

A Vindication of the Church of England

From the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome
Wherein, as is largely proved, the rule of faith and all the fundamental articles of the Christian
Religion are received, taught, professed, and acknowledged.

And

The Corruptions of the Church of Rome, in Relation to
Ecclesiastical Government, the Rule of Faith, and Form of Divine
Worship;

In answer to The Bishop of Meaux's Queries.

From *The English Theological Works*, by George Bull.

J. H. Parker, 1844.

[Spelling selectively modernized. Bible citations converted to all Arabic numerals. Footnotes moved into
or near places of citation. Hebrew characters omitted.]

Written at the request of the Countess of Newbrugh, in answer to a celebrated
Roman Catholic treatise, entitled, "The Catholic Spiritualist".

The Preface.

Sometime in last December I received a letter from Mr. Curll the bookseller, acquainting me that a manuscript of my father's, entitled, A Letter to the Countess of Newbrugh, was found among the papers of a gentleman lately deceased. The manuscript hath since been transmitted to me, and I have carefully perused it. And though I was at first surprised to find it not written in my father's own hand, yet, upon farther recollection, I see no manner of reason to question but that the Treatise is his; having frequently heard him mention such a Letter, and seen several of his papers (written, as near as I can guess, about the same time) transcribed by the same hand. From whence I farther conclude, that the Manuscript, of which I am now speaking, is the very same that was sent to the Countess of Newbrugh, and which Mr. Nelson so laments the loss of, p. 66 of his Life of my father. For the sake of those readers who may not have seen that excellent piece of Mr. Nelson's, I shall here insert the whole paragraph.

"While Mr. Bull was Rector of Suddington, the providence of God gave him an opportunity of fixing two ladies of quality in that neighbourhood, in the Protestant Communion, who had been reduced to a very wavering state of mind, by the arts and subtleties of some Romish Missionaries. Their specious pretenses to antiquity were easily detected by this great master of the ancient Fathers; and by his thorough acquaintance with Scripture, and the sense of the Catholic Church in matters of the greatest importance, he was able to distinguish between primitive truths, and those errors which the Church of Rome built upon them. He

had frequent conferences with both these ladies, and answered those objections which appeared to them to have the greatest strength, and by which they were very near falling from their steadfastness; *For one of them he writ a small treatise, which she had requested from him, but no copy of it is to be found among those papers he left behind him; nothing remaineth of it but the remembrance that it was written, and that he did thereby succeed in establishing the lady in the Communion of the Church of England.* Both the ladies always owned, with the greatest sense of gratitude, this signal service they received from the learning and capacity of Mr. Bull. None can well apprehend how grievous a state of human life doubt is, in matters of consequence, but they who feel it; and therefore no wonder if they blessed that happy instrument by which fresh light was conveyed into their minds, and those uncertainties cleared up which they laboured under, in reference to matters of the greatest moment. The method indeed they took was prudent and Christian, to seek for knowledge at those lips which are appointed to preserve it, and to bring their doubts to their own Pastors, before they submit to the authority of others. And I question not but for this reason, among many, God thought fit to give them the satisfaction they sought for: and if others, who are assaulted after this manner, would take the same course, I doubt not but that they would find the same success.”

If the reader is desirous to know who those ladies (mentioned in the beginning of the paragraph) were, I can only tell him, that one of them was the wife of a worthy person now living, who (for reasons best known to himself) was unwilling her name should be mentioned upon such an occasion by Mr. Nelson; and supposing him to be still of the same opinion. I shall not insert anything here which may be grating to him. The other was the Countess of Newbrugh, for whose sake this treatise was composed: and of her all the account I can at present give is, that she was daughter and sole heiress of Sir Henry Pool, Bart., of Salperton, in the county of Gloucester, and wife to Charles Leviston,* who, for services done the Crown in the reign of King Charles the Second, was by him created Earl of Newbrugh in the kingdom of Scotland, and held a considerable place in that King’s favour as long as he lived. She was a lady (as I have been informed by persons who very well remember her) of great personal endowments; and the reader may collect the same from several passages in the following Letter. It seems to have been her mother, the Lady Pool [See note b, p. 3.] of Cirencester, who first advised her to consult my father in this important affair; who, out of a sense of gratitude for this and other services done her family, and to testify the great esteem she had for him, did afterwards, in her last will, appoint him to be her executor. [See the Life of Bishop Bull, p. 41. (ed. 1827.)]

*[[This marriage is omitted in all the Peerages which I have seen; and probably because there was no issue from it. Robert Bull was however mistaken in calling the first earl of Newbrugh *Charles*; his name was *James* Livingston, or Levingstone; he married first Anne, daughter of Sir Henry Pool, and secondly Lady Catharine Howard, daughter of Theophilus, Earl of Suffolk, and widow of George Lord Aubigny, by whom he had Charles, the second Earl.]]

As to the Letter itself, I shall forbear giving any character of it, my near relation to the author unqualifying me for such an undertaking. The reader himself must judge of that, who (I question not) upon a full perusal of it, will esteem it a performance worthy the author whose name it bears. I will no longer deprive the reader of the satisfaction the following Treatise may afford him, than to let him know he is obliged to that worthy gentleman, Mr. Richard Rawlinson, A. M. of St. John's College, Oxon., and F.R.S., for the discovery of this Manuscript, who, for rescuing it from the obscurity it had lain in for almost fifty years, and bestowing it on the public by me, has a just right to the thanks of every one who shall receive advantage from it.

Robert Bull.
Tortworth, April 18, 1719.

A letter to the Right Honourable the Countess of Newbrugh.

Madam,

I. I humbly beg your ladyship's pardon, that I have not sooner performed my duty, and obeyed your ladyship's desires, (which with me ought to have the force of commands,) by returning an answer to the letter of your Roman Catholic friend and relation. The truth is, the letter came from your ladyship to my hands (after a considerable stop) in a very ill season, when I was wholly taken up by other businesses not to be dispensed with; and I do not remember that in all my life I have had a task imposed on me in so unhappy a conjunction of circumstances [[He probably alludes to the controversies in which he was engaged concerning the *Harmonia Apostolica*.]]: yet some hours I have forcibly snatched from the importunity of those urgent occasions, in which I have made a shift to shape the following answer. In reading whereof, all the favour I shall desire from your ladyship, is this. First, that you would trust me in those citations out of the Fathers and learned authors which I produce, till the author of the letter shall prove me guilty of prevarication therein, which I am sure he will never be able to do. Secondly, that your ladyship would excuse that sharpness of style which I sometime make use of in my answer. Indeed, the honourable relation to your ladyship, which the author of the letter lays claim to, hath restrained me from handling him as he deserves; but my zeal to the honour of God and His holy

truth, so grossly confronted by him (which I persuade myself is dearer also to your ladyship than your own honour), hath constrained me sometimes to give him a just rebuke. Having premised these my humble requests unto your ladyship, I shall proceed (without the compliment of any farther preface) to examine whatsoever may seem any way considerable in the letter.

II. That collection of texts of Scripture concerning corporal austerities, which the author of the letter mentions, what it is I know not, your ladyship it seems having forgotten to send it, [I have since received it from the Lady P., and find it so inconsiderable, as not to deserve any more particular answer than is here given to it.] and therefore cannot give him a direct answer to this part of his letter: but, in general, I can give your ladyship St. Paul's determination of the question, "Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things," etc. [1 Tim. 4:8.] In the former part of which sentence, the Apostle acknowledgeth some little use of "bodily exercise," or corporal austerities, or restraints and castigations laid upon the body: these may be in some degree useful, at least to some persons and in some cases, provided they are kept in due bounds, tacitly laid down by the Apostle elsewhere, [Col. 2:23.] where he tells us, these austerities have a show [Or notion, λόγον έχοντα σοφίας.] of wisdom in voluntary observation, [εν εθελοθησκεία.] which our translation renders "in will-worship, in humility, in neglecting the body, and not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." So that all the show and appearance of wisdom that such austerities can be allowed to have, consists in these three things: First, that they be undertaken voluntarily and freely, not by imposition from others, not as necessary acts of piety. Secondly, that they be used with humility, not priding ourselves in them as great achievements in religion; not superciliously condemning or despising others who allow themselves a greater (if lawful) freedom than we do. Thirdly, that they be really made use of for the castigation of the body, and not in hypocritical pretense, so as that in the mean time we indulge ourselves in as great delights, or greater, than those from which we abstain. I beseech your ladyship to consider these three cautions of the Apostle: and then I shall leave it to yourself to judge, how far the austerities, commonly practiced in the Church of Rome, are from being conform to those golden rules. For I am not willing to take the occasion that is here given me, of laughing at the follies of our adversaries in this particular. Corporal austerities, thus limited, the true sons of the Church of England most willingly admit of, and embrace; and I speak from my conscience, that I think those austerities are, in silence, better practiced by some of our Church, than by the generality of the Romanists that so much glory in them. But it is the latter part of the Apostle's determination, that we mainly stick to; "Godliness is profitable unto all things"; that is, true piety, consisting in the love

of God, and our neighbours as ourselves, together with the fruits and effects of these, is always and to all persons useful: indeed, this is *unum necessarium*, that one necessary thing.

III. To this trial we will stand; let that Church that most earnestly presseth this real piety, carry the bell, and be acknowledged for the best Church; and if this commendation be found due to the Church of Rome, in its present estate, I will never speak a word to dissuade your ladyship from leaving our Communion, and casting yourself into the bosom of that Church, which is displayed at this day with so alluring a bravery; but will engage myself to attend your ladyship in a voyage to Rome, in the quality of one of your lackeys. The truth is, this very consideration kept me, when I was yet unacquainted with the true state of the controversy between us and the Roman Church, from having any affection to the same, although I have not wanted some considerable temptations to entertain better thoughts thereof; for ever since I understood anything of religion, I have apprehended the certain truth of what St. Paul tells us, [Rom. 14:17.] “That the kingdom of God doth not consist in meat and drink,” and such like external things, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost”; that the soul of piety lies in the piety of the soul; and then, observing how the spirits of the Roman devotion spend themselves in outward and external things, leaving the heart and vital parts thereof cold and languishing; how, like the Pharisees, they shew themselves mighty zealots in the little appendages of religion, whilst “they neglect the weightier matters of the law”; how amongst them it is accounted almost (if not altogether) as heinous a crime to break a frivolous institution of one of their vainly devised orders, as to transgress a direct command of God: how that faction among them that governs the Church of Rome (the Jesuits) are of all mortals the easiest and loosest casuists in questions that concern the substance of religion; how the corporal austerities they so much boast of, and commonly used by them, are commutations for the great and indispensable duties of Christianity, and umbrages to the foulest vices and impurities: (whence it comes to pass, that the most carnal and sensual Protestants are most easily induced to undertake them; and it is to be observed by everyone nowadays, that the filth of our Church doth empty itself into the sink of Rome): I say, when I considered these things, I was so far from admiring the Church of Rome for that face of religious severity which it hath affected to put on, that that very affectation made me out of love with it, yea, wrought in me a kind of loathing of it: but enough of the corporal austerities of the Church of Rome.

IV. In the next place, supposing that the collection of texts of Scripture mentioned, had opened to your ladyship a prospect into farther doubts, that is, had puzzled your ladyship, and unsettled you, and so made way for his farther

attempts upon your conscience and religion; he proceeded to recommend to your ladyship the perusal of a book called *The Catholic Scripturist*, [I wonder he should promise himself such great matters from so sorry a scrip of paper. [A second edition of this book was published in 1686.]] and promiseth that therein you shall find, not only the faith, but the practice of the Church of Rome, in matters of religion, manifestly confirmed by the Holy Scriptures. I am sorry I have not the book by me, as your ladyship supposeth; for the book you were pleased to lend me upon taking my leave of your ladyship, when last at London, after a cursory perusal of it, I left with a friend of mine to be speedily returned to your ladyship, with my humble thanks; and by what accident it hath been intercepted, I cannot understand. By what I remember of the contents of the book, I may venture to say, it is an errant piece of sophistry, like those that used to be scattered among us by the Ministers of the Church of Rome. Indeed, if I had the book by me, it would be too long a work for a letter to answer the several chapters thereof; but otherwise the task would be easy; I desire none more facile.

V. However, by its title page (if I could remember no more) I were able to refute it: *The Catholic Scripturist*. What, doth he mean the Roman Catholic Scripturist? Yes, doubtless: but then your ladyship may presently discern in the very title a contradiction in terms; you may easily see that the very design of that book is contrary to the professed design and doctrine of the Church of Rome: to make this plain, I desire your ladyship to ask the author of the letter these few questions:

1. Are all the points defended in the book called *The Catholic Scripturist*, clearly proved by the Holy Scriptures?

2. Is the belief of these points (which are all principal ones in controversy betwixt us and the Church of Rome), together with the belief of the other fundamentals of the Christian faith, equally acknowledged by us and them to be delivered in the Holy Scriptures, a belief sufficient unto salvation?

3. Doth not the Church of Rome professedly maintain that all things necessary to be known and believed unto salvation, are neither in express terms, or by necessary consequence, delivered and contained in the Holy Scriptures; and that there is need of the tradition of the Church, as a supply in this case? He cannot (for shame) but answer affirmatively to each of these questions. For as for the first question, it is the professed design of that book to maintain that all the points undertaken to be defended therein may be proved out of the Holy Scriptures; and the author of the letter adds manifestly, and he afterwards tells your ladyship, that he doubts not but that the result of his letter to you, and the book attending it, will end in this admiration: "Who would have thought it, that

the Papists could have so much to say for themselves out of most clear texts of the word of God?" [And the Catholic Scripturist tells us that he would produce for the points most disliked in his religion, many and loud-speaking texts. Pref. n. 4.] Indeed, I never so much as dreamed that the Papists could, out of the Holy Scriptures, produce anything to the purpose in defense of their tenets concerning Image-worship, Invocation of Saints, Transubstantiation, the Half-communion, Indulgences, etc. Nor hath the book in the least altered my thoughts and apprehensions.

4. That the points defended in the book (called *The Catholic Scripturist*), together with those other points that are on both sides acknowledged to be clearly delivered in the Holy Scriptures, do make up a full and complete body of Catholic principles, or the necessary articles of the Christian faith, he must acknowledge; otherwise, what bounds will he put to the necessary articles of religion? How shall a sincere Christian know when he believes and practiceth that which is sufficient in order to his salvation? And, besides, what other point of the Roman faith can he produce more difficult to be proved out of the Holy Scriptures, than those whose defense is undertaken by the author of *The Catholic Scripturist*. From these two propositions granted, it undeniably follows, that all necessary points of Christian doctrine may be proved out of the Holy Scriptures, and that by most clear and manifest texts; which is directly contrary to the known and avowed doctrine of the Papists themselves: nay, the Catholic Scripturist hath a chapter (if I forget not) concerning tradition; the professed design whereof is to prove that we must be beholding to tradition for many necessary points of faith, and that the Scripture is not a sufficient rule. I confess I am amazed when I observe with what a fatal stupidity, or rather with what an evil conscience, and how fraudulently, the Romanists defend their cause; but, indeed, a cause so bad could no otherwise be defended.

VI. Many particular instances of the sophistry of that book I might give your ladyship, if I had it by me; but there is one instance I took special notice of, and wrote my observations in a scrip of paper, because it was a point wherein your ladyship seemed to need satisfaction, viz. the point of Invocation of Saints. He undertakes not to prove the laudableness of that practice of his Church by express Scriptures, but by necessary consequences from certain principles clearly delivered in Scripture. The principles he lays down [(Point 36. n. 2. p. 235.)]; "1. That the angels and saints, with God, can hear our prayers. 2. That they can and will help us." From these principles he draws this conclusion; "Therefore it is laudable to pray to them." I will not quarrel (at present) with the consequence, but inquire only how he proves the antecedent. Many, yea most of the principal

texts, whereby he endeavours to demonstrate his two principles, are taken out of the Old Testament: when he comes to his 37th point (which is the first of his principles), “that the angels and saints can hear our prayers,” he proves it especially by texts that are either taken out of, or at least have reference to, the Old Testament. Thus, [(Num. 4.)] from Luke 16:26, he observes (like a learned divine arguing from such passages in a parable, which do not in the least belong to the scope thereof) that “though there be a great gulf fixed between the souls of Abraham and Dives, yet God gave them some means to hear what each of them said”; from whence he makes his inference by way of question: “Can He then find no means for saints to hear us?” This text is indeed taken out of the New Testament, but it hath a manifest reference to the state of Abraham, and the saints departed under the Old Testament. But [(Num. 5.)] he professedly produceth one text out of the Old Testament, which he tells us he had kept as a reserve, to declare how saints, even there, knew what passed. It concerns the writing that came from Elias after his death (as is supposed) to King Joram. [2 Chron. 21:12.] In the 38th point, he delivers his second principle, together with the conclusion drawn from both, in these words; “That saints can and will help us; therefore it is laudable to pray to them.” How proves he this? [(Num. 4.)] “That by the merits of saints we may beg and obtain favours,” he proves, from 1 Kings 15:5, and Isaiah 32:35. And [(Num. 5.)] he tells us that “the power which the prayers of saints have, and that they use carefully to pray for us, is often expressed in Scripture”; where he cites Jer. 15:1, and Ezek. 14:14, 20; and the instance of Elias’s care to assist his people after his death, mentioned in the former point [(Num. 5.)] and the famous vision of Judas Maccabaeus. [2 Macc. 15:12.] All these texts are again out of the Old Testament: and he proceeds [(Num. 6.)] to prove the same thing from Dives’s praying to Abraham, [Luke 16:27.] which texts I have already observed to have reference to the saints departed under the Old Testament.

VII. Now, after this laborious proof out of the Old Testament of both the foundations of invocation of saints; viz. That the saints can hear our prayers; 2. That they can and will help us; who would not conclude, according to the author’s own way of reasoning, “that it was a laudable practice to pray to saints even under the Old Testament?” But the Catholic Scripturist himself will by no means own this conclusion. For in the 38th point [(Num. 1. p. 253.)] he expressly tells us that of “praying to saints the Old Testament could not write, no saints being as then in heaven.” For the understanding of which, your ladyship may please to observe that these two hypotheses are generally received among the Papists: 1. That the saints departed this life since the ascension of our Saviour are in the third heaven, and do enjoy the beatific vision; and that in the glass of

the Holy Trinity, or some other way, they do see or understand the particular necessities of men on earth; and, therefore, may rationally be invocated and prayed unto. So the author of *The Catholic Scripturist*, [(Point 36. num. 1.)] being to enter upon his head province, of proving the invocation of saints and angels out of Scripture, lays down this as his foundation, in these express words, for the ground of this question: “I lay this foundation out of Scripture, that as the angels are in heaven, so the souls of the saints go directly from hence to heaven, without they have some few offences to clear in purgatory.” 2. That the souls of the faithful, that died before our Saviour, went not to heaven, enjoyed not the beatific vision, nay, were not so much as in paradise; but, contrarily, were in a state of confinement, and shut up in a sorry place, which they call *limbus patrum*; and that our Saviour, after His death, descended to that place, to fetch and deliver them from thence; and, consequently, that it would have been an absurd thing for men, under the Old Testament, to pray to saints departed for help, that were in a condition wherein they needed help themselves. And yet the author of *The Catholic Scripturist*, who acknowledgeth both these doctrines of his Church, hath the impudence to attempt the proof out of the Old Testament of both his principles, whereon he grounds invocation of saints; viz. that the saints can hear our prayers, and that they can and will help us; and, consequently, that it is laudable to pray unto them. And it is pretty to observe again, how directly he contradicts himself in this question: we have already heard him acknowledge there could be no such thing as praying to saints, delivered in the Old Testament. Why? Because the saints then were not in heaven. If there could be no such thing taught, there could be no such thing laudably practiced, under the Old Testament; and yet that invocation of saints was practiced, and that laudably too, under the Old Testament, he otherwhere plainly enough affirms, [(Point 38. num. 5. p. 258.)] where, having spoken of the vision of Judas Maccabaeus, [2 Macc. 15:12.] wherein he saw Onias the high priest (and chief of God’s people) dead, and Jeremiah the prophet dead long before, praying for the people of the Jews, he adds, “We have from thence, that the most holy high-priest, and chief of God’s only people, believed that saints prayed for us and helped us; and that all the people (who were said to be encouraged by this vision) were of the same belief. How far then is this from all novelty, which can be proved to have been practiced before the days of the Apostles?” etc. Now what is the practice which he affirms can be proved from the history of the Maccabees to be clear of all novelty, and to have been in use in these days? He must, if he will acknowledge himself to have written sense, confess, he meant the practice of praying to saints; so that under the Old Testament there could not be any such thing as invocation of saints, departed this life, laudably practiced; and yet such a thing there was

even under the Old Testament practiced, and that laudably. What a rare art have these men of reconciling both parts of a contradiction! But it is no wonder that this little author hath in this controversy split himself against the rock of so evident a contradiction: seeing there that great Bellarmine himself also underwent the same fate before him. For he, as well as our Catholic Scripturist, produceth divers texts out of the Old Testament, to prove invocation of saints, in the place where he treats of that subject; but, elsewhere, he makes this ingenuous confession: “Before the coming of Christ, the saints, which died, entered not into heaven, neither did they see God; nor could they ordinarily know the prayers of those that supplicated to them; and therefore it was not the custom for men under the Old Testament, to say, Holy Abraham, pray for me; but the men of those times only prayed to God.” [Ante Christi adventum sancti qui moriebantur non intrabant in coelum, nec Deum videbant, nec cognoscere poterant ordinarie preces supplicantium. Ideo non fuit consuetum in V. Teat. ut diceretur, Sancte Abraham, ora pro me; sed solum orabant homines ejus temporis Deum. Bel. i. 19. is Beat. Sanct.] Where, by the way, your ladyship may please to observe that Bellarmine expressly confesseth that men under the Old Testament “prayed only unto God,” and, therefore, not to the saints; no, nor angels neither. But the author of The Catholic Scripturist (as indeed Bellarmine himself other- where) professedly maintained that men, under the Old Testament at least, prayed unto the holy angels. What sincere Christian is there (who hath his eyes open to see these things) who doth not abominate such egregious prevarications in the great matters of salvation?

VIII. Let us now come to the New Testament: and here, before we enter upon the testimonies produced for invocation of saints out of the New Testament, we have this strong prejudice against it: that if men under the Old Testament, (wherein Christ, as Mediator, was not clearly revealed,) and the saints, knew not (at least generally) the new and living way of drawing nigh unto God, and offering up their prayers in the name of Christ; (whence our Saviour Himself, just before His death, saith of His Apostles, who were born and bred in the Jewish religion, that “hitherto they had asked nothing in His name” [John 16:24.]); I say, if men under the Old Testament could make a shift to pray to God acceptably, without the mediation of saints, then much more may we do well enough without it now under the Gospel, wherein Christ, the only Mediator between God and man, is perfectly and fully revealed; but I shall let this pass (though it be an observation that utterly overthrows all necessity of using the mediation of saints under the New Testament), and follow the steps of the Catholic Scripturist. Concerning the four Gospels, we have his full confession [(Point 38. num. 1. p. 253.)] in these words: “The four Gospels writ no farther than the ascension of Christ to heaven; before which no saint also was in heaven;

wherefore you need not wonder that in the four Gospels you see no mention of praying to saints in heaven.” Indeed we do not at all wonder at this, being able to render a much better account of this silence of the four Evangelists: but we wonder much at the impudent sophistry of this writer, who, within a few pages after he had made this confession, [(Viz. num. 6.) See also point 37. num. 4. p. 248.] cited two testimonies out of the Evangelists, to prove invocation of saints. [Viz. Luke 16:27 and 9 of the same chapter.] He proceeds in the very next words to the Epistles of St. Paul. [Pages 253, 254.] “In St. Paul’s Epistles,” saith he, “you find him begging prayers of saints on earth: so Heb. 13:18, ‘Pray for us.’ Seeing then, that prayer to saints in heaven is more beneficial to us, it is also (by manifest consequence) more to be used by us.” A childish sophism; so often and so shamefully baffled by our writers, that I wonder again at his impudence in producing it, and that as a manifest consequence. Indeed, who sees not the difference between the communication of prayers amongst the faithful living on earth, which the Scripture speaks of, and the practice of invoking saints departed, which the Papists defend? For, 1. To entreat a saint living on earth, that he would, together with us, pray unto God for the obtaining of any benefit to us, is not religiously to invoke that saint, but invite him to the religious invocation of God on our behalf: but the Papists, in their invocation of saints do profess to give them religious worship, and stiffly maintain (witness the Catholic Scripturist himself [(Point 36.)]) that such worship is due unto them; and accordingly they invoke saints with all the circumstances of religious worship: they rashly enshrine their images, and exalt them on high, and fall prostrate before them, etc. 2. The Papists do not only desire the saints to pray for them unto God that He would help them, but also pray unto the saints themselves that they would help them; and from them expect help. This is apparent from many of their offices, especially such as are directed to the blessed Virgin. 3. When we beg the prayers of a saint on earth, that is present with us, we attribute to him nothing above human nature; but when Papists invoke the souls of departed saints, they ascribe to them a power of hearing those that are absent; of hearing an infinite number of supplicants, at a vast distance from each other, praying to them at the same time; and that of hearing them so, as to understand with what inward affection they pray, and to know the secrets of their hearts, which are powers above human nature, though never so much exalted; yea, proper to God alone.

IX. All the remaining texts produced by him out of the New Testament, are taken out of the dark and mysterious book of the Revelations. And though it be in a serious matter, a man can hardly restrain his laughter, that observes how pleasantly he argues from them. The first text cited [(Point 38. num. 6. p. 258.)] is

Rev. 2:26–27. “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers.” Bless us! what argument can the conjurer raise out of this text to prove invocation of saints? “The saints,” saith he, “having authority to rule nations so powerfully (as is here expressed by a rod or scepter of iron), they exercise this their power chiefly, by making intercession so powerfully to God for us, as to obtain for us such graces as we stand most in need of.” A forcible collection, if your ladyship shall please to grant the poor beggar these two suppositions: 1. That these texts speak of the souls of the saints departed in the state of separation, and in the interval between their death and the last resurrection. [The texts seem to intend the judiciary power which the saints shall receive at Christ’s second coming, or at the day of judgment of which read Matt. 19:28, 1 Cor. 6:2–3.] 2. “That to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and to break them in pieces as a potter’s vessel,” signifieth, “to make intercession so powerfully to God for them, as to obtain for them such graces as they most stand in need of.” Another text is Rev. 5:8. “The four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell before the Lamb, having every one harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints.” Here again your ladyship must be so kind to the author, as to grant that the four beasts and four and twenty elders are the souls of departed saints in the state of separation, which indeed would be a liberal concession. If he asks me, What else is meant by the four beasts and the four and twenty elders? I answer, in the words of Cajetan (a learned writer of their own), concerning this whole book of the Revelation, “Let him that can, expound it.” [Exponat, qui potest.] St. Austin, by the four beasts understands the four Evangelists (of which St. John, who wrote the Revelation, was one); and shews from some writers [Lib. i. de consens. Evang.] before him, how aptly they are signified by the four several beasts described by St. John. [Rev. 4:6–7.] And Zegerus, a learned expositor among the Romanists, tells us that .” interpreters for the most part agree in this, that the four beasts signify the four Evangelists.” [Fere consentiunt explanatores, 4 animantia, 4 evangelistas accipientes. Zeger. in Apoc. 4:6–7.] H. Grotius, by the four beasts, understands the four Apostles, or Apostolical persons, then at Jerusalem. By the twenty-four elders, the most learned interpreters [Vid. Lyrum. Zeger. et Grot. in Apoc. 4:4.] understand, the Governors and Bishops of the Church in St. John’s time, who, say they, are therefore reckoned twenty-four, to answer to the twenty-four courses of the priests appointed by David under the Old Testament. [1 Chron. 24.] Surely the Greek word Πρεσβύτεροι, which St. John here useth, signifieth Presbyters, or priests; and I hope the Papists, though they embrace for oracles the idle dotages of their counterfeit Dionysius, concerning the hierarchy of angels, yet will not dream so

far as to fancy an order of Presbyters among “the spirits of just men made perfect.” Besides, it appears that the prayers which these four beasts and the twenty-four elders had in their golden vials, were their own prayers; and those not petitory, but eucharistic; not petitions, but thanksgivings. I say, this appears from the words immediately following, [Verse 9.] wherein they are said in a solemn hymn to have given thanks to Christ for their redemption, and the redemption of the whole Church by the blood of Christ. And, however, let the four beasts and twenty-four elders, or presbyters, be what the Catholic Scripturist shall please to fancy them, yet it is certain that in this text there is not the least intimation of any prayers made, or any religious worship performed to them. His last text is Rev. 8:3–4. “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.” To this I answer, first, This text concerns the angels only, and hath not the least relation to the saints departed; and we are now inquiring chiefly concerning invocation of saints. Secondly, This text is variously interpreted by the writers of the Church of Rome themselves: some expounding this angel of Christ, others of Michael the archangel, others of the angels in general. [Vide Zegerum in loc.] Thirdly, This text describeth only a prophetic vision; wherein to conceit everything to be real and argumentative, would be as absurd as to argue from all the little circumstances of a parable (which, indeed, is the usual way of arguing of the Catholic Scripturist, for want of better topics); and then we must fancy an altar before the throne of God, and a golden censer in the hand of the angel, and incense burnt therein, and the smoke thereof ascending before the throne of God; that is, we must turn the text into smoke. Fourthly, Let the Papists make their best advantage of this text, it will appear to be nothing to their purpose: the utmost that can be gathered from hence is, 1. That the angels are conscious to some prayers of the saints on earth, as being present (especially) at the public services of the Church, and beholding the decorum used there. [1 Cor. 11:10.] And what sober Protestant ever denied this? 2. That those blessed spirits, as they do descend from their heavenly habitations, to take notice of the services performed by us mortals, so they ascend to heaven again, and, as it were, make their returns, and give a report of what they hear and see to be done and performed of us. 3. That they join their devotions with ours, their heavenly hallelujahs with our imperfect praises, yea, and their hearty Amen to all our prayers; wishing, out of their fervent charity and burning love, all the good things unto us that we pray for.

And all this is acknowledged by some writers of the Church in the purer

ages (as your ladyship will by and by understand), who yet never acknowledged the invocation of angels, much less of saints, but utterly rejected both, as derogatory to the honour of God, and Christ the Mediator. And the Catholic Scripturist himself (as great a stock of confidence as he hath) durst not affirm that the prayers of the saints, mentioned in this text, and said to be offered up by the angel, were made to the angel himself, but to God. So he tells us immediately before his citation of this text, “that Raphael offered the prayers made (to whom?) to God by Toby.” And then, what is all this to his purpose?

X. Let us now (with your ladyship’s leave) cast up the account, and we shall find the total sum of all the texts, that can with any colour of reason be pretended by our Catholic Scripturist to prove invocation of saints, to amount to a very slender number; for by his own confession, all the texts alleged out of the Old Testament, are to be deducted (which are the greatest number) as impertinent, yea, sophistically produced, seeing it is acknowledged not only that there was not, but that there could not be, any such thing as invocation of saints taught under the Old Testament, no saint being then in heaven. Upon the same ground, all the texts alleged out of the four Gospels are to be deducted also, because none of them reach any farther than Christ’s ascension, before which time no saint was yet in heaven; so that when your ladyship meets with any text for invocation of saints, cited out of any book of Scripture, from Genesis to the end of St. John’s Gospel, you may be assured, from the confession of the Papists themselves, that it is nothing to the purpose; and the few remaining texts out of St. Paul’s Epistles and the Revelation of St. John, your ladyship hath seen also how impertinent they are. And now what is become of that formidable and numerous army of Scripture testimonies for “praying to saints,” which the author had with so much ostentation brought into the field, to encourage the Roman Catholic, and to affright the Protestant reader, and to abuse both? It is gone and vanished, and there appears not one text that will stand the ground in defense of so desperate a cause.

XI. But there is one text in the New Testament (which the Catholic Scripturist himself is forced to produce), wherein the religious worship (and so the invocation) of angels, and therefore much more of saints, is plainly forbidden: the text is Col. 2:18–19. “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head,” etc.; where the Apostle expressly forbids the religious worship of angels, and obviates also the specious pretense of the Romanists, whereby they

endeavour to colour that unchristian practice. The pretense is humility, and that they dare not in their prayers, by reason of their unworthiness, approach immediately unto God, but by degrees and steps, addressing themselves to the holy angels, and by them making their supplications to Almighty God. The Apostle assures us that this pretense is a mere cheat and fraud, serving to no other purpose than to beguile souls; and that (this pretense notwithstanding) the practice of invoking and worshipping angels is both vain and sinful. 1. Vain and rash; because hereby men [Α μη εώρακεν εμβατεύων.] intrude into those things they have not seen. They know not the nature and names, the distinct orders and offices of angels, or when they are present and when not; and yet they pray unto them and worship them. 2. Sinful and wicked; for hereby they, after a sort, forsake Christ, and hold not the Head of angels, principalities, and powers, that is, they do not acknowledge Christ, the Head of all angels, principalities, and powers, to be a sufficient mediator between God and man; but seek out for other mediators beside Him. Now, what saith the Catholic Scripturist to this text? I beseech your ladyship seriously to weigh the answers which he gives. [(Point 36. num. 8. p. 242, 243.)] He tells us that St. Paul could not forbid the worship of angels, which St. John practiced, etc. [Rev. 19:10, 22:8.] Why not? seeing the angel himself, to whom St. John offered to perform that worship, forbade it and refused it. But, saith the sophister, he forbade it not as unlawful, but as unbecoming the dignity of St. John, who was a very great Prophet and Apostle; and by his office equal to angels. How vain this shift is, your ladyship will easily discern, if you consider the angel, in the text cited, forbids the worship which St. John was about to give him, by such reasons as equally extend to all Christians: 1. He tells him he was σύνδουλος, his “fellow servant,” no master of his, to be worshipped by him; but a creature, obliged to worship and serve the supreme God no less than himself. 2. He expressly forbids this worship offered to him by St. John, as due only to God; for in both the texts cited, after the angel had forbidden St. John to worship him, he adds, “worship God;” as if he should say, That worship which thou art about to offer me, is due only to God, and therefore to Him alone do thou give it. 3. In the latter text cited, Rev. 22:9, there is an express clause, which is so general as to comprehend all other Christians no less than St. John, or the Prophets and Apostles, as not obliged, yea, forbidden, to worship angels. The words are, “I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book; “that is, all obedient Christians, which therefore are by this text no less exempted from the worship of angels than St. John himself was. But he urgeth, “By this you make St. John guilty of idolatry, in worshipping an angel, no less than you pretend us Roman Catholics to be.” I answer, This is most false; for we say that St. John, surprised

with the heavenly glory, and transported with the glad tidings of the marriage supper in the former text I and the vision of the heavenly Jerusalem in the latter, worshipped the angel that was the messenger of the one, and the revealer of the other, not knowing, or at least not considering, who he was; and, being warned, forbore to proceed in that his error and mistake. But the Papists knowingly, wittingly, deliberately, and professedly, worship angels; and being warned by this example of St. John, and the express prohibition of St. Paul, and many other admonitions of Scripture, will not give it over, but still obstinately persist in their sinful practice.

But I wonder the Catholic Scripturist should so far forget his own catechism; for the Trent Catechism (which I am sure he dares not disown) expressly acknowledgeth [In Explic. Precept. 1.] that the honour that St. John was about to give unto the angel was “an honour due unto God only,” and upon that account forbidden; and some of the most learned authors [Vide Baron. Annal. tom. i. ad ann. 60. Greg. de Valentia, lib. i. de Idolatria, cap. 4. Coster. Enchirid. cap. 16. Sol. Object. 7. Aquin. Secunda Secundae, Quaest. 84.] among the Romanists acknowledge the same. But, secondly, let us examine the direct answer which he gives to the above-cited text, in these words: “The truth is, St. Paul speaks only of such religious worship of angels as had been taught among the Jews by Simon Magus, who would have sacrifice offered to all angels, as well evil as good, etc. And this is that which is condemned in the Council of Laodicea.” The plain sense of which answer is this: that St. Paul forbids not the worship of good angels, but only of bad angels, or devils. But sure the Catholic Scripturist is a man of a very forlorn understanding, if he really believes this answer to be the truth; for St. Paul prohibits the worship of angels in general. Now if he had meant that good angels may be worshipped, but had not, he ought to have made a distinction, unless he intended grossly to deceive his reader. 2. St. Paul speaks of all those angels and principalities of which Christ is the Head [Verses 10 and 19.]: and I hope the good angels are not to be excluded from this number. Nay Christ, in the most proper sense, is the Head of the good angels alone. 3. St. Paul speaks to a Christian Church, “the saints and faithful brethren which are at Colosse.” [Chapter. 1:2.] These he cautions to take heed of the worship of angels; and implies, that they were prone to that worship which he forbids. Now sure they were very sorry saints that were inclined to worship devils. 4. He tells us also, that the angel worship which he forbids, was gilded over with a specious pretense, with a show of humility, viz. in not daring to approach the supreme God, but by His ministers, the holy angels. But what specious pretense could there be for the worship of devils, the enemies of God? What show of humility, or any other Christian virtue, could set off so hellish and damnable a practice? I

should dishonour your ladyship's understanding, if I should dwell any longer in the refutation of so senseless an interpretation: so that, from the text of St. Paul (notwithstanding all the cavils of the Catholic Scripturist), I have leave to conclude that the worship and invocation of angels (and therefore much more of saints departed) is sinful and unlawful. What he adds concerning the Council of Laodicea, that this devil-worship was the only thing condemned by the Fathers thereof, all the learned know to be an impudent falsehood. They condemn the same worship of angels which St. Paul forbids; and their decree hath respect to the same countries which the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians condemns. For Laodicea, where that Council assembled, was the metropolis of Phrygia, and not far from Colossae; so that it seems, the same superstitious practice of worshipping angels, which had its beginning among the Colossians in St. Paul's time, took such deep root, as to continue in that part of the world till the time of the Council of Laodicea, that is, above two hundred years after: which again renders it utterly improbable that this angel worship should be the worship of evil angels or devils; for so detestable a practice could not continue so long, at least among those that still bore the name of Christians, such as the persons concerned in the decree of the Council of Laodicea are expressly acknowledged to be. In a word, that Council doth in general terms, and without any distinction, forbid Christians to name, [*Ἀγγέλους ονομάζειν*, i.e. *Angelos invocare*. Vide 2 Tim. 2:19, collat. Cum 1 Cor. 1:2. De vera autem concilii sententia cent: Zonar. Comm. in Concil. Laodic. canon 35.] that is, invoke or pray unto angels.

XII. I have this to add concerning invocation of saints, in reference to the New Testament (if after what hath been said it be not superfluous to add anything more), that whereas the Catholic Scripturist (as we have heard [See also point 37. num. 2.]) professedly lays down this as the ground of his discourse concerning praying to saints: that the saints, when they die, go immediately to the third heaven, and there enjoy the beatific vision; this foundation is utterly subverted by the doctrine of the Catholic Church in the first ages: for the Church of God, for some ages after the Apostles, believed that the souls of the faithful, in the state of separation, though they are in a happy condition in paradise, yet are not in the third heaven, nor do enjoy the beatific vision till the resurrection. If the author of the Letter, or the Catholic Scripturist, shall deny this, I will forfeit all my credit with your ladyship if I do not fully prove it by very many and very manifest testimonies out of primitive antiquity. Nay, this was a doctrine so generally received in the time of Justin Martyr, [Dialog. cum Tryphone, p. 306, 307. edit. Paris, 1636. [c. 80. p. 178.] Vide et pag. 223. [c. 5. p. 107.]] that is, in the first succession of the Apostles, that we learn from the same Justin, that there were none but some profligate heretics that believed the souls of the faithful, before

the resurrection, to be received into heaven itself. And indeed the Scriptures of the New Testament, as they do assure us that the souls of the faithful, departed this life, are in Abraham's bosom, [Luke 16:23.] or in paradise [Luke 23:43.]; so they do plainly enough intimate that paradise and the third heaven are distinct places. [2 Cor. 12:2-4.] And so the Jews, [Vide Grot. in Lucae, c. xxiii. 43.] from whom the notion and very term of paradise was derived, universally believed; and it is most certain that our Saviour Christ, whose soul went to paradise presently upon His death, ascended not to the third heaven till after His resurrection. Now the particular knowledge which the saints departed are supposed to have of things done upon earth, depends, according to the Papists, on their enjoying the beatific vision; and upon this knowledge the particular intercession of the saints in heaven is founded, and that again is the foundation of invocation of saints. Hence it follows, that the prime foundation of invocation of saints, laid by the Papists, is overthrown by the general consent of the purest and best ages of the Church of Christ, and that most agreeably also to the Scriptures of the New Testament.

XIII. And accordingly it is very apparent that there was no such thing practiced in the Church (by the Catholics I mean) as invocation of saints, for at least three hundred years after Christ. Let the author of the Letter produce any one testimony to the purpose, out of any writer of these ages, that is not by learned men of his own party acknowledged and confessed to be supposititious and forged, and I will yield them the whole cause in this controversy. This is a very liberal offer; and yet I will stand to it, and do not fear in the least that the Protestant cause will be any loser by it. Nay, it is manifest that the Church of Christ, in those purer ages, professedly disowned the invocation of any creature, saint or angel, as derogatory to the honour of God, who alone is to be invocated through Christ the only Mediator. I will give your ladyship one illustrious testimony, that shall reach as far as about two hundred and fifty years after Christ. Origen, [Contra Cels. l. v. p. 233. edit. Cantab. [c. 4. p. 579.]] defending the Christian religion against Celsus, a profane derider of it, and answering a cavil of his concerning the holy angels, declares the opinion and practice of the Christian Church in his age in these express words: "We confess, indeed, that the angels are certain 'ministering spirits sent forth' by God 'to minister unto them that are heirs of salvation'; and that they do one while ascend to the pure celestial places, yea, to the purer super-celestial regions, offering up the prayers of men; another while descend from thence, bringing back to every man, as he is found worthy, somewhat of those things they are appointed by God to minister unto them that are favoured by Him. These spirits we are taught, from their office, to call angels; and we find that, by reason of a certain divinity that is in

them, they are sometimes in the Scripture called gods; yet this is not to be understood as if we were commanded to adore them, or give them Divine worship, although they minister and convey the good things of God unto us. For all prayers, all intercessions, deprecations, and thanksgivings, ought to be directed to God, the Lord of all things, by our High Priest, who is greater than all angels, the living Word and God. For to invoke the angels without the knowledge of them, of which mortals are incapable, would be unreasonable. And if we should suppose that we could attain the admirable and hidden knowledge of them, so as to understand their nature and several offices, yet this would not warrant us with confidence to invoke any other besides the supreme God, who is abundantly able to supply all our wants by our Saviour, the Son of God. And this is enough to make the angels our friends, and ready to do us any good office, that we are pious towards God, and, as far as our mortal nature is able, imitate their virtues, who themselves also do imitate God.”

I beseech your ladyship seriously to weigh the several things contained in this testimony. This ancient and famous writer doth here plainly teach, 1. That the angels, who stand before the face of God in heaven, are by no means to be invoked; much less then the saints, who are supposed by the Church of God (as we have before shewn) to be yet, at least, “a little lower than the angels”. 2. That the angels are blessed instruments, betwixt God and us, of conveying our prayers to God, and the good things of God to us, and yet are not to be invoked; how much less then the saints departed, to whom no such ordinary ministry is attributed, either in Scripture or antiquity? 3. That the angels are called in Scripture gods, which is more than the souls of the saints departed are, and yet they are not to be invoked. 4. That invocation is a part of Divine worship, and therefore not to be given to any creature: and, therefore, 5. That all sorts of prayers are to be directed to God only by Christ, the only Mediator; and that we have no warrant to direct them to any other. 6. That to invoke God in Christ is sufficient, without having recourse to any other mediators: because God alone is able to supply all our wants. 7. That the pretense of those that tell us that it is a prudent course to pray to angels, that so we may make them our friends, and procure them to use their interest in heaven in our behalf, is vain; because the best and only way to procure friendship of these blessed spirits, is sincerely to serve and worship God alone, according to our measures, as they do. I know not how all the cavils and little pretenses of the Romanists, in this question, could have been more clearly obviated in so few words. 8. All this he delivers as the known and professed doctrine of the Church in his time, opposed to the philosophy of the heathen, concerning worshipping of demons. And who sees

not, if there had been any such practice of invoking saints or angels amongst Christians in those days, as is now in the Church of Rome, the objection of Celsus would have been perfectly groundless and ridiculous, and the answer of Origen a gross falsehood.

To return thither from whence I have somewhat digressed: from the premises it manifestly appears, that, according to the principles acknowledged by the Papists themselves, there could be no such thing as invocation of saints recommended or practiced in the Old Testament; and that, according to the grounds received by the primitive Christians that lived nearest to the Apostles (and who certainly, if the Apostles had taught either by writing or oral tradition any such practice, could not be so universally ignorant thereof), invocation of saints is not, cannot be taught or delivered in the New Testament; and, consequently, that the author of the Catholic Scripturist declares himself an egregious sophister, when he undertakes to prove their doctrine by clear texts out of both the Old and New Testament. And, therefore, some more learned and ingenuous Papists (who had not so bard a forehead as the Catholic Scripturist) have plainly, and in downright terms acknowledged, that the practice of their Church, in praying to saints, is nowhere taught in the Old or New Testament. To omit others that I might cite, if I had room and leisure, we have a full confession of Barmes, [*Orationes esse ad sanctos faciendas, neque expresse neque involute sacraliterae docent* 2. 2. *Quaest. Art. 10.*] a known author among the Romanists; “That prayers,” saith he, “are to be made to saints, the Holy Scriptures do neither expressly nor covertly teach us.”

XIV. I have one instance more (fresh in my memory), wherein the fraud and deceit of the Catholic Scripturist is very conspicuous. One of the points he undertakes to prove out of Scripture is the Half-communion, or receiving the Sacrament only in one kind, viz. the bread, practiced and (not only so, but) enjoined in the Church of Rome. I know your ladyship to be well versed in the Holy Scriptures, and therefore humbly beseech you only to recollect what you have read therein concerning this matter; as, that our Saviour instituted and commanded the Sacrament to be received in both kinds [*Matt. 26:26–28.*] and that every institution and command of Christ, especially in so important a matter as is the great Sacrament and most mysterious rite of Christianity, ought with all possible care and exactness of religion to be observed [*1 Cor. 11:23–25.*]; that St. Paul, in pursuance of our Saviour’s institution, enjoins, that every Christian, after due examination, should not only “eat of the bread,” but also “drink of the cup” in the Sacrament [*1 Cor. 11:28.*]; that it appears the Apostolic Church did accordingly receive the Sacrament in both kinds [*1 Cor. 11:26–27, 29; 10:21.*]; and

then I shall leave it to your ladyship's conscience, to judge of the intolerable impudence of those hectors in divinity, who dare undertake the proof of such things out of Scripture as may be discerned by all to be manifestly repugnant thereunto. Indeed, that the Romanists have no ground in Scripture, or primitive antiquity, to rob the laity of one half of the Communion, is plainly confessed by that very Council which first established this sacrilege; I mean the Council of Constance. For the Fathers of that Council (if it be lawful to give that venerable title to a sorry convention of men so wholly regardless of the command of Christ, and the practice of the Apostolic Church, yea, of the whole Church of God for* many ages after) in express terms acknowledge that Christ instituted the Sacrament to be received in both kinds, yea, that it was so administered and received in the primitive Church; yet, with a *non obstante*, notwithstanding all this, they boldly and blasphemously decree against communion in both kinds, as a thing dangerous and scandalous; and the decree denounceth excommunication to the priest that shall dare to administer the Sacrament as Christ appointed. I wrong them not. All this is plainly delivered in the thirteenth session of that Council. And think you not, madam, that those were rare Scripturists? What Christian is there, that bears any due honour to Christ, or respect or reverence to His commands, whose soul doth not rise up against such an antichristian decree? But where lies the danger and scandal of communicating in both kinds, that the Council speaks of? Cardinal Cajetan [In 3. Aquin. Quaest. 80.] (who was best able to explain this mystery) tells us in these words: "It is morally impossible that so many people should communicate in both kinds, without spilling the blood under the species of wine: now to expose the blood of Christ to this danger, is an act of irreverence, yea, a sacrilege, imputable to the people and their governors." He adds, "that this is the chief and solid foundation of the custom introduced of the people's communicating in one kind only." I confess I could not read these words of Cajetan without horror. For doth it not here follow, that Christ, by instituting the Sacrament in both kinds (I tremble again to utter it), unavoidably exposed His own blood to irreverence and sacrilege? that the whole primitive Church (wherein communion in both kinds is confessed by the Papists themselves to be practiced), both the people, and their Bishops, and governors, were chargeable with irreverence and sacrilege done to the blood of Christ; or, to speak in St. Paul's phrase, "were guilty of the blood of our Lord."

*[De administratione S. S. sacramenti Eucharistiae satis compertum est, universalem Christi Ecclesiam in hunc usque diem, occidentalem vero seu Romanam mille amplius a Christo annis, in solenni praesertim et ordinaria hujus sacramenti dispensatione, utramque panis et vini speciem omnibus Ecclesiae Christi membris exhibuisse. Cassasd. Consult. Art. 22. De utraque Specie Sacrament.]

But who sees not that the sacrilege is here chargeable on the Church of Rome, which hath robbed the faithful of one half of the blessed Sacrament, the cup of our Lord; to which they had a right by the institution of Christ, and the happy enjoyment and possession whereof they were invested with by the prescription and practice of the Catholic Church for many ages together after the Apostles? For when they tell us that the people receive a perfect sacrament only in one kind, because both the body and blood of Christ are truly and perfectly contained under each species of the Sacrament, they egregiously prevaricate in a matter of great concernment to the souls of men. For, 1. If this be true, then our Saviour did superfluously institute the Sacrament to be received in both kinds: for if there be a perfect sacrament in one kind only, to what purpose did Christ institute the other? 2. It is, most false, that the body and blood of Christ are sacramentally in each element: for it is the bread only that doth sacramentally signify and exhibit the body of Christ, and the wine only that doth sacramentally signify and exhibit the blood of Christ. 3. That which doth not perfectly represent and set forth the death and passion of our Lord, is no perfect sacrament (for this is the very end of this Divine institution, “to strew forth the Lord’s death” [1 Cor. 11:26.]); but communion only in one kind, viz. the bread, doth not perfectly represent the death and passion of our Lord Jesus; therefore, communion only in one kind is no perfect sacrament. The effusion and shedding of Christ’s blood on the cross (which is so considerable a part of His passion, as that it is everywhere emphatically insisted on in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and Christ Himself, in the very institution of the Sacrament, urgeth it, when consecrating the cup He saith, “This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which was shed for many” [Matt. 26:28. 1 Cor. 11:25.]); I say, this effusion of Christ’s blood is in the communion only of the bread so far from being perfectly, that it is not at all represented, but totally obscured. And therefore, 4. Some of the more ancient and learned writers among the Papists themselves have plainly confessed that communion in one kind is but an imperfect sacrament: so Durandus [In Sentent. Lombard. Com. lib. iv. distinct. 7. qu. i. p. 693.]; “This Sacrament was ordained of God for a spiritual refection, which is signified by the corporal; and it is not a perfect refection, unless therein somewhat be propounded of meat, and something of drink.” So Tapperus [Tapperus apud Cass. de Communionem sub utraque Specie, p. 1032.]; “Although whole Christ be under both species, yet He works according to the signification of them, and under one useth His body as an instrument, under the other His blood. And seeing the Sacraments confer the grace which they signify, where the signification is more perfect, there the effect also must needs be more full and complete.” And before

these our Halensis; “Receiving under both kinds (which manner of receiving our Lord delivered) is of greater efficacy and perfection.” [Lib. iv. Quaest xi. Mem. 3. p. 225.] I leave it now to your ladyship to judge how kind a mother the Church of Rome is, which for so long a time hath debarred her sons of the refreshment and comfort of a perfect sacrament, and condemned them to a mutilated, maimed, and half-communion. Indeed, the cause is so plain, that we might well wonder the Church of Rome hath not long since retracted this her rash, erroneous, and dangerous determination, did we not know and were assured, that that Church (or rather court) is swayed and guided wholly (not by the maxims of piety and conscience, but) by carnal policy. If she should recant, and restore to the faithful their right to the blessed cup, it would follow (they are the words of Gerson, [Sequeretur Ecclesiam Romanam hactenus non idem sensisse de hoc Sacramento, et Concilia generalia in fide et bonis moribus errasse. *Gerson. contra Haeres. de Communionem laicorum ab utraque Specie.* [p. 529. op. ed. 1606. vol. i.]] a famous writer among the Papists), “that the Church of Rome hath hitherto thought amiss concerning the Sacrament, and that General Councils have erred in faith and good manners.” Vain fear! for as for the former branch of the consequence, it is manifest, and cannot be denied; nor will the Proctors of the Church of Rome, with all their sophistry, be ever able to stave it off. As for the latter part, it doth not follow (at least from the premises), for it is certain that the Councils of Constance and Trent (which established that wicked decree) were not truly General Councils. But it were better to grant that part of the consequence also, rather than to affirm that Christ Himself erred, in appointing the Sacrament to be received in both kinds; that the whole Church of Christ, under the guidance of the Apostles themselves, erred, and were chargeable with irreverence and sacrilege against the blood of our Lord: both which are unavoidable consequences of admitting the decree of the Council of Constance as true and certain.

By these instances (to which many more might be added) your ladyship may be satisfied how vain and perfectly false is the pretense of the Catholic Scripturist and the author of the Letter, when they profess to prove the points in controversy between them and us by Scripture; between which and their tenets (for the most part) there is the same agreement as between light and darkness, between heaven and hell.

XV. The author of the Letter having advised your ladyship to the reading of the aforementioned book, proceeds in the next place to direct you in the manner how to read it; and here he is mighty earnest, and again and again beseecheth your ladyship to consult your serious reason. Strange advice from a Roman Catholic! Will they then allow us to consult our serious reason in the

matter of religion? This is all we desire from them, that they would not compel us to hoodwink our reason, and to follow their Church in all things by a blind implicit faith. But stay; not too much of our serious reason neither. The reasonable liberty which he gives your ladyship with one hand (and earnestly desires you to make use of), he takes away with the other. For he presently adds, “And when anything shall occur to your thoughts as falsely imputed novelties in our Church – (he means sure, when you meet with any point in that book that is (although falsely) charged with novelty, and shall seem such to your ladyship even after the use of your serious reason; well, what then?) – be pleased, madam, to turn to the 12th point, [(Num. 2. p. 90.)] and you shall read there an invincible argument against any possibility of innovation in matters of faith.” The plain sense of which advice, is this: I advise your ladyship to consult your serious reason in the reading of the book called *The Catholic Scripturist*; but yet you must take heed how you follow its guidance: for I foresee there are many points therein, which, after all that is said in defense of them by the author, will appear to your serious reason, when you have in the best manner consulted it, perfect novelties, and no way consonant to the Holy Scripture: and, therefore, when your serious reason consulted, tells you that the Church of Rome is guilty of innovation in such points, you must not believe it, but turn to such a place in the book, where you have an invincible argument to prove that the Church of Rome is infallible, and cannot possibly be guilty of any innovation. But to what purpose is it for your ladyship to consult your serious reason in the several points defended in that book, if, when you have so done, you are still at a loss, and must not trust anything to it, but only look to the proof of that point which concerns the infallibility of the Roman Church, and from thence conclude the truth of all the rest? That invincible argument he speaks of, I remember not [[The argument is that if Transubstantiation had not been believed at first, but introduced at any subsequent period, such an innovation never could have been established.]]; (indeed I cannot remember that I met with any such throughout the whole book); but as soon as I see the book again (which I hope will be speedily), I shall give your ladyship a particular answer to it, and doubt not to do it with most ample satisfaction. In the meantime, it may suffice to mind your ladyship of the true state of the question concerning the infallibility of the Roman Church. We Protestants profess and prove, by most evident arguments, that the Church of Rome hath in sundry points erred, and is guilty of innovation. The patrons of that Church, not able to answer those arguments of ours, tell us this cannot be, that the Church of Rome is infallible, and cannot possibly be guilty of such innovation. Is not this an admirable way of reasoning and disputation? Can the Romanists produce arguments to prove that their Church cannot err, so clear and

evident as these alleged by us to demonstrate that she hath erred? Surely no. To make this plain: if I can be infallibly certain that my senses, rightly disposed, and all due requisites to sensation supposed, are infallible, and cannot be deceived about their proper objects (and if I cannot be assured of this, the Apostles had no infallible assurance of that which is the foundation of the Christian faith – the resurrection of Christ – which was evidenced to them by their testimony of sense, and that testimony pronounced infallible [Acts 1:3. 1 John 1:1–2. Recita Johannis testationem, “Quod vidimus,” inquit, “quod audivimus, oculis nostris vidimus, et manus nostrae contrectarunt de Sermone Vitae.” Falsa utique testatio, si oculorum, et aurium, et manuum sensus natura mentitur. *Tertull. Lib. de Anim. cap. 17.*]); then I may be infallibly certain that the Church of Rome is not infallible, yea, that she hath grossly erred in her doctrine of Transubstantiation, teaching the bread and wine, after the words of consecration, to be turned into the very flesh and blood of Christ, which yet all my senses assure me to remain still the same in nature and substance; that is, bread and wine. If I can be infallibly certain that Christ Himself is infallible; that He would not, could not, appoint an institution that should be dangerous and scandalous to His Church, viz. of receiving the Holy Eucharist in both kinds; if I can be infallibly certain that the whole Church of Christ, that was under the guidance and direction of the Apostles, were not grossly deceived, and engaged by the Apostles themselves in a practice dangerous and scandalous (and of this I may be as infallibly sure as I am of the truth of the Gospel itself); then I may be infallibly certain that the Church of Rome not only may err, but hath grossly erred in that determination of hers, whereby she rejects (in the Council of Constance) communion in both kinds, as a dangerous and scandalous practice. And in the same manner, we might proceed to shew the falsehood of divers other determinations of the Church of Rome, if this paper would permit: but these are sufficient to any person that shall (according to the advice of the author of the Letter) consult his serious reason. Indeed, I look upon it as a wonderful both, just and wise providence of God, that He hath suffered the Church of Rome to fall into such gross errors (which, otherwise, it is scarce imaginable how men in their wits, that had not renounced, not only the Scriptures but their reason, yea, and their senses too, could be overtaken with), and to determine them for articles of faith. For hereby a person of the meanest capacity (so he be sincere, and not under the prejudice of education) may evidently discern with what a strange kind of impudence that Church arrogates to herself an infallibility in all her determinations. And for such of our Church that have been informed of these things, and yet shall leave our Communion, and follow the guidance of that Church upon the account of her infallibility, I fear they are in the number of those miserable persons described

by the Apostle, [2 Thess. 2:11–12.] “who are given up to strong delusions, that they may believe a lie,” etc. That which follows in the text I dread to mention; God avert it from them!

XVI. A little after, the author of the Letter adviseth your ladyship “to peruse the table of the aforementioned book, and to select any one or more points which you conceive may most pinch the Papists, and to judge impartially of what you read,” etc. I confess the proposal is very fair and reasonable, but yet it is no more than what the defense of his cause necessarily obliged him to submit to. For such is the unhappy condition of that Church, which arrogateth to herself infallibility in all her determinations, that she must equally defend them all; and if she should be found to be mistaken in but one instance, her whole authority is forever blasted. I humbly beseech your ladyship, therefore, to accept the condition offered, and to pitch upon the instances already given, demanding that satisfaction, which, in the sequel of his Letter, he promiseth shall be given you “with all fullness of clarity”.

XVII. As for that undertaking of your ladyship (which he mentions) “to make appear our Church to be the only true Church,” etc. knowing your ladyship’s wisdom and prudence, I cannot believe you ever undertook any such thing. None of us do affirm that our Church is the only true Church; for that would be a schismatic assertion, like that of the Donatists of old, and the Papists nowadays, and the highest breach of charity, in damning all the Christian world besides ourselves. What we affirm is this, that our Church is a true Church, in all the respects mentioned by the author of the Letter, and also a pure Church; and therefore such, as from which no man can separate, or desert her communion, without the guilt of schism. This the writers of our Church have affirmed, and by many large volumes proved. If the author of the Letter can produce anything worth the taking notice of, to the contrary, I will engage to your ladyship (although I have my hand full of other work) to answer it. But it may be, your ladyship said that our Church of all others, at this day, is the purest and best Church, most conform to the Scripture and primitive pattern. And this (although comparisons are odious) is very defensible, and a well-weighed truth, of which I have (ever since I was capable of judging) been verily persuaded. But if the comparison be made between the Roman Church and ours, he is stark blind that sees not to which the preference is due. For in the points controverted between the Papists and us (wherein alone the comparison can be framed, seeing in the rest we stand upon equal terms), it is very visible that we keep to the rule of Scripture and the primitive pattern, from which the Church of Rome hath widely deviated. And supposing, (not granting,) that the Roman Church could, in the

said questions, clear herself of the heavy imputations of idolatry and sacrilege, charged on her by her adversaries; yet. she will never be able to acquit herself from innovation, and the guilt of receding from the rule of Scripture and the primitive practice. Nothing but impudence itself (that is, such a thing as the author of *The Catholic Scripturist*) dares affirm that the Scriptures teach, or the primitive Church practiced, image worship, invocation of saints, the half-communion, prayers in a tongue not understood by them that are required to join in them, etc.; and therefore among the Papists themselves some of the more ingenuous and learned have confessed that none of these things can be found either in the Scriptures, or the practice of the primitive Church. Besides, our serious reason, if consulted (according to the advice of the author of the Letter), will tell us, that the side on which our Church determines in these questions, is at least best and safest. Suppose the image worship practiced in the Church of Rome were not idolatrous, yet sure it is gross and carnal; and to worship God, who is a Spirit, in spirit and truth, without images and corporeal representations, is a more spiritual and generous worship than that which is performed with and by them: and the best plea which the Papists have made for these images is, that they may be useful books for idiots and fools to pore on. [*Idiotarum libri.*] So if we should suppose that invocation, of saints and angels were not at all derogatory to the honour of God, and Christ the Mediator; yet seeing God hath nowhere commanded it, nowhere annexed any promise thereunto in the Scriptures, it may be well doubted whether He will accept it. [*Certa ratione nescimus, an sancti nostra vota cognoscant quamvis pie hoc credamus. Cajetan in secundam secundae Quaest. 88. Art. 5.*] And seeing it is not, cannot be certain, that the saints are in a capacity of understanding our particular necessities, and hearing our prayers; neither can it be certain that all the prayers we make unto them are not frustraneous, and vainly poured out into the air, without any benefit or advantage accruing to us by them. But we are sure that it is not only lawful for us, but our indispensable duty, to pray unto God, because He hath in a thousand places expressly commanded us so to do: we are sure that He knows all our wants and necessities, and can bear our prayers, as being omniscient, and everywhere present: we are sure that the prayers we offer up to Him, agreeable to His will, in the name only of Christ the Mediator, shall be heard and accepted, God having obliged Himself to grant such prayers by many express promises. Now it is a known rule, *in dubiis pars tutior eligenda*, that “in doubtful cases we are to take the safest side,” that which is liable to the least doubts: much less then, will a wise man deliberate in his choice, where one side hath no doubt at all, the other many. So if the Church of Rome could excuse herself from sacrilege, in robbing the laity of one half of the Communion (which she will never be able to do), yet everyone sees that a whole

communion is better than a half one, a more perfect sacrament better than a less perfect one; such as a communion only in one kind is by the more learned Papists confessed to be. And, lastly, it is most evident, that it is much better to [Cajetan in 1 Cor. 14. Ex hac Pauli doctrina habetur, quod melius ad edificationem Ecclesiae est, orationes publicas, quae audiente populo dicuntur, dici lingua communi clericis et populo, quam dici Latine.] pray unto God with the understanding, than without it. Your ladyship's wisdom will easily direct you to carry on the comparison by the same method, in most of the other points controverted between us and the Church of Rome. But I have chosen to instance in these, as being some of the most principal.

XVIII. His offer to read any book on our side that your ladyship shall recommend to him, and with all diligence and indifference to peruse it, is again very fair and ingenuous. In the abundance of excellent books of this kind, it is hard to make a choice. How many full and clear discourses have been long since written against the errors of the Church of Rome, as to the points in controversy between them and us, that are yet unanswered, and are like so to remain forever! But if a new treatise may be judged best, I humbly advise your ladyship to recommend to his reading a book of the learned Dr. Stillingfleet, lately published, [[In 1671.]] and entitled, "A Discourse concerning the Idolatry of the Church of Rome, etc." and to hear what he can return in answer to it.

XIX. And now we come to his great boast; so great a one, that I wonder it should drop from the pen of any well-advised person, that considers what he saith or writes: "And this, madam, give me leave to recommend to your reflections as most undeniable, that all Christianity, over the whole world, was first planted by the Missionaries and Apostles sent by and from the heads of our Church under Jesus Christ, by the immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost," etc. etc. O the hard forehead of a Roman Catholic!

This that he recommends to your ladyship as an undeniable truth, is, indeed (saving his honourable relation to your ladyship's blood), a most gross falsehood. It is so far from being true that all Christianity was first planted in the world by the Missionaries of the Church of Rome, that it is manifest that Christianity was planted in the eastern parts of the world, and divers eminent Churches of Christ formed and settled there, before the Church of Rome had a being, and whilst the Tarpeian hill was covered with a thick fog of paganism. Christianity was first planted (as every man knows that hath read the Scriptures) in Jerusalem, where was a numerous Church settled, and St. James, the brother of our Lord, by the hands of the Apostles (and, as many of the ancients tell us, by the immediate order of Christ Himself), constituted Bishop. This was the first

and truly Mother Church. From this seminary of Christianity, many other Churches were planted in Judaea; in Samaria, [Acts 8:5–6, 14, 25.] in Syria, and, in particular, in that noble city thereof, Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians. [Acts 11:26.] And it is observable, that all this while the Apostles preached the Gospel to none but those of the Jewish nation or religion. [Acts 11:29.] All this while the city of Rome lay in darkness; till at length, in the reign of Claudius, as Eusebius relates it, [Histor. Eccles. 2:14.] St. Peter came to Rome (and certainly then he came, if ever), and brought the light of the heavenly doctrine from the east into the western parts of the world. If the author of the Letter shall object, that all these plantations in the east were made by St. Peter, who was afterwards head of the Church of Rome, the answer is easy. 1. This plea is impertinent (how true soever it may be allowed to be), seeing it still appears that these things were not done by St. Peter as the head of the Church of Rome; for this he could not be before that Church was in being. 2. St. Paul also planted some Churches in the eastern parts of the world, before the Gospel was preached in the city of Rome. As soon as he was converted, which was in the reign of Tiberius, and in the nineteenth year thereof, as Eusebius tells us in his Chronicle, he went into Arabia, and preached the Gospel there; and this, as the learned have observed, was the first plantation among the Gentiles made by St. Paul. [Gal. 1:17.] Afterwards (as he himself tells us), he preached the Gospel “from Jerusalem, round about unto Illyricum” [Rom. 15:19.]; and that so, as that he strove to preach it “where Christ was not yet named,” nor the foundations of Christianity already laid by others. [Verses 20, 21.] And indeed St. Paul planted more Churches in the eastern and western parts of the world than St. Peter, or any other of the Apostles besides, yea, it seems, more than all the rest of the Apostles together; for he “laboured more abundantly than they all.” [1 Cor. 15:10.] Hence St. Clement, [Epist. ad Corinth. p. 14. edit. Oxon. 1669. [c. 5. p. 150.]] Bishop of Rome in the apostolic age, speaking of the labours of St. Peter and St. Paul, briefly touches on the former, but dwells in the praises of the latter (not so much as mentioning St. Peter’s coming to Rome). “St. Paul,” saith he, “having been seven times cast into bonds, scourged, and stoned, obtained the reward of his patience, and having preached the Gospel in the east and the west, became famous for his faith, instructing the world in righteousness; and coming into the bounds of the west, suffered martyrdom under the emperors, and so departed this life, and went into the holy place, being made an example of the highest patience.” Much use may be made of this testimony by the wise and learned; but my present purpose, in alleging these words of St. Clement (a contemporary and fellow labourer of St. Paul, to whom he had a nearer relation than to St. Peter) is to verify St. Paul’s words, that he was more abundant in his endeavours of

propagating the Gospel, than any other of the Apostles, St. Peter himself not excepted. Let me now seriously and in good earnest, ask the author of the Letter, doth he think that St. Paul planted all these Churches as the missionary of St. Peter (the vainly supposed head of the Church of Rome), or by authority derived from him? If he be so confident or ignorant as to affirm this, St. Paul himself shall refute him, who solemnly declares that he received not his commission from any man on earth, but immediately from Christ himself [Gal. 1:11.]; that as soon as he was converted by the heavenly vision, he betook himself to his work of preaching the Gospel, as not conceiving it necessary to go up to Jerusalem to take a commission from St. Peter, or any other of the Apostles residing there, whose faces he saw not till three years after [Verses 15–18.]; that St. James, St. Peter, and St. John, the three pillars of the Church at Jerusalem, upon “conference added nothing unto him,” viz. either of instruction or commission, either of knowledge or authority [Gal. 2: 6.]; that when these three Apostles saw the “Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto him, as the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter, they gave him the right hand of fellowship.” [Verses 7–9.] What can be more plain than these words? For, according to the suppositions of the Romanists, it should have been said that the headship of the whole Church was committed to St. Peter, part of the government whereof, viz. that which concerned the circumcision of the Jewish Church, he kept to himself, and committed the other, that respected the Gentile Christians, to St. Paul: but the words are quite otherwise; St. Peter had his share of inspection into the Churches committed to him, and St. Paul his, and neither of them from the other, but both from Christ. And here, by the way, your ladyship may please to observe, how this very thing, that the care of the circumcision was committed by Christ unto St. Peter, as his proper charge, doth, if well considered, utterly overthrow the pretenses of the Church of Rome to the universal Pastorship, derived from St. Peter. For, 1. The title of the “Apostle of the circumcision,” given to St. Peter in, Scripture, would have been a great diminution to his dignity, if (as the Romanists fancy) he had been head and governor (in an appropriated sense, not common to him with the other Apostles) both of the circumcision and uncircumcision, that is, of the universal Church. 2. St. Peter’s proper relation to the circumcision, or Churches of the believing Jews, doth not at all correspond with his taking the charge of the Church of Rome (a Gentile Church) above all others, and residing there, and making that the chief episcopal see. He might, indeed, occasionally come to Rome; and I am willing to believe (upon the testimony of many of the ancients) that he did so, and preached there, especially to those of the circumcision: although some very learned men have observed that the whole tradition of St. Peter’s voyage to Rome was first derived

from Papias, an author indeed very ancient but also very credulous, and of a mean judgment (as Eusebius characterizes him); but that he fixed his chair at Rome, among the Gentile Christians, and, much more, that he advanced that Church to the primary and universal pastorship over all the rest (supposing it in his power so to do), is certainly a very idle and groundless imagination, and no way consistent with that account of St. Peter which the Scripture gives us. For the Churches of the circumcision were his chief and proper charge; and all his other labours, in comparison of what he bestowed on them, were, if I might so speak, a kind of *πάρεργον*, or “work by the by.” [Quod dicit Paulus Petro creditum fuisse Apostolatam circumcissionis, id intelligendum est, *ἐπι το πολύ*. Nam et Petrus Cornelium convertit incircumcisum, et Paulus Judaeos nonnullos. Sed praecipuum studium Petro erat circa Judaeos, Paulo circa gentes alias. *Grot. ad Gal. 2:7.*] And therefore if any Church could have challenged a primacy of authority over the rest, upon the account of St. Peter, it would have been one of the Churches of the circumcision, as Jerusalem or Antioch, to whom he had, above all other Churches, a peculiar relation, as being Apostle of the circumcision.

But this I mention only by the way, although it be very much to the purpose. My business was to prove (and I have done it abundantly) that St. Paul, by whom most of the first plantations of Christianity in the world were made, was no missionary of the Church of Rome, or of St. Peter, considered as head thereof, or in any other relation; and, consequently, that what the author of the Letter recommends to your ladyship’s reflection, as undeniable, is a palpable untruth; viz. “That all Christianity over the whole world was first planted by Missionaries and Apostles, sent by and from the heads of the Roman Church.”

XX. Some perhaps will wonder what necessity should drive the author of the Letter to maintain so extravagant an assertion; but I acknowledge he had very great and cogent reasons to force him on this desperate attempt. For it is an article of the Romanist’s faith, that the Church of Rome is now, and ever was from the beginning, the head of the Catholic Church, from which all other Churches derive their very being of Churches: that the Church of Rome is “causally (as Cardinal Perron expresseth it [Reply to King James, iv. 9.]) the only Catholic Church, as the center and beginning of Ecclesiastical communion, infusing unity, which is the form of universality, into the Catholic Church.” Now this cannot possibly be defended, unless you suppose the Church of Rome to be the Mother Church, and all other Churches to derive their Christianity, and the succession of their Pastors, from her. But this foundation I have already utterly destroyed, and, consequently, the towering Babel superstructure raised thereon falls to the ground. If no Church be a Catholic Church but by its dependence on or derivation from the Church of Rome, then the first and most noble plantations

of Christianity in the east were no true and Catholic Churches; because they were made such Churches as they were, before the Church of Rome had a being; and if it be answered, that the Church of Rome had then a being in her head, viz. St. Peter, by whom, or by whose authority, those plantations in the east were made, I have already replied, 1. That St. Peter could not be considered as actually the head of the Church of Rome before that Church existed; 2. That St. Peter was never at all the head of the Church of Rome, any more than, no, nor so much as he was the head of some other Churches, as of Jerusalem, etc. to which he had a most especial relation, as the “Apostle of the circumcision”; 3. That St. Paul planted most Churches, both in the east and west, who yet was no dependent in the least upon St. Peter, either as the head of the Church of Rome, or in any other relation; and yet the Churches planted by St. Paul were as truly Catholic and Apostolic Churches as any planted by St. Peter. All these things are plain and evident, and whosoever doth not willfully shut his eyes against the clear light of the Holy Scriptures and right reason, cannot but acknowledge them; and being acknowledged, they do for ever destroy the senseless and arrogant pretenses of the Romanists to a primacy of authority and jurisdiction belonging to their Church over all other Churches in the world.

XXI. Nay, from the grounds laid it is manifest that the Church upon the hill (as high as she is) cannot lay just claim so much as to a prerogative of honour (which yet we willingly grant to some Churches before others) above all the rest, as originally due unto her. For doubtless this prerogative of honour was originally due to the mother or original Church: such the Church of Rome was not; but indeed one of the younger daughters of Sion. The Christian Church planted at Jerusalem, was really and truly the seminary of all Christianity over the whole world. And upon this account the prerogative of honour was originally due to her; and not upon this account alone: for, 1st. This Church was the more constant seat and residence of the Apostles, wherein they had their Councils, from whence they gave forth their laws and decrees to the other Churches, and to which the other Churches upon emergent difficulties had recourse. [Acts 15:1–2, 6, 7, etc.] 2. The episcopal see of this Church was constituted with such circumstances, as agree to no other Church of the Christian world besides. St. James, the brother of our Lord Jesus (a person by that relation the most honourable) was made the first Bishop there, and in the whole Christian world, and that by an assembly of the holy Apostles, under whose eyes, and in the place of their residence, he was to execute his office; and that again, (if we will give credit to the united testimonies of divers very ancient Christian writers, [Vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vii. 19. et Vales. Annot.]) by the express order and command of Christ Himself. Upon which accounts, Eusebius tells us that a strange kind of

3. It is certain that a kind of preeminence or precedence is everywhere in Scripture given to the Jews (by reason of the covenant of God to their fathers) before the Gentiles in the kingdom of the Messiah, and in the participation of those benefits that accrue to mankind by Christ Jesus and His Gospel, of which, although the Gentiles were no less partakers than the Jews, yet in this order, that they were dispensed to the “Jew first, and then to the Gentile” [Rom. 2:10, 3:1–2.]; and St. Paul tells us that it was necessary that the Gospel should be first preached unto them. [Acts 13:46.] The Church of the Jews was then the elder sister; and this right of primogeniture she lost not by becoming Christian, which she must have done if we suppose her to have been subjected to the Church of Rome, or any other Church among the Gentiles. Now Jerusalem was the chief Church of the circumcision, and therefore, as such, the preeminence was due to her. And accordingly we find, that although this first and famous Church of Jerusalem, not very long after the Apostles, lost much of her real dignity, not retaining so much as the jurisdiction of the Churches of Palestine (whether this happened through the several devastations of that city, whereby it was rendered poor and contemptible; or through the inveterate hatred of the Gentile Christians against the Jewish believers, whereby the former sought by all means and arts to depress the latter; or through the political distribution and subordination of Churches, which was molded according to the civil disposition of the Roman empire, wherein Jerusalem happened to have none of the best shares, I determine not, although I incline to the last resolution), yet still, all other Churches for a long time acknowledged (in words at least) a special respect and honour due to that see; and some of the ancients have termed it the “Mother of all other Churches,” even the “Throne of Christ upon earth;” and the governors thereof, “the princes of all other Christians in the world;” and which is more, in differences about rights and customs, have appealed from other Churches, even the Roman Church itself, to the primitive orders and constitutions settled in that first Apostolical Church, all which I could make evident by many express testimonies, if I durst be so far troublesome to your ladyship.

XXII. But to conclude this discourse, we may, in confidence of the premises, very justly and aptly bespeak the arrogant Romanists, that expect all other Churches should own a dependence upon theirs, and claim to themselves a privilege of giving laws to the Christian world, in the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians (a learned, wealthy, and populous city, and thereby much disposed

to the humour of the Church of Rome, as it is at this day), “What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?” [1 Cor. 14:36.] [Vide Grotium in locum.] The Corinthian doctors (it seems) had introduced divers customs contrary to the institutions of other Churches, such as men’s covering their heads, and women being uncovered, in religious exercises and assemblies, women preaching, etc. [1 Cor. 11:3–6, 14:34.] In these evil customs they persisted, not regarding the pattern of other Churches that were before them: insomuch, as the mild Apostle is forced to charge them with the guilt of a contentious, perverse, and proud humour, in slighting the customs of the Catholic Church. [1 Cor. 11:16.] To these he thus speaks: “What? came the word out from you?” are you the Mother Church? did all the rest of the Christian world receive the Gospel and its institutions from you? No. The Christian law came out of Sion, and the Gospel was first preached, and the Church of Christ planted, in Jerusalem: look thither, and you shall find no such customs used as you obstinately persist in. Or, “did the word of God come only to you?” No. As you were not the first, so you are not the only persons, that received the Gospel and became a Christian Church; there are many other Churches besides, enjoying equal privileges with yourselves. Why are you then so arrogant? Your ladyship’s wisdom can easily apply this, and discern how much more deeply the present Church of Rome is concerned in this smart expostulation of the Apostle. And now I leave it to your ladyship to judge, what advantage the author of the Letter hath gotten to his cause by his inconsiderate boasts.

XXIII. As for the modern plantations of Christianity, [Concerning the admirable method used by the Ministers of the Church of Rome in the conversion of the heathens in China, and other neighbour nations, your ladyship may please to read Dr. Stillingfleet’s late treatise, p. 439–441.] especially those made since the difference between us and the Church of Rome, it is not worth our while to speak of them.

The Church of Rome, as well as other parts of Christendom, may for shame be silent in this matter. Nay, sure I am, the Church of Rome, in the posture it hath been for these many years, hath so little reason to boast of her advancing and promoting the interest of the Christian religion in the world, that it is apparent the gross corruptions of Catholic doctrine, defended by her, have stained and darkened (nothing more) the glory of Christianity, and sullied its beauteous face, and hindered its growth and progress. Let indifferent persons, that have travelled abroad in the world, judge here, and they will tell us that nothing doth more alienate the hearts of the Jews, and Mahometans too, from Christianity, than the image worship and bread worship (so directly contrary to both their laws) which they see with their eyes practiced by them that call themselves the only true Christians. And how many doctrines are there defended by the Church of Rome,

which lie as stumbling blocks before them! What a mountain in their way is the article of Transubstantiation, which a man cannot receive without utterly renouncing at once his reason and all his senses too! Every man hath heard of one great person [Averroes. *Si Christiani adorant Deum quem comedunt, sit anima mea cum philosophia.*] (and we have reason to believe that there have been many more of his mind) that was turned off from Christianity by this just prejudice; “If the Christians worship the God which they eat, let my soul be with the philosophers.” I have here a very copious and profitable theme before me, if I had time and room enough to enlarge upon it: but enough of this for the present.

XXIV. We proceed, in the next place, to the constant visibility and succession of Pastors in our Church, which he challengeth your ladyship, as obliged by promise, to make good. And here I make him this fair proposal: Let him, or any one of his party, produce any one solid argument to demonstrate such a succession of Pastors in the Church of Rome, and I will undertake, by the very same argument, to prove a like succession in our Church. Indeed, your ladyship will easily discern that the author of the Letter is concerned, no less than we are, to acknowledge such a succession of lawful Pastors in our Church, till the time of the Reformation; and if we cannot derive our succession since, it is a hard case. But our records, faithfully kept and preserved, do evidence to all the world an uninterrupted succession of Bishops in our Church, canonically ordained, derived from such persons in whom a lawful power of ordination was seated by the confession of the Papists themselves. For the story of the Nag’s Head Ordination is so putid a fable, so often and so clearly refuted by the writers of our Church, that the more learned and ingenuous Papists are now ashamed to make use of it.

XXV. His demand, that we should shew a succession of Pastors in our Church, in all ages, holding and professing the Thirty-nine Articles, is infinitely ridiculous, absurd, and unreasonable; for we ourselves acknowledge that the Pastors of our Church were, before the Reformation, involved, as well as others, in the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome, against which our Thirty-nine Articles are mainly directed; or else there had been no need of reformation. And let him, if he can, shew a constant succession of Pastors in the Church of Rome, always professing the decrees of the Council of Trent, in the points of image-worship, invocation of saints, communion in one kind, purgatory, indulgences, etc., and I will promise with heart and hand to subscribe to that Council. But it is as clear as the light at noon-day, that the decrees of that Council, in those articles, are most contrary to the doctrine of the Catholic Church (and so of the Pastors of the Church of Rome) in the first and best ages.

As for ourselves, that which we maintain is this: That our Church, and the Pastors thereof, did always acknowledge the same rule of faith, the same fundamental articles of-the Christian religion, both before and since the Reformation; but with this difference, that we then professed the rule of faith together with the additional corruptions of the Church of Rome; but now (God be thanked) without them. So that the change as to matter of doctrine, which hath been in our Church and her Pastors, is for the better; like that of a man from being leprous becoming sound and healthy, and yet always the same man. This a learned Prelate [Bishop Hall's Old Religion, chap. iii.] of our Church solemnly proclaimed to all the world in these words: "Be it known to all the world, that our Church is only reformed or repaired, not made new: there is not one stone of a new foundation laid by us: yea, the old walls stand still, only the overcasting of those ancient stones with the untempered mortar of new inventions, displeaseth us: plainly, set aside the corruptions, and the Church is the same. And what are these corruptions, but unsound adjections to the ancient structure of religion? These we cannot but oppose, and therefore are unjustly and imperiously asserted. Hence it is, that ours is by the opposite styled an ABLATIVE or NEGATIVE RELIGION; for so much as we join with all true Christians in all affirmative positions of ancient faith, only standing upon the denial of some late and undue additaments to the Christian belief." Let the author of the Letter prove, that our Church, since the Reformation, hath departed from any one article of the common faith, always received in the Church of God, and more fully explained in the creeds of the first General Councils, and he will perform something to the purpose; but till then all his discourses of our change in point of doctrine will be impertinent. And that he will never be able to prove this, will appear afterwards.

XXVI. Indeed, the question is here the same with that threadbare one which the Papists use to reiterate, when they have nothing else to say for themselves; Where was your Church before LUTHER? To which the answer is easy: Our Church was then where it is now, even here in ENGLAND. She hath not changed one thing of what she held before, any way pertaining either to the being or wellbeing of a Church; only she hath made an alteration in some things, which seemed to her (and so they will to all indifferent judges) greatly prejudicial to both. She still retains the same common rule of faith. She still teacheth the necessity of a holy life, and presseth good works as much as before; only she is grown more humble, and dares not ascribe any merit to them. She still observes all the fundamental ordinances and institutions of Christianity. She baptizeth, she feeds with the holy Eucharist, she confirmeth. [Aqua signat, S. Spiritu vestit, Eucharistia pascit. *Ita de Ecclesia Romana Tertull. de Praescript. adversus Haeret.*,

cap. 36.] She retaineth the same Apostolical government of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. And because she finds that a set form of Liturgy is used by all Christian Churches in the world, without any known beginning, she hath hers too, and that a grave, solemn, excellently composed one, conformed, as near as she could devise, to the pattern of the most ancient offices. A Liturgy, for its innocence and purity, so beyond all just exceptions, that the Papists themselves, upon its first establishment, could not but embrace it. And therefore for several years they came to our Churches, joined in our devotions, and communicated without scruple, till at last (as an excellent person of our Church rightly expresseth it) “a temporal interest of the Church of Rome rent the schism wider, and made it gape like the jaws of the grave”: nay, it is transmitted to us (as the same excellent author observes) by the testimony of persons greater than all exception, that Paulus Quartus, Pope of Rome, in his private intercourses and letters to Queen Elizabeth, did offer to confirm and establish the Common Prayer Book, if she would acknowledge the primacy and authority, and the reformation derivative from him. [Camden’s Annals, A.D. 1560. Baker’s Chron. Eliz. anno 1560, p. 343.] And this method was pursued by his successor Pius Quartus, who assured her she should have anything from him, not only things pertaining to her soul, but what might conduce to the establishment and confirmation of her royal dignity; amongst which, that the Liturgy, newly established by her authority, should not be rescinded by the Pope’s power, was not the least considerable. I beseech your ladyship to make a little pause here. Our Liturgy contains the whole religion of the Church of England. This the Popes and Bishops of Rome themselves offer to confirm and establish. Let me now ask this question, Is our Liturgy in itself a good and safe way of worshipping God, or not? If not, these Popes were to blame in offering to confirm it; for no subsequent decree of a Pope could make that safe and good, which was not so antecedently. If it were in itself good and I safe, then it is so still, though the Pope of Rome never confirmed it; and so the whole religion and reformation of the Church of England is safe and good, by the plain confession of the Pope himself; the infallible judge of the Roman Church. But let us proceed. As to the Catholic customs, our Church (so far is she from the love of innovation) professeth all reverence and respect unto them. Upon this score, she still observes all the great and ancient festivals of the Church with great solemnity; viz. the feasts of the Nativity, Circumcision, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Saviour, the descent of the Holy Ghost, or the feast of Pentecost, etc.; she still honours the memory of the holy Apostles, Saints, and Martyrs, and hath days wherein to express this, and to bless God for them, and propound their virtues to the imitation of her sons. The ancient fasts of the

Church she hath not rejected; and, therefore, because she finds a Lent, or solemn fast, before the great festival of Easter, presently after the Apostles universally observed (though with a considerable variety [Vide Iren. Epist. ad Victorem, apud Eusebium Hist. Eccl. v. 24. et Valesii Annot. in locum.] as to the number of days, and the hours of abstinence on those days) in the Church of God, she recommends the same observation to her sons, in the full number of forty days, to be kept as days of stricter temperance, and prayer too, by all those whose health and other circumstances will permit them to undertake it. She still observes the fasts of the four seasons, or Ember weeks. [Concerning their antiquity in England, see Spelman, Conc. Brit. p. 256, 518, 546. And concerning the continuance of them in our Church, see Can. 31. an. Dom. 1603.] She still recommends the two weekly stations of the primitive Church to the observation of her sons, Wednesday and Friday, [Quartae et sextae Ferae. Vide Grot. Annot. ad Luc. 18:12.] distinguishing them from other days of the week by the more solemn and penitential office of the Litany. And in the table of the fasts to be observed, all Fridays in the year, except Christmas Day, are expressly mentioned. I might proceed to other instances; but these are abundantly sufficient to shew that the Church of England in her Reformation affected no unnecessary change or innovation. Indeed, she made no change or innovation but of those things that were themselves manifest changes and innovations, yea, somewhat worse; such as those above mentioned, image worship, the worship and invocation of saints and angels, the dry communion, the senseless and unreasonable service of God in an unknown tongue, enjoined the people, and not understood by them. Wherein, as I have already shewn, every man's reason and conscience will tell him that the change is made for the better. She hath also shaken off (and it was high time so to do, seeing that St. Augustine so long ago complained of it) that intolerable yoke of ceremonies, many of which were perfectly insignificant and ridiculous, some directly sinful, and their number in the whole so great, as to require that intention of mind, which ought to be employed about more weighty and important matters; yet retaining still (to shew that she was not over nice and scrupulous) some few ceremonies, that had on them the stamp of venerable antiquity, or otherwise recommended themselves by their decency and fitness. In a word, the authors of our Reformation dealt with our Church as they did with our temples, or material churches. They did not pull them down and raise new structures in their places, no, nor so much as new consecrate the old ones; but only removed the objects and occasions of idolatrous worship (at least out of the more open and conspicuous places), and took away some little superstitious trinkets, in other things leaving them as they found them, and freely and without scruple making use of them.

XXVII. What next he saith concerning our notorious prevarication from the Articles of our Church, I do not perfectly understand. He very well knows that all our clergy doth still subscribe them: and if any man hath dared openly to oppose the declared sense of the Church of England in any one of those Articles, he is liable to Ecclesiastical censure, which would be more duly passed and executed, did not the divisions and fanatic disturbances, first raised and still fomented by the blessed emissaries of the Apostolic see, hinder and blunt the edge of our discipline. But possibly he intends that latitude of sense, which our Church, as an indulgent mother, allows her sons in some more abstruse points, (such as predestination, etc.) not particularly and precisely defined in her Articles, but in general words capable of an indifferent construction. If this be his meaning, this is so far from being a fault, that it is the singular praise and commendation of our Church. As for our being concluded by the Articles of our Church, if he means our being obliged to give our internal assent to everything delivered in them upon peril of damnation, it is confessed that few, yea, none of us, that are well advised, will acknowledge ourselves so concluded by them, nor did our Church ever intend we should. For she professeth not to deliver all her Articles (all, I say, for some of them are coincident with the fundamental points of Christianity) as essentials of faith, without the belief whereof no man can be saved; but only propounds them as a body of safe and pious principles, for the preservation of peace to be subscribed, and not openly contradicted by her sons. And, therefore, she requires subscription to them only from the clergy, and not from the laity, who yet are obliged to acknowledge and profess all the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, no less than the most learned doctors. This hath been often told the Papists by many learned writers of our Church. I shall content myself (at present) only with two illustrious testimonies of two famous Prelates. The late terror of the Romanists, Dr. Usher, the most learned and reverend Primate of Ireland, thus expresseth the sense of the Church of England, as to the subscription required to the Thirty-nine Articles; “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 peace and unity; neither do we oblige any man to believe them, but only not to contradict them.” [Schism Guarded, p. 150. See also p. 396.] So the excellent Bishop Hall, in his Catholic Propositions (truly so called), denieth in general that any Church can lawfully propose any articles to her sons, besides those contained in the common rule of faith, to be believed under pain of damnation. His third proposition is this: “The sum of the Christian faith, are those principles of Christian religion, and fundamental grounds and points of

faith, which are undoubtedly contained and laid down in the canonical Scriptures, whether in express terms or by necessary consequence, and in the ancient creeds universally received and allowed by the whole Church of God.” [Second tome, p. 183.]

And then in the seventh and eighth propositions, he speaks fully to our purpose. “There are and may be many theological points, which are wont to be believed and maintained, and so may lawfully be of this or that particular Church, or the Doctors thereof, or their followers, as godly doctrines and profitable truths, besides those other essential and main matters of faith, without any prejudice at all of the common peace of the Church.” [Prop. 7.] “Howsoever, it may be lawful for learned men and particular Churches to believe and maintain those probable or (as they may think) certain points of theological verities, yet it is not lawful for them to impose and obtrude the same doctrines upon any Church or person, to be believed and held as upon the necessity of salvation; or to anathematize or eject out of the Church any person or company of men that thinks otherwise.” [Prop. 8.]

As for the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, undoubtedly delivered in the Scriptures, and allowed (except the Romanists, who have so affected singularity as to frame to themselves a new Christianity) by the whole Church of God, they are by the consent of all Christians acknowledged to be contained in that called the Creed, or rule of faith.

XXVIII. This rule of faith, and that also as it is more fully explained by the first General Councils, our Church heartily embraceth, and hath made a part of her Liturgy, and so hath obliged all her sons to make solemn profession thereof. To declare this more distinctly to your ladyship, our Church receiveth that which is called the Apostles’ Creed, and enjoins the public profession thereof to all her sons in her Daily Service. And if this Creed be not thought express enough fully to declare the sense of the Catholic Church in points of necessary belief, and to obviate the perverse interpretations of heretics, she receiveth also that admirable summary of the Christian faith, which is called the Nicene Creed (but is indeed the entire ancient creed of the oriental Churches, together with the necessary additional explications thereof, made by Fathers both of the Council of Nice against Arius, and the Council of Constantinople against Macedonius), the public profession whereof she also enjoins all her sons (without any exception) to make in the Morning Service of every Sunday and holyday. This Creed she professeth (consentaneously to her own principles) to receive upon this ground primarily, because she finds that the articles thereof may be proved by most evident testimonies of Scripture: although she deny not, that she is confirmed in

her belief of this Creed, because she finds all the articles thereof, in all ages, received by the Catholic Church. Some indeed have questioned, yea, denied this, concerning the additional explications of the Fathers of Nice and Constantinople. As though all the Fathers of the first three hundred years had understood the respective articles to which those explications belong, in a sense quite different from, yea, contrary to, the sense which those Councils had offered to them. But this suggestion is so manifest a falsehood, that I wonder much to find it with so great a confidence delivered in the writings of divers learned men. The sum of what the Nicene Fathers have added by way of explication to the rule of faith, is this: That the Son of God is no creature, but very God, subsisting in the very substance, essence, and nature of His Father. Now, although many of those ancient writers have let fall such things (especially in the heat of contest) as seem not very consistent with the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, yet the thing itself is professedly and frequently acknowledged by all, not one excepted, as I could make appear by many full and express testimonies out of each of them. Indeed, not one of them (no, not Origen himself, charged by so many with heresy in this article) ever dreamt the Son of God (in that nature wherein He is more properly so called) to be a creature. Nay, Tertullian [*Οικονομίας sacramentum quae Unitatem in Trinitatem disponit, tres dirigens, Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum; tres autem non statu, sed gradu; nec substantia, sed forma; nec potestate, sed specie: unius autem substantiae, et unius status, et unius potestatis, quia unus Deus, etc. Tertull. advers. Prax. cap. 2.*] (who flourished about an hundred and thirty years before the Nicene Council, and hath as many unwary expressions in this matter as any one of those writers whatsoever, yet) delivers this as the received doctrine of the Catholic Church in his time; That the Three Persons of the ever-to-be-adored Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are of one substance, and one state, and one power, because One God. Where we have not only the full sense, but the very words of the Nicene Fathers in this article, which is especially quarreled at by some no less presumptuous than peevish men. And this he delivers as a doctrine understood to be contained in the Creed or rule of faith then received in the Church, and which before he had just laid down. Nay, it is apparent, from the whole tenor of Tertullian's discourse in that book, that the heresy of Praxeas, asserting the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be but one Person, was built upon these two hypotheses; 1. That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were acknowledged by the Catholics to be of one and the same substance and nature; 2. That there could not be three distinct Persons subsisting in the same Divine Essence. And, indeed, the main argument made use of by all the several heretics, that from the beginning oppugned the Deity of the Son (as asserted by the Catholics), was this, that the doctrine was repugnant to the unity

and simplicity of the Divine Essence; for which argument there had not been the least colour, if the Catholics had only asserted the Son to be a made god, or a creature (howsoever signified, yet) of an essence and nature infinitely distant and alien from the nature and essence of the Father. To these let me add one argument, which seems to me irrefragable. [Vide Justin. Martyr. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 358. [c. 128. p. 221.] Col. p. 284. [c. 61. p. 157.] et Tatian. Orat. contra Graecos ad calcem operum Justini, p. 145. [c. 5. p. 247.] et Librum de Recta Confessione inter opera Justini, p. 380. [c. 9. p. 426.]] There was a famous question much disputed in the early days of the Church, even in the first succession of the Apostles (as it evidently appears from the writings of Justin Martyr, and his scholar Tatian, and others), concerning the manner of the Son's generation, viz. whether it were by a kind of abscission from the essence of the Father, or by a simple communication of essence, such as is betwixt fire producing other fire, without any diminution of itself and the fire produced. Now, how impertinent, how frivolous, how even ridiculous, had this controversy been, if it had not been taken for granted on all hands, that the Son was begotten of the very essence of the Father, and not made of things that were not! The sum of the explicatory addition made by the Fathers of Constantinople to the article concerning the Holy Ghost, is this; "That the Holy Ghost is no created spirit, but a divine Person, or very God, to whom, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, divine worship and honour ought to be given." Now we have already shewn that the Catholic Church, even in Tertullian's time (so long before the Council of Constantinople), acknowledged the Holy Ghost, no less than the Son, to be of one substance, state, and power, with the Father. And the same Tertullian [Duos Deos et duos Dominos nunquam ex ore nostro proferimus, non quasi non et Pater Deus, et Filius Deus, et Spiritus Sanctus Deus, at Deus unusquisque, etc. *Tertull. adv. Prax.* c. 13.] afterwards, in the same book (delivering again the common belief of the Catholics in his time), tells us expressly, "That the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and every one of them is God." And how many testimonies, out of the most ancient Fathers, might I here heap together! But it is needless; for as long as the sacrament of Baptism, as it was appointed by Christ to be administered "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," shall continue in the Church (that is, whilst the Church shall continue), as long as the doxology, or glorification of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost together (which was received in the Catholic Church in the very age that trod upon the heels of the Apostles, as appears from the testimony of St. Justin Martyr [Apolog. ii. p. 97, 98. [Apol. i. c. 6. p. 47.]] and others), shall retain a place in the Liturgy and Public Offices of the Church, so long shall we not want a clear proof, and a practical evidence and demonstration, that the Deity of the Holy Ghost, and so, the consubstantiality of

each Person in the most blessed Trinity, is a catholic verity. This I thought fit to observe, to obviate the vain plea of the Romanists, who, from the example of the Fathers of Nice and Constantinople, justify their bold and presumptuous additions of new articles to the rule of faith, or at least of new explications of the old articles to such a sense wherein they were never before understood by the Catholic Church: for supposing the authority of their Church equal to that of the two first General Councils (which yet is to be granted), yet these Councils will not at all excuse them; for neither did they add any new article to the rule of faith, nor a new sense to any old article.

XXIX. To return. This creed (which our Church thus heartily owns, and obligeth all her sons to profess) is a sufficient summary of the articles of faith; and consequently our Church, by owning it, sufficiently declares herself to be Catholic in all points of faith, and distinguisheth herself from all heretical societies and combinations. If not, then 1. The first General Councils did not sufficiently declare the rule of faith; for we receive all that was declared by them to be *de fide*, or matter of faith. 2. Then (particularly) the Council of Ephesus [Concil. Ephes. Can. 7. apud Justell. p. 59, 60.] (the third General Council) did err in the very definition of the rule of faith, when the Fathers thereof thus expressly determined: “That it should not be lawful for anyone to produce, write, or compose, any other creed besides that which was agreed on and defined by the holy Fathers, who were met together at Nice,* by the Holy Spirit; and those who should dare to compose, produce, or offer any other creed to such as desired to return to the knowledge of the truth, from Paganism, Judaism, or any heresy whatsoever, should, if Bishops, be deposed from their Episcopal throne; if inferior Clergymen, deprived of holy orders; if laymen, excommunicated, or cast out of the Church.” The whole canon is remarkable, and very much to our purpose; but we are especially to observe those words, “or from any heresy whatsoever.” For hereby the Ephesian Fathers declare, That if any person was charged with any kind of heresy whatsoever, he should sufficiently purge himself by the acknowledgment of the aforesaid creed; and that upon his subscription thereunto, or profession thereof, he should be absolved, and received into the communion of the Church as a complete and perfect Catholic; and that whoever should propose to such a person anything else to be believed, as a necessary condition of Ecclesiastical communion, should himself be liable to the censure of the Church. Now to apply this: Our Church doth so heartily embrace the aforesaid creed, that she hath inserted it into her Liturgy, not only to be now and then read, but on every Lord’s day, and in every more solemn assembly to be openly professed by all her sons; and therefore she is in all points of faith and necessary belief completely and perfectly Catholic and orthodox, by

the judgment of the third General Council; and the Papists (that in the meantime call us heretics, and refuse to hold communion with us as such) are themselves liable to a severe punishment.

*[They mean, notwithstanding, the creed established in the Council of Constantinople, as being the same, with a little addition, with that of Nice. For it appears from the acts of the Ephesian Council that it was the Constantinopolitan creed that was openly read in the Council, and that upon the reading thereof this decree was passed.]

XXX. And here (by the way) it is worthwhile to observe the egregious prevarication of the Trent Fathers (and the Fathers indeed of that which is called the Roman Catholic religion) in this matter of the creed, or rule of faith. In the third session,* before they come to define any one particular article, they declare it necessary, after the pattern (forsooth) of the ancient Fathers and Councils (whom they have imitated not half so well as an ape doth a man), to premise the symbol, or rule of faith, used in the holy Church of Rome (which is indeed the creed of Constantinople), and beginning with these words, “I believe in one God”; and this creed they judge necessary to be in so many express words professed by their whole assembly, as “the principle wherein all Christians, that profess the faith of Christ, do necessarily agree; and the only firm foundation, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.” Where, when they profess this creed to be the principle wherein all Christians do “necessarily agree,” they plainly intimate (if we poor Protestants may presume to understand their meaning by their words) that there is no absolute necessity that all Christians should agree in other things. But their following words are express, wherein they acknowledge this creed to be “the only foundation,” and, consequently, that nothing is to be laid as a foundation beside: nay, that this creed is “the only firm foundation, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.” For who would not here conclude, that (by the confession of the Trent Fathers themselves) whosoever fixeth his feet upon this foundation, and departeth not from any one article contained in this creed, stands sure, as to all points of faith, and is in no danger at all of damnation, or hellfire, upon the account of heresy? And yet, in the following sessions, how prodigally doth this pack of bold and presumptuous men bestow their anathemas, thundering out hell and damnation to millions of pious souls, who stand firmly upon this only firm foundation, and cannot be proved to have denied any one point reducible or deducible from any article of the rule of faith. Very many are the instances that I might give your ladyship of this; but I shall content myself to instance only in such points held and defined by the Council of Trent, which I have already proved to be so far from articles of faith, that they are evidently false, erroneous, and dangerous. In the thirteenth session, canon 2, they anathematize and damn all those who shall dare so far to

trust all their senses wherewith God hath blessed them, as to believe that the bread and wine in the Sacrament do, after the words of consecration, still remain in substance the same (though they confess them transcendently changed in use), that is, bread and wine. And, consequently, in the sixth canon of the same session, they anathematize and damn all those who shall teach that the consecrated bread and wine ought not to be worshipped with Divine worship (such as is due to the only-begotten Son of God Himself), or to be carried about in solemn procession, to be so worshipped and adored by the people. A hard case! All our senses infallibly assure us of the truth of the former proposition, and upon the supposal thereof, the Papists do themselves confess the truth of the latter, and yet, nevertheless, we must be damned for thus teaching. So in the twenty-first session, they are anathematized and damned, “that shall say, that all the faithful are bound by the command of God, to receive the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist in both kinds.” And yet, we have an express command of Christ concerning both, who took the bread, and said, “Take, and eat,” and the cup, and said, “Drink ye all of it.” [Matt. 26:26–27.] If the patrons of this wicked decree shall say (as they have the impudence to say) that the latter branch of the precept, “Drink ye all of it,” concerns not the laity at all, but only the Priests, such as the Apostles were; the horrid consequence of this answer is visible to any man, that is not willfully or fatally blinded; viz. that then the former branch of the commandment, “Take, and eat,” concerns not the laity neither, but only the Priests, seeing both parts of the precept are delivered in the same breath, to the same persons, and in the same imperative and commanding style. And then, we may next expect (and by the same reason justify) another anathema or curse against all those presumptuous persons that shall dare to teach that lay Christians are, by any command of God, bound to receive the holy Eucharist at all, or in any part thereof. And then at last, well fare the dregs of fanaticism, the Quakers and others, who have wholly laid this Sacrament aside, as unnecessary. Lastly, in the twenty-fifth or last session, they command the Bishops (as a work, forsooth, worthy of their great and sacred office) “to teach invocation of saints, the honour of relics, the use of images, and that” (lest we should be ignorant of their meaning) “such as was established by the decrees” (especially) “of the second Nicene Synod; and to proclaim those to be of impious opinion, that teach otherwise.” And presently after, they denounce an anathema against any man “that should teach or” (so much as) “think contrarily to those decrees.”

*[Quare symbolum fidei, quo sancta Ecclesia Romana utitur, tanquam principium, in quo omnes qui fidem Christo profitentur *necessario* conveniunt, et fundamentum primum et unicum, contra quod portae inferni nunquam praevalerunt, totidem verbis

quibus in omnibus Ecclesiis legitur exprimendum esse censuit. Quod ejusmodi est, Credo in unum Deum, etc. et in Missali est. *Caranz. Sum. Concil.* p. 705. edit. Duac. 1648.]

And yet, as to the use of images, that is, the religious veneration and worship of them, such as was established by the Convention of Nice, [[Which was held in the year 787.]] it is notorious (and confessed also by a very learned writer [Cassander Consult. de Imaginibus et Simulachris.] of their own) that the decrees of that Convention, as far as concern the worship of images, were shortly after, in a numerous Synod of about three hundred Bishops (called therefore the plenary Council [Concilium plenum, v. Baron. Annal. ad an. Christi, 794.]), out of all Italy, Germany, France, and Britain, convened upon another occasion by Charles the Great at Frankfort, after a diligent reading of them in the hearing of the whole assembly (and therefore, not upon mistake or misrepresentation, as Baronius and others without any colour of truth pretend), with an universal consent condemned and utterly rejected, as “repugnant, not only to the Scriptures, and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, but also to the custom of the Roman Church.” So that if we must be damned for opposing the decrees of the Convention of Nice concerning image worship, we see what company we have, even the Bishops of all Italy, Germany, France, and our Britain (so many ages before the Reformation), involved together with ourselves in the same guilt and danger. And if we must suffer an anathema, for thinking otherwise in the point of invocation of saints than the Church of Rome teacheth, this is our abundant comfort, that we are of the same opinion in that article with the whole Catholic Church of Christ, for at least the first three hundred years (the best and purest ages of the Church), as I have already clearly demonstrated. After the same manner, the confession of faith, according to the Council of Trent, begins likewise (for a show) with the Constantinopolitan creed; but then presently, to the wholesome principles contained therein, are added all the unsound and corrupt doctrines of the Roman Church, concerning the prodigious riddle of transubstantiation, the half-communion, purgatory, the religious worship and invocation of saints, the worship of images, relics, indulgences, the primacy of the Church and Bishop of Rome over the universal Church, yea, all the decrees of the holy Council of Trent, as undoubtedly to be received. Concerning this medley of religion, this mixture of “gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay,” and “stubble,” together, [1 Cor. 3:12.] the miserable Trent Papist is bound to profess, “That this is the Catholic faith, without which no man can be saved,” [Hanc veram et Catholicam fidem, extra quam salvus nemo esse potest, quam in praesenti sponte profitear.] and that upon his oath too; that is, he is bound to pawn his own salvation, that all the Christian Churches of the world are damned besides the Roman, that doth but dissent from some one article of this prodigious creed: and

the main article concerning the primacy of the Bishops of Rome over the universal Church, is by all of them universally disowned. Yea, there are thousands in the communion of the Church of Rome, that will not acknowledge all the decrees of the Council of Trent for Divine oracles, such as this confession of faith declares them to be. With so intolerable a pride, arrogance, and presumption (at which every man that fears God, and considers the thing, cannot choose but tremble, and be filled with horror and amazement), do these men domineer and lord it over the faith and conscience of Christendom! But leaving the wretches to the righteous judgments of God, let us return thither from whence we have a little digressed.

XXXI. By what hath been said, we have abundantly cleared ourselves of prevarications from the Articles of our religion. For we have demonstrated, 1. As to the Thirty-nine Articles of our Church, to be subscribed by our Clergy, it is so far from being true (what the author of the Letter suggests) that few of us will be concluded by them, that, on the contrary, we all do and must suffer ourselves to be concluded by them, as far as our Church, in the imposition of them, intended we should. 2. That as for those Articles of religion which our Church proposeth to all her sons (without exception), to be professed by them as points undoubtedly delivered in Scripture, and contained in the ancient creeds, and acknowledged by the Catholic Church in all ages, she hath taken care (as far as a Church can possibly) to prevent any the least prevarication from them, by enjoining every one of us to make an open and solemn profession of them (in our Service and public Liturgy) before the face of the congregation, and in the presence of Almighty God.

XXXII. Let us now briefly consider how this charge of prevarication, objected by the author of the Letter against us, will return very heavily upon the men of his own Church. It is very manifest that divers, living in the communion of the Church of Rome, and professing themselves Roman Catholics, have most egregiously prevaricated from the articles of the Roman faith. The articles of the Roman faith, did I say? I confess it is very hard, if not impossible, to define what they are, or to draw up such a body of articles as shall be acknowledged for a standard of the Roman faith by all that profess themselves to be of that religion. This is so true, that I do solemnly profess, if I had any mind to be a Roman Catholic (which, God be thanked, I have not), I could not certainly tell how to be, or when I might be assured that I am such, unless I could persuade myself to the smutty faith of the collier, to believe as the Church doth, without knowing what it is that the Church believeth, or what is that Church which so believes as I profess myself to do. But let us follow them as far as we can in their labyrinth.

There are certain points received as articles of faith at Rome (and a man would be there accounted no Roman Catholic that should deny them), which yet are openly denied by some that profess themselves Roman Catholics. I instance only in two; the personal infallibility of the Pope, and his superiority to a General Council. As for the first, our countryman, Mr. White (a learned Roman Catholic, and one who hath many followers, and leaders too), is so far from acknowledging the personal infallibility of the Pope, that he affirms the holding of it to be an arch-heresy, and the propagating of that doctrine to be a grievous sin. [Tabulae Suffrag. c. 19–21. Vide et Holdeni Divinae Fidei Analysim, p. 179. [l. i. c. 9. p. 235.]] (And sure I am the doctors of the Sorbonne were formerly of the same mind with Mr. White, and I believe are so still.) And I myself have met with some Papists, who have plainly derided the doctrine of the personal infallibility of the Pope, and not without great indignation disowned it to be an article of their faith. As for the latter point, concerning the superiority of the Pope to a General Council, all those who disown the former must reject this also. For the Pope cannot be imagined superior to a General Council upon any other account than this, that he is guided (at least when he sits in his enchanted chair) by an infallible spirit, to judge of the determinations of General Councils, whether they are true or false, and, accordingly, to confirm or reject them. Yet this point must be held by all that own the Council of Florence, [Vide Caranz. Sum. Concil. Florent. et Synod. ann. 1439, p. 655, 676. [p. 864.]] or the confession of faith according to the Council of Trent: for in both of them it is determined, that the Pope, or Bishop of Rome, is the pastor, governor, and head of the universal Church, which cannot be true if the Pope be subject to the universal Church, represented by her Bishops in a General Council. Hence Gregory of Valence,* a learned Papist, speaking of those that held a General Council to be superior to the Pope, saith, “that they did indeed plainly thwart (though unawares) the most certain faith concerning St. Peter and the Bishop of Rome’s primacy in the Church.” Indeed they that do, seem to forget their very name of Papists, which was given them from their dependence on the Pope, as the Vicar of Christ, the head of the Church, and the infallible judge of all controversies. This, then, must be held as an undoubted article of faith, and the very foundation of the Roman Catholic religion, That the Pope is superior to a General Council. Now from this great article of faith, not only Mr. White, and the persons but now mentioned, but also divers other Roman Catholics of a higher rank, have egregiously prevaricated. We have a numerous assembly of many hundreds of Bishops, called together by the emperor Sigismund at Constance, [Caranz. Summ. Concil. Constant. sess. 4, 5. p. 647, 648. [p. 826.]] determining pointblank against this great article: for in the fourth session they define, “That the Synod, lawfully gathered together in the

Holy Ghost, and making a General Council, and representing the Catholic Church militant, hath a power immediately from Christ, to which every man, of whatsoever state or dignity, though it be the Pope himself, is bound to yield obedience,” etc. And presently after they decree, “That if any man, though he were the Pope himself, should refuse to obey the decrees of this Synod, or any other General Council lawfully gathered together, he should do penance, and suffer condign punishment.” And about sixteen years after, the Council of Basil [Caranz. Summ. Concil. Bas. p. 665, 672. [p. 848, 9.]] (in the second session) decreed the same thing in the very same words. Nay, in the third session, they determined this to be “a Catholic verity, and that whosoever should oppose it should be accounted a heretic.” It is to no purpose here to answer (as Bellarmine and others have done) that these Councils were no lawful Councils, as not confirmed by the Pope. For supposing this to be true (which certainly is most false, and it may be easily evinced that each of those Councils was confirmed by a Pope), yet still it is confessed, both that these Bishops (which were well-nigh all the Bishops of the western Churches) were of the Roman Catholic religion and communion, and that they did so determine as we have said. Let me now ask the author of the Letter this question, Was the superiority of the Pope to a General Council an article of faith in the time of the Council of Constance and Basil, or not? If it was, then here we have the Roman Catholic Bishops generally guilty of prevarication from an article of faith, and that the main article of the Roman Catholic religion. And then, what is become of that uninterrupted succession of Pastors (which the author of the Letter so much boasts of) in the Roman Church, always holding the same articles of religion? If it was not then held for an article of faith, as it is manifest enough it was not, from the testimony of so many Bishops, then are they guilty of a grievous prevarication, who have since made that an article of faith which was not so before, but rather was held to be an error, yea, a downright heresy. So that, on the one side or the other, here must of necessity be acknowledged a very lamentable prevarication from a great fundamental article of the Roman faith.

**[Atque hinc profecto illorum auctorum sententia manifeste revincitur, qui concilium universale pontifice superius faciunt. Pugnant enim illi revera (licet non advertentes) cum certissima fide de D. Petri ac Romani Pontificis in Ecclesia primatu. Gregor. de Valent. Com. Theolog., tom. iii. disp. I. qu. i. punct. 7. [p. 272.]]*

XXXIII. But let us come more closely to that standard of the Roman faith, which I am assured the author of the Letter acknowledgeth for such; viz. The decrees of the Council of Trent. It is well known, that a great number of those that call themselves Roman Catholics, are so far from being concluded by the decrees of that Council, that they utterly reject the authority thereof, accounting

it as an unlawful and irregular Convention. And yet the author of the Letter dares not (I am sure) pronounce all these to be heretical; and as for those that profess to submit themselves to the authority of that Council, how egregiously have many of them prevaricated from the canons and decrees thereof!

If the gentleman hath been so little conversant in the authors of his own Church as to deny this, I will undertake to prove it by the clearest evidences, even by the confession of Papists themselves. But that which I chiefly insist on (to shew the prevarication of the Trent Papists) is this, that no man can make profession of his faith, according to the Council of Trent, without being guilty, in that very profession, of prevarication in the highest degree, even to perjury. For your ladyship may please to understand, that the confession of faith, according to the Council of Trent, is made with a solemn oath; now in this confession, I. They swear “to receive as undoubted all things delivered, defined, and declared, by the Canons and General Councils, and especially by the holy Council of Trent.” [Omnia a sacris canonibus et oecumenicis Conciliis, ac praecipue a sacrosancta Synodo Tridentina tradita, definita, ac declarata, indubitanter recipio ac profiteor.] Now, any understanding man, that impartially reads the canons and the decrees of those Councils, acknowledged for general by the Papists, will find it impossible to reconcile them one to another. II. They swear with the same breath wherewith they profess their reception of all the Canons and General Councils, that “they acknowledge the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Rome to be the mother and mistress of all other Churches, and the Pope to be successor of St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and to be also the Vicar of Jesus Christ, to whom our obedience is due.” [Sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Romanam Ecclesiam omnium Ecclesiarum matrem et magistram agnosco: Romanoque Pontifici B. S. Petri Apostolorum principis successor, ac Jesu Christi Vicario, veram obedientiam spondeo ac juro.]

Now it is very manifest that the first and most famous General Council of Nice, in the sixth canon, decrees, That every Patriarch, within his province, hath full and perfect jurisdiction, without any dependence upon the Church or Bishop of Rome, or any other Church or Bishop; and that the jurisdiction of the Church and Bishop of Rome is no less limited than that of other Churches and Patriarchs. Let any man compare the words* of the canon with the usual answers given by the Papists, and (if he does not wink very hard) he must needs see what wretched shifts a bad cause will put men to. Other instances I might give your ladyship of the apparent contradictions of that Confession; but these are sufficient to shew that every man, who swears to the Confession of Trent, must necessarily be a perjured person, either knowingly and wittingly, or ignorantly and unadvisedly; and the best of these two sorts of perjury is bad enough. And

now I leave it to your ladyship to judge who are the prevaricators.

*[Τα αρχαια έθη κρατείω, τα εν Αιγύπτω, και Λιβύη, και Πενταπόλει, ώστε τον εν Αλεξανδρεία επισκοπον πάντων τούτων έχειν την εξουσίαν· επειδη και τω εν τη Ρώμη επισκόπω τουτο σύνηθές εστιν· ομοίως δε και κατα την Αντιόχειαν, και εν ταις άλλαις επαρχίαις, τα πρεσβεια σώζεσθαι ταις εκκλησίαις. Justell. Codex Can. Ecclesiae Univers. p. 30, 31. [p. 6.]]

XXXIV. Thus I have largely examined everything in the Letter, that seemed to me any way worthy of answer. What follows in the close, is nothing else but a bundle of specious words, which I know your ladyship to be too wise to be deceived by. Only I cannot but take notice how enthusiastic and perfectly fanatical his discourse is concerning faith and conversion. He tells your ladyship very gravely, that true faith is the immediate gift of God. But a graver Apostle assures us, that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”; that is, that a man must first have the object of his faith clearly and convincingly propounded to him, and that as declared by the “word of God” or “Divine revelation,” before he can truly believe, or be obliged so to do. He encourageth your ladyship to expect a conversion no less miraculous than that of St. Paul, and promiseth the contribution of his prayers for the obtaining of so great a favour. It seems he supposeth your ladyship to be at present in a sad estate, like that of St. Paul when he was yet a Saul, in a state of infidelity persecuting the Church of God. But your adhesion to the Church of England (wherein, as I have largely proved, the rule of faith and all the fundamental articles of the Christian religion are received, taught, professed, and acknowledged) secures you from infidelity and heresy; and your known and exemplary piety gives me ground to believe that you are in the number of those righteous persons (of whom our Saviour speaks) “that need no repentance,” [Luke 15:7.] that is, no universal change from a state of sin and death, to a state of grace and salvation. But if your ladyship’s present estate were as bad as your kind relation represents it, yet he gives you no just ground to expect so miraculous a conversion as that of St. Paul’s; and I doubt all his prayers to saints and angels would prove ineffectual for that purpose. But would your ladyship understand the plain English of this fanatic discourse? For, all his pretenses to the contrary, he is unwilling that your ladyship should consult your serious reason; for then he despairs (and not without reason) that ever you will come off to the Church of Rome; but he would have you to wait for some violent, sudden, and unaccountable impulse, that should drive your ladyship (you know not why or wherefore) into the bosom of their Church, where he promises “a delightful and sweet repose”. How sweet it will be, I know not, but sure I am it will not be very safe. Let me therefore humbly beseech your ladyship to stick to his first advice, “to consult your

serious reason,” and (let me add) those learned divines of our Church, that are near you, who are abundantly able to rescue your ladyship from the little trifling arrests of the Roman emissaries; and especially, to consult the undoubted oracles of God, the Holy Scriptures, which the author of the Letter himself tells you, “should be our guidance unto true faith and perfection”; and to all, to add your daily prayers to Almighty God, that He would lead you into, and confirm you in, His holy truth, and deliver you from the snares of error, which are, with so close and cunning a contrivance, everywhere laid among us: and then I doubt not, but you will continue steadfast in the communion of that Church, wherein at present, by the gracious providence of God, you live, and bless God that you are there.

If my weak endeavours may be farther serviceable to your ladyship in this great affair, be pleased freely to command, MADAM, Your ladyship’s most truly devoted servant in all Christian offices,

GEORGE BULL.

Suddington in Gloucestershire, October 18, 1671.

The Corruptions of the Church of Rome, in Relation to
Ecclesiastical Government, the Rule of Faith, and Form of Divine
Worship;

In answer to The Bishop of Meaux’s Queries.

The Bishop of Meaux’s Letter to Mr. Nelson, Concerning Dr. Bull.
A Monsieur Nelson, a Blackheath.

A St. Germain en Lays, 24 Juil. 1700.

J’ay receu, Monsieur, depuis quinze jours une Lettre, dont vous m’honorez de Blackheath aupres de Londres, le 18 Juillet de l’année passée, en m’envoyant un livre du Docteur Bullus, intitulé, “Judicium Ecclesiae Catholicae,” etc. Je vous dirai d’abord, Monsieur, que je ressentis beaucoup de joie à la veuë de vostre écriture et de vostre nom, et que je fus ravi de cette marque de vostre souvenir. Quant à l’ouvrage du Docteur Bullus, j’ay voulu le lire entier, avant que de vous en accuser la reception; afin de vous en dire mon sentiment. Il est admirable, et la matiere qu’il traite ne pouvoit estre expliquée plus savamment et plus à fond. C’est ce que je vous supplie de vouloir bien luy faire savoir, et en mesme temps les sinceres congratulations de tout le Clergé de France assemblé en cette ville, pour le service qu’il rend à l’Eglise Catholique, en defendant si bien le jugement qu’elle a porté sur la necessité de croire la divinité du Fils de Dieu. Qu’il me soit permis de luy dire qu’il me reste un seul sujet d’etonnement.

C'est qu'un si grand homme qui parle si bien de l'Eglise, du Salut que l'on ne trouve qu'en son unité, et de l'assistance infallible du St. Esprit dans le Concile de Nicée, ce qui induit la mesme grace pour tous les autres assemblez dans la mesme Eglise, puisse demeurer un seul moment sans la reconnoistre. Ou bien, Monsieur, qu'il daigne me dire comme à un zelé défenseur de la doctrine qu'il enseigne, ce que c'est donc qu'il entend par ce mot Eglise Catholique? Estce l'Eglise Romaine, et celles qui luy adherent? Estce 'Eglise Anglicane? Estce un amas confus de societéz separées les unes des autres? Et comment peuvent elles estre ce Royaume de J. C. non divisé en luy mesme, et qui aussi ne doit jamais perir? Que je serai consolé d'avoir sur ce sujet un mot de responce, qui m'explique le sentiment d'un si grave auteur. Je suis tres aise, Monsieur, d'apprendre dans vostre lettre l'heureuse nouvelle de la santé de Madame vostre femme, que je recommande de bon coeur à Dieu, avec vous et vostre famille. Ceux qui vous ont raconté les rares talens de M. l'Archevesque de Paris, aujourd'hui le Cardinal de Noailles, vous ont dit la verité; il y a long temps que la Chaire de St. Denis n'a esté si dignement remplie. Si M. Collier, dont vous me parlez, a fait quelque écrit Latin sur la nouvelle Spiritualité, vous m'obligerez de me l'envoyer. Mais sur tout n'oubliez jamais que je suis avec beaucoup de sincerité

MONSIEUR, Vostre tres-humble, et tres-obeissant Serviteur,

J. BENIGNE, E. DE MEAUX.

To Mr. Nelson, at Blackheath.

St. Germaine en Laye, July 24, 1700.

I received, Sir, about a fortnight ago, the honour of your letter from Blackheath, near London, dated the 18th of July of the last year, when at the same time you sent me Dr. Bull's book, entitled, "Judicium Ecclesite Catholicae," etc. I must first, Sir, acquaint you, that the sight of your hand and name gave me a great deal of joy, and that I was extremely pleased with this testimony of your remembrance. As to Dr. Bull's performance, I was willing to read it all over, before I acknowledged the receipt of it, that I might be able to give you my sense of it. It is admirable; and the matter he treats could not be explained with greater learning and greater judgment. This is what I desire you would be pleased to acquaint him with, and at the same time with the unfeigned congratulations of all the Clergy of France, assembled in this place, for the service he does the Catholic Church, in so well defending her determination of the necessity of believing the Divinity of the Son of God. Give me leave to

acquaint him, there is one thing I wonder at, which is, that so great a man, who speaks so advantageously of the Church, of salvation, which is obtained only in unity with her, and of the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost in the Council of Nice, which infers the same assistance for all others assembled in the same Church, can continue a moment without acknowledging her. Or either, Sir, let him vouchsafe to tell me, who am a zealous defender of the doctrine he teaches, what it is he means by the term Catholic Church? Is it the Church of Rome, and those that adhere to her? Is it the Church of England? Is it a confused heap of societies separated the one from the other? And how can they be that kingdom of Christ, not divided against itself, and which never shall perish? It would be a great satisfaction to me to receive some answer upon this subject, that might explain the opinion of so weighty and solid an author. I very much rejoice at the good news you send me of your lady's welfare, whom I heartily pray for, with you and your family. You have been rightly informed in the account you have received of the admirable qualifications of the Archbishop of Paris, now Cardinal de Noailles; the see of St. Denis has not for a long time been so worthily filled. If Mr. Collier, whom you mention, has writ anything in Latin concerning the modern mystical Divinity, you will oblige me in conveying it to me. But above all remember, that I am, with a great deal of sincerity,

SIR, Your most humble and most obedient servant,

J. BENIGNE, Bishop of MEAUX.

Dr. Bull's Answer.

I. The approbation of my writings by so learned and illustrious a Prelate as Monsieur de Meaux, especially when joined with the congratulations of the learned Clergy of France in general, is so high an honour done me, that if I did not set a great value on it, I were altogether unworthy of it.

But as to the wonder of Monsieur de Meaux, I cannot but very much wonder at it, especially at the reasons on which it is grounded. He wonders "how I, that speak so advantageously of the Church, etc. can continue a moment without acknowledging her." Her! What her doth the Bishop mean? Doubtless, the present Church of Rome, in the communion whereof he himself lives, and to which his design seems to be to invite me. But where do I speak so advantageously of the present Church of Rome? Nowhere, I am sure. My thoughts concerning her, I have plainly (perhaps too plainly and bluntly, in the opinion of Monsieur de Meaux) delivered in the book which he so commends, [Jud. Eccl. Cathol. c. 5. 3.] where, having spoken of that singular purity of the faith, which was in the Church of Rome in the first ages, and taken notice of and

extolled by some of the primitive Fathers, I thus conclude: “Oh, that so great a happiness, such purity of faith, had always continued in that Church I But, alas we may now cry out in the holy Prophet’s words, [Isaiah 1:21.] ‘How is the faithful city become an harlot!’” [Utinam haec felicitas, haec fidei puritas Ecclesiae isti perpetua fuisset! Sed proh dolor! Nunc Prophetae divini verbis exclamare possumus, “Quomodo effecta est meretrix urba fidelis!”]

But Monsieur de Meaux seems to think the Roman and the Catholic Church to be convertible terms, which is strange in so learned a man, especially at this time of the day. Cannot the Catholic Church be mentioned, but presently the Roman Church must be understood? The book which the Bishop refers to, bears this title, “Judicium Ecclesiae Catholicae trium primorum Saeculorum,” etc. Of the Catholic Church of the three first centuries I do indeed speak with great deference. To her judgment (next to the Holy Scriptures) I appeal against the oppugners of our Lord’s Divinity at this day, whether Arians or Socinians. The rule of faith, the symbols or creeds, the profession whereof was, in those ages, the condition of communion with the Catholic Church (mentioned by Irenaeus, Tertullian, and others), I heartily and firmly believe. This primitive Catholic Church, as to her government and discipline, her doctrines of faith, and her worship of God, I think ought to be the standard by which we are to judge of the orthodoxy and purity of all other succeeding Churches, according to that excellent rule of Tertullian, [De Praescript. adv. Haeres. c. 20, 21.] “Every descent must necessarily deduce itself from its first original. If these things are true, it is plain that every doctrine which these apostolical, these original and mother Churches, held as analogous to the rule of faith, is to be owned as true, and as containing, without doubt, what the Churches received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God; but that all other doctrine is to be looked upon as false, and no ways savouring of those truths which have been delivered by the Churches, and the Apostles, and Christ, and God.”* And to the same purpose he discourseth, cap. 31. *eusdem libri*.

*[Onme genus ad originem suam censeatur necesse est. Si haec ita sunt, constat proinde omnem doctrinam, quae cum illis Ecclesiis Apostolicis matricibus et originalibus fidei conspiret, veritati deputandam, sine dubio tenentem quod Ecclesiae ab Apostolis, Apostoli a Christo, Christus a Deo accepit: omnem vero doctrinam de mendacio praejudicandam, quae sapiat contra veritatem Ecclesiarum et Apostolorum et Christi et Dei.]

According to this rule, the Church of England will be found the best and purest Church at this day in the Christian world. Upon which account I bless God that I was born, baptized, and bred up, in her communion; wherein I firmly resolve by His grace to persist, *usque ad extremum vitae spiritum*. How far the

present Church of Rome hath departed from this primitive pattern, will appear hereafter.

Monsieur de Meaux adds, as a farther reason of his wonder, “that I speak of salvation as only to be found in unity with her.” Her! Doth the Bishop here again mean the present Church of Rome? If he doth, I must plainly tell him that I am so far from ever thinking that salvation is only to be found in unity with her, that, on the contrary, I verily believe they are in great danger of their salvation who live in her communion; that is, who own her erroneous doctrines, and join in her corrupt worship; of which I shall give a large account before I have done. I do indeed, in the book which the Bishop hath an eye unto, shew that there was a canon or rule of faith received in the primitive Church, which, whoever in any point thereof denied or opposed, was judged a heretic; and if he persisted in his heresy, cast out of the communion of the Catholic Church, and so out of the ordinary way of salvation. But what is this to the present Church of Rome, and her communion?

The Bishop’s last reason is, “That I own the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost in the Council of Nice, which infers the same assistance for all others assembled in the same Church.” To which I answer; I mention this indeed as the opinion of Socrates, but at the same time I give another account of the credit that is to be given to the determination of the Nicene Council in the article of our Saviour’s Divinity, in the Proemium of my *Defensio Fidei Nicenae*, [§ 3.] where my words are these: “But the same Socrates, chap. ix. of the same book, reproves Sabinus for not considering with himself, that they who came to this Council, how illiterate soever they were, yet being enlightened by God and the grace of the Holy Ghost, could in no wise depart from the truth. For he seems to have thought the enlightening grace of the Holy Ghost always to accompany a General Council of Bishops, and to preserve them from error, especially in any of the necessary articles of faith. Which supposition, if any one shall refuse to admit of, Socrates’ argumentation may be thus directed and urged against him: The Nicene Fathers, (let any imagine them as unskillful and illiterate as he will) yet, in the main, were doubtless pious men: but it is incredible that so many holy and approved men, assembled from all parts of the Christian world (who, how defective soever in any other sort of knowledge, could by no means be ignorant of the first and fundamental doctrine of the Holy Trinity, a doctrine wherein the very Catechumens were not uninstructed, or of what themselves had received from their predecessors concerning it), should wickedly conspire amongst themselves, to newly model the faith received in the Church concerning this principal article of Christianity.”* And, indeed, all these things considered and

laid together, it was morally impossible that the Nicene Fathers should have erred in the determination of the article before them. And that they did not actually err, I have sufficiently proved, in the Bishop's own judgment, in the following treatise.

*[Idem vero Socrates ejusdem libri cap. ix. p. 31. reprehendit Sabinum quod non etiam secum reputaverit, ως ει και ιδιωται ησαν οι της συνόδου, κατελάμποντο δε υπο του Θεου, και της χάριτος του αγίου Πνεύματος, ουδαμως αστοχησαι της αληθείας εδύναντο. i.e. eos, qui ad Synodum illam convenerant, quamvis rudes essent atque imperiti, a Deo tamen et Spiritus S. gratia illustratos, nullatenus a veritate aberrare potuisse. Quippe sensisse videtur Socrates, Concilio Episcoporum vere universali semper adesse Spiritus Sancti gratiam illuminatricem, quae ipsos ab errore, saltem in necessariis fidei articulis, liberos custodiat. Quam hypothesin si quis nolit admittere, poterit ad ipsum argumentatio Socratis ita institui ac formari: Patres Nicaeni, ut imperiti et literarum rudes fuisse fingantur, pii tamen certe maximam partem fuere: incredibile autem est, tot viros sanctos et probatos, ex omnibus orbis Christiani regionibus convenientes (qui qualicumque alias imperitia laboraverint, certe ignorare non poterant elementariam de SS. Trinitate doctrinam, etiam Catechumenis tradi solitam, aut quid ipsi ea de re a majoribus accepissent), nefarie conspirare potuisse ad hoc, ut receptam in Ecclesia fidem, de primario Christianismi articulo, varent.]

But suppose I were fully of Socrates' opinion, concerning the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost attending every truly General Council in matters of faith, I should be never the nearer to the communion of the Church of Rome, as it is now subjected to the decrees of the Trent Council. For, as I afterwards add in the same Preface, [§ 8.] "The assembly at Trent is to be called by any other name rather than that of a General Council." [Tridentina conventio quidvis potius quam Generale Concilium dicenda est.]

I proceed to the Bishop's questions. He asks me, "What I mean by the Catholic Church?" I answer: What I mean by the Catholic Church, in the book which he all along refers to, I have already shewn, and the very title of the book sufficiently declares. If he asks me, What I mean by the Catholic Church, speaking of it as now it is? I answer: By the Catholic Church, I mean the Church Universal, being a collection of all the Churches throughout the world, who retain "the faith (ἀπαξ) once delivered to the saints" [Jude 3.]; that is, who hold and profess, in the substance of it, that faith and religion which was delivered by the Apostles of Christ to the first original Churches, according to Tertullian's rule before mentioned. Which faith and religion is contained in the Holy Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, and the main fundamentals of it comprised in the canon or rule of faith, universally received throughout the primitive Churches, and the profession thereof acknowledged to be a sufficient *tessera*, or badge, of a Catholic Christian. All the Churches at this day, which

hold and profess this faith and religion, however distant in place, or distinguished by different rites and ceremonies, yea, or divided in some extra-fundamental points of doctrine, yet agreeing in the essentials of the Christian religion, make up together one Christian Catholic Church under the Lord Christ, the supreme Head thereof. The Catholic Church, under this notion, is not “a confused heap of societies, separated one from another.” But, it seems, no other union of the Church will satisfy the Bishop, but a union of all the Churches of Christ throughout the world under one visible head, having a jurisdiction over them all, and that head the Bishop of Rome for the time being. But such a union as this was never dreamed of amongst Christians for at least the first six hundred years, as shall be shewn in its due place.

The Catholic Church, I believe, shall never totally fail, that is, Christianity shall never utterly perish from the face of the earth, but there shall be some to maintain and uphold it to the end of the world; although some of the ancient Doctors of the Church have given us a very tragic description of the state of the universal Church of Christ, which shall be under the reign of the great Antichrist. But I know of no promise of indefectibility from the faith made to any particular Church, no, not to the Church of Rome itself. And if we may judge by the Holy Scriptures, and by the doctrine and practice of the primitive Catholic Church, the present Church of Rome hath already lamentably failed, and fallen into many dangerous and gross errors, as will by and by appear. Now that Church which hath already so far failed, why may she not utterly fail? If she be found but in one error, the infallible direction of her judgment, upon which her indefectibility from the faith must depend, is gone and destroyed. I add, that divers eminent Doctors, [Ribera et Viega in Apoc. 17.] even of the Roman communion, have discovered out of the Apocalypse, that Rome itself shall at length become the seat of Antichrist. If so, where will the Church of Rome then be?

But I wonder why Monsieur de Meaux should ask me, Whether by the Catholic Church I mean the Church of Rome, or the Church of England? He knows full well, I mean neither the one nor the other. For to say either of the Church of Rome, or of the Church of England, or of the Greek Church, or of any other particular Church, of what denomination soever, that it is the Catholic or Universal Church, would be as absurd as to affirm that a part is the whole. And to be sure I never meant the Church of Rome to be the Catholic Church, exclusively to all other Churches. I am so far from any such meaning that my constant judgment of the Church of Rome hath been, that if she may be allowed still to remain a part or member of the Catholic Church (which hath been

questioned by some learned men, upon grounds and reasons not very easy to be answered), yet she is certainly a very unsound and corrupted one, and sadly degenerated from her primitive purity. This I must insist upon, and have obliged myself to prove: and I prove it thus;

II. The Church of Rome hath quite altered the primitive Ecclesiastical government, changed the primitive canon or rule of faith, and miserably corrupted the primitive Liturgy, or form of Divine Worship.

1st. She hath quite altered the primitive Ecclesiastical government, by erecting a Monarchy in the Church, and setting up her Bishop as the universal Pastor and Governor of the whole Catholic Church, and making all other Bishops to be but his vicars and substitutes, as to their jurisdiction.

For that the Bishop of Rome had no such universal jurisdiction in the primitive times, is most evident from the sixth canon of the first Nicene Council, occasioned, as it appears, by the schism of Meletius, an ambitious Bishop in Egypt, who took upon him to ordain Bishops there without the consent of the Metropolitan Bishop of Alexandria. The words of the canon are these: “Let the ancient customs prevail [Τα αρχαια έθη κρατείτω. [The words of this canon may be seen below in this volume.] v. Can. Apost. 34 et Conc. Ephesin. can. 8.] that are in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, that the Bishop of Alexandria have the power over them all, forasmuch as the Bishop of Rome also hath the like custom. In like manner, in Antioch, and all other provinces, let the privileges be preserved to the Churches.” From this canon it is plain that the three Metropolitan Bishops, or Primates (they were not as yet, I think, called Patriarchs), of Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch, had their distinct jurisdictions, each independent on the other; and that all other chief Bishops or Primates of provinces, had the same privileges which are here confirmed to them. It is true, this canon doth not particularly describe or determine what the bounds are of the Roman Bishop’s power, as neither doth it the limits of the Bishop of Antioch’s jurisdiction, but only those of the Bishop of Alexandria’s province. The reason hereof is manifest; the case of the Bishop of Alexandria only was at this time laid before the Synod, whose jurisdiction in Egypt had been lately invaded by the schismatic ordinations of Meletius, as I before observed. But that the Roman Bishop’s power, as well as that of the other Metropolitans, had its bounds, is most manifest from the example that is drawn from thence, for the limits of other Churches. For what an absurd thing is it, that the Church of Rome should be made the pattern for assigning the limits to other metropolitan Churches, if that Church also had not her known limits at the same time when this canon was made Intolerable is the exposition which Bellarmine, and other Romanists, give of these words of the

canon; “Forasmuch as the Bishop of Rome also hath the like custom” [Ἐπειδὴ καὶ τῷ ἐν τῇ Ρώμῃ ἐπισκόπῳ τοῦτο σύνηθές ἔστιν.]; i.e. (they say) “It was the custom of the Bishop of Rome to permit, or leave to the Bishop of Alexandria, the regimen of Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis.” Certainly, τοῦτο σύνηθές ἐστὶν implies a like custom in the Church of Alexandria and in the Church of Rome; and the sense of the canon is most evident, that the Bishop of Alexandria should, according to the ancient custom of the Church (not by the permission of the Roman Bishop), enjoy the full power in his province, as by the like ancient custom the Bishop of Rome had the jurisdiction of his. But they that would see this canon fully explained, and cleared from all the trifling cavils and exceptions of the Romanists, may consult the large and copious annotations of the learned Dr. Beveridge, Bishop of St. Asaph, upon it, where they will receive ample satisfaction.

Thus was the government of the Catholic Church, in the primitive times, distributed among the several chief Bishops or Primates of the provinces, neither of them being accountable to the other, but all of them to an Ecumenical Council, which was then held to be the only supreme visible judge of controversies arising in the Church, and to have the power of finally deciding them. Hence the case of the Bishop of Alexandria, before mentioned, was not brought before the Bishop of Rome, or any other Metropolitan, but referred to the Fathers of the Nicene Council, to be finally determined by them.

The universal pastorship or government of the Catholic Church was never claimed by any Bishop till towards the end of the sixth century, and then it was thought to be challenged by John, Patriarch of Constantinople, assuming to himself the title of Ecumenical or Universal Bishop; whom Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, vehemently opposed, pronouncing him the forerunner of Antichrist who durst usurp so arrogant a title. And it is worthy observing how passionately the same Gregory expresseth his detestation of the pride and arrogance of the Patriarch of Constantinople, in his letter to Mauritius, the Emperor: “I am forced to cry out, O the times O the manners! All things in the parts of Europe are delivered up to the power of barbarous people. Cities are destroyed, castles demolished, provinces depopulated, etc.; and yet the Bishops, who ought to have lain prostrate on the ground, covered with ashes, and weeping, even they covet to themselves names of vanity, and glory in new and profane titles.” [Exclamare compellor ac dicere, O tempora! O mores! Ecce cuncta in Europae partibus barbarorum juri sunt tradita, destructae urbes, eversa castra, depopolatae provinciae, etc. et tamen sacerdotes, qui pavimento et cinere flentes jacere debuerunt, vanitatis sibi nomina expetunt, ac novis et profanis vocabulis gloriantur. Greg. l. iv. epist. 32. [al. v. 20.]] And yet this name of vanity, this new and profane title of Universal

Bishop, was afterwards accepted by Boniface III. Bishop of Rome, when it was offered him by that bloody miscreant, Phocas the Emperor; and the same title hath been owned by the succeeding Bishops of the Roman Church, and that as due to them by Divine right. Indeed, it may be questioned whether John of Constantinople, by assuming the title of Ecumenical Bishop, meant that he had an universal jurisdiction over all other Bishops and Churches; but this is certain, that Gregory opposed the title under this notion; this appearing abundantly from his epistle to John the Patriarch [Lib. iv. epist. 38. [al. v. 18.]]; and it is as certain, that under the same notion, the Bishops of Rome afterwards assumed that title, and do claim it to this day. Nay, the universal pastorship and jurisdiction of the Roman Bishop over all Bishops and Churches, is now no longer a mere court opinion, maintained only by the Pope's parasites and flatterers, but is become a part of the faith of the Church of Rome; it being one of the articles of the Trent Creed, to which all Ecclesiastics are sworn themselves, and which, by the same oath, they are obliged to teach the laity under their care and charge, as hereafter will appear. So that now there is no room for that distinction, wherewith some have soothed and pleased themselves, between the Church and Court of Rome; for the Court is entered into the Church of Rome, or rather the Court and Church of Rome are all one.

III. 2. The Church of Rome hath changed the primitive canon, or rule of faith, by adding new articles to it, as necessary to be believed in order to salvation. Look to the confession of faith according to the Council of Trent: it begins indeed with the primitive rule of faith, as explained by the Council of Nice and Constantinople; and happy had it been for the Church of Christ if it had ended there. But there are added afterwards a many new articles; and with reference to them, as well as to the articles of the old creed, it concludes thus: "This true Catholic faith, without which none can be saved, which I now willingly profess, and unfeignedly hold; the same I promise, vow, and swear, by the help of God, most constantly to keep and confess, entire and inviolate, even to my last breath; and to endeavour, moreover, to the utmost of my power, that it may be kept, taught, and professed, by all my subjects, or by those that are any way under my care. So help me God, and these His holy Gospels." [Hanc veram Catholicam fidem, extra quam nemo salvus esse potest, quam in praesenti sponte profiteor, et veraciter teneo, eandem integram et inviolatam, usque ad extremum vitae spiritum, constantissime (Deo adjuvante) retinere et confiteri, atque a meis subditis, vel illis quorum cura ad me apectabit, teneri, doceri, et praedicari, quantum in me erit, curaturum ego idem N. spondeo, voveo ac juro: sic me Deus adjuvet, et haec sancta Dei Evangelia.]

Now, if you examine those articles that follow after the Constantinopolitan Creed, you will find they are not merely explicatory of any article or articles of

the old canon of faith (such as that of the ὁμοούσιος, or “same substance,” in the Nicene Confession, which was virtually contained in the ancient canon, and by good consequence deducible from it, and was apparently also the sense of the Catholic Church before the Nicene Council), but they are plain additions to the rule of faith. Now if these articles were true, yet they ought not presently to be made a part of our creed; for every truth is not fundamental, nor every error damnable. We deny not but that General or Provincial Councils may make constitutions concerning extra-fundamental verities, and oblige all such as are under their jurisdiction to receive them, at least passively, so as not openly and contumaciously to oppose them. But to make any of these a part of the creed, and to oblige all Christians under pain of damnation to receive and believe them, this is really to add to the creed, and to change the ancient canon, or rule of faith. But, alas! these superadded articles of the Trent Creed are so far from being certain truths, that they are most of them manifest untruths, yea, gross and dangerous errors. To make this appear, I shall not refuse the pains of examining some of the chief of them.

The first article I shall take notice of is this; “ I profess, that in the Mass is offered to God, a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice, for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, there is truly, and really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is wrought a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation.”* Where this proposition, (“ That in the Mass there is offered to God, a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice, for the living and the dead,”) having that other of the “substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist,” immediately annexed to it, the meaning of it must necessarily be this, that in the Eucharist the very body and blood of Christ are again offered up to God as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men. Which is an impious proposition, derogatory to the one full satisfaction of Christ, made by his death on the cross, and contrary to express Scripture. [Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 25–26, 28; 10:12, 14.] It is true, the Eucharist is frequently called by the ancient Fathers πρόσφορα, θυσία, an “oblation,” a “sacrifice”. But it is to be remembered, that they say also it is θυσία λογικη και αναίμακτος, [[V. Constitut Apost. vi. 23.]] a “reasonable sacrifice,” a “sacrifice without blood”: which, how can it be said to be, if therein the very blood of Christ were offered up to God?

*[Profiteor in missa offerri Deo verum, proprium, et propitiatorium sacrificium, pro vivis et defunctis, atque in sanctissimo Eucharistiae sacramento esse vere et realiter et

substantialiter corpus et sanguinem, una cum anima et divinitate Domini nostri Jean Christi, fierique conversionem totius substantiae panis in corpus, et totius substantiae vini in sanguinem, quam conversionem Catholica Ecclesia transubstantiationem appellat.]

They held the Eucharist to be a commemorative sacrifice, and so do we. This is the constant language of the ancient Liturgies, “We offer by way of commemoration” [Μεμνημένοι προσφέρομεν. *Commemorantes*, or *Commemorando offerimas.*]; according to our Saviour’s words when He ordained this holy rite, “Do this in commemoration of Me.” [Τουτο ποιειτε εις την εμην ανάμνησιν. [Luke 22:19.] Vid. Justin. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 296, 297. [c. 70. p. 168, 9.]] In the Eucharist, then, Christ is offered, not hypostatically, as the Trent Fathers have determined (for so He was but once offered), but commemoratively only: and this commemoration is made to God the Father, and is not a bare remembering, or putting ourselves in mind of Him. For every sacrifice is directed to God, and the oblation therein made, whatsoever it be, hath Him for its object, and not man. In the Holy Eucharist, therefore, we set before God the bread and wine as “figures or images of the precious blood of Christ shed for us, and of His precious body” (they are the very words of the Clementine Liturgy [Του τιμίου αίματος Ιησου Χριστου του εκχυθέντος υπερ ημων, και του τιμίου σώματος τα αντίτυπα. Constitut. Apost. vii. 25. [See also v. 14. et vi. 30.]]), and plead to God the merit of His Son’s sacrifice, once offered on the cross for us sinners, and in this Sacrament represented, beseeching Him for the sake thereof to bestow His heavenly blessings on us.

To conclude this matter: the ancients held the oblation of the Eucharist to be answerable in some respects to the legal sacrifices; that is, they believed that our blessed Saviour ordained the Sacrament of the Eucharist as a rite of prayer and praise to God, instead of the manifold and bloody sacrifices of the Law. That the legal sacrifices were rites to invoke God by, is evident from many texts of Scripture. [See especially 1 Sam. 7:9, 13:12; Ezra 6:10, Prov. 15:8.] And that they were also rites for praising and blessing God for His mercies, appears from 2 Chron. 29:27. Instead therefore of slaying of beasts, and burning of incense, whereby they praised God, and called upon His name under the Old Testament; the Fathers, I say, believed our Saviour appointed this Sacrament of bread and wine, as a rite whereby to give thanks, and make supplication to His Father in His Name. This you may see fully cleared and proved by the learned Mr. Mede, in his treatise entitled “The Christian Sacrifice”. The eucharistic sacrifice, thus explained, is indeed λογικη θυσία, a “reasonable sacrifice,” widely different from that monstrous sacrifice of the Mass taught in the Church of Rome.

The other branch of the article is concerning Transubstantiation, wherein the Ecclesiastic professeth upon his solemn oath his belief, that in the Eucharist

“there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood of Christ”; a proposition that bids defiance to all the reason and sense of mankind; nor (God be praised) hath it any ground or foundation in Divine revelation. Nay, the text of Scripture on which the Church of Rome builds this article, duly considered, utterly subverts and overthrows it. She grounds it upon the words of the institution of the holy Sacrament by our Saviour, the same night wherein He was betrayed; when He took bread, and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, “This is My body,” το διδόμενον, saith St. Luke, [[Luke 22:19.]] το κλώμενον, saith St. Paul, [1 Cor. 11:21.] “which is given and broken for you.” After the same manner He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink ye all of this, for this is My blood of the New Testament,” το εκχυνόμενον, “which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Now whatsoever our Saviour said was undoubtedly true: but these words could not be true in a proper sense; for our Saviour’s body was not then given or broken, but whole and inviolate: nor was there one drop of His blood yet shed. The words, therefore, must necessarily be understood in a figurative sense; and then, what becomes of the doctrine of Transubstantiation? The meaning of our Saviour is plainly this; What I now do is a representation of My death and passion near approaching; and what I now do, do ye hereafter, “do this in remembrance of Me”; let this be a standing, perpetual ordinance, in My Church to the end of the world; let My death be thus annunciated and shewn forth till I come to judgment. [See 1 Cor. 11:26.]

As little foundation hath this doctrine of Transubstantiation in the ancient Church, as appears sufficiently from what hath been already said concerning the notion then universally received of the Eucharistic sacrifice. It was then believed to be an ανάμνησις, or “commemoration,” by the symbols of bread and wine, of the body and blood of Christ, once offered up to God on the cross for our redemption; it could not therefore be then thought an offering up again to God of the very body and blood of Christ, substantially present under the appearance of bread and wine; for these two notions are inconsistent, and cannot stand together. The ancient doctors, yea, and Liturgies of the Church, affirm the Eucharist to be *incrumentum sacrificium*, “a sacrifice without blood;” which it cannot be said to be if the very blood of Christ were therein present, and offered up to God. In the Clementine Liturgy, the bread and wine in the Eucharist are said to be *antitypa*, “correspondent types,” figures, and images, of the precious body and blood of Christ. And divers others of the Fathers speak in the same plain language. [Vid. Greg. Naz. Apol. Orat. 1. tom. i. Cyril. Hierosol. 5. Cat. Myst. Ambros. de Sacrament. lib. iv. cap. 4.]

We are not ignorant that the ancient Fathers generally teach that the bread

and wine in the Eucharist, by or upon the consecration of them, do become, and are made, the “body and blood of Christ”. But we know also, that though they do not all explain themselves in the same way, yet they do all declare their sense to be very dissonant from the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Some of the most ancient Doctors of the Church, as Justin Martyr [[Apol i. 66. p. 83.]] and Irenaeus, [[iv, 18. p. 251.]] seem to have had this notion, that by or upon the sacerdotal benediction, the Spirit of Christ, or a divine virtue from Christ, descends upon the elements, and accompanies them to all worthy communicants, and that therefore they are said to be, and are, the body and blood of Christ; the same divinity, which is hypostatically united to the body of Christ in heaven, being virtually united to the elements of bread and wine on earth. Which also seems to be the meaning of all the ancient Liturgies, in which it is prayed “that God would send down His Spirit upon the bread and wine in the Eucharist.” And this doubtless is the meaning of Origen in his eighth book against Celsus, [P. 399. [c. 33. p. 766.]] where, speaking of the Holy Eucharist, he says, that therein “we eat bread by prayer (i.e. by the prayer of consecration for the descent of the Divine Spirit upon it) made a certain holy body, which also sanctifies those who with a sound or sincere purpose of heart use it” [Ἄρτους ἐσθίομεν σῶμα γενομένους, δια τὴν εὐχὴν ἅγιόν τι καὶ ἀγιάζον τοὺς μεθ’ υγιῶς προθέσεως αὐτῶ χρωμένους.]; but that neither Justin Martyr, nor Irenaeus, nor Origen, ever dreamed of the transubstantiation of the elements, is most evident. For Justin Martyr and Irenaeus do both of them plainly affirm, that by eating and drinking the bread and wine in the Eucharist, “our bodies are nourished,” and that the “bread and wine are digested and turned into the substance of our bodies”; which to affirm of the glorified Body of Christ, were impious and blasphemous, and to affirm the same of the mere accidents of the bread and wine, would be very absurd and ridiculous. And Origen expressly saith, “that what we eat in the Eucharist is bread, but bread sanctified and made holy by prayer, and which, by the Divine virtue that accompanies it, sanctifieth all those who worthily receive it.” He that would see more of this notion of the ancient Fathers, and particularly those places of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus fully cleared and vindicated from the forced and absurd glosses of the Romanists, may consult my learned friend Mr. Grebe, in his notes upon Justin Martyr’s first Apology, of his own edition, [P. 128, 129.] but especially in his large and elaborate Annotation upon Irenaeus. [Lib. iv. cap. 34. [c. 18.]]

I shall dismiss this article with this one only observation, that after the prodigious doctrine of Transubstantiation was confirmed by the first Lateran Council, there were many in the communion of the Church of Rome who could not digest it, did not in truth believe it, and wished from their hearts that their

Church had never defined it. For this we have the ample testimonies of very eminent writers of that Church. “The conversion of the bread and wine into Christ’s body and blood,” saith Cajetan, [Par. 3. qu. 75. article 1.] “all of us do teach in words, but indeed many deny it, thinking nothing less. [[i.e. though they think that they do not deny it: putantes se non negare illam.]] These are diversely divided one from another. For some, by the conversion that is in the Sacrament understand nothing but identity of place, that is, that the bread is therefore said to be made the body of Christ, because, where the bread is, the body of Christ becomes present also. Others understand by the word ‘conversion’ nothing else but the order of succession, that is, that the body succeedeth and is under the veils of accidents, under which the bread, which they suppose to be annihilated, was before.” Occam saith, [Centilogii conclus. cap. 39.] “There are three opinions about Transubstantiation, of which the first supposeth a conversion of the sacramental elements; the second the annihilation; the third affirmeth the bread to be in such manner transubstantiated into the body of Christ, that it is no way changed in substance, or substantially converted into Christ’s body, or doth cease to be; but only that the body of Christ, in every part of it, becomes present in every part of the bread.” Waldensis [Tom. ii. de Sacram. Eucharistiae, cap. 19.] reports out of Chrysopolitanus Zacharias’s book, entitled, *In unum ex quatuor*, “that there were some, perhaps many, but hardly to be discerned and noted, who thought still as Berengarius did.” The same Waldensis, in the same book, [Cap. 64.] saith, “that some supposed the conversion that is in the Sacrament, to be, in that the bread and wine are assumed into the unity of Christ’s person; some thought it to be by way of impanation, and some by way of figurative and tropical appellation. The first and second of these opinions found the better entertainment in some men’s minds, because they grant the essential presence of Christ’s body, and yet deny not the presence of the bread still remaining, to sustain the appearing accidents.” These opinions he reports to have been very acceptable to many, not without sighs, wishing the Church had decreed that men should follow one of them.

It cannot be doubted but that there are at this day many in the communion of the Church of Rome who are in the same perplexity about this article of Transubstantiation, and have the same wishes, that their Church had never made it an article of their faith; for the absurdities of Transubstantiation, and the reason of mankind, are still the same. Now what a lamentable condition are they in, who are forced to profess (yea, and all Ecclesiastics now by the Trent Confession in the most solemn manner to swear) that they believe what they cannot for their hearts believe; whose consciences, between the determinations of their Church, and the dictates of their own reason, yea, and sense too, are

continually ground as between two millstones! I have been long upon this article, but shall be more brief on the next.

The next article is this: “I confess also, that under one kind only, whole and entire Christ, and the whole Sacrament, is received.” [Fateor etiam sub altera tantum specie totum atque integrum Christum verumque sacramentum sumi.] Now this article of the “sufficiency of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, taken only in one kind,” as it refers to, and is designed to justify, the practice of the Roman Church, in the constant and public administration of the Sacrament to all the laity only in one kind, viz. the bread, denying them the cup, is manifestly against our Saviour’s first institution of the Sacrament, against apostolical practice, and the usage of the universal Church of Christ for a thousand years, as is confessed by divers learned men of the Roman communion. And yet, according to the Trent Creed, all men are damned that do not assent to the insolent (and as I may justly term it) antichristian decree of the Roman Church in this point. And who can without astonishment reflect on the stiffness and obstinacy and uncharitableness of the Trent Fathers in this matter? Before they met, when it was noised that a Council should be called to redress the manifold abuses and corruptions that were in the Church, it was the longing expectation and earnest desire of many good men, that, amongst other things, the Communion in both kinds might be restored to the laity. There were a multitude of pious souls, as it were, upon their knees before them, thirsting after the cup of blessing, and earnestly begging for an entire Sacrament. But those *duri Patres*, those hardhearted Fathers, had no compassion on them, turned a deaf ear to their loud cries and supplications, only bidding them believe for the future (what they could not believe), that half the Sacrament was every whit as good as the whole.

Immediately follows this article; “I firmly hold, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detained there are relieved by the prayers of the faithful.” [“Constanter teneo purgatorium esse, animasque ibi detentas fidelium suffragiis juvari.] Now this article of a “purgatory after this life,” as it is understood and taught by the Roman Church (that is, to be a place and state of misery and torment, whereinto many faithful souls go presently after death, and there remain till they are thoroughly purged from their dross, or delivered thence by masses, indulgences, etc.,) is contrary to Scripture, and the sense of the Catholic Church for at least the first four centuries, as I have at large proved in a discourse concerning the state of the souls of men in the interval between death and the resurrection [[Sermon III. p. 53.]]: which I am ready to communicate to Monsieur de Meaux, if he shall desire it. Indeed the doctrine of purgatory is not only an error, but a dangerous one too, which (I am verily persuaded) hath betrayed a multitude of souls into eternal perdition, who might have escaped hell, if they had not

depended upon an after-game in purgatory. But this article, being very gainful to the Roman Clergy, must above others be held fast, and constantly maintained and defended. “I firmly hold it.” [Constanter teneo.]

[[This passage, “Prayers for the dead – misery and torment,” is taken almost literally from the third Sermon, p. 52.]] Prayers for the dead, as founded on the hypothesis of purgatory (and we no otherwise reject them), fall together with it. The prayers for the dead used in the ancient Church (those, I mean, that were more properly prayers, i.e. either deprecations or petitions) were of two sorts, either the common and general commemoration of all the faithful at the oblation of the Holy Eucharist, or the particular prayers used at the funerals of any of the faithful lately deceased.

The former respected their final absolution, and the consummation of their bliss at the resurrection; like as that our Church useth both in the office for the Communion, and in that for the Burial of the Dead: which indeed seems to be no more than what we daily pray for in that petition of the Lord’s Prayer, (if we rightly understand it,) “Thy kingdom come.” The latter were also charitable omens, and good wishes of the faithful living, as it were accompanying the soul of the deceased to the joys of paradise, of which they believed it already possessed, as the ancient author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, in the last chapter of that book, plainly informs us. In a word, let any understanding and unprejudiced person attentively observe the prayers for the dead in the most undoubtedly ancient Liturgies, especially those in the Clementine Liturgy, and those mentioned in the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; and he will be so far from believing the Roman purgatory upon the account of those prayers, that he must needs see they make directly against it. For they all run (as even that prayer for the dead which is unadvisedly left by the Romanists in their own canon of the Mass, as a testimony against themselves) in this form: “For all that are in peace or at rest in the Lord.” Now how can they be said to be “in peace or at rest in the Lord,” who are supposed to be in a state of misery and torment?

The next article is this: “As also that the saints reigning together with Christ are to be venerated and invoked, and that they offer up prayers to God for us; and that their relics are to be venerated.” [Similiter et sanctos una cum Christo regnantes venerandos et invocandos esse, eosque orationes Deo pro nobis offerre, eorumque reliquias esse venerandas.] Now, for the worship and invocation of saints deceased, there is no ground or foundation in the Holy Scriptures, no precept, no example. Nay, it is by evident consequence forbidden, in the prohibition of the worship and invocation of angels, Col. 2:18, with which text compare the 35th canon of the Council of Laodicea, and the judgment of the learned Father Theodoret,

concerning it, who flourished shortly after that Council. He, in his notes upon that text of St. Paul, hath these express words; “The Synod, met at Laodicea in Phrygia, made a law forbidding men to pray even to the angels.” [Ἡ σύνοδος συνελθούσα ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ τῆς Φρυγίας νόμῳ κεκώλυκε καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις προσεύχεσθαι.] See also Zonaras upon the same canon. He, as well as Theodoret long before him, rightly judged, that both in the text of St. Paul, and in the Laodicean Canon, all prayers to angels are forbidden. Now if we must not pray to angels, then much less may we pray to saints. The angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.” they watch over us, and are frequently present with us, nay, they are *internuncii*, messengers between God and us, conveying God’s blessings to us, and our prayers to God, [Acts 10:4; Apoc. 8:3.] none of which things are anywhere affirmed of the deceased saints. And yet we must not pray even to the angels.

Hear also Origen, who lived long before the Laodicean Council, delivering the sense of the Church of his time in this matter, [Lib. v. contra eels. p. 233. edit. Cantab. [c. 4. p. 580.]] where he excellently discourseth against the religious worship and invocation of angels: in opposition to which, he first lays down this as a received doctrine among all Catholic Christians, “That all prayers, all supplications, deprecations, and thanksgivings, are to be offered to God, the Lord of all, by the chief High Priest, who is above all angels, the living Word, and God.” [Πᾶσαν μὲν γὰρ δέησιν, καὶ προσευχῆν, καὶ ἐντευξίν, καὶ εὐχαριστίαν, ἀναπεμπτέον τῷ ἐπι πασι Θεῷ, διὰ τοῦ ἐπι πάντων ἀγγέλων ἀρχιερέως, ἐμψύχου Λόγου καὶ Θεοῦ.] And presently after he shews the folly and unreasonableness of praying to angels upon several accounts. As first, because the particular knowledge of angels, and what offices they severally perform, is a secret which we cannot reach to; which is the very reason which St. Paul suggests in the text before mentioned, that whosoever worships and invokes the angels, doth “intrude into those things which he hath not seen.” [Ἀ μὴ εἰδὼρακεν ἐμβατεύων.] From whence we may easily gather, that Origen, in this discourse of his, had an eye to that text of St. Paul, and understood it, as we do, to be a prohibition of all prayer to angels.

2. He argues, that if we should suppose that we could attain such particular knowledge of the angels, yet it would not be lawful for us to pray to them, or any other, save to God, the Lord of all, who alone is all-sufficient, abundantly able to supply all our wants and necessities, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, His word, wisdom, and truth. Lastly, he reasons to this effect; that the best way to gain the good-will of those blessed spirits, is not to pray to them, but to imitate them by paying our devotions to God alone, as they do. Hear the same Origen, [Lib. viii p. 402. [c. 37. p. 769.]] where to Celsus talking of those spirits that preside over the affairs of men here below, who were thought to be

appeased only by prayers to them in a barbarous language, he answers with derision, and tells him he forgot with whom he had to do, and that he was speaking to Christians, “who pray to God alone through Jesus.” [Τοις μόνω τω Θεω δια του Ιησου ευχομένοις.] And then he adds, that the genuine Christians, in their prayers to God, used no barbarous words, but prayed to Him in the language of their respective countries, the Greek Christians in the Greek tongue, the Romans in the Roman language, as knowing that the God to whom they prayed understood all tongues and languages, and heard and accepted their prayers in their several languages, as well as if they had addressed themselves to Him in one and the same language. Again in the same book, [P. 420. [c. 64. p. 789.]] to Celsus discoursing much after the same rate, he gives this excellent answer: “The one God is to be atoned by us, the Lord of all, and must be entreated to be propitious to us, piety and prayers being the best means of appeasing Him. And if Celsus would have others applied to after Him, let him assure himself, that as the body’s motion unavoidably moves its shadow, so likewise, when God is once become propitious to any, all His angels, souls, and spirits, will become friends to such an one.”* From these testimonies of Origen, to which more might be added, it is very evident that the Catholic Christians of his time made no prayers either to angels or saints, but directed all their prayers to God, through the alone mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Indeed, against the invocation of angels and saints, we have the concurrent testimonies of all the Catholic Fathers of the first three centuries at least. For as to that testimony of Justin Martyr, in his second (or rather first) Apology for the Christians, [P. 56. [Apol. i. 6. p. 47.]] alleged by Bellarmine, and others of his party, for the worshipping of angels as practiced in the primitive times of the Church, I have given a clear account of it, [Def. Fid. Nic. ii. 4, 8.] where I have evidently proved that place of Justin to be so far from giving any countenance to the religious worship of angels, that it makes directly against it. And the like may be easily shewn of the other allegations of Bellarmine out of the primitive Fathers.

*[Ένα ουν τον επι πασι Θεον ημιν εξευμενιστέον, και τουτον ίλεω έχειν ευκτέον, εξευμενιζόμενον ευσεβεία και πάση αρετη· ει δε και άλλους τινας βούλεται μετα τον επι πασιν εξευμενίζεσθαι Θεον, κατανοησάτω, ότι ώσπερ τω κινουμένω σώματι ακολουθει η της σκίας αυτου κίνησις, τον αυτον τρόπον τω εξευμενίζεσθαι τον επι πασι Θεον, έπεται ευμενεις έχειν πάντας τους εκείνου φίλους αγγέλους, και ψυχας, και πνεύματα.]

To conclude: Look into the most ancient Liturgies, as particularly that described in the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, and the Clementine Liturgy, contained in the book entitled The Apostolical Constitutions; and you will not find in them one prayer of any sort to angels or saints, no, not so much as an oblique prayer (as they term it), i.e. a prayer directed to God that He would hear the intercession

of angels and saints for us. And yet after all this, they are forever damned by the Trent Creed, who do not hold and practice the invocation of the saints deceased. For this is one of the articles of that creed, without the belief whereof, they tell us, “none can be saved” [Nemo salvus esse potest.]: that is, all are damned who pray unto God alone through Christ the Mediator, as the Scripture directs, and the Catholic Church of the first and best ages hath practiced.

As to what follows, “that the saints departed do offer up their prayers to God for us”; if it be understood of the intercession of the saints in general, we deny it not. But this is no reason why we should pray to them to pray for us. Nay, on the contrary, if the deceased saints do of their own accord, and out of their perfect charity, pray for us, what need we be so solicitous to call upon them for their prayers, especially when our reason and Scripture also tell us that we are out of their hearing, and that they do not, cannot know, our particular wants and necessities? For as to what the Romanists tell us of the glass of the Trinity, and extraordinary revelations, they are bold presumptuous conjectures, destitute of any ground or colour from reason or Scripture, and indeed are inconsistent with one another. To be sure, that conceit of the glass of the Trinity would never have passed with the Fathers of the first ages; for they generally held “that the souls of the righteous” (some indeed excepted of the souls of the Martyrs) “do not presently after death ascend to the third heaven, but go to a place and state of inferior bliss and happiness” (which they commonly call by the name of paradise, though where it is situated they do not all agree), “and there remain till the resurrection of their bodies; after which they shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, and there forever enjoy that consummate bliss and happiness which consists in that clear vision of God which the Holy Scripture calls ‘seeing Him face to face’.” And indeed, their distinction of paradise (the receptacle of holy souls presently after death) from the third heaven, seems to have firm ground in the New Testament [Vid. Luke xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. 12:2–4; and Grot. in loc.]; and was undoubtedly received in the Church of God before the coming of the Lord in the flesh. However, this was a current doctrine in the Christian Church for many ages; till at length the Popish Council of Florence boldly determined the contrary, defining, “That those souls which having contracted the blemish of sin, being either in their bodies, or out of them, purged from it, are presently received into heaven, and there clearly behold God Himself, one God in three Persons, as He is.” [Eas animas quae post contractam peccati maculam, etc.] This decree they craftily made, partly to establish the superstition of praying to saints deceased, whom they would make us to believe to see and know all our necessities and concerns *in speculo Trinitatis*, as was said before, and so to be fit objects of our religious invocation, partly and chiefly to confirm the doctrine of purgatory, and

that the prayers of the ancient Church for the dead might be thought to be founded upon a supposition that the souls of some, nay, most faithful persons, after death, go into a place of grievous torment, out of which they may be delivered by the prayers, masses, and alms of the living. But this by the way.

It is added in the creed, “that not only the saints themselves, but also their relics, are to be worshipped.” A strange definition of the Trent Fathers, especially if we consider the time when it was made; a time when the best and wisest men in the Roman communion sadly complained of the vile cheat put upon the poor ignorant people, by shewing them I know not what relics of saints, and drawing them to the worship of them, only for gain’s sake, and to pick their pockets. Hear the judgment of the learned and pious Cassander as to this article: “Seeing there are a small number of true and approved relics, especially in these provinces, and many of those which are made show of are too apparently liable to suspicion, and the frequenting and veneration of them is of little service to true piety and devotion, though of very much to superstition or gain; it seems to me much more proper that all such ostentation of miracles were forborne, and the people were invited to worship the true relics of saints, that is, the examples of piety and virtue they have left behind them for our imitation, as is recorded in what has been written either by them or of them.” [Cum verae et compertae reliquiae, praesertim in his provinciis, perpaucae sint, et multae ex iis quae ostentantur non temere suspectae haberi possint, atque illorum frequentatio et veneratio non multum pietati, plurimum vero superstitioni vel questui serviant; multo consultius videtur, ut ab omni reliquiarum ostentatione abstinenceatur, et populus ad veras sanctorum reliquias colendas, id est, exempla pietatis et virtutum quae in scriptis vel ab ipsis, vel de ipsa extant, imitanda provocetur.]

The next article of the Trent Creed is this: “I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, and the ever Virgin Mother of God, and other saints, are to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given them.” [Firmissime assero imagines Christi ac Deiparae semper Virginis necnon aliorum sanctorum habendas et retinendas esse, atque eia debitum honorem et venerationem impertiendam.] A doughty article indeed, worthy to be ushered in with a *Firmissime assero!* But is this really an article of the Catholic Christian faith, without the belief whereof there is no salvation? What then is become again of the Catholic Church of the first three centuries and downwards? For it is certain that the Church of those days never allowed the use of images in her oratories or conventicles, much less the adoration and worship of them. This appears from what we read of Adrian, the Roman Emperor, related by Aelius Lampridius in the Life of Alexander Severus [c. 43.]; that he, favouring the Christians, and willing to gratify them in their way of worship, commanded that they should have temples built for them without any images in them; as well knowing their utter aversion to the setting

up of images in the places of their religious worship. This also more plainly appears from the writings of the Christian apologists of those times against the heathens objecting to them, that they had no images that they worshipped, and, consequently, that they were atheists, and worshipped no god at all; for they thought there could be no religious worship of anything without some visible image of the object to be worshipped; and finding no image at all of any sort in the oratories of the Christians, they concluded that the Christians worshipped no deity. Now our apologists are so far from pleading to this objection, that the Christians had images in their places of worship, that they answer without any distinction, by way of concession, and that not only granting that they had no images, but affirming they ought not to have them, and condemned the Gentiles which had. See Minutius Felix [P. 91.] Arnobius [vi. init.] and Lactantius. [ii. 2.]

In the fourth century, indeed, there were some attempts to bring in pictures into the Christian oratories, but they were presently checked and repressed by the governors of the Church, as appears from the 36th canon of the Council of Eliberis in Spain, and from the relation which Epiphanius gives us (who flourished towards the end of the fourth century) in his Epistle to John Bishop of Jerusalem, translated by St. Jerome out of Greek into Latin [Tom. ii. Oper. Hieronymi; [v. Epiphanius Op. ed. 1682. vol. ii. p. 317.] where he tells John of Jerusalem, that going into a church in the village of Anablatha to pray, he found there a picture hanging up, which (though it were out of his own diocese) he cut in pieces, as being scandalous, and contrary to the Holy Scriptures; and desires John to take care for the future, that no such pictures be hung up in any church under his jurisdiction. The words of Epiphanius are these: “At my entrance into the church to pray, I saw there a veil hanging within the doors of the same church, dyed and painted, and having the image as it were of Christ, or some saint, for I do not well remember whose it was. When, therefore, I had seen this image of a man hanging in the church of Christ, against the authority of the Scriptures, I tore it in pieces, and advised the keepers of the place to wrap therewith a poor dead man, and carry him to burial in it. And whereas they on the other hand murmured, saying, that if he would tear the veil, he ought in justice to change it, and give them another for it; I no sooner heard this, but I promised to give them one, and that I would send it presently. However, some little time passed, whilst I was seeking after the best veil, to send them it; for I thought I must send one from Cyprus. But now I have sent such as I could meet with; and I beseech thee, command the Presbyters of that place to receive the veil we have sent from the bearer, and to command for the future, that no such veils, as are contrary to our religion, be hung up in the church of Christ. For it becomes thy worth to have the greater care in this respect, that thou mayest take

away all such scrupulosity as is unworthy of the Christian Church, and the people committed to thy charge.”* The authority of this epistle is vindicated from the cavils of Bellarmine, by the learned Andrew Rivet, in his *Critici Sacri*. [iii. 29.] How would the zeal of this great and good Bishop have been inflamed, if he had seen what we nowadays see, not only pictures, but massy images in churches, and people praying, kneeling, and burning incense before them!

*[Cum intrassem in ecclesiam ut orarem, inveni ibi velum pendens in foribus ejusdem ecclesiae tinctum atque depictum, et habens imaginem quasi Christi, vel sancti cujusdam, non enim satis memini cujus imago fuerit; cum ergo hoc vidissem, in Ecclesia Christi contra auctoritatem Scripturarum hominis pendere imaginem, scidi illud, et magis dedi consilium custodibus ejusdem loci, ut pauperem mortuum eo obvolverent et efferrent. Illique contra murmurantes dixerunt, si scindere voluerat, justum erat ut aliud daret velum atque mutaret. Quod cum audissem, me daturum esse pollicitus sum et illico esse missurum. Paululum autem morarum fuit in medio, dum quaero optimum velum pro eo mittere; arbitrabar enim de Cypro mihi esse mittendum. Nunc autem misi, quod potui reperire; et precor ut jubeas presbytero ejusdem loci suscipere velum a latore, quod a nobis missum est: et deinceps praecipere, in ecclesia Christi istiusmodi vela, quae contra religionem nostram veniunt, non appendi. Decet enim honestatem tuam hanc magis habere sollicitudinem, ut scrupulositatem tollat, quae indigna est Ecclesia Christi, et populis qui tibi crediti sunt.]

By what means image-worship in after-ages entered into the Church, is not so easy to tell; nor is it very necessary. But this is certain, that about the beginning of the eighth century it had gotten great ground. For in the year of our Lord 754, in the reign of Constantine, nicknamed Copronymus, a General Council was convened at Constantinople, consisting of 338 Bishops, declaring itself the seventh General Council. [Vide Syn. CP. in Act. Syn. Nic. ii. p. 621. edit. Col. an. 1618.] This Synod expressly condemned all worship of images, “decreeing it to be abominable; and that all images, of whatsoever matter or colour they were made, should be cast out of all Christian churches.” [Ibid. p. 965.] And presently after, they decree severe punishments to any man “that should dare from thenceforward to make, worship, or set up in the church, or in his own house, any such image, as being a transgressor of the commandment of God, and an enemy to the doctrine of the Fathers.” Where observe, that the Bishops of this Council condemn all image worship, as contrary both to Scripture, and also “to the doctrine of the Fathers of the Church that were before them,” as indeed we have already shewn it to be. In this Council, Germanus Bishop of Constantinople, Georgina Cyprius, and Damascene a Monk, who were the chief sticklers for image-worship, were excommunicated.

About thirty years after, viz. an. 787, another Council met, at Constantinople first, and was afterwards translated to Nice, in which the decree

of the former Synod was exploded, and image-worship first established in the Church. This Council was called by the Empress Irene, a bigoted image worshipper. She had so great an influence upon this Synod that, partly by her persuasions, partly by her threats, several Bishops, who in the former Synod had condemned image worship, were now for it. Among these, Basilius Bishop of Ancyra, Theodorus Bishop of Myra, and Theodosius Bishop of Amorium, were brought in as *pompae Circences*, and offered to this Council their letters supplicant, confessing that they had sinned in condemning the worship of images in the Synod convened by Constantinus Copronymus. *Dux foemina facti*: it was a woman that first brought this childish worship (the great Hincmar of Rheims calls it *puparum cultum*, “baby worship”) into the Church of Christ. The Bishops in this Synod, being destitute of Scripture proof and authentic tradition for their image worship, betook themselves “to certain apocryphal and ridiculous stories,” [Ad apocryphas quaedam et risu dignas menias. Car. Mag. iii. 3.] as Charles the Great observed. For in this Synod, a letter from Adrian Bishop of Rome, to Constantine and Irene, was produced and openly read, full of the most ridiculous fables, as particularly concerning the leprosy of Constantine the Great before his conversion; the barbarous remedy that he sought after by the blood of innocent babes; the appearing of St. Peter and St. Paul to him in a dream, advising him to send for Pope Sylvester, who, upon we know not what persecution raised by Constantine against the Christians, was fled with his Clergy to the mountain Soracte, and there hid themselves in the caves thereof; that when Sylvester came to him, he commanded his Deacons to produce the images of St. Peter and Paul, which, as soon as the Emperor saw, he cried out aloud, “These are the very images that I saw in my dream; I am convinced, I believe, and desire the laver of Baptism”; which, when he had received, he was immediately cured of his leprosy; that thereupon, in gratitude for the benefit he had received, he ordered churches to be built for the Christians, whose walls and pillars should be adorned with the holy images of Christ and the saints. Was there ever such a legend offered to a Synod of Bishops? And yet this letter of Adrian was accepted and approved of by the whole Council. Had none of them read the Life of Constantine, written by Eusebius?

Wherefore, about seven years after, viz. an. 794, this Nicene Synod was condemned and abdicated by a Council of about three hundred Bishops, convened at Frankfort by Charles the Great, King of France. In this Synod were present not only the Bishops of France, but also of Germany and Lombardy, as provinces subdued to the King of France. Pope Adrian also sent his Legates thither, and the great Charles himself honoured this Council with his presence.

The Romanists are hard put to it toward the stroke of this Council against the worshippers of images. They have several evasions. Genebrard, [Lib. iii. Chron. an. 790.] and Bellarmine [Lib. ii. de Imag. cap. 14. [Op. vol. ii. p. 991.]] tell us that the Fathers at Frankfort mistook the meaning of the second Nicene Council, as thinking they had decreed “the worship due to God alone,” [Cultum latriae.] to be given to the images of the saints, which they were very far from doing. But it is far more probable that Genebrard and Bellarmine were both grossly mistaken. There were assembled in this Council almost all the learned Bishops of the west; they had the acts of the second Nicene Synod before them, and diligently perused them, and upon examination condemned them as to the point of image worship. Besides, our Alcuinus, the Emperor’s tutor, the most learned man of that age, had before so fully examined the Nicene acts, that he wrote a learned discourse against them, and notably refuted them, as we shall hear by and by. Lastly, it is certain that the Fathers of the Council of Frankfort did not condemn only *cultum latriae* to be given to images, but all manner of religious worship.

Others therefore tell us, [Surius in admon. ad lect. pro Syn. Frank. [vol. iii. p. 226.] Coriolanus in Concilio Frank. ad an. 794.] that they who urge the testimony of the Frankfort Synod against image worship, are utterly mistaken; that the Synod which the Fathers at Frankfort condemned, was not the Council of Nice, but that of Constantinople under Constantinus Copronymus; that the Frankfort Synod perfectly agreed with the Fathers of the Nicene Council, and confirmed the worship of images. This is strange news indeed, but it is far from being true. The mistake of those writers who tell us this (if it were a mistake in them, and not a willful prevarication) arose from hence, that the Synod which established image worship met first (as I noted before) at Constantinople, though it was afterwards translated to Nice; and so might be truly said to be a Council convened at Constantinople, and thereupon be mistaken for that Council of Constantinople which was convened by Constantinus Copronymus, which was indeed confirmed by the Frankfort Fathers. But that it was the second Council of Nice that was condemned by the Synod at Frankfort, and that upon this very account, that it had introduced image worship into the Church, we have abundant evidence.

For this is testified not only by Walafridus Strabo, but also by Ado Viennensis and Regino Prumiensis, in their histories; with whom Abbas Uspergensis agrees in his Chronicle, where he thus writes: “ In the year 793, whilst Charles was celebrating the feast of Easter in Frankfort, a numerous Synod of Bishops was gathered together out of all the provinces of the realm; the Legates of Pope Adrian were there also in his stead. In this Synod the heresy of a certain Bishop named Felix was condemned.—The Synod likewise which a few

years before met at Constantinople, under Irene and Constantine her son, and was called the seventh General Council, was universally renounced as useless, that so it might neither be styled the seventh, nor by any other name.”* That the Council here said to be condemned by the Frankfort Synod was the second Council of Nice, is evident, for it is expressly said to be the Council convened under the Empress Irene and Constantine her son, and that but a few years before. But it is said to be convened at Constantinople because there indeed it first met, as was noted before.

*[Anno Dom. DCCXCIII Carolo in Franconofurt Pascha celebrante, Synodus Episcoporum magna collecta est ex omnibus regni provinciis Legati quoque Hadriani Papae in ejus vice affuerunt. In hac Synodo haeresis cujusdam Episcopi Felicis nomine damnata est. — Synodus etiam, quae ante paucos annos in Constantinopoli congregata sub Hirene et Constantino filio ejus septima et universalis ab ipsis appellata est, ut nec septima nec aliquid diceretur, quasi supervacua ab omnibus abdicata est. [p. 176.]]

Add to this the testimony of Hincmar of Rheims, an author in all respects most worthy of credit in this matter: “In the time of the emperor Charlemagne, a General Synod was held in France by order of the Apostolic See, the said Emperor convening it. And according to the direction of the Holy Scriptures, and the tradition of the ancients, the Greek Synod was condemned and wholly laid aside. Of the condemnation whereof, a volume of no small size was sent from the same Emperor to Rome by some of the Bishops, and I myself have read it in the palace in my younger days.”*

*[Tempore Caroli Magni imperatoris, jussione Apostolicae sedis Generalis est Synodis in Francia convocante praefato imperatore celebrata, et secundum Scripturarum tramitem traditionemque majorum ipsa Graecorum pseudo-synodus destructa et penitus abdicata; de cujus destructione non modicum volumen, quod in palatio adolescentulus legi, ab eodem imperatore Romam est per quosdam Episcopos missum. Hincmar. Rhem. adv. Hincmar. Laudon. cap. 20. [Op. vol. ii. p. 457.]]

In the same chapter he afterwards adds, “Wherefore, by the authority of this Synod the worship of images was somewhat restrained: yet not so but that Adrian and the other Bishops persevered in their opinion; and after the death of Charles, most earnestly promoted their puppet-worship: insomuch that Lewis, Charles’s son, wrote a book, wherein he fell much sharper upon the worship of images than his father had done.”*

*[Autoritate itaque hujus Synodi non nihil repressa est imaginum veneratio: sed tamen Hadrianus et alii Pontifices in sua opinione persevererunt: et mortuo Carolo suarum puparum cultum vehementius promoverunt: adeo ut Ludovicus, Caroli filius, libro longe acriori insectatus sit imaginum cultum, quam Carolus.]

With what indignation and abhorrence the decree of the Nicene pseudo-

synod was received by our British Church, our historians tell us. Hear Roger Hoveden. “Charles, King of France, sent the book of the Council, directed to himself from Constantinople, into Britain; in which book, alas! alas! many things were found unagreeable and contrary to the true faith; especially, that by the unanimous assertion of almost all the eastern Doctors, that is to say, of not less than three hundred or more Bishops, the worship of images was confirmed: which the Church of God utterly abominated. Against which, Alcuinus wrote an Epistle wonderfully supported with authorities out of the Holy Scriptures, and brought it with the same book to the King of France, in the name of our Bishops and Princes.”*

*[Carolus Rex Francorum misit Synodalem librum ad Britanniam sibi a Coustantinopoli directum, in quo libro (heu! prô dolor!) multa inconvenientia et verae fidei contraria reperiebantur: maxime quod pene omnium orientalium Doctorum, non minus quam trecentorum vel eo amplius Episcoporum, unanimi assertione confirmatum fuerit, imagines adorari debere, *quod omnino Ecclesia Dei execrator*. Contra quod scripsit Albinus [Alcuinus] epistolam ex autoritate Divinarum Scripturarum mirabiliter affirmatam, illamque cum eodem libro, ex persona Episcoporum ac principum nostrorum, regi Francorum attulit. Part. i. Annal. ad annum 792. Vide et Matth. Westmon. ad ann. 793.]

From whence it appears that the Nicene acts, sent from Constantinople to Charles the Great, were by him, before the Frankfort Synod, first sent to Britain; and being examined and abundantly refuted, and that from the Holy Scriptures, by our most learned Alcuinus, were carried back again, together with that refutation of them, to the Emperor, in the name of our Bishops and Princes: so that even then the British Church was protestant in this article concerning image worship.

And indeed, I am persuaded that no man of judgment and integrity, that hath been conversant in the Holy Scriptures, and in the writings of the more ancient Doctors of the Church, will be able to read those acts of the pseudo-synod of Nice without indignation and abhorrence of it, when he observes upon what ridiculous fables, gross misinterpretations of Scripture, falsifications, and impertinent allegations of the ancient Fathers, the Bishops of that Convention built their decree concerning image worship. Notwithstanding all this, the Bishops at Trent chose to follow that wretched Synod, and have decreed, and that as an article of faith most firmly to be asserted, “that the images of Christ and the saints are to be retained, yea, and worshipped too.” May not one presume to ask why? What necessity is there of this? Cannot the Church of Christ be as well without these images and this image-worship now, as it was in

the more ancient and purer times of it? Nay, may we not farther ask what good use at all can be made of these images and this image worship? The answer of the Romanists here is that these images are *libri laicorum, et idiotarum*, “books fit to instruct the ignorant laity,” that cannot read the Holy Scriptures, and apt to raise devotion in them. But to this plea for image worship made use of by Wading, a Jesuit of Antwerp, his learned antagonist returns this excellent answer, with which I shall conclude what I have to say upon this article: “I deny not but images may be of use to the stupid vulgar, who are led only by their senses, for raising their devotion at the sight of them; but see, I pray thee, whether many more and greater disadvantages are not to be feared from the use and worship of them. For, in the first place, it is scarce possible but that the ignorant and profane vulgar will be apt hence to imbibe filthy and sordid notions of God and the saints, will depend upon these images and statues as their tutelary gods, will pay them as bad or worse adoration than the heathens paid to their abominations; and, lastly, will grow mere brutes by using images instead of books, as if there were no need of understanding more than these will teach them. This, were it proper, might be abundantly confirmed; but I only appeal to experience, as above all exception. In the next place, it cannot be but the Jews must be most intolerably scandalized at the use and worship of images, and will be the more averse to all thoughts of ever embracing of Christianity, inasmuch as the worship of a statue or image is a dreadful, heinous, and enormous crime with them. They most firmly believe, that He can never be the Messiah, whose disciples allow as lawful what is so directly contrary to the Divine law. And this is to be reckoned so much the greater evil, because it is almost the principal occasion of all the Jews’ indignation against Christ and Christians; so that their conversion to our religion is in my opinion to be despaired of, unless this stumbling-block be first taken out of the way. Thirdly: offence will hereby be inevitably given to an infinite number of Christians, and they will be irreconcilably alienated from your Church, whilst, having their minds possessed with a true sense of the Divine prohibition, they think they have just reason to look upon image worship as no better than idolatry: when also, at the same time, those that contend for it do not believe it necessary by reason of any Divine command, yet nevertheless press it as much as in them lies upon men’s consciences, as though it were necessary. Who sees not what great evils and inconveniences these are? The ignorant people are tempted to continue in their profane sottishness; the Jews in their destructive error; Christians in their deplorable schism; and all good men in an endless despair of ever seeing an

amendment. So that I need not fear to make myself the judge between us; and beg thee to tell me seriously, whether the single advantage of using and worshipping images will equal, not to say preponderate, these so many and so great mischiefs.”*

*[Non diffiteor imagines servire posse stupido vulgo, quod non nisi sensibus suis ducitur, ut earum conspectu ad devotionem excitetur: sed vide sis, obsecro, an non multo plura et graviora incommoda metuenda sunt, ex usu et cultu earum. Primo enim, fieri aliter vix potest, quin rude et profanum vulgus opiniones foedas et sordidas de Deo sanctisque imbibat, ut ex ipsis imaginibus et statuīs tanquam a diis suis tutelaribus pendeat, iis tribuat quae Gentilium abominationibus paria sunt, si non deteriora: denique ut istarum imaginum tanquam librorum suorum usu prorsus obrutescat, quasi aliud quid scire aut sapere opus non habeat. Confirmare hoc possem prolixè, si luberet: sed experientiam solam testem do, quae omni exceptione major est. Secundo fieri non potest ut per imaginum usum ac cultum non gravissime offendantur Judaei, et a religione Christi amplectenda reddantur alieniores: nimirum piaculum, scelus, aut flagitium summum pene ipsis est statuae aut imaginis cultus. Messiam esse non posse firmissime credunt, cujus discipuli tam directe contraria Divinae legi licita esse sibi persuadent. Hoc malum tanto pluris aestimandum venit, quod praecipuum pene est, quod Judaeorum bilem in Christum et Christianos acuit, adeo ut desperata mihi videatur eorum ad Christianam religionem conversio, quamdiu hic obex ipsis ponitur. Tertio, fieri non potest, ut non offendatur, immo alienissimus non reddatur ab Ecclesia vestra infinitus Christianorum numerus, qui solius interdicti Divini religione adducti cultum imaginum idololatriam sibi esse persuadent: cum ii, qui eum urgent, ex praecepto Divino eum non credant necessarium esse, nihilominus tamen quanta posstuat vi eum tanquam necessarium conscientiis imperent. Quanta haec mala et incommoda sint, quis non videt? Rudi populo datur causa manendi in profano suo stupore; Judaeis in funesto ipsorum errore; Christianis in deplorando schismate; piis omnibus in aeterna remedii desperatione. Anne hisce tot tantisque incommodis una ista utilitas, quam ex imaginum usu cultuque percipi vis, aequipolleat, nedum praeponderet, te ipsum judicem poscere non dubito. *Episcopi Resp. ad Epist. Pet. Wadingi de Cultu Imag. cap. 8.*]

The next article is concerning Papal indulgences, in these words: “I also affirm, that the power of granting indulgences was left by Christ to the Church, and the use of them tends very much to the salvation of Christians.” [Indulgentiarum etiam potestatem a Christo in Ecclesia relictam fuisse, illarumque usum Christiano populo maxime salutarem esse affirmo.] Now the doctrine of indulgences, as it was before the Council of Trent, and hath been since taught in the Church of Rome, is big with gross errors. It depends on the fiction of purgatory; it supposeth a superfluity of the satisfactions of the saints; which, being jumbled together (*horreo referens*) with the merits and satisfaction of our Saviour, make up one treasury of the Church; that the Bishop of Rome keeps the key of it, as having the sole power of granting indulgences, either by himself immediately, or by others commissioned from him: lastly, it very absurdly extends the effect of

the power of the keys, left by Christ in His Church, to men in the other world. Is not this now a doctrine worthy of a place in our creed, and to be made an article of the Catholic faith? That the doctrine and use of indulgences were never beard of in the Church of Christ for many hundreds of years, is certain, and confessed too by divers learned men of the Roman communion. I shall cite only one of them, but he such a one as may be *instar omnium*. Our Roffensis, [[i.e. J. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester.]] Luther's great antagonist, and Rome's Martyr, gives us this account of indulgences: "Many, perhaps, are tempted not to rely much upon indulgences, upon this consideration, that the use of them appears to be new, and very lately known amongst Christians. To whom I answer, it is not very certain who was the first author of them. The doctrine of purgatory was rarely, if at all, heard of amongst the ancients. And to this very day the Greeks believe it not. Nor was the belief either of purgatory or indulgences, so necessary in the primitive Church as it is now. So long as men were unconcerned about purgatory, nobody inquired after indulgences; for upon that depends all the worth of indulgences. Take away purgatory, and there is no more need of these. Seeing, therefore, purgatory was so lately known and received in the universal Church, who will wonder that in the first ages of Christianity indulgences were not made use of?"

*[Multos fortasse movet indulgentiis istis non usqueadeo fidere, quod earum usus in Ecclesia videatur fuisse recentior, et admodum sero repertus apud Christianos. Quibus ego respondeo, non certo constare a quo primum tradi coeperunt. De purgatorio apud priscos nulla vel quam rarissima fiebat mentio. Sed et Graecis ad hunc usque diem non est creditum purgatorium esse. Nec tam necessaria fuit sive purgatorii seu indulgentiarum fides in primitiva Ecclesia atque nunc est. Quamdiu nulla fuerat de purgatorio cura, nemo quaesivit indulgentias. Nam ex illo pendet omnis indulgentiarum existimatio. Si tollas purgatorium, quorsum indulgentiis opus erit? Quum itaque purgatorium tam sero cognitum ac receptum Ecclesiae fuerit universae, quis jam de indulgentiis mirari potest, quod in principio nascentis Ecclesiae nullus fuerit earum usus? Art. 18. cont. Lutherum. [Op. p. 496. ed. 1597.]]

In this indeed the Bishop seems to be mistaken, that he thought the doctrine of purgatory and the use of indulgences to be coeval, and that the latter immediately and necessarily follows from the former. It is true, purgatory and Papal indulgences are both of them later inventions. But, I think, when men were first seduced to a belief of purgatory, they were not yet presently so foolish as to think that any one mortal man had power by his pardons to deliver men out of it. Antichristianism in the Roman Church did not presently come to that maturity, nor was the Papal power so soon advanced to that prodigious height and greatness. It was at first more reasonably judged that the supposed miserable

souls in purgatory were to receive their relief rather from the prayers of the Church, together with the prayers, almsdeeds, and good works, of their living friends and relations.

To sum up this matter in short: Papal indulgences, as taught and used in the Church of Rome (to which this article of the Trent Creed must have reference; or else let any man tell me what the meaning of it is), if they were freely granted, can by no means be justified and defended, but the merchandise and sale of them for money is abominable. That such a vile trade of indulgences hath been driven in the Church of Rome cannot, without the greatest impudence, be denied, as long as the *Taxa Cancellariae Apostolicae* [Taxa Cancell. Apost. Paris. Apud Tass. Denis. 1520. [Printed also in vol. xv. part i. of *Tractatus Illustrium Jurisconsultorum*, Venet. 1584, p. 368.]] is extant. Of which filthy book, Espencaeus, a learned Doctor of the Roman communion, thus sadly and most justly complains in Epist. ad Tit. [c. 1.]: “There is exposed to sale, and easily to be had by any who will be at the charge of purchasing it, a book openly and publicly printed here, and which may be had now as well as formerly, entitled, The Tax of the Apostolical Chamber or Chancery; whereby may be learned more sorts of wickedness than from all the summists, and the summaries of all vices; and a license for most of them, but an absolution for all, is offered to such as will bid well for it. I spare names; for as one, though at present I cannot well recollect who, says, the very repeating of them is offensive. It is wonderful, that during this time and this schism, such an infamous kind of index of so many such foul and horrid wickednesses (that I cannot imagine any more scandalous work is to be met with in Germany or Switzerland, or any of those countries that have withdrawn their obedience to the Papal See) should not have been suppressed. So far have the factors from the Roman communion been from suppressing it, that many new impunities for such so gross enormities are granted, and the rest confirmed in the faculties of the Legates dispatched to their several countries.”* A little after, he adds out of Mantuan, “It is sad to see how money carries all things at Rome.” [Heu Romae nunc sola pecunia regnat. *Mant. Ecl.* v. 123.] And not very long before the Council of Trent, what a prodigious mass of money Pope Leo raised by these indulgences, the noble historian Thuanus tells us: “Leo,” saith he, “to the guilt of his dispensations, added another and greater, when, at the instigation of the Cardinal Laurence Puccius, he everywhere exacted monies in vast sums, sending his Bulls through all the kingdoms of Christendom, promising forgiveness of all their sins, and eternal life, at a price stated according to the quality of their crimes.”**

*[*Prostat et in quaestu pro meretrice sedet liber palam ac publice hic impressus, et hodieque ut olim venalis, Taxa Camerae seu Cancellariae Apostolicae inscriptus, in quo*

plus scelerum discas licet, quam in omnibus omnium vitiorum summistis et summariis: et plurimis quidem licentia, omnibus autem absolutio empturientibus proposita; parco nominibus, nam quod ait nescio quis: Nomina sunt ipso pene timenda sono. Mirum hoc tempore, hoc schismate, non suppressum tot tamque foedorum tamque horrendorum scelerum velut indicem adeo infamem ut non putem in Germania, Helvetia, et ubicunque a Romana sede defectum est opus prostare majore hujus scandalo; et adeo tamen non supprimitur ab Ecclesiae Romanae favissoribus, ut talium ac tantorum facinorum licentiae ac impunitates in facultatibus Legatorum illinc huc venientium bona ex parte innoventur atque confirmentur.]

**[Peccatum in sacris muneribus dispensandis admissum Leo mox longe graviore cumulavit, cum Laurentii Puccii Cardinalis impulsu, ut pecuniam ad immensos sumptus undique corrogaret, missis per omnia Christiani orbis regna diplomatis, omnium delictorum expiationem ac vitam aeternam pollicitus est constituto pretio, quod quisque pro peccati gravitate dependeret. Jac. Thuan. Histor. sui temporis ad ann. 1515.]

In a word, all sober men cried shame at this abominable cheat, imposed on the souls of men for whom Christ died. And if the men that influenced and governed the Trent Convention, had had any true sense of religion, they would have denounced an anathema against this vile doctrine and practice, and not (as they have done) decreed, and that as an article of faith without any restriction or qualification, “that the use of indulgences is highly conducing to the salvation of Christians.” [Indulgentiarum usum Christiano populo maxime salutarem esse.] But they were the Pope’s vassals, and received their instructions from Rome not to reform anything, though never so much amiss, that tended to the grandeur and gain of that See.

The last article I shall take notice of is contained in these words: “I acknowledge the holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church to be the mother and mistress of all Churches, and promise true obedience to the Pope of Rome, successor to St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and the Vicar of Jesus Christ.” [Sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Romanam Eccl. omnium Ecclesiarum matrem et magistram agnosco; Romano Pontifici, beati Petri Apostolorum principis successori, ac Jesu Christi vicario veram obedientiam spondeo.] Here the Ecclesiastic swears to three great untruths, one upon the neck of another. 1. “That the Roman Church is the mother of all other Churches”; which is a manifest falsehood in matter of fact. For everybody knows that the Church of Jerusalem was the first mother Church, and is so called and acknowledged by the ancient Fathers. St. Jerome saith, “It was the Church founded at Jerusalem, that planted all the other Churches.” [Ecclesia in Hierusalem fundata totius orbis Ecclesias seminavit. *Com. in Is.* [i. 2. p. 33.]] And the Synodical Letter from the Council of Constantinople to Damasus and the western Bishops, calls Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem, which “is the mother of all Churches.” [Της μητρος απασων των εκκλησιων. Theodoret. *Eccl. Hist.* v. 9.] From this

truly mother Church, divers other Churches were planted in the east, before the Gospel came to Rome; as particularly the Church of Antioch, [Acts 11:26.] where the disciples were first called Christians. Upon the persecution raised against the Church of Jerusalem, the Christians of that Church, being dispersed and scattered abroad, soon spread the Gospel far and near through the east. And to come nearer home, it is affirmed by some learned men of the Roman Church, that our Britain received the Gospel before Rome. For Suarez confesseth [Defens. Fid. Cath. 1. i.] that the Gospel was preached here from the first rising of it. And Baronius, from some MSS. in the Vatican, affixeth our conversion to Christianity to the thirty-fifth year of our Lord, which was near nine years before the founding of the Roman Church. But if the credit of these MSS. be questionable, this however is evident, that our Britain did not receive her first Christianity from Rome, but from the east. This, I say, is evident from the customs observed here from the beginning in the observation of Easter, and the administration of Baptism, different from the Roman use but conform to the oriental Churches. So that we may justly check the arrogance of the present Roman Church in the words of St. Paul to the proud Corinthians, setting up among themselves certain customs, contrary to the institutes of all other Churches: “Came the word of God out from you? or came it to you only?” [1 Cor. 14:36.] Q. d. Are you the first and only Christians? your Church the first and only Church of Christ? Yes, say the Romanists; our Church is the mother of all other Churches. But this is apparently false, “for the law first came out of Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” The Church of Rome pretends also to be the only Church of Christ, i.e. that there is no true Church of Christ but what is in union with and subjection to her. But this is as false a claim as the other. For there were divers true Churches of Christ before the Church of Rome was in being, which therefore could have no dependence upon her.

2. “That the Church of Rome is the mistress of all other Churches,” is another great untruth. A proposition which, if it should have been advanced in the first ages of the Church, would have startled all Christendom. Every Metropolitane Church would presently have stood up, and loudly pleaded her own immunities, rights, and privileges, independent upon Rome or any other Metropolis. These rights and privileges were confirmed, as of primitive and ancient custom, by the sixth canon of the great Council of Nice, as hath been before shewn; established also by the eighth canon of the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus, as by and by will appear. Indeed, in the days of old, when the Church of Rome was quite another thing from what now it is, all other Churches, upon several accounts, paid a singular respect to her, and gave her the pre-eminence;

but they never acknowledged her mistressship over them, or themselves to be her serving maids. This language would then have sounded very harsh, and been esteemed insolent and arrogant by all the Churches of Christ. In later days indeed, she hath made herself mistress, but a mistress of misrule, disturbing the peace, invading the rights, and imposing upon the faith of other Churches.

3. "That the Bishop of Rome is the Vicar of Christ," i.e. under Christ, the head and governor of the universal Church, is another gross untruth. The universal pastorship and jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, over all other Bishops, was never heard of, never pretended to, by any Bishop of that Church for the first six hundred years and more, as I have before shewn. To which all that I shall now add concerns our British Church. We say, then, our Church of Britain was never under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome for the first six hundred years; Britain being a distinct Diocese of the empire, and consequently having a Primate of her own, independent upon any other Primate or Metropolitan. This appears first from the customs of our Church during that time, in the observation of Easter, and the administration of Baptism, different from, as was before observed, the Roman custom, but agreeing with the Asiatic Churches. For it is altogether incredible that the whole British Church should so unanimously have dissented from Rome for so many hundred years together, if she had been subject to the jurisdiction of the Roman Bishop, or that the Roman Bishop all that time should suffer it, if he had had a patriarchal power over her.

Secondly, The same is evident by the unanimous testimony of our historians, who tell us that when Austin the Monk came into Britain, as St. Gregory's Legate (which was after the sixth century was fully complete and ended), and required submission from our Church to the Bishop of Rome, as her Patriarch, the proposal was rejected, as of a new and strange thing never heard of before. The answer of Dinotus, the learned Abbot of Bangor, in the name of all the Britons, is famous; viz. "that they knew no obedience due to him, whom they called the Pope, but the obedience of love, and that, under God, they were governed by the Bishop of Caerleon." Under God, i.e. immediately, without any foreign Prelate or Patriarch intervening, they were to be governed by the Bishop of Caerleon, as their only Primate and Patriarch. Which privilege continued to the succeeding Bishops of that See for several ages, saving that the Archiepiscopal Chair was afterwards removed from Caerleon to St. David's. And that this was indeed the sense not only of Dinotus, but of all the whole body of our British Clergy at that time, all our historians tell us, witnessing the absolute and unanimous resolution of the British Clergy, both Bishops and Priests, synodically met together, not to subject themselves to the jurisdiction of

the Bishop of Rome. [Vide Spel. Com. Gual. Mon. ii. 12, *Bedam omnesque alias.*]

This being the ancient privilege of the British Church, we have an undoubted right of exemption from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome by the ancient canons of the Catholic Church; particularly by the sixth canon of the great Nicene Council above mentioned, by which it was decreed, “That the ancient customs should everywhere obtain, and that the then privileges of every province should be preserved inviolate.” But this is most evident from the eighth canon of the Council of Ephesus, occasioned by the famous case of the Cyprian Bishops; which was this: the Metropolitan of Cyprus being dead (Troilus, the Bishop of Constance), the Bishop of Antioch pretended that it belonged to him to ordain their Metropolitan, because Cyprus was within the civil jurisdiction of the diocese of Antioch. Upon this the Cyprian Bishops made their complaint to the General Council at Ephesus, grounding it upon the Nicene canon, and pleading that their Metropolitan had been of ancient time exempt from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Antioch, and was ordained by a Synod of Cyprian Bishops; which privilege was not only confirmed to them by the Ephesine Council, but a general decree passed, “that the rights of every province should be preserved whole and inviolate, which it had of old, according to the ancient custom.” And it is to be observed, that the Bishop of Antioch had a more colourable pretense to a jurisdiction over the Cyprian Bishops, than Gregory could have to a jurisdiction over our British Churches; for Cyprus was indeed within the civil jurisdiction of Antioch, but our Britain was originally itself a distinct Diocese of the empire. Yet the Ephesine Fathers judged that ancient custom should prevail in the case of the Cyprian Bishops: how much more then should it in ours? Certainly Pope Gregory, when by his Legate, Austin, he challenged to himself a jurisdiction over our British Church, was ignorant of, or had forgotten, or else regarded not, the Canons of the Nicene and Ephesine Councils. If it be objected, that our British Church afterwards submitted herself to the Bishop of Rome as her Patriarch, which power he enjoyed for many ages, and that therefore our first Reformers cannot be excused from schism, in casting off that power which by so long a prescription he was possessed of; we answer, we did indeed yield ourselves to the Roman usurpation, but it was because we could not help it: we were at first forced, awed, and affrighted into this submission. For who hath not heard of the barbarous massacre of the poor innocent Monks of Bangor, to the number of twelve hundred, for refusing Austin’s proposal, and asserting the ancient rights and privileges of the Britannie Churches? [[This is a mistake. The massacre at Bangor had no connection with Austin’s mission. See Turner’s Hist. of the Anglo-Salons, vol. i. p. 319, etc.]] When this force ceased, and we were left to our liberty and freedom of resuming our primitive

rights, why might we not do it, as we saw occasion, without the imputation of schism? This is not only our just plea, but it is ingenuously confessed by Father Barns, our learned countryman, and of the Roman communion. His words are these: “The island of Britain anciently enjoyed the same privilege with that of Cyprus, that is to say, of being in subjection to the laws of no Patriarch: which privilege, though heretofore abolished by tumults and force of war, yet being recovered by consent of the whole kingdom in Henry the Eighth’s reign, seems for peace sake most proper to be retained, so it be done without breach of Catholic unity, or incurring the charge of schism.”* Indeed, we had very great reason to resume our primitive right and privilege of exemption from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, when, by means thereof, he lorded it over our faith, and imposed manifest and gross corruptions both in doctrine and worship upon our consciences. But this by the way. We return to the article of the Trent creed now before us.

*[Insula autem Britanniae gavisata est olim privilegio Cyprio, ut nullius Patriarchae legibus subderetur. Hoc autem privilegium etsi abolitum olim fuit bellorum tumultibus et vi, tamen cum tempore Henrici Octavi totius regni consensu fuerit repetitum, videtur pacis ergo retineri debere, sine dispendio Catholicismi, et absque schismatis ullius nota. *Barns. Cath. Rom. Pacif. sect. 3.*]

Concerning which, it is farther to be observed, that it founds the universal pastorship of the Bishop of Rome upon a Divine right. It says, “The Bishop of Rome is the Vicar of Jesus Christ;” i.e. under Christ, the head and governor of the universal Church. *Quo jure?* He is St. Peter’s successor. What then? Why St. Peter was constituted by Christ the prince of the Apostles, i.e. (if there be any connection of parts in the article) he had by Christ committed to him authority and jurisdiction over the rest of the Apostles, and consequently over the whole Church.

But the falsehood and folly of this pretense hath been manifestly exposed by very many writers of our Church [Davenant Determ. Q. 47.]; particularly that great man, Dr. Bramhall, Primate of Ireland, hath sufficiently refuted it in these few words [[A Just Vindication of the Church of England, Diss. II. 5.]]: “Let us consider,” saith he:

“First, That all the twelve Apostles were equal in mission, equal in commission, equal in power, equal in honour, equal in all things, except priority of order, without which no society can well subsist.

“So much Bellarmine confesseth, [De Pont. iv. 22.] that by these words, ‘As My Father sent Me, so send I you,’ our Saviour endowed them with all the fullness of power that mortal men were capable of. And therefore no single Apostle had jurisdiction over the rest; equals have no power over each other [Par

in parem non habet potestatem.]; but the whole college of Apostles, to which the supreme management of Ecclesiastical affairs did belong in common. Whether a new Apostle was to be ordained, or the office of Deaconship was to be erected; or fit persons were to be delegated for the ordering of the Church, as [Acts 1, 6, 8:14, 11, 15.] Peter and John, Judas and Silas; or information of great moment were to be heard, as against Peter himself (though Peter out of modesty might condescend, and submit to that to which he was not obliged in duty; yet it had not become the other Apostles to sit as judges upon their superior, placed over them by Christ); or whether the weightier questions of the calling of the Gentiles, and Circumcision, and the Law of Moses, were to be determined, still we find the supremacy in the college.

“Secondly, That drowsy dream, that the plenitude of Ecclesiastical power and jurisdiction was given by Christ to St. Peter, as to an ordinary Pastor, to be derived from him to his successors, but to the rest of the Apostles as delegates for term of life, to die with themselves, as it is lately and boldly asserted, without reason, without authority, either Divine or human; so it is most repugnant to the doctrine of the Fathers, who make all Bishops to be the Vicars and Ambassadors of Christ (not of the Pope), and successors of the Apostles, indifferently *vicaria ordinatione*, who make but one Episcopacy in the world, whereof every Bishop hath his share. St. Peter was a Pastor, and the Pastoral office is of perpetual necessity in the Church. True; but so were all the rest of the Apostles Pastors as well as he. And if we examine the matter more narrowly, *cui bono?* for whose advantage this distinction was devised? It was not for St. Peter’s own advantage, who, setting aside his principality of order, is confessed to have had but an equal share of power with his fellow Apostles, but for the Pope’s advantage, and the Roman Court’s, whom they desire to invest solely with the key of all original jurisdiction.

“And if we trace on this argument a little farther, to search out how the Bishop of Rome comes to be St. Peter’s heir *ex asse*, to the exclusion of his elder brother, the Bishop of Antioch, they produce no authority that I have seen, but a blind, ill-grounded legend, out of a counterfeit Hegesippus, of St. Peter’s being about to leave Rome, and Christ’s meeting him upon the way, and admonishing him to return to Rome, where he must be crucified for His name; which reason halts on both sides; the foundation is apocryphal, and the superstructure is weak and unjointed, without any necessary connection.”

We have now, I think, sufficiently made good our second charge against the Church of Rome: viz. That she hath changed the primitive canon and rule of

faith by adding many new articles to it; and those so far from being necessary articles of faith, that they are not truths, but manifestly erroneous propositions, repugnant to reason, Scripture, and the sense of the primitive Catholic Church. And yet all the Clergy of the Roman communion are now forced not only to subscribe, but in the most solemn manner to swear to them. O miserably enslaved Clergy!

There was a time when the Gallican Church understood her own liberty, and boldly asserted it, refusing to own the authority of the Trent Convention, as being altogether influenced and governed by the Court of Rome. It was a brave protestation of the ambassador of France, made in the face of the Council of Trent, in the name of the King, his master, and the French Clergy, in these words [Goldast., tom. iii. p. 571.]: “We refuse to be subject to the command and disposition of Pius the Fourth; we reject, refuse, and contemn, all the judgments, censures, and decrees of the said Pius. And although (most holy Fathers) your religion, life, and learning, was ever, and ever shall be, of great esteem with us; yet seeing indeed you do nothing, but all things are done at Rome rather than at Trent, and the things that are here published are rather the decrees of Pius the Fourth than of the Council of Trent; we denounce and protest here before you all, that whatsoever things are decreed and published in this assembly, by the mere will and pleasure of Pius, neither the most Christian King will ever approve, nor the French Clergy ever acknowledge to be the decrees of a General Council.”

I wish the Gallican Church had still persisted in this resolution: “Yes, (saith a great man of our Church), so she did, and doth to this day. [Bramhall, tom. i. p. 128.] For though she doth not oppose the Council of Trent, but acquiesce, to avoid such disadvantages as must ensue thereupon, yet she did never admit it.” I should be heartily glad if this were true; but if all the Clergy of France, which represent the French Church, do as well as the Clergy of the other Roman Catholic dominions subscribe and swear to the Trent Creed (as I suppose they do; and if they did not, I cannot see how they could be accounted within the communion of the Roman Church), then they admit of the Council of Trent with a witness, in its full extent and latitude, as to all its canons, decrees, and definitions, not only which concern points of doctrine (as is pretended), but all other which relate to the discipline and government of the Church. For this is the last article of the Trent Creed: “Moreover, what things soever else are delivered, defined, and declared, by the sacred Canons and Ecumenical Councils, and especially by the holy Council of Trent, I undoubtedly receive and profess.” [Caetera item omnia a sacris Canonibus et OEcumenicis Conciliis, ac praecipue a sacrosancta

Tridentina Synodo tradita, definita et declarata, inclubitanter recipio atque profiteor.]

IV. 3. The third and last thing we charge the Church of Rome with, is, That she hath lamentably corrupted the primitive Liturgy and form of Divine Worship. This was a necessary consequent of the former; so corrupt a faith could not but produce as corrupt a worship. To enumerate and represent in their proper colours, all the corruptions of the worship of God in the Roman Church, would fill a large volume. I shall, therefore, only briefly point at some of them. The Prayers of that Church are in a tongue generally not understood by the people, contrary to reason, which of itself dictates, that when we pray to God, we ought to understand our own prayers; contrary to the plain declaration of Scripture, [1 Cor. 14.] contrary to the practice of the Catholic Church in the first ages, when Christians everywhere prayed to God in the language of their respective countries, as Origen expressly tells us in his eighth book against Celsus. [P. 402. [c. 37. p. 769.]] Justin Martyr also, who lived very near the Apostolic age, informs us, [[Apol. i. c. 65. p. 82.]] that in the Christian assemblies of his time there were κοινὰ εὐχαί, common prayers, i.e. prayers wherein all that were present joined in common, and bore a part; and that (as we learn from other very ancient authors [Cyprian. Serm. de Oratione.]), by making their responses aloud in due place, and by saying the other prayer after the Priest or Deacon *submissa voce*. Now there are no such common prayers in the Church of Rome; the Priests say and do all; the people being left to gaze about, or to whisper one to another, or to look upon their private Manuals of Devotion, according as their inclination leads them.

Again, Whereas in the first and best ages, the Churches of Christ directed all their prayers, according to the Scripture, to God only, through the alone mediation of Jesus Christ; the Liturgy of the present Church of Rome is interspersed with supplications and prayers to angels and saints, the unwarrantedness whereof I have above sufficiently shewn. To what is there said, I shall only add these two considerations.

First, Supposing (not granting) the learned men of the Roman Church could, by their subtle distinctions, so refine the practice of the invocation of angels and saints, as to make it innocent to themselves; yet experience tells us that the common people, who understand not those distinctions, are prone to transgress and run into sin, and a grievous sin too, in their practice of it; viz. to be taken off, in a great degree, from that trust and affiance, that entire dependence on Christ, that love and gratitude toward Him which they ought to have, and, indeed, to be more fond of the saints than of their Saviour. It is visible to all men, with what zeal the silly deluded souls run to the shrines of the saints,

how even prodigal they are in their offerings to them, when in the meantime their devotion toward their Saviour is very cold, and their oblations to Him sparing and niggardly. This is so manifest, that it hath been confessed by learned men of the Roman communion. It is acknowledged by Biel, [In can. Miss. Lect. 30. in expos. Cant. Mariae.] “most of us are more affected towards some saint, than towards our Lord Himself.” [Plerique nostrum magis afficimur circa sanctum aliquem aliquando, quam etiam circa Dominum.] By our Halensis, [Par. 4. Quaest 26. Memb. 3.] “Sometimes sinners are more inclinable to supplicate the saints than the Judge.” [Peccatores ad sanctorum interpellationem quandoque magis animantur quam Judicis.] Cassander also confesseth there are men in the Church of Rome (otherwise no ill men) who trust in their patron saints more than in Christ their Redeemer. His words are these: “There are some, and those no bad men neither, who have made choice of certain saints for their patrons and guardians, and put more trust in their merits and intercession, than in the merits of Christ.” [Homines etiam non mali certos sibi sanctos tanquam patronos et tutores delegerunt, atque in eorum meritis atque intercessione plusquam Christi meritis fiduciam posuerunt.]

Secondly, Whereas it is pretended by some Romanists, especially of late, that their prayers to saints amount to no more than an *Ora pro nobis*, a praying or desiring them to pray for us, as we desire the prayers of one another here on earth; this is manifestly false. For besides what hath been before observed, that they pray to saints deceased, and in a state and place vastly distant from them, wherein they cannot possibly hear their prayers, unless by revelation, or in *speculo Trinitatis*, which are groundless imaginations: I say, besides this, divers of their greatest Doctors ingenuously confess, yea, and boldly profess, that they pray to the saints, as they are appointed by God, to be *canales gratiae* between Him and us; conduit-pipes or instruments of conveying His grace to us. So our Halensis: “Seeing the Divine grace descends upon us by means of the saints, it is but fit that our ascent to God be through their mediation.” [Divinorum charismatum ad nos per sanctos fit descensus: unde congruum est, quod ascensus noster ad Deum fiat sanctis mediatoribus. Part iv. Quaest. 26. Art. 5.] So their learned Archbishop of Florence: “It is the law of the Deity to raise the things below to those that are above, by those in the middle; but as to the gifts of grace, the saints stand in the middle betwixt God and such as are travelling towards Him. Hence the Divine benefits descend upon us by the mediation of angels and holy souls.” [Lex Deitatis est infima per media ad suprema adducere: quantum vero ad dona gratiae, beati sunt medii inter Deum et viatores: divina igitur beneficia ad nos descendunt mediantibus angelis et animabus sanctis. Part iii. tit. 3.] They say also, that the saints do procure for us, and convey to us God’s blessings, by the merit of their intercession, and that this is the ground of their praying to them. So again *ubi supra*: “The saints are invoked by us by

reason of our want of merit, that where our defects fail, those of others may help us out.” [Sancti invocantur a nobis propter nostram inopiam in merendo, ut ubi nostra non suppetant merita, patrocinentur aliena.] So the great Master of the Sentences, Peter Lombard: “We pray them to intercede for us, that is, that their merits may succour us.” [Oramus ut intercedant pro nobis, id est, ut merita eorum nobis suffragentur. Lib. iv. Dist 45.]

And indeed most of their prayers to the saints are so expressed that they cannot without violence be interpreted to any other sense.

But most extravagant is the invocation and worship of the blessed Virgin, used and practiced in the Church of Rome. I will not urge here the hymn in Cassander’s [Cassand. Consult. Art. 21. de Cult. sanct.] time sung in their churches: “Beseech thy mother, command thy Son, O happy parent, who makest expiation for our wickedness; by thy authority as a mother command the Redeemer.” [Ora matrem, Jube Filio, / O felix puerpera, / Nostra pians scelera, / Jure matris impera Redemptori.] Nor the Psalter of our Lady, mentioned also by Cassander, [Cassand. Consult. Art. 21. de Cult. sanct.] as that which was in use in his time, in which, through the whole Book of Psalms, wheresoever the name of the Lord occurred, it was changed into the name of our Lady. Though I know not whether those horrid blasphemies were ever censured and condemned by any public act of the Roman Church.

But I do affirm that there are still such addresses and forms of prayer to the blessed Virgin, either enjoined, or allowed by authority to be used in the Church of Rome, as no man, who hath a due concern for the honour of his Redeemer, can read or hear without abhorrence and detestation. Such is that in the office of blessed Mary, [In officio beatae Mariae.] where they thus speak to her: “Hail, queen, the mother of mercy, our life, delight, and hope, hail! we shelter ourselves under thy protection; despise not our supplications in the times of our necessity; but deliver us from all dangers, thou ever-glorious Virgin!” [Salve, regina, mater misericordiae; vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve; sub tuum praesidium confugimus, nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus: sed a periculis omnibus libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa!] This is surely more than a “Pray for us.” [Ora pro nobis.] For they pray unto her as their life and hope, and fly to her as their refuge and protection, beseeching her to deliver them always from all dangers: but chiefly it is to be remarked that she is here called the “queen and mother of mercy.” Would you know the meaning of this? Berthorius will tell you: “The truth is, whereas the kingdom of God consists in these two virtues, justice and mercy, God bestowed on Mary, the queen of paradise, the half part of His kingdom, that is, the mercy. And for this cause it is, she is called the mother of mercy.” [Ista est veritas, quod cum regnum Dei in duobus constet, scil. in justitia et misericordia, isti regnae paradisi (Mariae)

dimidiam regni sui partem, scil. misericordiae distributionem contulit Deus. *Igitur regina dicitur misericordiae*. Lib. xix. *Moralitatum*, cap. 4.] The same exposition you may find in Biel. [In Can. Missae, Lect. 8.] And Cassander also acknowledgeth this to be the sense of that title given to the blessed Virgin.

In the Litany of our Lady, published in English here among us, she is called “Queen of Angels, Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles; source of the fountain of grace, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, and advocate of all Christians.” Now we have no instance of such attributes given to the blessed Virgin, either in the Holy Scriptures, or in the writings of the ancient Fathers; and indeed they are too big for any mere creature. For here the government of heaven, and all the holy angels therein, is attributed to her, which belongs only to our Lord Christ. [Eph. 1:20–22.] And what do they mean by that title which they give her of “Source (*scaturigo*) of the fountain of grace?” I cannot imagine any other meaning of it than this, that the Virgin Mary receiving first the emanation or efflux of grace from God, the Fountain of grace, by and through her all grace is carried and conveyed down to all the faithful. And so indeed Bernardinus explains the matter, in these words: “No creature has obtained any grace or virtue from God, but by the dispensation of this pious mother.” [Nulla creatura aliquam a Domino obtinuit gratiam vel virtutem, nisi secundum ipsius piae Matris dispensationem. Serm. lxi. Art. i. c. 8.] They that under this notion address themselves to the blessed Virgin, surely do much more than desire her to pray for them as we desire the prayers of one another.

What do they mean when they say she is the refuge of sinners? From what hath been said before, concerning the kingdom of mercy, supposed to be committed to the blessed Virgin, and concerning the title of queen of mercy given her, we may conclude the sense to be this, that when sinners are troubled in their consciences, and terrified with the sense of their sins, and of the judgments of God denounced against them, they may and ought to have recourse to her as the queen of mercy, as their asylum and sanctuary, to shelter and protect them from the Divine vengeance. This, a credible author assures us, hath been represented in several Roman Catholic temples, in which Christ hath been painted with an angry menacing countenance, casting His darts against sinners, and the blessed Virgin interposing herself as mediatrix, and repelling His darts. But Christ our Lord directs poor guilty sinners, whose consciences are oppressed with the burden of their sins, to a far better refuge, yea, the only refuge they are to fly to, even to Himself: “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” [Matt. 11:28.]

And who can read without the greatest horror such a prayer to the blessed Virgin as this that follows? “O my Lady, holy Mary, I recommend myself into

thy blessed trust and singular custody, and into the bosom of thy mercy, this night and evermore, and in the hour of my death, as also my soul and my body: and I yield unto thee all my hope and consolation, all my distress and miseries, my life and the end thereof, that by thy most holy intercession, and by thy merits, all my works may be directed according to thine and thy Son's will. Amen." What fuller expressions can we use to declare our absolute affiancement, trust, and dependence on the eternal Son of God Himself, than they here use in this recommendation to the Virgin? And who observes not that the will of the blessed Virgin is expressly joined with the will of her Son, as the rule of our actions, and that so, as that her will is set in the first place? A smatch of their old blasphemous impiety, in advancing the mother above the Son, and giving her a commanding power over Him. Yet this recommendation to the blessed Virgin is to be seen in a Manual of Prayers and Litanies, printed at Antwerp no longer ago than 1671, and that *permissu superiorum*, appointed to be used in the evening prayer for Friday. The book I had from a near relation of mine (who had been seduced to the Church of Rome, but afterwards returned again to the communion of the Church of England), who assured me that she herself used it, by the direction of her Confessor, in her private devotions.

There was a book published (and that too *permissu superiorum*), and in great vogue among our English Catholics in the reign of King James the Second, entitled, Contemplations of the Life and Glory of the Holy Mary: wherein you may find these words: "God hath by a solemn covenant pronounced Mary to be the treasury of wisdom, grace, and sanctity, under Jesus. So that whatsoever gifts are bestowed upon us by Jesus, we receive them by the mediation of Mary: no one being gracious to Jesus who is not devoted to Mary: nor hath anyone been specially confident of the patronage of Mary, who hath not through her received a special blessing from Jesus. Whence it is one great mark of the predestination of the elect, to be singularly devoted to Mary, since she hath a full power, as a mother, to obtain of Jesus whatever He can ask of God the Father, and is comprehended within the sphere of man's predestination to glory, redemption from sin, and regeneration by grace. Neither hath any one petitioned Mary, who was refused by Jesus, nor trusted in Mary, and was abandoned by Jesus." Afterwards he tells us [P. 9.] "that though the condition of some great sinners may be so deplorable, that all the limited excellency, merits, and power of all the saints and angels, cannot effectually bend the mercies of Jesus to relieve them, yet such is the acceptableness of the mother of Jesus to Jesus, that whosoever is under the verge of her protection may confide in her intercessions to Jesus." There needs no comment to set forth the horridness of these assertions. Upon the

whole matter, I cannot but think those silly women of Arabia, who once a year offered a cake in honour to the blessed Virgin as queen of heaven, to be as excusable at least as her devotees in the Church of Rome. And yet they in their days were thought worthy of a place in the catalogue of heretics. [Epiphan. Hares. iii. 79.] Sure I am, most of the arguments Epiphanius useth against the Colliridians, may serve every whit as well against the Papists.

To pass by the worship of images, allowed and practiced in the Church of Rome, of which I have said enough before,

Come we now to the principal part of the Christian worship, the holy sacrament of the Eucharist. How lamentably hath the Church of Rome vitiated the primitive institution of that most sacred rite I She hath taken from the laity the blessed Cup, contrary to our blessed Saviour's express command, as expounded by the practice of the Apostles, and of the universal Church of Christ, for the first ten centuries, as hath been above observed.

All the learned advocates of the Roman Church, with all their sophistry, have not been able to defend her in this matter from manifest sacrilege, and a violation of the very essentials of the Sacrament, as to the laity administered, nor can they prove it, so administered, to be a perfect Sacrament. He that would see this in a short compass fully proved, and all the weak evasions of the Romanists obviated, may consult our learned Bishop Davenant. [Determ. Quaest. 58.] Besides, the whole administration of it is so clogged, so metaphorized and defaced by the addition of a multitude of ceremonies, and those some of them more becoming the stage than the Table of our Lord, that if the blessed Apostles were alive, and present at the celebration of the Mass in the Roman Church, they would be amazed, and wonder what the meaning of it was; sure I am, they would never own it to be that same Ordinance which they left to the Churches.

But the worst ceremony of all is the elevation of the Host, to be adored by the people, as very Christ Himself under the appearance of bread, whole Christ, Θεάνθρωπος, "God and Man," while they neglect the old sursum corda, the lifting up of their hearts to heaven, where whole Christ indeed is. A practice this is, which nothing can excuse from the grossest idolatry, but their gross stupidity, or rather infatuation, in thinking that a piece of bread can, by any means whatsoever, or howsoever consecrated and blessed, become their very God and Saviour. A very sad excuse indeed. Moreover, by what reason, by what Scripture, by what example or practice of the primitive Churches, can the Romanists defend their carrying about the Holy Sacrament in procession, or the mockery of their solitary Masses? I might pass from the Holy Eucharist to the other Sacrament, of Baptism, and expose the many strange ceremonies used in

the Roman Church in the consecration of the Font, and in the very administration of that Sacrament. I might also take notice of the prayers used by the order of the Roman Church in the consecration or blessing of certain inanimate things, for the producing supernatural effects, such as curing diseases, driving away devils, etc. without any warrant from Scripture, or promise of God, that such effects shall follow. But I shall stop here.

I have now gone through the several heads of discourse which I proposed to myself, and sufficiently I think proved, that the Church of Rome hath altered the primitive Ecclesiastical government; changed the primitive canon or rule of faith; and, lastly, miserably corrupted the primitive Liturgy, and form of Divine Worship. For these reasons laid together, I can never be induced to enter into the communion of the Roman Church, as now it is: and for the same reason (to speak my mind freely), I wonder how so learned a man as Monsieur de Meaux, can with a good and quiet conscience continue in it.

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” [Jer. 6:16.]

THE END.