by your church now for apostolical traditions or no? Nay doth not your Roman Catechism^b absolutely pronounce the trine immersion to be unnecessary for baptism? How can that become unnecessary, which was once infallibly judged to be an apostolical tradition? Either the church then was out in her judgment, or your church out in hers; and choose whether of those you have the more mind to; either of them will help you to contradict yourself.

2. There want not sufficient reasons of suspecting that book to be corrupted. You say Erasmus was the first who suspected it. Not the first who suspected corruption in St. Basil's writings. For Marcus Ephesius in the Florentine council^c charged some Latinizing Greeks with corrupting his books against Eunomius, protesting that in Constantinople there were but four copies to above one thousand which had the passages in them which were produced by the Latins. But suppose Erasmus were the first: was he not so in discovering the genuine and supposititious writings of several others of the

^a S. Basil. de Sp. S. c. 27. tom. 1.

^b Catechism. Rom. de baptis.

^c Concil. Florent. Act. 20.

fathers? We must therefore inquire into the reason which Erasmus had of this suspicion; who tells us, in his epistle to John Dantiscus the Poland ambassador, that by that time he had gone through half this work he discerned a palpable inequality in the style, sometimes swelling to a tragical height, and then sinking into a vulgar flatness, having much more of ostentation, impertinent digressions, repetitions, than any of St. Basil's own writings, which had always a great deal of vigour, simplicity and candour, with great evenness and equality, &c. And although this argument, to all that know the worth of that excellent person, especially in his judgment of the writings of the fathers, will seem by no means contemptible, yet we have much greater reason for our suspicion than this merely from the style. For if you believe St. Basil was a man who knew how to speak consistencies, that he would not utter palpable and evident contradictions in his writings; you will have no reason to applaud yourself in this as a genuine piece of St. Basil's, at least for the latter part of it. For whereas you make this the force of his words, that "unwritten traditions have equal force to stir up piety with the written word;" you could hardly have named so many words which bear a greater face of contradiction to a multitude of testimonies in his unquestionably genuine writings. For is it not St. Basil^d who saith, "that it is a manifest falling from the faith, and an argument of arrogancy, either to reject any point of those things that are written, or to bring in any of those things that are not written?" Is it not St. Basil who bids a man "believe the things that are written, and seek not the things that are not written?" Is it not the same St. Basil who saith, "that every word and action ought to be confirmed by the testimony of holy scripture for confirmation of the
227 faith of the good, and confusion of the evil?" Is it not he who urgeth that very place to this purpose, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin?" then whatsoever is without the holy scripture,

^d Φανερά ἐκπτώσις πίστεως, καὶ ὑπερηφανίας κατηγορία, ἢ ἀθετεῖν τι τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ἐπεισάγειν τῶν μὴ γεγραμμένων. Basil. de vera ac pia Fide, tom. 2. Op. Gr. Lat. p. 386.

Τοῖς γεγραμμένοις πίστετε, τὰ μὴ γεγραμμένα μὴ ζήτει. Hom. 29. de Trinit. tom. 1.

Ἵτι δεῖ πᾶν ῥῆμα, ἢ πρᾶγμα πιστοῦθαι τῇ μαρτυρίᾳ τῆς θεοσπενύστου γραφῆς, εἰς πληροφορίαν μὲν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἐν τροπῇ δὲ τῶν πονηρῶν. In Ethicis. reg. 16. v. tom. 2.

Πᾶν τὸ ἐκτὸς τῆς θεοσπενύστου γραφῆς οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἔν, ἀμαρτία ἐστίν. Ib. reg. 80. c. 22.

being not of faith, is sin. Which at least must be understood of such things which men have an opinion of piety and necessity in the doing of. These and many other places may be produced out of his genuine writings attesting the clean contrary to what you produce this place for. What then must we think of him? Must we say of him as he did of Gregory Thaumaturgus, that he spoke some things not *δογματικῶς* but *ἀγωνιστικῶς*^e, not as though he believed them; but for disputation sake, because they served his purpose well? Or rather, have we not much greater reason, considering the contrariety of the doctrine, as well as inequality of style, to follow Erasmus his judgment concerning this book? especially considering that Bellarmine himself, who slights Erasmus his judgment herein; yet when he is pinched with a citation out of his *Ascetics*, calls the sincerity of that book into question, because he doth not therein seem to admit of “unwritten traditions, which,” saith he, *ad Amphilocheium*, “he doth strenuously defend^f.” If therefore he may question another book for not agreeing with this, we may more justly question this for disagreeing with so many others. Thus you see, it is not merely the style, and that only on the judgment of Erasmus, which makes this book suspicious. And from those citations produced out of other writings of St. Basil, the (3.) thing evidently appears, viz. that he so makes the scripture the touchstone of all traditions, as that scripture must be incomparably of greater force and superior dignity than any unwritten tradition whatsoever. But whether Stapleton in his testimony meant primarily apostolical traditions, or others, is not worth the inquiring.

§. 4. Concerning what follows, as to the sincerity and agreement of ancient copies of scripture, and the means to be assured of the integrity of them, I have sufficiently expressed myself already. Only what you add concerning the integrity of traditions above the scripture being new, deserves to be considered. “For,” say you, “universal traditions are re-^{Lab. p. 98.} corded in authors of every succeeding age: and it seems much^{n. 2.} more incident to have errors slip into writings of so great bulk as is the Bible, which in their editions pass only through

^e Basil. ep. 64. ^f L. 4. de V. D. c. 7. De Amiss. Grat. l. 1. c. 13.

the hands of particular men, than that there should be errors in public, universal, and immemorial traditions, which are openly practised throughout Christendom, and taken notice of by every one in all ages." And from hence you instance in St. John's Epistle or St. Luke's Gospel, which being originally written to particular persons, must be at first received as authentical upon their credit: but, on the other side, apostolical traditions" (for which you instance in the observation of the Lord's day, infant baptism, use of altars, &c.) "in their prime institution and practice being publicly practised and owned by the apostles; it was incomparably harder, morally speaking, to doubt in the beginning of these traditions, than whether St. John's Epistle or St. Luke's Gospel were really theirs or no. Whence we see some books that were written by apostles were questioned for some time, but these and such like traditions were always owned as truly and really descending from the apostles." To which I answer, 1. If you prove not some tradition thus universally owned and received which we have no record of, or ground for the observation of from scripture, you speak nothing at all to the purpose; but two of those you instance in, observation of the Lord's day, and pædobaptism, we have as much as is requisite for the church's practice from scripture itself; for the other, of the use of altars, it were a work becoming you to deduce the history of them from the apostolical times, beginning at the *ὑπερῶον*, or upper room where the apostles met after Christ's ascension, and so tracing them through all the private houses and synagogues in which the Christians in the apostles' times had their
 228 solemn assemblies for divine worship; thence bringing down the history of them carefully through all the persecutions, and producing evidences to that purpose, out of Tertullian, Origen, Minutius Felix, and Arnobius, only blotting out *non* where they speak of altars and temples among Christians, and telling us that some protestants had corrupted their books; that where they utterly disown them, they did highly magnify them; that where they seemed to speak most against them, it was not to let the heathens know that they had them: by this means indeed you are like to acquaint us with some universal tradition less liable to corruption and alteration than the scriptures. For this of altars is the only thing by you

mentioned, which seems any thing to your purpose, the other two being sufficiently proved from scripture; which acquaints us so much with apostolical practice, as to yield abundant reason for the practice of following ages. You do well therefore to wrap up all other such traditions as might vie with the scriptures for integrity, in a prudent “&c. :” for you cannot but know that this game of tradition is quite spoiled if we offer to come to particulars. But it is a fine thing in general to talk of the impossibility of corrupting such a tradition as had its rise from the practice of the apostles, and was by them delivered to succeeding ages, and so was universally practised by all Christians as derived from the apostles; but when we put but that sullen demand, that such a thing as hath no evidence in scripture may be named which was so universally received and owned as the scriptures are, how many put off's, and &c.'s do we meet withal for fear of being evidently disproved in the particular instanced in! 2. If there be so much greater evidence for tradition than scripture, whence came the very next ages to the apostles to be so doubtful as to traditions which yet were agreed in receiving the scripture? I speak not of such things which we have not the least evidence the apostles ever thought of, much less universally practised, (such as we contend the things in controversy between you and us are,) but in such things which undoubtedly the apostles did practise, so as that the Christians of that age could not but know such a practice of theirs. As in that controversy which soon rise in the church about the day of the observation of Easter; what contests soon grew between the Asian and Roman Christians about this, both equally pretending apostolical tradition, and that at the least distance imaginable from the apostolical times! For Polycarp professed to receive his tradition from St. John, as those at Rome from St. Peter. If then traditions be so incapable of falsification and corruption, how came they to be so much to seek as to what the apostolical tradition was in the very next age succeeding the apostles? What! could not those who lived in St. John's and St. Peter's time know what they did? Could they be deceived themselves, or had they an intent to deceive their posterity? If some of them did falsify tradition so soon, we see what little certainty there is in the deriving a tradition from the

apostles : if neither falsified, then it should seem there was no universal practice of the apostles concerning it, but they looked on it as a matter of indifferency, and some might practise one way, and some another. If so, then we are yet further to seek for an universal tradition of the apostles, binding succeeding ages. For can you possibly think the apostles did intend to bind unalterably succeeding ages in such things which they used a liberty in themselves ? If then it be granted, that in matters of an indifferent nature the apostles might practise severally as they saw occasion, how then can we be certain of the apostles' universal practice in matters of an indifferent nature ? If we cannot so, we can have no evidence of an universal tradition of the apostles, but in some things which they judged necessary. But whence shall we have this unquestionable evidence, first that they did such 229 things, and secondly, that they did them with an apprehension of the necessity of them, and with an intention to oblige posterity by their actions ? By what rule or measure must we judge of this necessity ? By their universal practice ? But that brings us into a plain circle ; for we must judge of the necessity of it by their universal practice, and we must prove that universal practice by the necessity of the thing. For if the thing were not judged necessary, the apostles might differ in their practice from one another. Whence then shall we prove any practice necessary, unless built on some unalterable ground of reason ; and then it is not formally an apostolical tradition, but the use of that common reason and prudence in matters of a religious nature : or else by some positive law and institution of theirs ; and this, supposing it unwritten, must be evidenced from something distinct from their practice, or else you must assert, that whatever the apostles did, they made an unalterable law for ; or lastly, you must quit all unwritten traditions as universal, and must first infer the necessity, and then the universality of their practice from some record extant in scripture, and then you can be no further certain of any universal practice of the apostles, than you are of the scriptures : by which it will certainly appear that the scripture is far more evident and credible than any universal unwritten tradition.

A clear and evident instance of the uncertainty of knowing

apostolical traditions in things not defined in scripture, is one of those you instance in yourself, viz. that of rebaptizing heretics, which came to be so great a controversy so soon after the apostolical age. For though this controversy rose to its height in St. Cyprian's time, which was about A. D. 250, yet it was begun some competent time before that. For St. Cyprian in his Epistle to Jubaianus, where he gives an account of the general council of the provinces of Africa and Numidia, consisting of seventy-one bishops, endeavours to remove all suspicion of novelty from their opinion, "For," saith he, "it is no new or sudden thing among us to judge that those ought to be baptized who come to the church from heretics; for now many years are past, and a long time, since, under Agrippinus, the bishops meeting together did determine it in council, and thousands of heretics have voluntarily submitted to it &c." How far off could that be from the apostolical times, which was done so long before Cyprian's? And although St. Augustine (as it was his interest so to do) would make this to have been but a few years^h, yet we have greater evidence both of the greater antiquity and larger spread of this opinion. Whereby we may see how little the judgment of Vincentius Lirinensis is to be relied on as to traditions, who gives Agrippinus such hard words, "for being the first who, against scripture, the rule of the universal church, the judgment of all his fellow-priests, the custom of his ancestors, did assert the rebaptization of hereticsⁱ." How little truth there is in what Vincentius here says, and consequently how little certainty in his way of finding out traditions, will appear from the words of Dionysius of Alexandria, in his Epistle to Philemon and Dionysius concerning this subject. For therein he asserts "that long before that custom obtained in Africa, the same was practised and

^g Apud nos autem, non nova aut repentina res est, ut baptizandos censeamus eos qui ab hæreticis ad ecclesiam veniunt; quando multi jam anni sunt, et longa ætas, ex quo sub Agrippino convenientes in unum episcopi plurimi hoc statuerint, atque exinde in hodiernum diem tot millia hæreticorum, &c. Cyprian. ep. 73.

^h De Baptism. c. Donat. l. 4.

ⁱ Agrippinus omnium mortalium primus contra divinum canonem, contra universalis ecclesiæ regulam, contra sensum omnium consecratorum, contra morem atque instituta majorum, baptizandos eos qui ab hæreticis ad ecclesiam veniunt, censuisse. Commonit. l. 1. cap. 9.

decreed in the most famous churches both at Iconium, Synada, and other placesⁱ." On which account this great person professeth, that he "durst not condemn their opinion who held so." Whether this synod at Iconium were the same with that mentioned by Firmilian, is not so certain, but if it
 230 were, that can be no argument against the antiquity of it. For although Firmilian say, "that we long ago meeting in Iconium, from Galatia, Cilicia, and the neighbour regions, have confirmed the same, viz. that heretics should be baptized^k;" yet as the learned Valesius observes, the pronoun *we*, is not to be understood of Firmilian's person, but of his predecessors, and therefore checks both Baronius and Binius for placing that synod A. D. 258. We see therefore this opinion was so largely spread, that not only the churches in Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania favoured it, but almost all the Eastern Christians^l. For Dionysius in an epistle to Xystus, who succeeded Stephanus at Rome, wherein he pleads for moderation as to this controversy, and desires him more throughly to consider the weight of the business, and not proceed so rashly as Stephanus had done; he tells him in conclusion, that he writ not this of himself, but at the request of the several bishops of Antioch, Cæsarea, Ælia, Tyre, Laodicea, Tarsus, &c. Nay, and as it appears by Firmilian's epistle, they made no question but this custom of theirs descended from Christ and his apostles: for telling Cyprian, that in such places where the other custom had been used, they did well to oppose truth to custom; "But we," saith he, "join truth and custom together, and to the custom of the Romans we oppose the custom of truth. holding that from the beginning which was delivered by Christ and his apostles^m." But therefore adds, "Neither do

ⁱ Μη γυν οι εν Ἀφρικῇ μόνον τοῦτο παρεισήγαγον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸ πολλοῦ κατὰ τοὺς πρὸ ἡμῶν ἐπισκόπους, ἐν ταῖς πολυανθρωποτάταις ἐκκλησίαις καὶ ταῖς συνόδοις τῶν ἀδελφῶν, ἐν Ἰκονίῳ καὶ Σνννίδοις &c. Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 7.

^k Quod totum nos jam pridem in Iconio qui Phrygiæ locus est collecti, in unum convenientibus ex Galatia et Cilicia, et cæteris proximis regionibus confirmavimus.

Cypr. ep. 75. ubi pronomen *nos* non de ipsius Firmiliani persona, sed potius de ejus decessoribus accipiendum est. Vales. not. in Euseb. l. 7. c. 7.

^l Verum etiam omnes fere (ecclesiæ) quæ in Oriente magno numero Christianam pietatem profitebantur. Rigalt. not. in Cyprian. p. 145.

^m Cæterum nos veritati et consuetudinem jungimus, et consuetu-

we remember when this practice began, seeing it was always observed among us." And thence charges the church of Rome in that Epistle with violating that and several other traditions of the apostles. And Vincentius Lirinensis still takes Stephen's part; and all that he hath to say is, "that that is the property of Christian modesty and gravity, not to deliver their own opinions to their posterity, but to retain the tradition of their forefathers ⁿ." As though the other side could not say the same things, and with as much confidence as they did: but all the question was, what that tradition was which they were to retain? The one said one thing, and the other another; but, as Rigaltius well observes, "Vincentius speaks very truly and prudently, if nothing were delivered by our ancestors but what they had from the apostles; but under the pretence of our ancestors, silly or counterfeit things may by fools or knaves be delivered us for apostolical traditions ^o." And whether this doth not often come to pass, let the world judge. Now therefore, when these persons on both sides had incomparably greater advantages of knowing what the universal apostolical practice was than we can have, and yet so irreconcilably differ about it, what likelihood or probability is there that we may have greater certainty of apostolical tradition, than of the writings of the apostles? especially in such matters as these are, in which it is very questionable, whether the apostles had any occasion ministered to them to determine any thing in them. And therefore when Stephen at Rome and those of his party pleaded custom, and consequently, as they thought, apostolical tradition, it was not irrationally answered on the other side, by Cyprian and Firmilian, that that might be, "because the apostles had not occasion given them to declare their minds in it ^p," because either the heresies were

dini Romanorum, consuetudinem sed veritatis opponimus; ab initio hoc tenentes, quod a Christo et ab apostolo traditum est. Ep. 75. Cypr. p. 164. ed. Rigalt. V. etiam Basil. ep. prima canon. ad Amphiloichium, tom. 2. p. 759.

ⁿ Idque esse proprium Christianæ modestiæ et gravitatis, non sua posteris tradere, sed a majoribus accepta servare. Commonit. l. i. cap. 9.

^o Quæ sane sunt a Vincentio verissime ac prudentissime pronuntiata, si non alia sint a majoribus tradita, quam quæ majores ab apostolis susceperant: cæterum, sub nomine ac persona majorum, per fatuos aut sophistas, asinina aut sophisti capro apostolicis tradentur. Rigalt. observ. in Cyprian. p. 147.

^p Cypr. ep. 74, 75.

not of such a nature as those of Marcion and Cerdon, or else there might not be such returnings from those heresies in the 231 apostolical times to the church; which being of so black a nature, as to carry in them such malignity, by corrupting the lives of men by vicious practices, there was less probability either of the true Christian's apostatizing into them, or the recovery of such who were fallen into them. To this purpose Firmilian speaks, "That the apostles could not be supposed to prohibit the baptizing of such which came from the heretics, because no man would be so silly, as to suppose the apostles did prohibit that which came not in question till afterwards ⁹." And therefore St. Augustine, who concerned himself the most in this controversy, when he saw such ill use made of it by the Donatists doth ingenuously confess, "That the apostles did determine nothing at all in it; but however," saith he, "that custom which is opposed to Cyprian, is to be believed to have its rise from the apostles' tradition; as there are many other things observed in the church, and on that account are believed to have been commanded by the apostles, although they are nowhere found written ¹." But what cogent argument doth St. Austin use to persuade them this was an apostolical tradition? he grants they determined nothing in it, yet would needs have it believed, that an universal practice of succeeding ages should imply such a determination, though unwritten. But, 1, The universal practice we have seen already, was far from being evident, when not only the African, but the Eastern church did practise otherwise, and that on the account of an apostolical tradition too. 2. Supposing such an universal practice, how doth it thence follow, that it must be derived from the apostles, unless it be first proved, that the church could never

⁹ Quantum ad id pertineat quod Stephanus dixit, quasi apostoli eos qui ab hæresi veniant baptizari prohibuerint, et hoc custodiendum posteris tradiderint, plenissime vos respondistis; Neminem tam stultum esse, qui hoc credat apostolos tradidisse, quando etiam ipsas hæreses constat execrabiles ac detestandas postea extitisse. Firmil. ep. Cyp. 75.

¹ Apostoli autem nihil quidem exinde præceperunt, sed consuetudo illa quæ opponebatur Cypriano, ab eorum traditione exordium sumpsisse credenda est: sicut sunt multa quæ universa tenet ecclesia, et ob hoc ab apostolis præcepta bene creduntur, quanquam scripta non reperiantur. Aug. c. Donat. l. 5. c. 23.

consent in the use of any thing, but what the apostles commanded them; which is a very unreasonable supposition, considering the different emergencies which might be in the churches of apostolical and succeeding times, and the different reasons of practice attending upon them, with that great desire which crept into the church of representing the things conveyed by the gospel in an external symbolical manner, whence, in the second century, came the use of many baptismal ceremonies, the *præ gustatio mellis et lactis*, as Tertulian calls it, and several of a like nature, which by degrees came into the church: must we now derive these and many other customs of the church necessarily from the apostles, when even in St. Austin's time, several customs were supposed to be grounded on apostolical tradition, which yet are otherwise believed now? as in that known instance of infants' participation of the eucharist, which is otherwise determined by the council of Trent; and for all that I know, the arguments used against this tradition by some men, may as well hold against infant baptism, for there is an equal incapacity as to the exercise of all acts of reason and understanding in both: and as the scripture seems to suppose such acts of grace in one as have their foundation in the use of reason, it doth likewise in the other, and I cannot see sufficient evidence to the contrary; but if that place, "Except a man be born of John iii. 5. water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," taken in the sense of the fathers, doth imply a necessity of baptism for all, and consequently of children; that other place, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat John vi. 53. the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," taken likewise in the sense of the fathers, will import the necessity of a participation of the eucharist by infants, as well as others. I speak not this with an intention to plead either for this, or for the rebaptizing heretics, but to shew the great uncertainty of knowing apostolical traditions; some things having been taken for such, which we believe were not so, and others which could not be known whether so or 232 no by the ages next succeeding the apostles. And therefore let any reasonable person judge what probability there is in what you drive at, that apostolical traditions may be more easily known than apostolical writings.

§. 5. By which it appears, (3.) how vain and insufficient your reasons are, why traditions should not be so liable to corruption as the scriptures. 1. You say, “universal traditions are recorded in authors of every succeeding age; and it seems more incident to have the Bible corrupted than them, because of its bulk, and passing through the hands of particular men; whereas universal and immemorial traditions are openly practised and taken notice of by every one in all ages.” To which I answer, 1. that you give no sufficient reason why the Bible should be corrupted; 2. and as little why traditions should be more preserved than that. Two accounts you give why the Bible might be corrupted by errors, because of its bulk, and passing through the hands of particular men. But do you think it impossible, or at least unreasonable, to suppose that a book of no greater bulk than the Bible, should, by the care and vigilancy of men, through the assistance of Divine Providence, be preserved from any material corruptions or alterations? Surely, if you think so, you have mean thoughts of the Christians in all ages, and meaner of Divine Providence: for you must suppose God to take no care at all for the preservation of a monument of unspeakable concernment to the good of mankind; and you must conceive the Christians in all ages to be stupendously careless and negligent either in transcribing or reading the scriptures, which could suffer errors to slip into them, without discovery of them. Do you think that the Christians had no higher esteem of the scriptures than of the use of altars, or any other of your immemorial traditions? But, say you, “the one were public, and the other passed through the hands of particular men.” It should seem then their altars were upon high places, but the scriptures were only read in corners, never any such thing being publicly read as the Bible, so that any alteration might be there, and no notice at all taken of it. The poor African bishop found the contrary to his sorrow, who was in such danger from the people for altering but one word according to St. Hierom’s translation, as St. Austin reports the story. But suppose it passed through the hands of particular men, was it therefore more liable to be corrupted? I should think just the contrary; unless you could suppose all those particular men to agree in corrupting it, which, considering the difference of opinions,

capacities, and interests, is a most unreasonable supposition ; that some verbal and literal mistakes might slip in, you might rationally imagine, but that therefore any great corruptions should creep into it, argues your mean thoughts both of God's providence and the care of the Christian world. Well, but still it is impossible to corrupt your traditions. It were a much harder matter to free your traditions from being corruptions themselves of the purity of the Christian church. And why so hard for them to be corrupted ? " Because recorded in authors of every succeeding age." I had thought all books of equal, or much bigger bulk than the scripture, had been as liable to corruption as that ; but it seems not. If a book be written of traditions, the very traditions will preserve it pure, though as big as that Livy *quem mea vix totum bibliotheca capit*. But that is not all ; it seems these traditions are recorded in authors of every succeeding age : unhappy men we that cannot find them there ! I wish, instead of writing controversies, you would write the history of these traditions ; but be sure to deduce them through the authors of every succeeding age ; and I suppose you mean ever since the apostles. I shall then indeed believe popish traditions to be no novelties, but not before. But let us grant this : were not the scriptures attested by the same authors ? No ; it seems, they were agreed about all traditions, but not so about the scripture. And the reason is, because the scriptures were first delivered ²³³ to private men, as St. John's Epistle and St. Luke's Gospel ; but traditions had an universal practice. But can you suppose it otherwise but that particular books must be first delivered to private men ? Would you have them delivered only to general councils, or the pope and his cardinals ? It seems St. John was to blame for not directing his Epistle to the pope, instead of Gaius ; and St. Luke his Gospel to a general council, instead of Theophilus ; for then we might have had infallible certainty of them ; but now it is a plain case, we can have no more than moral certainty that ever they were theirs. But for this trick, it seems, they fared the worse ; for some books were doubted of for many years, in particular churches. It is well yet, they were not discarded by your catholic church, because the apostles did not put their books into your hands to recommend them. But what if some

books, by some men, were for some time doubted of, which yet were afterwards universally received upon sufficient evidence? "Why then," say you, "tradition hath much advantage of scripture." How so? Was no tradition which would be accounted universal doubted of by any men at any time? "No," say you, "it is impossible it should, for universal traditions were universally practised at all times." Now you speak home; and nothing wants to the proof of it, but only to let us know, what these universal traditions are, which were so universally practised in all ages, containing things different from scripture which are recorded in the authors of every succeeding age. Your offer is so fair, that my request shall be very short; name them, and prove them, and I will believe you, but not before. So much for this, which, though a digression in this chapter, yet is not from the design of this discourse.

§. 6. Setting aside therefore your discourse about A. C.'s pen being troubled, in which is nothing worth our notice; I come to the main dispute of this chapter, which is, whether the promises of infallibility made to the apostles are to be restrained to their own times, or to be extended to the present church in all ages? We assert the former, and you the latter. For which you produce this argument, "that from these very places Christians do infer that the church shall never fall away and perish. For if the assistance be not to preserve the succeeding church, at least from some kind of errors infallibly; it may, notwithstanding all the assistance he allows it here, fall into all kind of errors one after another, and so by degrees the whole church might fall into a general apostasy, and thereby perish. There must therefore be some kind of infallible assistance in the apostles' successors, by virtue of these promises." But, is it all one to say, there shall always be a church, and to say, that church shall always be infallible? Those who from the places in question do prove that the church shall never quite fall away, do not dream of a present infallibility in your sense, but that there always shall be a number of men professing Christianity in the world: and cannot you possibly conceive that there should be such a number of men professing Christianity without infallibility? To help therefore your understanding a little, suppose that all

the members of the Roman church should in one age be destroyed—(and, according to your former principle, that if a church may err, we cannot be certain but that it doth err; because this may be, we cannot be certain but that it is)—but we only make the supposition; do not you think that there would be still a number remaining, who profess Christianity, of the Greek and protestant churches? Yet I hope you will not say that these were infallible. There may be then a number of Christians who are not infallible; and that is all which is meant by saying, that the present church is infallible in fundamentals; viz. that there shall always be a church; for that which makes them a church is the belief of fundamentals; and if they believe not them, they cease to be so. That there-²³⁴fore which being supposed a church is, and being destroyed it ceaseth to be, is the formal constitution of it; but thus it is as to the church, the belief of fundamentals makes it a church, and the not belief of them makes them cease to be a Christian church; I speak of an essential, and not of an organical church; and I know not who those persons are, who out of those places do infer the perpetuity of an organical church; nor, if they did, doth it thence follow they must suppose an infallible assistance beyond an essential to make it an organical church. For I cannot imagine what necessity can be supposed of infallibility, in order to that which may be sufficiently constituted without it. 2. I answer, the perpetuity of the church doth rather argue the infallibility of the promise than of the church. Which if you did consider, you would not certainly infer infallibility from a promise of perpetuity. For all the infallibility supposable in this case is an infallibility of accomplishment of the promise made. As in a clear and parallel instance of that promise, “The sceptre shall not depart Gen. xlix. from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh ^{10.} come.” Taking it in the most received interpretation among Christians, that the Jewish polity should remain till the days of the Messiah; doth this infer that there should be a continual infallibility in the Jewish polity, because there was a promise made of its perpetuity? When God saith, “In Jerusalem have I set my name for ever,” doth it follow that Jerusalem should be always infallible? But how would you triumph beyond all reason, if you had but any thing like such a promise

for Rome, as that is for Jerusalem? Supposing then that the promises by you insisted on should be so far extended as to imply a perpetuity of a Christian church, what doth that argue but only this, that to make it appear that promise is infallibly true, there shall always be a succession of Christians in the world? 3. Suppose I should grant that the being of a Christian church doth suppose the assistance of God's Spirit, is there no assistance but what is infallible? If not, no one can be a Christian without infallibility; for we speak of no other assistance but what is necessary to make men Christians; for what makes them such severally, take them conjunctly, makes them a church. But if you, besides what assistance is requisite to make them Christians, do suppose somewhat more to make them a church, I pray name what it is; and whatever it be, it will not be owned by such who infer a perpetuity of a church out of these places. But if in order to that no more be meant (as no more can be meant) than what is necessary to make men Christians, then infallibility will grow so cheap and common, it will not be worth challenging by you for your church. 4. Suppose I grant this assistance to be infallible, doth all infallible assistance make an infallible testimony? I am sure not in their sense who say the church is infallible in fundamentals, for they never offer to assert that the present church is infallible in defining what are fundamentals and what not. And this is the only infallibility in question, viz. such a one as makes the testimony of those who have it infallible. For such a kind of assistance was that of the apostles, which is only the thing inquired after. If you can therefore prove such an infallibility in your church's testimony as the apostles had, you do something; but what is short of this is nothing at all to the purpose. 5. Suppose I should grant the testimony of the catholic church to be infallible, yet all these concessions were nothing for your advantage, unless you could as evidently prove that your church is the only catholic church. Which that you can never do will appear when we come to that question. 6. Suppose I should yield the catholic church's 235 testimony to be infallible, and your church to be the catholic church; yet all this is far from proving pope, or council, or both to be infallible. For by what means come they to claim the infallibility as belonging to them which is given to the

church? by what deeds are the conveyances settled of the privileges of the church to them? Where is it ever said in scripture, or in the least intimated, that the promises made to the church are to be understood of the representative church? The apostles had this promise in their personal capacities made to them, and not in a representative; how comes then the promise to be understood of a representation afterwards? Thus you see that you are at least six removes from any title to claim this infallibility from these promises by: and therefore you have little hopes that your claim should be admitted upon so slender a title.

§. 7. From this therefore at present you fly off, to the vindicating A. C. from asserting infallibility belonging to all the doctors and pastors of the church; which yet is a very good design to vindicate a man from his own words. For are they not as express as may be, viz. "That there is the promise of Christ and his Holy Spirit's continual presence, Luke x. 16. Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. Joh. xiv. 16. not only to the apostles, but to their successors also, the lawfully sent pastors and doctors of the church in all ages?" To which his lordship saith, "Here's a deal of infallibility indeed, and yet error store." Conf. p. 77. sect. 16. n. 28. Lab. p. 99. n. 3. You presently cry out, "But what shall we say to an adversary that forges what chimerical doctrine he pleases, and then fights against it?" What chimerical doctrine is that which he forges? doth he not relate A. C.'s words? and do you, or can you, deny them to be his words? But, say you, "this was not his meaning." I suppose you mean, that his words, as they are, are not defensible, and therefore you must have a *σοφὸν φάρμακον* for them: which is, "that he did not understand these words of every doctor apart, but of pastors and doctors lawfully assembled in œcumenical councils." But, 1. are pastors and doctors never lawfully sent but when they are in œcumenical councils? for it is plain A. C. speaks of them as lawfully sent. 2. Have pastors and doctors met in œcumenical councils in all ages? I would you could prove a truly œcumenical council in any age; but sure you never pretend to it in all ages; yet if A. C.'s words have any sense in them, they speak of such an infallibility as belongs to the church in all ages. And therefore this plaster is a great deal too narrow to cover the sore. But, say you, "every author is to be under-

stood to mean by his words what they will properly bear, and is consonant with the meaning of his other words." I most freely grant you this and all that follows, if you will prove it impossible for any man to speak nonsense or contradictions; but I can more easily prove it very possible for a man to speak things which contradict one the other, which I have sufficiently proved from your own dear self in this very discourse of infallibility. What follows concerning the Jesuits' pretence of infallibility to themselves (proved by his lordship from the words of the apologist to whom Casaubon replies in his Epistle to Fronto Duçæus, which are these, "Let day and night——life and death be joined together, and then there will be some hope that heresy may fall upon the person of a Jesuit") is very well worth the observing, were it only for that rare and incomparable answer which you make to them. In which it is hard to guess whether your ingenuity or your wit surpass the other. "Rabbi Casaubon, *κακοῦ κόρακος κακὸν ᾠδὴν*, must help him out, 'An apologist,' saith Casaubon, 'avers it is impossible for a Jesuit to err. Who is this anonymous apologist? A Jesuit or a minister? for an apologist and a Jesuit are no more convertible terms than a Jesuit and a minister. How shall we know then whether this nameless apologist was a Jesuit, or a minister personating a Jesuit? The Gospel will tell us: *ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.*'" O rare drollery! doth this pass for wit at Rome? or must we think you speak these words in good earnest? If so, your ignorance is more than ordinary in these matters. For to pass by your unworthy reflection on that excellent person Isaac Casaubon, whose memory is as far above your detraction as his learning beyond your reach; and to let go your scurrilous Greek proverb, *κακοῦ κόρακος κακὸν ᾠδὴν*, (which some will tell you was Greek for a Jesuit,) are you really so ignorant, that you did not know whether the apologist, whose words are cited, were a Jesuit or a minister? What, not he, who professedly undertakes the vindication of the Jesuits? not he, who was so seriously recommended by Fronto Duçæus, a Jesuit himself? not he, who industriously vindicates Ribadeneira, Scribanus, Emanuel Sa, Bellarmine, and others, in their doctrine which doth most reflect on the power and authority of princes? not he, who extols father Garnet who was exe-

Lab. p. 100.
n. 3.

236

cuted in England for the gunpowder treason, yet, for all this, not he known to be a Jesuit? Are you yet to seek? Apply but your own rule of the Gospel to what is said already, and by those fruits you cannot but know him to be a Jesuit.

§. 8. But now, notwithstanding the sufficient answers which have been so often given to the places produced for the proof of the church's infallibility out of scripture, you thought it no needless trouble in A. C. to mention them, and much less in yourself to vindicate them from the bishop's interpretation: the places are, Luke x. 16, "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me:" Matth. xxviii. 20. "I am with you always even unto the end of the world:" Joh. xiv. 16, "The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, shall abide with you for ever." That which you would infer from these places is, that an infallible assistance is promised to the church in all ages, not in its diffusive sense but representative, viz. in the pastors and doctors assembled in council. The substance of his lordship's answer to these places is in these words; "These promises were made of continual presence and assistance, that I grant; and they were made to the apostles and their successors, that I grant too, but in a different degree. For it was of continual and infallible assistance to the apostles, but to their successors of continual and fitting assistance, but not infallible." To this you return no answer in general, but endeavour to evince the contrary from the particular places by disproving his interpretations of them. To the first therefore, Luke x. 16, "He that heareth you heareth me," &c. his lordship answers, "that this was absolutely true in the apostles, who kept themselves to that which was revealed by Christ; but it was to be but conditionally true in their successors, i. e. so long and so far as you speak my words and not your own. For where the command is for preaching, the restraint is added. "Go," saith Christ, "and teach all nations:" but you may not preach all things that you please, but all things which I have commanded you. The publication is yours, the doctrine is mine; and where the doctrine is not mine, there your publication is beyond or short of your commission." To this you reply, "That this is rather to pervert our Saviour's words than to interpret them, is manifest." And the reason you give is, because a sectary, "who denies the apostles' infallibility as well as the church's, might apply this restraint to the apostles themselves,

Conf. p. 76.
sect. 16. n.
28.

Matt.
xxviii. 20.

Lab. p. 101.
n. 4.

as well as he now applies it to their successors." But they are strange kind of sectaries indeed who deny the apostles' infallibility, and my memory doth not serve me with any such who asserted Christ's infallibility and denied the apostles'; but if there be any such sectaries, let us know them, that we may then say, there are some in the world who believe great absurdities as well as you. However, let us for the present take this for a supposition, that any men might do so; whether then they might not say, the apostles were only infallible when they spake Christ's words and not their own, i. e. 237 delivered his doctrine and not any other. No doubt they might, and said very well in it too. And if these be the sectaries you mean, I am one of them myself; for I believe the apostles were no further infallible than as they delivered Christ's doctrine to the world, and I suppose there are many such sectaries besides myself. But all the difference then between the apostles and their successors was this, that those who heard the apostles' doctrine had ground to believe them infallible in what they delivered for Christ's doctrine, but we have no ground to believe so of any church since the apostles' times, that it is infallible in delivering the doctrine of Christ to others. The promise then of infallible assistance as made to the apostles doth imply, that God's Spirit would be so with them, that they should deliver nothing for the revealed will of God or the doctrine of Christ but what was really and truly so. And if you can from this or any other place prove such an infallible assistance to the church of all ages, you do something, but not otherwise. But for this particular place, "He that heareth you heareth me," I have something more yet to say, which may manifest how wholly impertinent it is to your purpose. 1. It seems to me very questionable, whether any such thing as infallibility be at all implied in this place: and then certainly from hence you cannot infer a successive infallibility in the church. And the reasons why I question it are, 1. The apostles themselves had not that continual infallible assistance of the Spirit of God till after Christ's ascension, when the promise of Christ's sending his Spirit upon them was remarkably accomplished; will you say then they had infallible assistance by the Spirit before the promise of that infallible assistance was made to them? If then the apostles themselves had not such a continual infallible assistance, much less the seventy

disciples who are here spoken of. 2. The message they were sent upon did not at all require any infallible assistance, for it was only a preparative message, they not being sent to deliver fully the doctrine of Christ, but to tell them, "the kingdom of God is at hand," or "nigh unto you," verse 9, 11, i. e. that blessed state of things under the Messiah is now ready to be revealed to you: the whole design therefore of that commission of the seventy disciples and the apostles, when they were first sent abroad, was of the same nature with John Baptist's, viz. to prepare people for the reception and entertainment of that doctrine which Christ should deliver to them. Now what infallible assistance can be supposed necessary in order to this? 3. The words imply nothing of infallible assistance in them. For when Christ saith, "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me," the plain meaning is no more than this; They which hearken to your message, and believe the truth of what you say, do therein manifest their readiness to hearken to me, and consequently will receive my doctrine when it is delivered to them; but they who despise this message of yours, the affront they offer you reflects most on me who sent you; and they shall find to their sorrow that in rejecting me they reject God too, who will punish them severely for it: which that it is the meaning of the words will very easily appear to any one that considers the scope and design of the place. Now is it not possible for any to declare their respect to Christ by receiving his messengers, without believing those messengers to be infallible? If that be possible, then what kind of infallibility can you hence infer? 2. Suppose I should grant these seventy infallible in what they delivered, yet nothing can be hence drawn from the church's continual infallibility, because of the different reason of one from the other; and that will appear in these things: 1. These were immediately sent abroad by Christ himself, when there were no infallible writings containing this doctrine 238 made by himself or his apostles. And was there not then much more reason for such an infallibility than there can be now? 2. These had sufficient evidences to attest that infallibility, by that power of miracles which they had in curing diseases and casting out of devils, verse 9—17. And therefore those they were sent to had sufficient inducement to believe such an

infallibility, if they had pretended to it: when therefore you can prove the like of your lawfully sent doctors and pastors, either apart or in a general council, you may then from hence argue something toward that infallibility, but not before.

In your following words you acknowledge a difference in applying this text to the apostles and their successors; for it was true in every one of the apostles apart, but it is not so in every one of the succeeding pastors: and for this you give these reasons: 1. Your adversaries and you are agreed in it, viz. that the pastors apart are fallible. 2. It is manifest by experience, that many eminent pastors have not only been erroneous, but heretical. 3. There is universal tradition for it. 4. Plain scripture for it, that even from themselves there should arise some that should speak perverse things. These reasons I acknowledge to be so true, that, if you had expressed the pope himself in them, you could not have proved his fallibility better than by experience, consent, and scripture. But yet you have two reserves in a corner which mar all the rest, viz. that from these places you make general councils infallible, and, according to your most received persuasion, the pope too. Do you so indeed? and from these places? and both of them infallible, whether they agree or not? But if our reasons be not stronger against any such infallibility deducible from these places than yours are for it, (for I have not seen any,) I am content to blind my understanding so much, if I can, as to believe what you say, that to give reasons against your exposition is impossible. But as your reason in all other things is weak, so in this it appears that either your ignorance or your confidence is intolerable.

Lab. p. 102.
n. 4.

Conf. p. 78.
sect. 16. n.
29.

§. 9. The next place is Matt. xxviii. 20. "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." To which his lordship saith, "Yes, most certain it is, present by his Spirit; for else, in bodily presence, he continued not with his apostles but during his abode on earth. And this promise of his spiritual presence was to their successors; else why to the end of the world? The apostles did not, could not live so long. But then to the successors the promise goes no further than, 'I am with you always,' which reaches to continual assistance, but not to divine and infallible." What say you now to this? Why forsooth, "It is the same answer as before, and therefore deserves no further refutation." But doth it not deserve some

further proof of your infallibility from this place: or are you content to let it go, because you cannot but see that a spiritual presence and not infallible is hereby promised, either to the apostles or their successors, although from other places it appears that the spiritual presence of Christ with his apostles did extend to so high a degree, as to make them infallible in what they delivered for the doctrine of Christ, but no place of scripture doth assert so much of the church's infallibility. It is well then that you grant, that St. Gregory did not believe any infallible assistance in the pastors of the church; "but," you say, "he understood it of them apart," to make which probable you must produce some other places, where he saith otherwise of them in council. But how a gracious presence of Christ with his church, which you grant Rabanus Maurus meant by this place, should suppose a conjunctive infallibility of the pastors as a necessary foundation and support of the church diffusive, I confess is beyond my understanding; but at least you say, it denies it not: neither doth it deny that you or I are infallible; but doth it therefore follow that we are so? What places you produce (or rather bid us go seek for out of the fathers) to prove that they, in effect, (it seems then, not evidently,) do attribute infallibility to the church, 239 (but by no means divine infallibility, for this is more than the third time that you have forbid the banns between those two words *divine* and *infallible*,) will to any that reads them appear to be capable of proving no more than the perpetuity of a church in the world; but if any of them can do any better service, I doubt not but we shall again meet with them, and therefore shall adjourn their consideration to a more convenient place. To prove that any of the fathers have denied this place to extend to infallibility, is a very unreasonable thing which you put the bishop and his party upon, because they only deliver what they conceive the meaning of places to be, without reflections on any heresies but such as were most prevalent in their own times. And if your church had in their time challenged infallibility from such places, you might have heard of their negative, which at present you put us unreasonably to prove.

§. 10. Your answer to John xiv. 16. only is, that it must be understood in some absolute sense; and doth not his lord-

ship say so too, viz. in regard of consolation and grace. But if you say, there can be no other absolute sense but an infallible assistance, you would do well to prove it, and not barely to suppose it : and so likewise what follows as to John xvi. 13. (which his lordship justly restrains to the apostles alone) you tell us, “that you contend, that in whatsoever sense all truth is to be understood in respect of each apostle apart, it is also to be understood in relation to their successors, assembled in a full representative of the whole church.” That you contend, we grant ; but we say, it is without sense or reason. And therefore come to examine what you produce for it. Your first reason, “because the representative of the church in general council, and the bishop of Rome as pastor of the whole church, have equal power to oblige the church to believe what they deliver, as each apostle had,” is utterly denied, and must be more than barely supposed as it is here. Your second, which you call the fundamental reason of this exposition, is, in short, “that the preservation of the church requires infallibility in future ages of the church, as well as in the apostles’ times,” which is again utterly denied ; and the next time you write, I pray prove your reasons well ; and think not your confident producing things you know are denied by us will serve for reasons against us. Before you can sufficiently prove that any rite of the church, not mentioned in scripture, had the Holy Ghost for its author, especially when contrary to a custom expressed in scripture, you must do more than produce a single testimony of St. Augustine for it ; who was apt to suppose the Holy Ghost might be pleased with such things which the church, though not therein infallible, might consent in the practice of. Which certainly is far from supposing the church to have infallible assistance with it in delivering doctrines of faith, because some things might be used in the church which the Holy Ghost might be supposed not displeased with ; which is the utmost can be made of your citation out of St. Austin.

It seems you were aware of that disparity between the apostles’ times and ours, as to the pretence of infallibility, because the apostles were first to deliver this doctrine to the world, and after to consign it by writing to future ages ; from whence it were easy to infer, there could not be that necessity of a

Lab. p. 103.
n. 5.

Lab. p. 103.
n. 6.

continual infallible assistance in the church, because the doctrine infallibly delivered by them is preserved in the church by the infallible records of it. But to this your answer is considerable. "What wise man," say you, "would go about to raise a stately building for many ages, and satisfy himself with laying a foundation to last but for a few years? Our Saviour, the wisest of architects, is not to be thought to have founded this incomparable building of the church upon sand; which must infallibly have happened, had he not intended to afford his continual assistance also to the succeeding pastors of the church, to lead them, when assembled in a general council, into all those truths wherein he first settled the apostles." Whether you call this arguing for the church's infallibility, or libelling against our blessed Saviour if he hath not done what you would have him, is hard to determine. I am sure it is arguing *ab absurdo* with a witness; for if he hath not done just as you fancy he should have done, he must venture to be accounted an ignoramus and impostor before, and here to do that which no wise man would have done, viz. build a stately fabric, the church, upon the sands. So it seems you account the prophets and the apostles: for if the apostle may be credited, we are "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." And this is it you must mean by being built on the sand; for herein it is plain the church is built on these, viz. that infallible doctrine which was delivered by them, but here is not one word or the least intimation of an inherent infallibility in the church which was to be its foundation so as to secure it from all error. And this, you say, must infallibly happen, if there be not the same infallibility in general councils which was in the apostles; for that I suppose must be the meaning of your last words, if they be to the purpose. But how groundless your pretence of the infallibility of general councils is will appear when we come to that subject; but have you so little of common sense and reason with you, as to suppose the church presently, notwithstanding the divine revelation of the doctrine of Christianity in scripture, to be built on sand, if general councils be not infallible? Is there not sufficient ground to rely on the doctrine of Christianity, supposing there never had been any general council in the world? What

Lab. p. 104.

11. 7.

240

Eph. ii. 20.

was the church built on before the Nicene council? only on sand? Surely the wind and billows of persecutions would then have easily overturned it. What if through civil combustions in the empire there could never have been any assemblies of the bishops afterwards, must the church needs have fallen to the ground for want of general councils? But why, I pray, must the infallibility of the apostles be compared only to a foundation that can last but for few years? Do you suppose that these apostles never did commit their doctrine infallibly to writing? or that these writings of theirs did last but for a few years? without one of these, it is hard to find out your meaning by those expressions. If you deny either of them, I shall readily prove them: but if you affirm both these, (as, if you are heartily a Christian, you must do,) with what face can you say that Christ, in making the apostles infallible, did lay a foundation but for a few years? But thanks be to God, although perverse and unreasonable men are always quarrelling with the methods of divine wisdom and goodness, this "foundation of the Lord standeth sure" still; and, as long as the infallible doctrine of the gospel continues, the church will be built on a steadfast and unmovable rock, which will prove a much surer foundation than the seven hills of infallibility. But this is your grand and fundamental mistake, to suppose a church cannot continue without a vital inherent principle of infallibility in herself, which must be discovered by infallible directions from the head of it: whereas we grant the necessity of an infallible foundation of faith, but cannot discern, either from scripture, reason, or antiquity, that there must be a living and standing infallible judge, which must deliver and interpret those infallible records to us. We grant then infallibility in the foundation of faith; we assert the highest certainty of the infallibility of that foundation; we declare that the owning of that infallible foundation is that which makes men Christians, (the body of whom we call a church;) we further grant, that Christ hath left in his church sufficient
 241 means for the preservation of it in truth and unity: but we deny that ever he promised such an infallibility to be constantly resident in that church as was in the prophets and apostles; and that neither any intention of Christ or any reason in the thing can be manifested, why such an infallibility

should be so necessary for the church's preservation, that without it the wisdom of Christ must be questioned, and the church built on a sandy foundation. Your citation of Vincentius Lirinensis proves nothing but the church's constancy in adhering to that doctrine of faith which was delivered from the beginning; but how that should prove a constant infallibility I cannot understand, unless it is impossible that there should be any truth where there is no inherent infallibility. Thus we see what very little success you have in the attempt of proving the church's continual infallibility from scripture.

§. 11. From hence you proceed to the consideration of the way, how scripture and tradition do mutually confirm each other. His lordship grants, "that they do mutually, but not equally, confirm the authority either of other. For scripture doth infallibly confirm the authority of church traditions, truly so called: but tradition doth but morally and probably confirm the authority of the scripture." "This," you say, "is apparently false," but endeavour not to make it evident that it is so: only you say, A. C. refused already to grant it. *Et quid tum postea?* Must every thing be false which A. C. refuses to grant? But let us see whether his similitude makes it out. "For," saith he, "it is as a king's ambassador's word of mouth and his king's letters bear mutual witness to each other." "Just so indeed," saith his lordship, "for his king's letters of credence under hand and seal confirm the ambassador's authority infallibly to all that know his seal and hand: but the ambassador's word of mouth confirms his king's letters but only probably. For else, why are they called letters of credence, if they give not him more credit than he gives them?" To which you make a large reply. "1. That the king's hand and seal cannot confirm infallibly to a foreign king, who neither knows hand nor seal, the ambassador's authority; and therefore this reacheth not the business, how we should know infallibly that the scripture is God's word. 2. That the primary reason why the ambassador is admitted is his own credit, to which correspond the motives of credibility of the church, by which the letters of credence are admitted. 3. That none can give authority to the letters of credence, or be infallibly certain of them, but such as infallibly know that hand and seal. 4. That none can infallibly know that hand and seal,

Conf. p. 80.
sect. 16. n.
31.

Lab. p. 105.
n. 7.

but such as are certain of the ambassador's sincerity." But doth all this disprove what his lordship saith, that though there be a mutual testimony, yet it is not equal? for although the letters of credence might be the sooner read and admitted of on the ambassador's reputation and sincerity, yet still those letters themselves, upon the delivery of them, may further and in a higher degree confirm the prince he is sent to of his authority to act as ambassador. Supposing then that there be a sufficient testimony that these letters were sealed by the secretary of state, who did manifest his sincerity in the highest manner in the sealing of them; though a foreign prince might not know the hand and seal, yet upon such a creditable testimony he may be assured that they were sealed by the prince himself. But then withal, if the ambassador, to assure the prince, offers his own life to attest the truth of his credentials, and the prince by reading the letters find something in them which could not be written by any other than that prince, he then hath the highest certainty he can desire. This is the case between tradition and scripture; general tradition at first makes way for the first admission of scripture, as the general repute of an ambassador's coming doth for his access to the prince; the particular tradition of the church is like the ambassador's affirming to the prince that he hath letters of credence with him; but then, when he inquires into the
 242 certainty of those letters, those motives of credibility (not which relate to the person of the ambassador) but which evidently prove the sealing of those letters (as the constant testimony of such who were present at it, the secretaries and ambassadors venturing their lives upon it) must confirm him in that; and lastly, his own reading the credentials give him the highest confirmation, i. e. the testimony of those who saw the miracles of Christ and his apostles, and confirmed the truth of their testimony by their dying for it, are the highest inducement to our believing that the scriptures were sealed by God himself in the miracles wrought, and written by his own hand, his Spirit infallibly assisting the apostle; but still, after all this, when in these very scriptures we read such things as we cannot reasonably suppose could come from any but God himself, this doth in the highest degree settle and confirm our faith. Therefore, as to the main scope for which this

similitude was used by his lordship, it holds still ; but your mistake lies in supposing that the ambassador's reception depended wholly on his own single testimony, and that was enough to make any prince infallibly certain that his letters of credence are true ; which cannot be, unless he knows beforehand that ambassador to be infallibly true, which is impossible to be supposed at his first reception. Yet this is plainly your case, that the scriptures are to be infallibly believed on the single testimony of the present church, which is, to make the ambassador himself give authority to his letters of credence, and set hand and seal to them. Whereas the contrary is most evident to be true. But then, supposing these credentials admitted, the prince transacts with the ambassador according to that power which is conveyed to him therein. And thus it is in the present case : not as though a prince treated every envoy with equal respect to an ambassador, no more ought any pastors of the church be received but according to that power and authority which their credentials, viz. the scriptures, do convey to them. We own therefore the apostles as God's immediate ambassadors, whose miracles did attest their commission from heaven to all they came to ; and no persons could pretend ignorance that this is God's hand and seal ; but all other pastors of the church we look on only as agents settled to hold correspondency between God and us, but no extraordinary ambassadors, who must be looked on as immediately transacting by the infallible commission of Heaven. When therefore the pastor or pastors of your church shall bring new credentials from Heaven, attested with the same broad seal of Heaven which the apostles had, viz. miracles, we shall then receive them in the same capacity as apostles, viz. acting by an infallible commission, but not till then. By which I have given a sufficient answer to what follows concerning the credit which is given to Christ's legates as to himself ; for hereby it appears they are to have no greater authority than their commission gives them. Produce therefore an infallible commission for your pastors' infallibility, either apart or conjunctly, and we shall receive it ; but not else. Whether A. C. in the words following doth in terms attribute divine and infallible authority to the church, supposing it infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost, is very little

material ; for, whether he owns it or no, it is sufficient that it necessarily follows from his doctrine of infallibility. For how can the church be infallible by virtue of those promises wherein divine infallibility, you say, is promised, and by virtue of which the apostles had divine infallibility, and yet the church not to be divinely infallible ? The remainder of this chapter, which concerns the sense of the fathers in this controversy, will particularly be considered in the next, which is purposely designed for it.

THE SENSE OF THE FATHERS IN THIS CONTROVERSY.

The judgment of antiquity inquired into, especially of the three first centuries; and the reasons of it.—The several testimonies of Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and all the fathers who writ in vindication of Christian religion, manifested to concur fully with our way of resolving faith.—T. C.'s answers to Vincentius Lirinensis, a Gandavo, and the fathers produced by his Lordship, pitifully weak.—The particulars of his ninth chapter examined.—S. Augustine's testimony vindicated.—T. C.'s nauseous repetitions sent as vagrants to their several homes.—His lordship's considerations found too heavy for T. C.'s answers.—In what sense the scripture may be called a *Præcognitum*—What way the Jews resolved their faith.—This controversy, and the first part, concluded.

§. 1. **H**AVING thus largely considered whatever you could pretend to for the advantage of your own cause, or the prejudice of ours, from reason and scripture; nothing can be supposed to remain considerable, but the judgment of the primitive church in this present controversy. And next to scripture and reason, I attribute so much to the sense of the Christian church in the ages next succeeding the apostles, that it is no mean confirmation to me of the truth of the protestant way of resolving faith, and of the falsity of yours, that I see the one so exactly concurring, and the other so apparently contrary to the unanimous consent of antiquity. For, though you love to make a great noise with antiquity among persons meanly conversant in it, yet those who do seriously and impartially inquire into the sense of the primitive church, and not guess at it by the shreds of citations to your hands in your own writers (which is generally your way) will scarce in any thing more palpably discern your juggling and impostures than in your pretence to antiquity. I shall

not here inquire into the corruptions crept into your church under that disguise, but, as occasion is ministered to me in the following discourse, shall endeavour to pluck it off, but shall keep close to the matter in question. Three things then I design in this chapter.

1. To shew the concurrence of antiquity with us in the resolution of faith.

2. Examine what you produce from thence, either to assert your own way, or enervate ours.

3. Consider what remains of this controversy in your book.

1. For the manifesting the concurrence of antiquity with us; I shall confine my present discourse to the most pure and genuine antiquity, keeping within the compass of the three first centuries, or at least, of those who have purposely writ in vindication of the Christian faith. Not that I do in the least distrust the consent of the succeeding writers of the primitive church, but upon these reasons. 1. Because it would be too large a task at present to undertake, since no necessity from what you object, but only my desire to clear the truth, and rectify the mistakes of such who are led blindfold under the pretence of antiquity, hath led me to this discourse. 2. Because in reason they could not but understand best the ways and methods used by the apostles for the persuading men to the Christian faith; and if they had mentioned any such thing as an infallibility always to continue in the 244 church, those pastors certainly who received the care of the church from the apostles' hands, could not but have heard of it: and were strangely to blame if they did not discover and make use of it. Whatever therefore of truly apostolical tradition is to be relied on in such cases, must be conveyed to us from those persons who were the apostles' immediate successors; and if it can be made manifest that they heard not of any such thing, in that when occasion was offered, they are so far from mentioning it, that they take such different ways of satisfying men, which do manifestly suppose that they did not believe it. I know some of the greatest patrons of the church of Rome, and such who know best how to manage things with best advantage for the interest of that church, have made little account of the three first ages, and confined themselves within the compass of the four first councils, upon

this pretence, because the books and writers are so rare before, and that those persons who lived then had no occasion to write of the matters in controversy between them and us. But if the ground why those other things which are not determined in scripture are to be believed by us and practised as necessary be, that they were apostolical traditions, who can be more competent judges what was so and what not, than those who lived nearest the apostolical times? and those certainly (if they writ of any thing) could not write of any thing of more concernment to the Christian world than the knowledge of such things would be; or at least we cannot imagine but that we should find express intimations of them, where so many, so wise, and learned persons do industriously give an account of themselves and their solemn actions to their heathen persecutors. But however silent they may be in other things, which they neither heard nor thought of, as in the customs controverted between the papists and us, (which, no doubt, is the true reason why the three first ages are declined by cardinal Perron,) yet there is not the least shadow of pretence why they should be silent in this present controversy, since the great business of their writings was to vindicate the Christian faith, to persuade the heathens to believe it, and to manifest the grounds on which they were induced to believe themselves. If therefore in this they do unanimously concur with that resolution of faith I have already laid down, nothing can be desired more for the evidence and confirmation of the truth of our way, than that it is not only most consonant to scripture, but built on the truest reason, and was the very same which the primitive Christians used when they gave an account of their faith: which I shall do, not by some mangled citations, but deducing it from the scope and design of their writings, and drawing it successively down from the first after the apostles, who appeared in vindication of the Christian faith.

§. 2. I begin with Justyn Martyr, who, as Photius saith of him, was ἀνὴρ οὐτε τῷ χρόνῳ πόρρω τῶν ἀποστόλων, οὐτε τῇ ἀρετῇ, “not far from the apostles either in time or virtue^a,” and who being a professed philosopher before he became a Christ-

^a Phot. biblioth. Cod. 234.

ian, we may in reason think that he was more inquisitive into the grounds of Christian faith before he believed, and the more able to give an account of them when he did. Whether therefore we consider those arguments which first induced him to believe, or those whereby he endeavours to persuade others to it, we shall find how consonant and agreeable he is to our grounds of faith, how far from any imagination of the church's infallibility. In the beginning of his excellent dialogue with Trypho, (if I may conjecture,) he represents the manner of his conversion in a Platonical way, introducing a solemn conference between himself and an ancient person of great gravity, and a venerable aspect in a solitary place, whither he was retired for his meditations. Pet. Halloix^b is much troubled who this person should be, whether an angel in
 245 human shape, or a man immediately conveyed by an angel to discover Christianity to him, which when he had done, he was as suddenly carried back again. Scultetus (I suppose from the story) asserts Justyn Martyr^c to be converted by divine revelation. But, if I be not much mistaken, this whole conference is no more than the setting forth the grounds of his becoming a Christian in the Platonical mode, by way of dialogue, (and probably the whole disputation with Trypho may be nothing else;) but, however that be, it is apparent Trypho looked on him as a Platonist by his pallium, and Justin Martyr owns himself to have been so, and therefore it was very congruous for him to discourse after the academic manner. In which discourse, when Justin Martyr had stood up in vindication of the Platonic philosophy, the other person endeavours to convince him of the impossibility of attaining true happiness by any philosophy. For when Justin had said, that by philosophy he came to the knowledge of God, the other person demanded, how they could know God, who had never seen him, nor heard him? He replied, that the τὸ θεῖον was μόνῳ νῶ κατάληπτον, "God was only intelligible by our minds, as Plato said:" he again asks, "whether there were such a faculty in the minds of men, as to be able to see God without a divine power and Spirit assisting it?" Justin answers, that according to Plato, "the eye of the under-

^b Pet. Halloix in vit. Just. Mart. cap. 2. in not. ^c Medulla Patr. p. 9.

standing was sufficient to discover that there is such a being, which is the cause of all things, but the nature of it is ineffable and incomprehensible." Upon which he proceeds to inquire, what relation there was between God and the souls of men, and what means to come to the participation of him ; after a great deal of discourse on which subject between them, Justin comes at last to inquire, if there were not truth and certainty in philosophy, by whose instruction or by what means he should come to it ? To which that person returns this excellent answer, " That there had been, a long time since, several persons much elder than the reputed philosophers, blessed men, just, and lovers of God, speaking by the inspiration of the divine Spirit, foretelling things which have come to pass since, whom they call prophets. These only saw the truth, and declared it to men ; neither flattering nor fearing any, nor conquered with the love of honour : but they only spake the things which they heard and saw, being filled with the Holy Spirit. Whose books are still extant ; which whosoever reads and assents to, will find himself much improved in the principles and ends of things, and whatever becomes a philosopher to know. For they writ not by way of argument or demonstration, but, that which is above it, they are most faithful witnesses of truth. For the things which have and do come to pass do enforce men to believe the truth of what they spake : and not only so, but they are most worthy to be believed, for the miracles which they wrought. Moreover, they extol the Maker of the world, God and the Father, and declare to the world his Son Christ : which the false prophets, who are acted by a seducing and impure spirit, neither hath done, nor yet do do ; but they attempt to shew some tricks for the amazement of men, and cry up the evil and deceiving spirits. But do thou, above all things, pray that the gates of light may be opened to thee. For these things are not seen nor understood by all, but only by them to whom God and Christ shall grant the knowledge of them^d." A most signal

^d Ἐγένοντό τινες πρὸ πολλοῦ χρόνου, πάντων τούτων τῶν νομιζομένων φιλοσόφων παλαιότεροι, μακάριοι καὶ δίκαιοι, καὶ θεοφιλεῖς, θείῳ πνεύματι λαλήσαντες, καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα θεσπίσαντες, ἃ δὴ νῦν γίνεται, προφήτας δὲ

αὐτοὺς καλοῦσιν· οὗτοι μόνοι τὸ ἀληθές καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἐξείπον ἀνθρώποις, μήτ' εὐλαβηθέντες, μήτε δυσωπηθέντες τινα, μὴ ἠττημένοι δόξης, ἀλλὰ μόνα ταῦτα εἰπόντες ἃ ἤκουσαν καὶ ἃ εἶδον, ἀγίῳ πληρωθέντες πνεύματι. Συγγράμματα

and remarkable testimony (as any is extant in all antiquity) 246 for acquainting us with the true grounds and reasons of faith, which therefore I have at large produced. The very reading of which is sufficient to tell us how true a protestant this, whether angel or man, was. When Justin asked him, what teachers he should have to lead him to truth? he tells him, there had been, long before philosophers, excellent persons in the world called prophets, men every way good, who did nothing for fear or favour, or love of themselves. But Justin might further ask, how he should come to be instructed by them? He tells him, their writings were still extant, wherein were contained such things as might hugely satisfy a philosophical mind concerning the origin and principles of things. He might still inquire, whether those things were demonstrated or no in them? No, he replies; but they deserve assent as much, if not beyond any demonstration; because they manifest themselves to be from God, by two things, the exact accomplishment of the prophecies made by them, and the unparalleled miracles which were wrought by them. But might not the evil spirits work such things? No: for, although their false prophets may do several things to amaze men, yet they can do no such miracles as they did; besides, all which they do tends to advance these evil spirits in the world; but the design of the true prophets is to declare the true God and his Son Christ. But may then any one, by the innate power of his mind, yield a divine assent to these things? No: but pray earnestly to God to enlighten your mind; for this is the effect of divine grace, in and through Christ. What part is there now of our resolution of faith

δὲ αὐτῶν ἔτι καὶ νῦν διαμένει, καὶ ἔστιν ἐντυχόντα τοῦτοις πλείστον ὠφελήθηται καὶ περιάρχων, καὶ περιτέλους, καὶ ὧν χρῆ εἶδέναι τὸν φιλόσοφον, πιστεύσαντα ἐκείνοις. οὐ γὰρ μετὰ ἀποδείξεως πεποιήρηται τότε τοὺς λόγους, ἅτε ἀνωτέρω πίσης ἀποδείξεως ὄντες ἀξιόπιστοι μάρτυρες τῆς ἀληθείας· τὰ δὲ ἀποβάντα καὶ ἀποβαίνοντα ἐξαναγκάζει συντίθεσθαι τοῖς λελαλημένοις δι' αὐτῶν· καὶ τοίγχε καὶ διὰ τὰς δυνάμεις ἃς ἐπέτελλουν, πιστεῦσθαι δίκαιοι ἦσαν· ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὸν ποιητῆν τῶν ὄλων Θεὸν καὶ πατέρα ἐδοξάζον, καὶ

τὸν παρ' αὐτοῦ Χριστὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ κατήγγελλον, ὅπερ οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ πλάνου καὶ ἀκαθάρτου πνεύματος ἐμπισπλάμενοι ψευδοπροφήται, οὔτε ἐποίησαν, οὔτε ποιῶσιν, ἀλλὰ δυνάμεις τινὰς ἐνεργεῖν εἰς κατάπληξιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τολμῶσι, καὶ τὰ τῆς πλάνης πνεύματα καὶ δαιμόνια δοξολογοῦσιν· εὐχου δέ σοι πρὸ πάντων φωτὸς ἀνοιχθῆναι πύλας· οὐ γὰρ συνοπτὰ, οὐδὲ συνορητὰ πᾶσιν ἐστιν, εἰ μὴ τῷ Θεῷ συνίεναι καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς αὐτοῦ. Justin. Martyr. Dialog. c. Tryph. p. 224, 225. ed. Paris. 1636.

which is not herein asserted? If you ask, why you believe there were such men in the world as these prophets? the continuance of their books and common fame sufficiently attest it. If you ask, why you should believe them to be true prophets? the excellency of their doctrine, joined with the fulfilling prophecies and working miracles, abundantly prove it. But if you lastly ask, whether, besides objective evidence, there be not some higher efficient requisite to produce a divine faith? the answer is, That depends upon the grace of God in Christ: so that here we have most evidently all those things concurring, which his lordship asserts in the resolution of faith; moral inducement preparing the mind, rational evidence from the thing into which faith is resolved, and divine grace requisite in the nature of an efficient cause. But where is there the least intimation of any church's infallibility requisite to make men believe with a firm and divine faith? No doubt that was a divine faith which Justin was bid to pray so heartily for, and which was only in those to whom it was given; and yet even this faith had no other assurance to build itself upon but that rational evidence which is before discovered. That divine person never thought of men's believing with their wills, much less that the books of scripture had no more evidence of themselves than distinction of colours to a blind man; he did not think Christ an ignoramus or impostor, because he left no church infallible, nor that God by the prophets laid a foundation upon sand, or that would last but a few years, because he did not continue such an infallible assistance as the prophets had to the church in all ages; yet these are all brave assertions of yours; which doubtless you would be ashamed of, and recant, if you had not, as Casaubon saith of the person whom you could not tell whether he was a Jesuit or no, (but by that character you might guess it,) that had *frontem ferream, et cor involutum*; a brow of steel, and a heart full of meanders, (to use your own fine expression.) Upon this Justin tells us, a divine ardour was raised in his mind, and a love of the prophets and such as were the friends of Christ, and, upon further consideration, *ταύτην μόνον εὔρισκον φιλοσοφίαν ἀσφαλῆ τε καὶ σύμφορον*, "I found this the only certain and profitable philosophy;" and thereupon commends the doctrine of Christ to Trypho and his company for some-

thing which was certainly innate to it, that it had a kind of
 247 awe and majesty in it, and is excellent at terrifying and per-
 suading those who were out of the right way, and brings the
 sweetest tranquillity to such as are conversant in it. And
 afterwards undertakes to demonstrate the truth of our reli-
 gion from the "reasonableness of it, that we have not yielded
 our assent to vain and empty fables, nor to assertions uncapa-
 ble of evidence and demonstration; but to such as are filled
 with a divine Spirit overflowing with power, and flourishing
 with grace." And accordingly manageth his discourse quite
 through, shewing the insufficiency of the ceremonial law, and
 the truth and excellency both of the person and doctrine of
 Christ. But what need all this, if he had believed your doc-
 trine? It had been but proving the church infallible by motives
 of credibility; and then, to be sure, whatever was propounded
 to be believed by it was infallibly true. But older and wiser,
 it seems, must hold here too; Justin, though so near the
 apostles' times, went a much further way about: but it was
 well for him he lived so long ago, else he might have been
 accused of heresy, or making faith uncertain, if he had lived in
 our times, and such doctrine of his might have merited an
Index Expurgatorius.

§. 3. But it seems he was not afraid of it then, for he often
 elsewhere speaks to the same purpose. For, in his Parænesis
 to the Greeks, he makes it his business, first to shew the
 unreasonableness of believing those who were the great authors
 of all their superstitions; for the poets were manifestly ridi-
 culous, the philosophers at continual dissensions among them-
 selves, so that there was no relying on them for the finding
 out of truth, or the redress of the miseries of human nature;
 and then comes to the authors of our religion^f, who were
 both much elder than any of theirs, and did not teach any
 thing of their own heads, nor dissented from one another in
 what they delivered, or sought to confute each other as the
 philosophers did, but ἀφιλονείκως καὶ ἀσασιάστως, without all
 jarring and contention, they delivered to men the doctrine
 which they received from God. "For," saith he, "it was not

^e Παρεστῶτι γὰρ δείξω, ὅτι οὐ κε-
 νοῖς ἐπιστεύσαμεν μύθοις, οὐδὲ ἀναπο-
 δείκτοις λόγοις, ἀλλὰ μεστοῖς πνεύμα-

τος θείου καὶ δυνάμει βρύνουσι, καὶ
 τετηλόσι χάριτι. Id. p. 226.

^f Parænes. p. 9.

possible for them to know such great and divine things by nature, or human wit, but by a heavenly gift descending from above upon holy men^ε." It seems, Justin believed there was such evidence in the matters contained in scripture, which might persuade men to believe that they came from God; that they were but as instruments to that τὸ θεῖον πλῆκτρον (as he expresseth it), to that divine Spirit which did strike upon them; whence with one consent and harmony they sound forth the doctrine of God, the world's creation and man's, the immortality of the soul, judgment to come, and all things else which are necessary for us to know, which they unanimously deliver to us, though at great distances from each other, both in regard of time and place. And so proves the antiquity of the writings of Moses above all the wise men of the Greeks, by the testimony of their own authors, Polemon, Appion, Ptolomæus Mendesius, and many others, and concludes his discourse with this speech, "that it is impossible for us to know any thing certainly concerning God or religion, but from divine inspiration, which alone was in the prophets." In his first Apology for the Christians, he tells us what it was, while he was a Platonist, which brought him to a good opinion of Christianity, which was, the observing the power and efficacy that doctrine had upon the Christians to undergo with so much courage what was accounted most terrible to human nature, (which are, death and torments^b.) From whence he reasoned with himself, that although the Christians were so much calumniated, yet certainly they "could not be vicious persons, who were so little fearful of those great bug-bears²⁴⁸ of human nature. For who is there that is a lover of pleasure, or intemperate, or cruel, that can cheerfully embrace death, so as thereby to be deprived of all his goods?" And when he speaks of the doctrine itself of Christianity, he says, "It is suitable to whatever was rational among the Platonists or other philosophers, but far more agreeable to itself, and containing much more excellent things than ever they could attain to the knowledge ofⁱ." In his second Apology^k for the

ε Οὔτε γὰρ φύσει, οὔτε ἀνθρωπίνῃ ἐννοίᾳ οὕτω μεγάλα καὶ θεῖα γινώσκειν ἀνθρώποις δυνατόν, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἄνωθεν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἁγίους ἄνδρας τηρικαῦτα κατελθούσῃ δωρεᾷ. Id. ib.

^b Apolog. 1. p. 50.

ⁱ Τίς γὰρ φιλήδονος, ἢ ἀκρατής, καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν βόραν ἀγαθὸν ἡγούμενος, δύναιτο ἂν θάνατον ἀσπάζεσθαι, ὅπως τῶν αὐτοῦ ἀγαθῶν στερηθῆ. Id. ib.

^k Apol. p. 51, 52.

Christians to the emperor Antoninus Pius, he insists much on the excellency of the doctrine of Christianity from the precepts of it, chastity, love of enemies, liberality, submission to authority, worship of God, &c¹. Afterwards he proves the truth and certainty of all we believe concerning Christ, from the exact accomplishment of the prophecies made concerning him in the Old Testament, which discourse he ends with this saying^m: “So many and so great things being seen, are sufficient to persuade men to believe the truth of them, who are lovers of truth, and not seekers of applause, and under the command of passionsⁿ.” Thus we see, in all his discourses, where he had the most occasion administered to him to discover the most certain grounds of Christian faith, he resolves all into the rational evidence of the truth, excellency, and divinity of the doctrine which was contained in the scriptures. For in his second oration to the Greeks, after he had spoken highly in commendation of the scripture, calling it “the best expeller of all turbulent passions, and the surest extinguisher of those preternatural heats in the souls of men^o; which,” saith he, “makes men not poets, nor philosophers, nor orators, but it makes τὸν θνητὸν ἀθάνατον, τὸν βροτὸν θεόν, dying men immortal, and mortals become gods; and transfers them from the earth εἰς τοὺς ὑπὲρ Ὀλυμποῦ ὄρους, to such places whose confines are far above Olympus; therefore, O ye Greeks, come and be instructed; be ye as I am, for I was as you are. And these were the things which prevailed with me, the divine power and efficacy of the doctrine^p.” What was it then, I pray, that Justin Martyr, of a philosopher becoming a Christian, resolved his faith into? If we may believe himself, it was into the evidence of the doctrine of Christianity, and not into the infallibility of any church. The testimony of this person I have the more largely insisted on, both because he was so great a philosopher as well as Christian, and lived so near the apostolical times. Next him we produce Athenagoras as a philosopher too, as well as Christian, who flourished under

¹ Ibid. p. 61, 62, &c.

^m Ibid. p. 73.

ⁿ Τὰ τοσαῦτα γούν ὀρώμενα, πειθῶ καὶ πίστιν τοῖς ἀληθῆς ἀσπαζομένοις, καὶ μὴ φιλοδοξούσι, μηδὲ ὑπὸ παθῶν ἀρχομένοις, μετὰ λόγου ἐμφορῆσαι δύναται. Apol. 2. p. 89.

^o Ὡ παθῶν δεινῶν φυγαδευτήριον. ὧ πυρὸς ἐμφύχου σβεστικὸν διδασκαλείον. Orat. 2. p. 40.

^p Ταῦτά με εἶλε, τό τε τῆς παιδείας ἔνθεον καὶ τὸ τοῦ λόγου δυνατόν. Id. ib.

Antoninus and Commodus, to whom he made his apology in behalf of the Christians, in which he first undertakes to manifest the reasonableness of the doctrine which they owned, the foundation of it being the same with that which the best philosophers acknowledged the existence and unity of the Deity. “But,” saith he, “if we had nothing but such reasons as he had produced, our persuasion could only be human; but the words of the prophets are they which establish our minds:—who being carried beyond themselves, by the impulse of the divine Spirit spake that which they were moved to, when the Spirit used them as instruments through which he spake⁹.” Is not here a plain resolution of faith into that divine authority by which the prophets spake? and that not as testified by any infallible church, but as it was discernible by those persons he spake to, for he appeals to the emperors themselves concerning it; which had been a fond and absurd thing for him to do, if the knowledge of that divine inspiration did depend merely on the testimony of Christians as such, and were not to be discovered by some common principles to them and 249 others. Much to the same purpose Tatianus speaks in that eloquent oration of his against the Greeks, who was Justin Martyr’s scholar; and we shall see how agreeable he speaks to him, in the account he gives, how he became a Christian. “After,” saith he, “he had abundantly discovered the vanity of the theology and superstitions of the Greeks, he fell to the reading some strange books, much elder and more divine than the writings of the Greek philosophers. And to these” saith he, “I yielded up my faith, for the great simplicity and plainness of the style, and the freedom from affectation which was in the writers, and that evidence and perspicuity which was in all they writ; and because they foretold things to come, made excellent promises, and manifestly declared the monarchy of the world^r.” What protestant could speak

9 Ἐπεὶ δὲ αἱ φωναὶ τῶν προφητῶν πιστοῦσιν ἡμῶν τοὺς λογισμοὺς—οἱ κατ’ ἕκαστασιν τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς λογισμῶν κινήσαντος αὐτοὺς τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματος, ἃ ἐνηργουῦντο ἐξεφώνησαν συγγραμμένον τοῦ πνεύματος, ὡσεὶ καὶ ἀληθῆς ἀλλοθεν ἐμπνεῦσαι. Athenag. Apol. p. 9.

r Καί μοι πεισθῆναι ταύταις συνέβη, διὰ τε τῶν λέξεων τὸ ἄτυφον καὶ τῶν εἰπόντων τὸ ἀνεπιτήδευτον, καὶ τῆς τοῦ πάντος ποιήσεως τὸ εὐκατάληπτον, καὶ τῶν μελλόντων τὸ προγνωστικόν, καὶ τῶν παραγγελμάτων τὸ ἐξάϊσιον, καὶ τῶν ὅλων τὸ μοναρχικόν. Tatianus, p. 165.

higher of the scripture, and of those internal arguments which are the grounds of faith, than Tatianus in these words doth? Yet we see, these were the arguments which made him relinquish the Greek learning of which he was a professor at Rome, and betake himself to the profession of Christianity; though he was sure to undergo not only contempt from the world, but to be in continual hazard of his life by it. That innate simplicity of the writings of the scripture, joined with the perpicuity of it, (if at least those words be rightly translated *τῆς τοῦ πάντος ποιήσεως τὸ εὐκατάληπτον* by *sermo nusquam obscurus*, and it doth not rather relate to the account of the world's creation, which I conjecture it may do,) but however, the certainty of the predictions, the excellency of the promises, and the reasonableness of the doctrine, were the things which by the reading of the books he was persuaded to believe them by. But all this while we hear no news of any church's infallibility in order to faith.

§. 4. We come therefore to Irenæus, who was *omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus explorator*, as Tertullian speaks of him^s, “a great searcher into all kind of learning,” and therefore surely not to seek as to the true account of his faith. Whose judgment herein, although we have had occasion to inquire into before, yet we have testimonies enough beside to manifest his consent with them. And although Irenæus of all the ancient fathers be looked on as the most favourable to tradition, and is most cited to that purpose in these disputes, yet I doubt not but to make it appear, that where he speaks most concerning tradition, he makes the resolution of faith to be wholly and entirely into the scripture: and they who apprehend otherwise do either take the citations out of him upon trust, or else only search him for the words of those citations, and never take the pains to inquire into the scope and design of his discourse. For clearing which, we must consider what the subject was which he writ of, what the pleas of the adverse party were, what way Irenæus takes to confute them, and to establish the faith of Christians as to the matter which was in controversy. The matter in dispute was this: Valentinus and his scholars not being contented with the simplicity of the

^s C. Valentin. cap. 5.

doctrine of the gospel, and in probability the better to suit their opinions to the heathen mythology, had invented a strange pedigree of gods, the better, as they pretended, to give an account of the production of things, and the various dispensations which had been in the world: but knowing that the Christians did with the greatest resolution adhere to that doctrine which was delivered by Christ and his apostles, they could not suppose that they should embrace these figments unless they could some way or other father them upon them. Upon which they pretended that these very things which they delivered were really intended by Christ and the apostles in their writings, but because so few were capable of them, they gave only some intimations of them there, but delivered these ²⁵⁰ great mysteries privately only to those who were perfect; and that this was St. Paul's meaning when he said, "I speak wisdom among them that are perfect." This Irenæus gives us an account of in the beginning of all his discourse^t: but is more fully expressed in the original Greek of Irenæus preserved by Epiphanius^u in the heresy of the Valentinians. On which account alone, as Petavius saith, Epiphanius hath well deserved of posterity, for preserving entire those original fragments of Irenæus; his Greek therein being much more intelligible and smooth than the old harsh Latin version of him. His words are: "All which things are not expressly declared, in as much as all are not fit to understand them; but are mysteriously couched by our Saviour in parables, for such who are able to understand them^x." Thus they said, the thirty Æones were represented by the thirty years in which our Saviour did not appear publicly, and by the parable of the works in the vineyard, in which the one, three, six, nine, eleven hours, making up thirty, did again denote their Æones; and that St. Paul did most expressly signify them, when he used so often *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*. The duodecad of Æones by the twelve years at which our Saviour appeared disputing with the doctors. The raising of Jairus his daughter of twelve

^t Iren. l. i. c. i. p. 4. ed. Erasm.

^u Petav. not. in Epiph. in hæres. Valent.

^x Ταῦτα δὲ φανερώς μὲν μὴ εἰρη-
σθαι, διὰ τὸ μὴ πάντας χωρεῖν τὴν

γνώσιν μυστηριωδῶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Σωτή-
ρος διὰ παραβολῶν μεμνήσθαι τοῖς
συνιεῖν δυναμένοις. Iren. apud Epiph.
hæres. 31. sect. 14.

years, represented Achamoth being brought to light, whose passions were set forth by those words of our Saviour, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" in which there were three passions of Achamoth, sorrow, fear, and despair; with many things of a like nature: but hereby we sufficiently see what their pretence was, viz. that there were deep mysteries but obscurely represented in scripture, but whose full knowledge was delivered down by an oral cabala from Christ and his apostles. Now we must consider what course Irenæus^y takes to confute these pretensions of theirs. First, he gives an account what that faith was, which the church dispersed up and down the world received from the apostles and their disciples, viz. that thereby they believed in one God the Father almighty, who made heaven and earth, the sea and all in them, and in one Jesus Christ the Son of God, &c. which was directly contrary to the Valentinian heresies, who supposed the supreme God and Demiurgus to be different, and so *Christus* and *Salvator*, and so in others^z. This faith which the church hath received it unanimously keeps, though dispersed through the whole world; for although the languages be different, yet the tradition is the same among them; whether they live in Germany, France, Spain, the east, Egypt, Libya, or elsewhere. And after in the first book he hath shewed the many different opinions of the several broods of these heretics; and in the second discovered the fondness and ridiculousness of them; in his third book, he undertakes from scripture to shew the falseness of them. And begins with that excellent expression before cited. "For we have not known the disposition (or economy) of our salvation by others than by those by whom the gospel came to us, which they then first preached, and after by the will of God delivered to us in writings to be the foundation and pillar of our faith^a." Which being laid down by him at his entrance as the grand principle on which he goes, will lead us to an easy understanding of all that follows. This therefore he not only asserts, but proves. For whereas some of the adversaries pretended that the apostles preached before they fully understood all they were to know, he shews how false that was, because, after Christ's resurrection

^y Iren. l. 1. c. 2.^z Ibid. l. 1. c. 3.^a Ibid. l. 3. c. 1.

from the grave, they were endued with the Spirit of God descending from on high upon them; and were furnished with a perfect knowledge by which they went up and down preaching the gospel, which all and each of them had the knowledge of. Thus Matthew in the Hebrew tongue set forth his gospel when Peter and Paul at Rome preached the gospel and founded a church; and after their departure Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, writ those things which²⁵¹ were preached. Afterwards John published his gospel at Ephesus in Asia; "and all these," saith he, "delivered to us one God maker of heaven and earth, and one Christ his Son. To whom if one doth not assent, he despiseth those who were our Lord's companions, and therefore despiseth our Lord Christ, and likewise despiseth the Father, and is condemned of himself, resisting and opposing his own salvation, which all heretics do^b." Can any thing be more plain, than that Irenæus makes it his design to resolve faith into the writings of Christ and his apostles, and saith, that these writings were delivered as a foundation of faith, that the reason why the Christians believed but one God and one Christ was, because they read of no more in the Gospels published by them, "that he that despiseth them who were our Lord's companions, despise himself and God, and condemn themselves?" He doth not say, he that despiseth the lawfully sent pastors of the church meeting in general councils, nor them who have power to oblige the church to believe as well as the apostles had, as you say, but evidently makes the obligation to believe to depend upon that revelation of God's will which was made by the apostles, and is by their writings conveyed down to us. Would not the Valentinians have thought themselves presently run down by such ways of confutation as yours are, that they must believe the present church infallible in whatever is delivered to be believed to the world?

§. 5. But doth not Irenæus himself make use of the church's tradition, as the great argument to confute them by? I grant he doth so, and it is on that very account, that he might

^b Quibus si quis non assentit, et est a seipso damnatus, resistens, spernit quidem participes Domini, et repugnans salutis suæ, quod faciunt omnes hæretici. Iren. l. 3. c. 1. Dominum, spernit vero et Patrem,

confute them, and not lay down the only sure foundation of Christian faith. For he gives that reason of his doing so in the beginning of the very next chapter: "For," saith he, "when we dispute against them out of the scripture, they are turned presently to an accusing of the scriptures, as though they were not in all things right, and wanted authority, and because of their ambiguity, and for that truth cannot be found out by them without the help of tradition^c." I need not say that Irenæus prophesied of you in this saying of his, but it is as true of you as if he had. Your pretences being the very same against the scriptures being the rule of faith with those of the Valentinians, only that you deny not the truth of what is therein contained; for otherwise, the want of authority in themselves, the ambiguity of them, the impossibility of knowing the sense of them without tradition, are the very same arguments which with the greatest pomp and ostentation are produced by you against the scriptures being the rule whereby to judge of controversies. Which we have no more cause to wonder at than Irenæus had in the Valentinians, because from them we produce our greatest arguments against your fond opinions. Now when the Valentinians pretended their great rule was on oral tradition, which was conveyed from the apostles down to them, to this Irenæus opposeth the constant tradition of the apostolical churches, which in a continued succession was preserved from the apostles' times, which was the same every where among all the churches, which every one who desired it might easily be satisfied about; because "they could number them, who by the apostles were appointed bishops in churches, and their successors unto our own times, who taught no such thing, nor ever knew any such thing as they madly fancy to themselves^d." We see then his appeal to tradition was only in a matter of fact: whether ever any such thing as their opinion which was

^c Cum enim ex scripturis arguuntur, in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum scripturarum, quasi non recte habeant, neque sint ex auctoritate, et quia varie sint dicta, et quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas ab his qui nesciant traditionem. Iren. l. 3. c. 2.

^d Et habemus annumerare eos, qui ab apostolis instituti sunt episcopi in ecclesiis et successores eorum usque ad nos, qui nihil tale docuerunt, neque cognoverunt, quale ab his deliratur. Iren. l. 3. c. 3.

not contained in scripture, was delivered to them by the apostles or no, i. e. whether the apostles left any oral tradi-²⁵² tions in the churches, which should be the rule to interpret scriptures by, or no? and the whole design of Irenæus is to prove the contrary, by an appeal to all the apostolical churches, and particularly by appealing to the Roman church, because of its due fame and celebrity in that age wherein Irenæus lived. So that Irenæus appealed to the then Roman church, even when he speaks highest in the honour of it, for somewhat which is fundamentally contrary to the pretensions of the now Roman church. He then appealed to it, for an evidence against such oral traditions which were pretended to be left by the apostles, as a rule to understand scripture by; and were it not for this same pretence now, what will become of the authority of the present Roman church?

After he hath thus manifested by recourse to the apostolical churches, that there was no such tradition left among them, it was very reasonable to infer that there was none such at all; for they could not imagine if the apostles had designed any such tradition, but they would have communicated it to those famous churches which were planted by them, and it was absurd to suppose that those churches who could so easily derive their succession from the apostles, should in so short a time have lost the memory of so rich a treasure deposited with them, as that was pretended to be; from whence he sufficiently refutes that unreasonable imagination of the Valentinians. Which having done, he proceeds to settle those firm grounds on which the Christians believed in one God the Father, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, which he doth by removing the only objection which the adversaries had against them. For when the Christians declared the main reason into which they resolved their faith as to these principles, was, because no other God or Christ were revealed in scripture, but them whom they believed, the Valentinians answered, this could not be a sufficient foundation for their faith on this account, because many things were delivered in scripture, not according to the truth of the things, but the judgment and opinion of the persons they were spoken to. This therefore being such a pretence as would destroy any firm resolution of faith into scripture, and must necessarily

place it in tradition; Irenæus concerns himself much to demonstrate the contrary, by an “ostension,” as he calls it, “that Christ and the apostles did all along speak according to truth, and not according to the opinion of their auditors,” which is the entire subject of the fifth chapter of his third book. Which he proves first of Christ, because he was truth itself, and it would be very contrary to his nature to speak of things otherwise than they were, when the very design of his coming was to direct men in the way of truth. The apostles were persons who professed to declare truth to the world; and as light cannot communicate with darkness, so neither could truth be blinded with so much falsehood as that opinion supposeth in them. And therefore neither our Lord nor his apostles could be supposed to mean any other God or Christ than whom they declared. “For this,” saith he, “were rather to increase their ignorance and confirm them in it, than to cure them of it;” and therefore that law was true which pronounced a curse on every one who led a blind man out of his way. And the apostles being sent for the recovery of the lost sight of the blind, cannot be supposed to speak to men according to their present opinion, but according to the manifestation of truth. For, what physician intending to cure a patient will do according to his patient’s desire, and not rather what will be best for him? From whence he concludes, since the design of Christ and his apostles was not to flatter but to cure men’s souls; it follows, that they did not speak to them according to their former opinion, but according to truth without all hypocrisy and dissimulation. From whence it follows, that if Christ and his apostles did speak according to truth, there is then need of no oral tradition for our understanding scripture, and consequently the resolution of
 253 our faith as to God and Christ, and proportionably as to other objects to be believed, is not into any tradition pretending to be derived from the apostles, but into the scriptures themselves; which by this discourse evidently appears to have been the judgment of Irenæus.

§. 6. The next which follows is Clemens of Alexandria, who flourished A. D. 196, whom St. Hierom^e accounted the

^e Hieron. Ep. ad Magnum.

“ most learned of all the writers of the church :” and therefore cannot be supposed ignorant in so necessary a part of the Christian doctrine as the resolution of faith is. And if his judgment may be taken, the scriptures are the only certain foundation of faith ; for in his Admonition to the Gentiles, after he hath with a great deal of excellent learning derided the heathen superstitions, when he comes to give an account of the Christians’ faith, he begins it with this pregnant testimony to our purpose. “ For,” saith he, “ the sacred oracles affording us the most manifest grounds of divine worship, are the foundation of truth ^f.” And so goes on in a high commendation of the scripture, as the most compendious directions for happiness, the best institutions for government of life, the most free from all vain ornaments, that they raise men’s souls up out of wickedness, yielding the most excellent remedies, dissuading from the greatest deceit, and most clearly encouraging to a foreseen happiness ; with more of the same nature. And when after he persuades men with so much rhetoric and earnestness to embrace the scriptures *ἀναπεπταμέναις ταῖς ἀκοαῖς*, “ with the greatest readiness,” he gives this as the reason of it, that so they might *ἐν ἀγναῖς ξενοδοχεῖν ταῖς ψυχαῖς τὸν Θεόν*, “ entertain God in chaste souls. For the word is that light to men, by which we see God ^g.” And soon after, speaking that the design of religion is to make men like to God as much as possible, he adds, “ that truly they are the sacred scriptures which make men holy and deify men ^h,” i. e. by assimilation. And in that large and eloquent parænesis which follows, wherein he persuades men to the forsaking their old customs and embracing Christianity, all the arguments he useth are drawn from the scriptures, and not so much as the least mention of any infallible ensurancer of their truth and authority, but supposeth the evidence he produceth sufficient to persuade them to the belief and love of them. In the first of his Stromata, he proves the truth of the scriptures by the much greater antiquity of them than any of the Greek

^f Καὶ γὰρ οἱ χρησμοὶ, τὰς εἰς τὴν θεοσέβειαν ἡμῶν ἀφορμὰς ἐναργέστατα προτείνοντες, θεμελιούσι τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Clem. Alex. Προτρέπτ. p. 50. ed. Paris.

^g Φῶς δὲ ὁ λόγος ἀνθρώποις, δι’ οὗ καταναγκάζομεθα τὸν Θεόν. Ibid. p. 55.

^h Ἱερὰ γὰρ ὡς ἀληθῶς, τὰ ἱεροποιούνητα καὶ θεοποιούνητα γράμματα. Ibid. p. 56.

learning. In the second, where he particularly inquires into the nature and grounds of faith, he hath this expression: “ He therefore that believes the sacred scriptures, having a firm judgment, doth receive the voice of God, who gave the scriptures, as an impregnable demonstrationⁱ.” (Although the text be commonly printed without the comma between ἔχων and ἀπόδειξιν, yet the sense and context makes it evident that it ought to be there, and accordingly Sylburgius gives intimation of it in his notes, and Gentian Hervet, in the translation as revised by Heinsius, applies the demonstration to what follows, but very weakly joins ἀναντίρρητον with κρίσιν and not with ἀπόδειξιν, and so renders it *firmum habens iudicium cui contradicere nequit*, whereas it is plain that he intends to give an account what that foundation is which faith doth stand on.) And after having made a large discourse concerning the nature of faith, comparing the judgment of philosophers concerning it, he concludes with this saying: “ That it is an absurd thing for the followers of Pythagoras to suppose that his *ipse dixit* was instead of a demonstration to them; and yet those who are the lovers of truth, not to believe the sure testimony of our only Saviour and God, but to exact proofs of him of what he spake^k.” Wherein he
 254 discovers that Christianity requires from men no unreasonable thing in expecting assent where no such kind of proofs as those used by philosophers are; but if the Epicureans did suppose some kind of anticipation necessary to knowledge, if the Pythagoreans relied on authority, if Heraclitus quarrelled with such as could neither hear nor speak, i. e. such as neither had authority themselves, and yet would rely on none; it could not be judged any absurd thing, that Christianity did require such an assent to what Christ delivered, especially considering that he was ἀξιόπιστος, i. e. that he discovered sufficient reason why he was to be believed in whatever he spake. And thence elsewhere he says, “ that faith is a sure demonstration, because truth follows whatever is delivered

ⁱ Ὁ πιστεύσας τοίνυν ταῖς γραφαῖς ταῖς θείαις, τὴν κρίσιν βεβαίαν ἔχων, ἀπόδειξιν ἀναντίρρητον, τὴν τοῦ τὰς γραφῶν δεδωρημένου φωνῆν λαμβάνει Θεοῦ. Strom. 2. p. 362.

^k Τοὺς δὲ τῆς ἀληθείας φιλοθεάμονας, ἀπιστεῖν ἐπιχειροῦντας ἄξιόπιστῳ διδασκάλῳ τῷ μόνῳ Σωτῆρι Θεῷ, βασιάνους τῶν λεγομένων ἀπειτεῖν παρ’ αὐτοῦ. Ibid. p. 369.

from God^l." And when he gives an account what that true knowledge is which the Christian hath, he shews what things are requisite to it; two things knowledge supposeth, *ζήτησις* and *εὑρεσις*, inquiry and discovery: the "inquiry," saith he, "is an impulse of the mind, for the finding out of something by some signs which are proper to it; discovery is the end and rest of inquiry, which lies in the comprehension of the thing, which is properly knowledge. Now the signs by which things are discovered are either precedent, concomitant, or subsequent." All these he thus applies to the scriptures: "The discovery, as the end of our inquiry after God, is, the doctrine delivered by his Son; but the signs whereby we know that he was the Son of God, precedent, are the prophecies declaring his coming; concomitant, were the testimonies concerning his birth; subsequent, are those miracles which were published and manifestly shewed to the world after his ascension. Therefore the peculiar evidence that the truth is with us, is, that the Son of God himself hath taught us^m." A place not so clear in itself, as miserably involved through the oscitancy of the Latin interpreter, in which it is plain, that Clemens doth exactly, according to all rational principles of knowledge, give an account of the grounds of Christian faith; the main principle of which is the doctrine delivered by Christ; which that it ought to be assented to appears by a full concurrence of all those signs which are necessary in inquiries: here are the greatest precedent signs, (prophecies, made so long before, exactly accomplished in him,) the fullest concomitant signs, (in the many wonderful things which happened at his coming in the world,) and the clearest subsequent signs by those great and uncontrolled miracles, which were wrought in the world after his ascension. "All which put together do evidently prove that he was the Son of God who delivered this doctrine to us, and therefore

^l Γίνεται τοίνυν αὕτη ἡ πίστις ἀπόδειξις βεβαία, ἐπεὶ τοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ παραδοθείσιν ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐπιταί. Strom. 6. p. 649.

^m Τῆς τοίνυν περὶ Θεοῦ ζητήσεως, εὔρεσις μὲν ἢ διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ διδασκαλία· σημείον δὲ τοῦ εἶναι τὸν Σωτῆρα ἡμῶν αὐτὸν ἐκείνον τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, αἶ τε προηγουμένη τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ

προφητεῖαι, τοῦτον κηρύσσουσαι· αἶ τε συνπάρχασαι τῇ γενέσει αὐτοῦ τῇ αἰσθητῇ περὶ αὐτοῦ μαρτυρία· πρὸς δὲ καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάληψιν κηρυσσόμεναι τε καὶ ἐμφανῶς δεικνύμεναι δυνάμεις αὐτοῦ· τεκμήριον ἄρα τοῦ παρ' ἡμῖν εἶναι τὴν ἀλήθειαν, τὸ αὐτὸν διδάξαι τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ. Strom. 6. p. 674.

deserves our most firm assent in whatever appears to be his word." Can any thing then be more apparent than his resolution of faith into the rational evidence of Christ's being the Son of God, which is manifested to us, not by the infallible testimony of any church, but by the infallible signs of it which were precedent to, attendant on, and consequent to his appearance in the world. "If therefore," saith he, "according to Plato, truth can only be learned either from God, or those who are come from him, we may justly boast that we learn the truth from the Son of God, taking the testimonies out of those sacred oracles which were first prophesied and then fully declared ⁿ," viz. by accomplishment. The main ground of faith, then, is such as the wisest philosophers did admit of, viz. that whatsoever God said is true, and none can deliver truth but such as come from him, on which account there is nothing left but evidence that he in whom we believe was

255 the Son of God, which is abundantly manifested by the accomplishment of those prophecies in him which were made so long before. After which he disputes against the same sort of heretics which Irenæus did, and upon the same principles, viz. "that whatever God or Christ thought necessary for us to know or believe is consigned to us in the writings of the prophets and apostles ^o:" and thence he cites that out of Peter's *κίρυγμα* (a book, I suppose, then extant under that name,) *οὐδὲν ἄτερ γραφῆς*, "nothing without the written word,"—where was the unwritten word then!—and in that end of the book discovers the weakness of philosophy, because it came from mere men; but men, as men, are no sufficient teachers when they speak concerning God. "For," saith he, "man cannot speak *ἀξιώχρεως*, things becoming God^p; for being weak and mortal, he cannot speak as he ought of a Being infinite and immortal, nor he that is the work of him who made it; besides, he that cannot speak truth concerning himself, how much less is he to be believed concerning God! For, as much

ⁿ Εἴπερ οὖν καὶ κατὰ Πλάτωνα, ἢ παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἢ παρὰ τῶν ἐκγόνων τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐκμανθάνει μόνως, οἷον τε εἰκότως παρὰ τῶν θείων λογίων τὰ μαρτύρια ἐκλεγόμενοι, τὴν ἀληθειαν ἀνχοῦμεν ἐκδιδάσκεισθαι, διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, προφητευθέντων

μὲν τὸ πρῶτον, ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ σαφηνισθέντων. Strom. 6. p. 675.

^o Strom. p. 676, 678, &c.

^p Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐχέγγνοι διδάσκαλοι περὶ Θεοῦ λέγοντες ἄνθρωποι, καθὼ ἄνθρωποι. Ibid. p. 697.

as man wants of divine power, so much must his speech fall short of God, when he discourseth of him^a. For man's speech is naturally weak, and unable to express God, not only as to his essence, but as to his power and works ;” thence he concludes a necessity that God by his Spirit must discover himself to men ; which revelation he proves to be only extant among Christians, because of the many divine testimonies that Christ was the Son of God, because the knowledge that came by him was so remarkably dispersed abroad in the world, and did prevail, notwithstanding all opposition and persecution. “ For,” saith he, “ the Greek philosophy, if any ordinary magistrate forbid it, did presently sink ; but our doctrine hath been forbid from its first publishing, by the kings and potentates of the earth, who have used their utmost industry to destroy both us and that together, but still it flourisheth, and the more for its being persecuted ; for it dies not like a human doctrine, nor perisheth like a weak gift^r.” Thus we see that he insists on rational evidence as the great and sufficient testimony into which our faith is resolved as to the being of a divine revelation. In his next book he answers some objections of the heathens against believing Christianity, of which the chiefest was, the dissension among the Christians, wherein (if ever) he had an opportunity to declare what the certain rule of faith is, and what power God hath left his church for determining matters to be believed by us. But for want of understanding this necessary foundation of faith, viz. the church's infallibility, he is fain to answer this objection just as a protestant would do : “ 1. If this^s were an argument against truth, the objectors had none themselves, for both Jews and Greeks had heresies among them. 2. The very coming of heresies was an argument of the truth of scripture, because that had expressly foretold them. 3. This argument doth not hold any where else, therefore it should not in reason here, viz. where there is any dissent there can be no certainty ; for though physicians differ much from one another, yet patients are not thereby discouraged from seeking

^a Ἀσθενὴς γὰρ φύσει ὁ ἀνθρώπος λόγος, καὶ ἀδύνατος φράσαι Θεόν.
Id. ib.

^r Ἡ δὲ καὶ μᾶλλον ἀνθεὶ οὐ γὰρ

ὡς ἀνθρωπίνῃ ἀποθήσκει διδασκαλία, οὐδ' ὡς ἀσθενὴς μαραίνεται δωρεά.
Ibid. p. 698.

^s Ibid. p. 753, &c.

to them for cure. 4. This should only make men use more care and diligence in the search and inquiry after truth; for they will find abundant recompense for their search in the pleasure of finding truth. Would any one say, because two apples are offered to him, the one a real fruit, the other made of wax, that therefore he will meddle with neither; but rather, that he ought to use more care to distinguish the one from the other? If there be but one highway, and many by-paths which lead to precipices, rivers, or the sea, will he not go in the highway because there are such false ones? but rather go in it with the more care, and get the exactest knowledge of it he can. Doth a gardener cast off the care of his garden because weeds grow up with his herbs? or rather, doth he not use the more diligence to distinguish one from the other? So ought
 256 we to do in discerning truth. 5. That all those who seriously inquire after truth may receive satisfaction. For, either man's mind is capable of evidence, or it is not; if not, it is to no purpose to trouble ourselves with any thing of knowledge at all; if it be, then we must descend to particular questions, by which we may demonstratively learn from the scriptures how the heresies fell off from them: and that the most exact knowledge is preserved in truth alone, and the ancient church^t." If then heresies must be demonstratively confuted out of scriptures, what then doth he make to be the rule to judge of controversies, but only them? For what he speaks of the ancient church, he speaks of it as in conjunction with truth, and in opposition to those novel heresies of the Basilidians and Valentinians. For, that he doth not at all appeal to the judgment of any church, much less the present, as having any infallibility whereon men ought to rely in matters of faith, appears likewise by his following words: "But those," saith he, "who are willing to employ themselves in the most excellent things, will never give over the search of truth, till they have received a demonstration of it from the scriptures themselves^u." Here we see the last resolution of assent is into the scriptures themselves, without any the least mention or intima-

^t Ἀποδείξεως δὲ οὐσης, ἀνάγκη συγκαταβαίνειν εἰς τὰς ζητήσεις, καὶ δι' αὐτῶν τῶν γραφῶν ἐκμανθάνειν ἀποδεικτικῶς, ὅπως μὲν ἀπεσφάλησαν αἱ αἱρέσεις, &c. p. 755.

^u Ἄλλ' οἱ πονεῖν ἔτι μοι ἐπὶ τοῖς καλλίστοις, οὐ πρότερον ἀποστήσονται ζητοῦντες τὴν ἀλήθειαν, πρὶν ἂν τὴν ἀπόδειξιν ἀπ' αὐτῶν λάβωσι τῶν γραφῶν. Id. ib.

tion of any infallibility in the church, either to deliver or interpret those scriptures to us: and after, gives the true account of heresies, viz. men's not adhering to the scriptures. "For," saith he, "they must necessarily be deceived in the greatest things who undertake them, unless they hold fast the rule of truth, which they received from truth itself^x." And in this following discourse he goes as high as any protestants whatever, (even such who suppose the scripture to be *principium indemonstrabile* by any thing but itself;) for he makes the doctrine delivered by Christ to be the principle of our faith; "and we make use of it," saith he, "to be our *κριτήριον* to find out other things by. But whatever is judged is not believed till it be judged, therefore that can be no principle which stands in need of being judged. Justly therefore when we have by faith received that indemonstrable principle, and from the principle itself used demonstrations concerning itself, we are by the voice of our Lord instructed in the knowledge of truth^y." Nothing can be more plain in what he saith, than that, if there were a higher *κριτήριον* than scripture, (as there must be, if we are to receive it on the account of the church's infallible testimony,) the scripture could not be called the principle of our faith, but when we receive the scripture, the evidence we have that it is our principle must be fetched from itself; and therefore he does here in terms (as express as may be) resolve the belief of scripture into internal arguments, and makes it as much a principle supposed as ever his lordship doth. And immediately after, when he proposeth that very question, how this should be proved to others, "We expect not," saith he, "any proof from men, but we prove the thing sought for by the word of God, which is more worthy belief than any demonstration, or rather which is the only demonstration, by the knowledge of which those who have tasted of the scripture alone become believers^z." Can any

^x Σφάλλεσθαι γὰρ ἀνάγκη μέγιστα τοὺς μεγίστοις ἐγχειροῦντας πράγμασιν, ἢν μὴ τὸν κανόνα τῆς ἀληθείας παρ' αὐτῆς λαβόντες ἔχωσι τῆς ἀληθείας. Id. p. 756.

^y Τὸ κρινόμενον δὲ πᾶν ἔτι ἄπιστον πρὶν κριθῆναι· ὡς τ' οὐδ' ἀρχὴ τὸ κρίσεως δεόμενον· εἰκότως τοίνυν πίστει

περιβαλόντες ἀναπόδεικτον τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκ περιουσίας, καὶ τὰς ἀποδείξεις παρ' αὐτῆς τῆς ἀρχῆς περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς λαβόντες, φωνῇ Κυρίου παιδευόμεθα πρὸς τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας. Strom. 7. p. 757.

^z Οὐ τὴν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀναμένομεν μαρτυρίαν, ἀλλὰ τῇ τοῦ Κυρίου φωνῇ

one who reads these words ever imagine that this man speaks like one that said, that the scriptures of themselves appear no more to be God's word, than distinction of colours to a blind man? How much beyond the Valentinians and Basilidians would Clemens have accounted so great a madness, who so 257 plainly asserts the scriptures to be proved by themselves, and that not casually, or in the heat of argument, but, lest we should not thoroughly apprehend his meaning, repeats it again in the same page, ἀπ' αὐτῶν περὶ αὐτῶν τῶν γραφῶν τελείως ἀποδεικνύντες, "perfectly demonstrating the scriptures by themselves." And are not all these testimonies of such persons, so near the apostolical times, sufficient to acquaint us what the grounds of the resolution of faith were in the Christian church? when all of them do so unanimously fix on the scripture, and not so much as mention the infallible testimonies of any church, much less the Roman. Much more might be cited out of this excellent author to the same purpose, particularly where he refutes the Valentinians, who deserted the scriptures, and pleaded tradition: but the testimonies already produced are so plain, that it will be to no purpose to produce any more.

§. 7. It were easy to continue an account of the same grounds of faith through the succeeding writers of the Christian church, who have designedly writ on that subject, in vindication of Christian religion, which they unanimously prove to be divine, chiefly by these arguments; from the undoubted miracles which were wrought by Christ and his apostles, from the exact fulfilling of prophecies, and the admirable propagation of the Christian doctrine; all which are particularly insisted on by Origen against Celsus; by Tertullian in his Apologetic, adversus Scapulam, and elsewhere; by Minucius Felix, Arnobius, and Lactantius; not to mention Eusebius in his books of Preparation and Demonstration evangelical, Cyril's Answer to Julian, and others. (But, having elsewhere more fully and largely considered that subject, I rather choose to refer the reader to what hath been there handled already^a,

πιστούμεθα τὸ ζητούμενον ἢ πασῶν ἀποδείξεων ἔχεγγωτέρα, μάλλον δέ, ἢ μόνη ἀπόδειξις οὕσα τυγχάνει καθ' ἣν ἐπιστήμην οἱ μὲν ἀπογευσάμενοι

μόνον τῶν γραφῶν, πιστοί. Ibid.

^a Origines Sacrae, l. 2. c. 7, 8, 9, 10.

than to tire his patience with either repeating the same, or adding more testimonies to the same purpose.) Only that which is most pertinent to our present purpose I shall here add: Whether is it credible, that those persons who fully understood the doctrine of Christianity, who were themselves rational and inquisitive men, and writ for the satisfaction, not only of subtle adversaries, but of doubting and staggering Christians, should so unanimously agree in insisting on the evidence of matter of fact, for the truth of the thing delivered in scripture, and the fore-mentioned arguments for the divinity of the doctrine therein delivered, had it not been the judgment of the church they lived in, that the resolution of faith was into those grounds on which they insisted? And is it again credible, that any of them should believe the testimony of the church to be necessary as infallible, in order to a divine faith, and that without it the scriptures could not be believed as divine, and yet in all their disputes with the Gentiles concerning the doctrine of Christianity, and with several heretics (as the Marcionists, &c.) concerning the books of scripture, upon no occasion should mention this grand Palladium of faith, viz. the infallibility of the present church? And lastly, is it credible, that when in our modern controversies men do evidently maintain faction and interest more than the common principles of Christianity, (that he must be blinder than one that can see no distinction of colours that doth not discern on what account this infallibility is now pretended,) is it, I say, credible, that a doctrine pretended so necessary for our believing scriptures with divine faith should be so concealed, when it ought, for the honour and interest of Christianity, to have been most divulged? which now only in these last and worst times is challenged by an usurping party in the church as left by Christ himself, (when no other evidence can be given of it, but what was common to all ages of the church,) as belonging to such a party under the pretence of the catholic church, which doth so apparently use it only to uphold her pretended authority, and so makes it serve to the worst ends and the most unworthy designs.

Having thus far considered what the judgment of those 258 fathers was concerning the resolution of faith, who lived nearest the apostolical times; I should now come to consider

Conf. p. 82.
sect. 16. n.
32.

what you can produce out of antiquity for your church's infallibility, or more generally, for any infallible testimony supposed in the catholic church, (whatever that be,) in order to a foundation for divine faith: but you very prudently avoid the testimonies of antiquity in so necessary a subject as this is; for those testimonies mentioned in the foregoing chapter, in explication of Matt. xxviii. 20, taking them, as you have in so loose and careless a manner produced them make nothing at all for the church's infallible testimony; but only assert that which is not denied, that there shall always be a Christian church in the world. Our only remaining task then, as to this, is to examine in what way you seek to enervate the testimonies produced by his lordship out of antiquity, which you do in the latter part of chap. 8. His lordship had truly said, "that this method and manner of proving the scripture to be the word of God, which he useth, is the same which the ancient church ever held, namely, tradition, or ecclesiastical authority first, and then all other arguments, but especially internal from the scripture itself." For which he cites, first, the church in St. Augustine's time. "He was no enemy to church tradition," saith his lordship, "yet when he would prove that the author of the scripture (and so of the whole knowledge of divinity, as it is supernatural) is God in Christ, he takes this as the all-sufficient way, and gives four proofs all internal to the scripture: 1. The miracles. 2. That there is nothing carnal in the doctrine. 3. That there hath been such performance of it. 4. That by such a doctrine of humility the whole world almost hath been converted. And whereas *ad muniendam fidem*, for the defending of the faith, and keeping it entire, there are two things requisite, scripture and church tradition; Vincent. Lirinens. places authority of scriptures first, and then tradition. And since it is apparent, that tradition is first in order of time, it must necessarily follow, that scripture is first in order of nature, that is the chief upon which faith rests and resolves itself." To this (after you have needlessly explained his lordship's opinion in this controversy) you begin to answer thus: "He cites first Vincentius Lirinensis, l. 1. c. 1, who makes our faith to be confirmed both by scripture and tradition of the catholic church." But, are not you like to be trusted in

citing fathers who doubly falsify a testimony of your adversary's when you may be so easily disproved? For, 1. you tell us he cites that first which he produceth last. 2. You cite that as produced by him for the foundation of faith, which he expressly cites for the preservation of the doctrine of faith; so he tells you *ad muniendam fidem*, &c. Can any thing be more plain and obvious to any one who looks into that discourse of Vincentius, than that he makes it not his business to give an account of the general foundations of faith as to the scriptures being God's word, but of the particular doctrines of faith, in opposition to the heresies which arise in the church? So that all that he speaks concerning scripture is not about the authority, but the sense and interpretation of it. If therefore I should grant you, that he speaks of Christian and divine faith, what is this to your purpose, unless you could prove that he speaks of that divine faith whereby we believe the scripture to be the word of God. But yet your argument is very good to prove, that he speaks not of any human fallible persuasion, but true Christian divine faith; for he opposes it to heresy, and calls it sound faith, and his faith. It seems, then, whatever faith is sound for the matter of it, is presently Christian, divine, and infallible; and so, whosoever believes any thing which is materially true, in opposition to heresies, needs never fear as long as he doth so, for, according to you, he hath Christian and infallible faith; but what if the devil's faith be as sound as any catholic's, must it therefore be divine 259 faith? No, (it may be you will answer,) because he wants the formal object of faith, and doth not believe on the account of your church's infallibility: I verily believe you; for he knows the jugglings of it too much to believe it infallible. But, take Vincentius in what sense you please, that is evident in him which his lordship produced him for, that, for the preserving faith entire, he places authority of scripture first, and then tradition, (unless you will serve his testimony as you do his lordship's, because it makes for your purpose, say, he mentions tradition first, and then scripture;) but, say you, "he says tradition doth as truly confirm divine faith as scripture, though scripture doth it in a higher manner." If you did but consider, either what kind of tradition or what kind of faith Vincentius insists on, you could not possibly think his words

any thing to your purpose. For he speaks not of any tradition infallibly attested to us, without which you pretend there can be no divine faith, but of such an universal tradition which depends wholly upon antiquity, universality, and consent, and never so much as mentions, much less pretends to any thing of infallibility: so that if you grant such a kind of tradition doth as truly confirm faith as the scripture, then you must grant no necessity of an infallible testimony to assure us of that tradition, for Vincentius speaks of such a kind of tradition as hath no connexion with infallibility. For if Vincentius had ever in the least thought of any such thing, so great and zealous an opposer of heresies would not have left out that which had been more to his purpose than all that he had said. For wise men, who have throughly considered of Vincentius his way, though in general they cannot but approve of it so far as to think it highly improbable that there should be antiquity, universality, and consent against the true and genuine sense of scripture, yet when they consider this way of Vincentius, with all those cautions, restrictions, and limitations set down by him, (l. i. c. 39.) they are apt to think, that he hath put men to a wildgoosechase to find out any thing according to his rules; and that St. Augustine spake a great deal more to the purpose, when he spake concerning all the writers of the church, “that although they had never so much learning and sanctity, he did not think it true because they thought so, but because they persuaded him to believe it true, either from the authority of scripture, or some probable reason^b.” If therefore St. Austin’s authority be not sunk so low as that of the monk of Lerins, we have very little reason to think that tradition can as truly confirm faith to us as the scriptures, supposing that to have been the meaning of Vincentius. Which yet is not reasonable to imagine, since Vincentius^c himself grants, that in case of inveterate heresy or schism either the sole authority of scripture is to be used, or at most the determinations of general councils; nay, and in all cases doth suppose, that “the canon of scripture is

^b Alios autem ita lego, ut quantalibet sanctitate, doctrinaque præpolleant, non ideo verum putem, quia ipsi ita senserunt, sed quia mihi, vel per illos authores canonicos, vel

probabili ratione, quod a vero non abhorreat, persuadere potuerunt. August. ep. 19.

^c Lib. i. c. 39.

perfect, and is abundantly sufficient of itself for all things^d." Can you yet therefore suppose, that Vincentius did think that tradition did as truly confirm our faith as the scripture? Which is your assertion, and the only thing whereby you pretend that the bishop hath misconstrued Vincentius; but whether be more guilty of it, I leave to impartial judgment.

§. 9. The next testimony you consider is that of Henricus à Gandavo. For his lordship had said, "that the school had confessed this was the way ever." For which he cites the testimony of that schoolman, "that daily with them that are without Christ enters by the woman, i. e. the church, and they believe by that fame which she gives" (alluding to the story of the woman of Samaria^e). "But when they come to hear 260 Christ himself, they believe his words" before the words of the woman: "for when they have once found Christ, they do more believe his words in scripture, than they do the church which testifies of him; because then *propter illam*, for the scripture they believe the church. And if the church should speak contrary to the scripture, they would not believe it^f. Thus," saith his lordship, "the school taught then." "No, that did it not," say you. But let us see how rarely you prove it: "for," you say, "he speaks all this of a supernatural and divine faith to be given both to the scriptures and the church." Gandavensis certainly is much obliged to you, who venture to speak such great absurdities for his sake; for if he be understood in both places of divine and infallible faith, these rare consequences follow: 1. That the first beginning of faith is equal to the highest degree of it; for when he speaks of the church, he speaks of Christ's entering by that which can be meant of nothing else but the first step to faith, as is plain in the parallel case of the woman of Samaria; but if this were divine and infallible, it must be equal to the highest degree, for that I suppose can be but divine and infallible, unless you can find out degrees in infallibility. By this rule, you make

^d Quum sit perfectus scripturarum canon, sibi que ad omnia satis superque sufficiat, &c. l. 1. c. 2.

^e Sic quotidie apud illos qui foris sunt intrat Christus per mulierem, id est ecclesiam, et credunt per istam famam, etc. Hen. à Gand. Sum.

art. x. quæst. 1. § 10.

^f Plus verbis Christi in scriptura credit, quam ecclesiæ testificanti: quia propter illam jam credit ecclesiæ. Et, si ipsa quidem contraria scripturæ diceret, ipsi non crederet. Id.

him that is but over the threshold as much in the house as he that is sat down to the table; a plant at its first peeping out of the earth, to be as tall as at its full growth; and the Samaritans as firmly to believe in Christ at the first mention of him by the woman, as when they saw and heard him.

2. By this you make an infallible faith to be built on a fallible testimony; for to what purpose else was the similitude of the woman of Samaria insisted on, but to parallel the testimony of the church with that of the woman, and consequently the faith built on the church's testimony to be like that which the Samaritans had of Christ upon the woman's testimony; and if you believe that faith infallible, you must assert an infallible faith to be built on a fallible testimony, and yet to be as infallible as that which is built on an infallible testimony: and then, I pray, tell me, to what end would you make your church's testimony infallible, if faith may be infallible without it?

But it may be, though these seem hard things, yet you prove them invincibly; no doubt of it; for you say, "that Christ enters by that faith, but Christ cannot enter into a soul by a mere human fallible persuasion, but by divine faith only. Nay, when he says that he more believes the scripture than the church's testimony, he saith that he believes the church; but how can he believe without faith?" O the irresistible force of demonstrations! But what silly people are we, that thought a man might enter into a house by the door, though he met not with his hearty entertainment till afterwards! But do you really think that Christ never enters into a soul but by divine and infallible faith? For Christ enters by that which gives him his first admission, but his full reception must be by a higher degree of faith. Do you think men believe as much at first as ever after? If not, may not Christ be said to enter by that lower degree of faith? I pray, what think you of the case in hand, did not the belief of Christ enter by the woman of Samaria? and was that as divine a faith as what they had afterwards? Nay, take Christ's entering (as improperly as you can imagine it) for his hearty reception in the soul, can that be no other ways but by an infallible faith? A faith supposed to be built on infallible grounds, I grant; but whether all who do truly

believe in Christ, do build their faith on grounds in themselves infallible, my charity to some deluded souls in your church (as well as honest, but ignorant persons elsewhere) gives me just reason to question. But still there is a greater subtilty behind, which is, if he believes the scripture more than the church, then he must believe the church equally with 261 the scripture; for that must be the meaning of what you say, "when he says, he believes the scripture more than the church, he believes the church; but how can he believe without faith?" *Ergo*, this must be divine faith, or else all the rest come to nothing. So that if I say, I believe the scripture more than you, it follows, that I believe you as much as the scripture, by the very same consequence. But you have gotten such a knack of contradicting yourself, that poor Gandavo cannot fall into your hands but you must make him do so too. When you say, "a man cannot believe without faith," I dare justify it to be one of the greatest truths in your book; but if your meaning be, a man cannot believe without divine faith, I hope we protestants sufficiently confute that; for you dare not deny that we believe at all, but (just as the devils do) we must, according to you, "believe and tremble," because our faith is not divine and infallible. But still your subtilty works with you; for because Gandavensis saith, "that we must yield our first faith to the scripture, but *secundam sub ista*, a secondary faith to the definitions and customs of the catholic church;" you cry out, "Here's *prima et secunda fides*; but yet both of them are properly and truly faith." But, are both of them properly and truly divine faith? if so, how comes the distinction of the first and second, one subordinate to the other, if both be equally divine and infallible? Nay, according to your principles, the faith given to the church must be the first faith, and to the scriptures the second under that; because for the sake of the church's testimony we are to believe the scriptures. And do you really think there may be no discovery of infidelity in rejecting a sufficient testimony for faith, where there is not an infallible testimony? But whatever you think, your great enemy, reason, tells us the contrary; and therefore what follows, "of believing the church *sub pœna perfidiæ*," is to no more purpose than what went before. The strength therefore of all that you say as

to this testimony of Gandavensis, lies in the proof of this one thing, "that no man can believe any thing without an infallible faith;" yet I verily believe that you have miserably perverted the schoolmen's words, and think no more infallible testimony requisite for it than your own words.

Lab. p. 109.
n. 8.

§. 10. But, it may be, though you do so ill by the schoolmen, you may use the fathers more civilly. Three things therefore you have to answer to those testimonies of the fathers, which seem most to make use of internal arguments: 1. That they use them not to such as had no divine faith, but to such as had. 2. That they do not use them as primary, infallible and divine proofs, but as secondary arguments, persuasive only to such as believed scripture to be God's word antecedently to them. 3. That they do not use only such proofs as are wholly internal to the scripture itself. "As to the two first conditions," you say, "it is evident these proofs were made by Christians, namely the holy fathers; and commonly to Christians who lived in their times. And as clear is it, that they never pronounced them to be the primary, infallible and divine motives of their belief in that point, nor used they them as such." How false and absurd these answers are may appear by our precedent discourse, wherein we manifested that the Christians insisted on those arguments there mentioned, not for themselves and other Christians, but chiefly to convince and persuade by them the Gentile world to the belief of Christianity. And did they suppose these heathens to have a divine faith already? or did they look on such arguments as only secondary motives, when these were the chief, nay only arguments which they used to persuade them? If they had other, that were primary, divine, and infallible, and only made use of secondary, human, probable motives, they were guilty of the highest betraying the Christian cause imaginable. And you make them only to defend Christianity as Vaninus did Divine Providence, with such silly and weak arguments, that by their overthrow the belief of it might fall with them. Indeed, if they had pretended the infallible testimony of the church, there might have been just reason for such a suspicion, and any wise men would have thought their design had been to make their religion contemptible, and expose it to the derision of atheists, instead of better establish-

ing the foundations of believing it. But those wise and holy men knew better the interest of Christianity, than to offer to defend it by principles in themselves false, and much more liable to question than that was which they were to prove by them: and therefore made choice of arguments in themselves strong and evident, and built on principles common to themselves and those whom they disputed against; i. e. they urged them with the greatest strength of reason, and the clearest evidence of divine revelation, and never questioned but that a faith built on those grounds, if effectual for a holy life, was a true and divine faith. It seems then your cause cannot be maintained without the most sharp and virulent reflections on those primitive Christians, who, among all those arguments whereby they so successfully prevailed over the Gentile world, never did so much as vouchsafe to mention the least pretence to infallibility; for which they are now accused of using only the blunter weapons of human and fallible motives, and not those primary and divine motives of infallibility. But this is not the first time we have seen what desperate shifts a bad cause puts men upon.

It may be yet your strength may lie in your last condition, viz. "That these arguments used by them were not internal." For, 1. you say, "that of miracles is external; the scriptures themselves work none, neither were ever any miracles wrought to confirm, that all the books now in the canon (and no more) are the word of God." I answer, 1. I have already told you of a double resolution of faith, the one as to the divinity of the doctrine, the other as to the veracity of the books which contain it: when therefore miracles are insisted on, it is not in order to the latter of these, which we have sufficient assurance of without them, as I have already largely proved, both as to the truth and integrity of the canon of scripture; but miracles, we say, are the arguments to prove the divinity of the doctrine by, because they attest the divine revelation of the persons who deliver this doctrine to the world. 2. As to us, who receive the report of those miracles as conveyed to us by the scripture, those may be said to be internal arguments to the scripture which are there recorded in order to our believing the doctrine therein contained to be divine. The motives of faith being delivered to us now jointly with the

doctrine, although on different grounds, we believe the veracity of the books of scripture, and the infallibility of the doctrine contained in it. We believe that the miracles were truly done, because they are delivered to us by an unquestionable tradition, in such authentic writings as the scriptures are; but we believe the doctrine contained in the books to be divine, because attested by such miracles, and we believe the books of scripture to be divinely inspired, because such persons cannot be supposed to falsify to the world who wrought such great miracles. 2. You say, "the conversion of so many people and nations by the doctrine contained in scripture is also external to the scripture." But still you suppose that these arguments are brought to prove these books to be divinely inspired, which is denied; we say only, "that the admirable propagation of the doctrine of the gospel" is a great argument that it was from God. And therefore, when afterwards you say, "that supposing all those arguments mentioned by the bishop out of St. Augustine to be internal to the scripture, yet they cannot infallibly and divinely prove that scripture is the word of God." If by scripture you mean the writings, we pretend not to it; if by scripture you mean the doctrine of it, we assert it, and think it no argument at all against that, which you add, "that persuade they may, but convince they cannot;" no doubt if they persuade, they do much more than convince; but, I suppose, your meaning is, they do it not effectually; if so, that is not the fault of the arguments, but of the person, who by his obstinacy will not hearken to the clearest evidence of reason. All that this can prove is a necessity of divine grace to go along with external evidence, which you dare not assert, for fear of running into that private spirit, which you objected to his lordship on the same account. But it is very pretty which follows: You say, "Supposing that all those arguments mentioned, of miracles, nothing carnal in the doctrine, performance of it, and conversion of the world by it, were all of them internal to scripture, yet they could not prove infallibly the scripture to be the word of God;" and to prove this, you tell us, "concerning the third and fourth, how can it ever be proved, that either the performance of this doctrine or the conversion of nations is internal to scripture?" But did you not suppose

them before to be internal to scripture? and though they were so, yet could not prove the scripture, &c.? and to prove that, you say they cannot be proved "internal to scripture." Which is just as if I should say, if you were pope you would not be infallible; and all the evidence I should give for it, should be only to prove that you were not pope.

You conclude this chapter with a wonder. (I mean not any thing of reason which would really be so.) "But," say you, "who can sufficiently wonder, that his lordship, for these four motives, should so easily make the scripture give divine testimony to itself, upon which our faith must rest, and yet deny the same privilege to the church? Seeing it cannot be denied, but that every one of these motives are much more immediately and clearly applied to the church, than to the scripture." What! more immediately and clearly? and so clearly, that it cannot be denied? Prove but any one of them as to that church whose infallibility is in question, viz. the present Roman church, and I will yield you the rest. Produce but any one undoubted miracle, to confirm the infallibility of your church, or the pastors of it; shew your doctrine (wherein it differs from ours) not to be carnal; manifest the performance of the Christian doctrine, only in the members of your church; prove that it is your church, as such, which hath preached this doctrine, and converted whole nations to the belief of it (in any other way than the Spaniards did the poor Indians); and we may begin to hearken with somewhat more patience to your arrogant and unreasonable pretence of infallibility. Can any one then, who hath any grain of reason left him, think that from these arguments, "while his lordship disputes most eagerly against the present church's infallibility, he argues mainly for it," as you very wisely conclude that chapter? If this be arguing for your church's infallibility, much good may such arguments do you.

§. 11. And so I come to the last part of my task as to this controversy, which is, to examine your next chapter, which puts us in hopes of seeing an end of this tedious controversy: but this containing very little new in it, (and therefore deserves not to be handled apart,) will on that account admit of a quicker dispatch. In which the first section begins with St. Austin's testimony, which should have been considered before,

and now it comes out with the same answer attending it, which was given so lately concerning "primary and infallible, and secondary and probable motives of faith," the vanity of which is sufficiently discovered. Whereas in your margin you bring an example of such a probable motive, viz. when St. Austin saith to Faustus, "That as constant tradition was sufficient for him to believe that that Epistle was Manichæus's which went under his name; so the same tradition was sufficient to him to prove the Gospel was St. Matthew's, which was so universally received for his, ever since the writing of it &c." I am so far from thinking this a mere probable motive, that it is the highest evidence the matter is capable of, and so St. Austin thought. Your paralleling the saying of Waldensis, "That if the church should speak any thing contrary to scripture, he would not believe her," with another which you pretend to be St. Austin's, "If the scripture should speak any thing contrary to the church, we could not believe that neither," and then saying "that both proceed on an impossible supposition," must imply, that it is an equal impossibility for the church to deliver any thing contrary to the doctrine of scripture, as for the scripture to contradict itself; for to say, the scripture should contradict the church, signifies nothing, because the being of the church is founded on the doctrine of scripture. All that St. Austin saith in the place you refer us to comes to no more than this, If the church were found deceived in the writings of scripture, then there could be no ground of any firm assent to them. And is this, I pray, a fit parallel for that speech of Waldensis? Is this to say, if the scripture speak any thing against the church, it is not to be believed?

In your next sect. n. 2, 3, you fall from parallels to circles and semicircles, as you call them, in which you only shew us your faculty of mumbling the same things over and over, concerning his lordship's "mistating the question, about infallible and divine faith, apostolical tradition, the formal object of faith," which I must, out of charity to the reader's patience, beg him to look back for the several answers, if he thinks any thing needs it; for I am now quite tired with these repeti-

tions, there being not one word added here but what hath been answered already. But, lest these should not enough tire us, the next sect. n. 4. consists of the old puff-paste of “ultimate motive, and formal object, of the infallibility which is not simply divine,” and others of a like nature, whose vanity hath been detected in the very entrance into this controversy. ^{Lab. p. 113. n. 4.}

It seems you had a great mind to give the bishop a blow when you reach as far as from p. 103. to p. 115. to do it, and yet fall short of it at last; for though you charge him with a false citation of St. Austin for these words, *fidei ultima resolutio est in Deum illuminantem*, yet in that chapter, though not the words, yet the sense is there extant, when he gives that account of Christian faith, “that it comes not by the authority of men, but from God himself confirming and enlightening our mind^h.” Is not here a plain resolution of faith in *Deum illuminantem*? And therefore your charge of “false citation,” and your confident denial, “that there is any such text to be found either there or any where else in all St. Augustine,” argue, you are not careful what you say, so you may but throw dirt in your adversary’s face, though we may easily know from whence it comes, by the foulness of your fingers. And for your other challenge, “of producing any testimony of the fathers which saith, that we must resolve our faith of scripture into the light of scripture;” I hope the testimonies I have in this chapter mentioned may teach you a little more modesty: and for the other part of it, “that we cannot believe the scripture infallibly for the church’s authority,” as far as a negative can be proved, I dare appeal to the judgment of any one, whether it be possible to believe that the fathers judged the certainty, much less infallibility of Christian faith did depend on the church’s infallible testimony, and yet never upon the most just occasion do so much as mention it, but rather speak very much to the contrary.

§. 12. His lordship having thus at large delivered his mind in this important controversy; to make what he had said the more portable, sums up the substance of it in several considerations. Which being only a recapitulation of what hath been fully discussed already, will need the shorter vindication, in 265

^h Non jam hominibus, sed ipso Deo intrinsecus mentem nostram firmante et illuminante. Aug. c. Ep. Manich. c. 14.

some brief strictures, where you unjustly quarrel with them. To his 1. "That it seems reasonable, that since all sciences suppose principles, theology should be allowed some too; the chiefest of which is, that the scriptures are of divine authority;" your answer is considerable; viz. "that he confounds theology, a discursive science, with faith, which is an act of the understanding, produced by an impulse of the will, &c." But not to examine what hath been already handled, of the power of the will in the act of faith, it is plain, when his lordship speaks of theology, he means theology, and not faith; and the intent of this consideration was to shew, the "unreasonableness of starting this question in a theological dispute about the church." In your answer to the second, you say, "that fallible motives cannot produce certainty;" which if you would prove, you would do more to the purpose than you have done yet; and by this argument, I could not be certain whether you had done it or no, unless you brought some infallible motives to prove it. The third you pass over. The fourth you grant, though not very consistently with what you elsewhere say: as to what you say in answer to the fifth, concerning miracles, I agree with you in it, having elsewhere sufficiently declared myself as to them. For the sixth you refer to your former answer, and so do I to the reply to it. In the seventh, his lordship proves "the necessity of some revelation from God" rationally and strongly, and thence infers, "that either there never was any such revelation, or that the scripture is that revelation, and that is it we Christians labour to make good against all atheism, profaneness, and infidelity." To which you have two exceptions: 1. "That this cannot be proved by the mere light of scripture," which his lordship never pretended to. 2. "That he leaves out the word 'only,' which was the cause of the whole controversy;" what, between Christians and atheists? for of that controversy he there speaks; but since you are so fond of your unwritten revelations, pray prove the necessity of them as strongly against atheists, as his lordship hath done the necessity of a written one. In the last consideration he musters up all the several arguments whereby men may be persuaded, "that this revelation is contained in those books we call the scripture;" as, the tradition of the church, the testimony of former

Lab. p. 114.
n. 5.

Lab. p. 115.
n. 5.

Conf. p. 9.
sect. 16. n.
34.

Lab. p. 116.
n. 5.

ages, the consent of times, the harmony of prophets, and the prophecies fulfilled, the success of the doctrine, the constancy of it, the spiritual nature and efficacy of it, and lastly, the inward light and excellency of the text itself; which, with a great deal of rhetoric, is there set forth. But to all this you say no more than what hath been abundantly disproved, viz. “that all these only justify our belief, when it is received as ^{Lab. p. 116.} the ancients received it, upon the infallible authority of church ^{n. 5.} tradition, but never otherwise.” Whereas we have proved, that the ancients received it only on the same grounds which are here mentioned, and therefore certainly are sufficient, not only to justify our faith, but to persuade us to believe.

§. 13. Your argument against what his lordship saith of the “necessity of the Spirit’s assistance with these motives, and the light of scripture for producing divine faith,” will equally hold against all those of your own side who hold the necessity of God’s Spirit for believing the church’s infallibility, and against all such of both sides who hold any necessity of divine grace; for then you must say, that either that grace is not necessary in order to salvation, or that those who want it are neither truly Christians nor capable of salvation. And how horribly soever these consequences sound in the ears of the unlearned, they can sound no worse than those multitudes of scriptures do which tell men, that without true divine faith, and real grace, they are under eternal condemnation. But it may be that the unlearned may not be affrighted with such sentences as those are; you think it a great deal better to let them hear little or nothing of the scripture, and to let them be continually entertained with the sweet and melodious voice of the church. No doubt you ²⁶⁶ thought your next argument had done the business effectually; for, say you, “to make them more sensible of the ^{Lab. p. 116.} foulness of this error,” viz. the danger of such who do not ^{n. 6.} savingly believe, “let them consider, that when young and unlearned Christians are taught to say their Creed, and profess their belief of the articles contained in it, before they read scripture, they are taught to lie, and profess to do that which they neither do nor can do in his tenet.” An excellent argument against making children say their Creed! But will not the same hold against all public using of the Creed,

because it is unquestionable but there are some who do not savingly or divinely believe it? Nay, will it not much more hold against any in your church saying their Creed at all, unless they first believe your church to be infallible, which is very well known that all do not? For then, according to you, "they do but lie, and profess to do that which they neither do nor can do without the church's infallible testimony:" and therefore you must begin a new work of catechising the members of your church, to know whether they believe the church's infallibility, before they can say their Creed. Unless you solve it among yourselves by saying, It is not a formal lie, but only an equivocation; which many of you say is lawful in case of danger, as you see apparently this is. But if the equivocation be said only to lie in the word *believe*, you might easily discern the weakness of your argument through it. For if some may truly believe what they do not savingly believe, there is no lie certainly told in saying, They do believe as far as they do; which is by a firm assent to the truth of all the articles of faith by that which is called an historical or dogmatical faith, where there may be no saving faith. But that because children are taught (as a short system of the articles of faith) to say their Creed, we must be convinced of the foulness of our error, is an apparent evidence, that either you apprehended our understandings to be very weak, or that you sufficiently discover your own to be so.

Lab. p. 117.
n. 7.

§. 14. The only quarrel which you have with his lordship's synthetical way is, "that he confounds his reader with multiplicity of arguments, and weakens the authority of the church, without which," if you may be believed, "he might tire himself and others, but never be able to make a clear resolution of faith." How clear an account you have given of faith in your analytical way, by the authority of the church, hath been sufficiently laid open to you; but I wonder not that you quarrel with multiplicity of arguments, there being nothing which doth really weaken the authority of your church so much as they do, and they are men certainly of your temper who will be soon tired with too much reason. What follows concerning the captiousness of the question as first propounded, and the vicious circle you would free yourselves of by the motives of credibility, deserve no further answer. Only when

you would make A. C. go your way, and both together prove the church infallible independently on scripture, you did not certainly consider, that it is an infallibility by promise, which you challenge, and for that end, in the precedent chapter, were those places of scripture produced by A. C. and urged by you. All that I shall return by way of answer to your tedious discourse concerning "scriptures being a principle supposed among Christians," (the main of it depending on the circumstances of the dispute between his lordship and Mr. Fisher,) shall be in these following particulars: 1. That in all controversies among Christians, whose decision depends upon the authority of scripture, the scripture must be supposed as granted to be of divine authority by both parties. 2. That in that question, Whether the scripture contains all necessary things of faith, that necessity must be supposed to relate to the things which depend upon scripture, and therefore implies it believed on other grounds, that this scripture is of divine revelation. For the question is, Whether God hath consigned his will so fully to us, in this revelation of himself, that nothing necessary to be believed is left out of it? For men then to say, that this is left out of it, viz. to believe that this is a divine revelation, is an unreasonable cavil, it being supposed in the very question that it is so. 3. That in this sense the scripture may be said to be a supposed principle, because it hath a different way of probation, from particular objects of faith revealed in scripture. For to a rational inquirer, who seems to doubt of the truth of scriptures, it is equally absurd to give him any one of these three answers: 1. That it is a principle to be supposed: for, though it be supposed as to the particular debate depending on scripture; yet it is fond and absurd to say, it must be supposed, when it is the thing in question. 2. That it is known merely by its own light: for the person I have to deal with, supposing himself equally capable to judge of reason and evidence as myself, it doth but betray the weakness of my cause, or my inability to manage it, to pretend that to be evident, which it is much more evident that he doth not think so; and it is only to tell him my understanding must rule his, and that whatever appears to me to have light in itself ought likewise so appear to him. 3. It is as absurd as either of the other two, to say,

Lab. p. 118,
&c. n. 8, 9,
10.

267

That you will prove to a rational inquirer the scripture to be God's word by an unwritten word of God. For, 1. his inquiry is, whether there be any word of God or no; you prove there is, because there is; for that is all you prove by your unwritten word. He denies, or at least questions, whether there be any, and particularly instanceth in scripture; you think to end the question, by telling him, he must believe it to be so, because there is another word of God which attests it; which, instead of ending the first question, begets a great many more. For, 2. he will be more to seek concerning this unwritten word than before; because he might use his reason in judging concerning the written word, but cannot as to this unwritten; it being only told him, there is such a thing, but he knows not what it is, how far it extends, who must deliver it, what evidence this hath beyond the other that it comes from God, that it must be used as an argument to prove it with. If you send him to the infallibility of the church, you must either presume him of a very weak understanding, or else he would easily discern your perfect juggling in this; the veins of which I have discovered throughout this discourse. There remains nothing then but reason, a principle common to us both, by which I must prove that the scriptures are from God, which reason partly makes use of the church's tradition, not in any notion of infallibility, but merely as built on principles common to human nature, and partly uses those other arguments which prove by the greatest rational evidence, that the doctrine contained in scripture was from God; and if this were all the meaning of saying "the scriptures are a principle supposed," because of a different way of proving them, from particular objects of faith, you can have no reason to deny it.

Conf. n. 100.
sect. 18. n. 5. §. 15. The next thing his lordship insists on is, that the Jews never had nor can have any other proof that the Old Testament is the word of God, than we have of the New. In your answer to which, I grant that which you contend for, that the tradition of scriptures among them was by their immediate ancestors as well as others; I grant, that their faith was not a scientific knowledge, but a firm and perfect assurance only, (but understand not what you mean by saying "that otherwise it would not be meritorious,") but am as far to seek as

ever for any infallibility in the Jewish church, which should in every age be the ground of believing the books of the Old Testament to be divinely inspired. And if you will prove a constant succession of prophets from Moses till our Saviour's appearing, (which you seem willing to believe,) you would do something towards it; but for your permanent infallible authority in the high priest and his clergy, I have already shewed it to be a groundless, if not a wilful mistake.

What remains concerning the nature of infallibility, (which ²⁶⁸ at last his lordship makes to be no more than that which excludes all possibility of doubting, and therefore grants, that an infallible assurance may be had by ecclesiastical and human proof,) and how far that is requisite to faith; concerning moral certainty, and what assurance may be had by it; concerning the canon of scripture, apostolical tradition, the unwritten word, St. Austin's testimony about the church; they are all points so fully discussed before, that out of pity to the reader I must refer him to their several places, which when he hath thoroughly considered, I will give him leave to sum up the several victories you have obtained in the management of it, which will be much more honourable for you than for yourself to do it, as you do most triumphantly in the end of this controversy concerning the resolution of faith. And although I have not been much surprised with your attempts, yet I shall heartily conclude this great debate with your last words in it: "The consequence I leave to the serious consideration of the judicious reader. I beseech God he may make benefit of it to his eternal felicity."

Conf. p. 101.
sect. 19. n. 1.

Lab. p. 123,
&c. n. 12
ad fin. cap.





