THE

RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS

A

SAFE WAY TO SALVATION

BY

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THE

PREFACE

TO THE AUTHOR OF

CHARITY MAINTAINED;

WITH AN

ANSWER TO HIS PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED

A DIRECTION TO N. N.

SIR,

UPON the first news of the publication of your book, I used all diligence with speed to procure it; and came with such a mind to the reading of it, as St. Austin, before he was a settled catholic, brought to his conference with Faustus the Manichee. For as he thought that if anything more than ordinary might be said in defence of the Manichean doctrine, Faustus was the man from whom it was to be expected; so my persuasion concerning you was, *Si Pergama dextra defendi possunt, certe hac defensa videbo*. For I conceived, that among the champions of the Roman church, the English in reason must be the best, or equal to the best, as being by most expert masters trained up purposely for this war, and perpetually practised in it. Among the English, I saw the Jesuits would yield the first place to none; and men so wise in their generation as the Jesuits were, if they had any Achilles among them, I presumed, would make choice of him for this service. And besides, I had good assurance, that in the framing of this building, though you were the only architect, yet you wanted not the assistance of many diligent hands to bring you in choice materials towards it; nor of many careful and watchful eyes to correct the errors of your work, if any should chance to escape you. Great reason, therefore, had I to expect great matters from you, and that your book should have in it the spirit and elixir of all that can be said in defence of your church and doctrine; and to assure myself, that if my resolution not to believe it were not built upon the rock of evident grounds and reasons, but only upon some sandy and deceitful appearances, now the wind, and storm, and floods were coming which would undoubtedly overthrow it.

2. Neither truly were you more willing to effect such an alteration in me, than I was to have it effected. For my desire is to go the right way to eternal hapiness. But whether this way lay on the right hand, or the left, or straight forward; whether it be by following a living guide, or by seeking my direction in a book, or by hearkening to the secret whisper of some private spirit; to me it is indifferent. And he that is otherwise affected, and hath not a traveller's indifference, which Epictetus requires in all that would find the truth, but much desires, in respect of his ease, or pleasure, or profit, or advancement, or satisfaction of friends, or any human consideration, that one way should be true rather than another; it is odds but he will take his desire that it should be so, for an assurance that it is so. But I, for my part, unless I deceive myself, was, and still am, so affected, as I have made profession; not willing, I confess, to

take any thing upon trust, and to believe it without asking myself why; no, nor able to command myself (were I never so willing) to follow, like a sheep, every shepherd that should take upon him to guide me, or every flock that should chance to go before me; but most apt and most willing to be led by reason to any way, or from it, and always submitting all other reasons to this one—God hath said so, therefore it is true. Nor yet was I so unreasonable as to expect mathematical demonstrations from you in matters plainly incapable of them, such as are to be believed, and if we speak properly, cannot be known; such, therefore, I expected not. For as he is an unreasonable master, who requires a stronger assent to his conclusions than his arguments deserve; so I conceive him a froward and undisciplined scholar, who desires stronger arguments for a conclusion than the matter will bear. But had you represented to my understanding such reasons of your doctrine, as, being weighed in an even balance, held by an even hand, with those on the other side, would have turned the scale, and have made your religion more credible than the contrary; certainly I should have despised the shame of one more alteration, and with both mine arms, and with all my heart, most readily have embraced it: such was my expectation from you, and such my preparation, which I brought with me to the reading of your book.

3. Would you know now what the event was, what effect was wrought in me, by the perusal and consideration of it? To deal truly and ingenuously with you, I fell somewhat in my good opinion both of your sufficiency and sincerity, but was exceedingly confirmed in my ill opinion of the cause maintained by you. I found every where snares that might entrap, and colours that might deceive the simple; but nothing that might persuade and very little that might move an understanding man, and one that can discern between discourse and sophistry: in short, I was verily persuaded, that I plainly saw, and could make it appear to all dispassionate and unprejudicate judges, that a vein of sophistry and calumny did run clean through it from the beginning to the end. And letting some friends understand so much, I suffered myself to be persuaded by them, that it would not be either unproper for me, or unacceptable to God, nor peradventure altogether unserviceable to his church, nor justly offensive to you (if you indeed were a lover of truth, and not a maintainer of a faction), if setting aside the second part, which was in a manner wholly employed in particular disputes, repetitions, and references, and in wranglings with Dr. Potter about the sense of some supernumerary quotations, and whereon the main question no way depends, I would make a fair and ingenuous answer to the first, wherein the substance of the present controversy is confessedly contained; and which, if it were clearly answered, no man would desire any other answer to the second. This, therefore, I undertook, with a full resolution to be an adversary to your errors, but a friend and servant to your person: and so much the more a friend to your person, by how much the severer and more rigid adversary I was to your errors.

4. In this work my conscience bears me witness, that I have, according to your advice, "proceeded always with this consideration, that I am to give a most strict account of every line and word that passeth under my pen;" and therefore have been precisely careful, for the matter of my book, to defend truth only, and only by truth; and then scrupulously fearful of scandalizing you or any man with the manner of handling it. From this rule, sure I am, I have not willingly swerved in either part of it; and, that I might not do it ignorantly, I have not only myself examined mine own work (perhaps with more severity than I have done yours), as conceiving it a base and unchristian thing to go about to satisfy others with what I myself am not fully satisfied), but have also made it pass the fiery trial of the exact censures of many understanding judges, always heartily wishing that you yourself had been of the *quorum*. But they who did undergo this burden, as they wanted not a sufficiency to discover any heterodox doctrine, so I am sure they have been very careful to let nothing slip dissonant from truth, or from the authorized doctrine of the church of England: and, therefore, whatsoever causeless and groundless jealousy any man may entertain concerning my person, yet my book, I presume, in reason and common equity, should be free from them; wherein I hope that little or nothing hath escaped so many eyes which, being weighed in the

balance of the sanctuary, will be found too light: and in this hope I am much confirmed by your strange carriage of yourself in this whole business. For though, by some crooked and sinister arts, you have got my answer into your hands, now a year since and upwards, as I have been assured by some that profess to know it, and those of your own party; though you could not want every day fair opportunities of sending to me, and acquainting me with any exceptions which you conceived might be justly taken to it, or any part of it (than which nothing could have been more welcome to me); yet hitherto you have not been pleased to acquaint me with any one: nay more, though you have been at sundry times, and by several ways, entreated and solicited, nay, pressed and importuned by me, to join with me in a private discussion of the controversy between us, before the publication of my answer (because I was extremely unwilling to publish anything which had not passed all manner of trials; as desiring, not that I, or my side, but that truth might overcome, on which side soever it was); though I have protested to you, and set it under my hand (which protestation, by God's help, I would have made good), if you, or any other, who would undertake your cause, would give me a fair meeting, and choose out of your whole book any one argument whereof you was most confident, and by which you would be content the rest should be judged of, and make it appear that I had not, or could not, answer it, that I would desist from the work which I had undertaken, and answer none at all; though by all the arts which possibly I could devise, I have provoked you to such a trial; and in particular by assuring you, that if you refused it, the world should be informed of your tergiversation; notwithstanding all this, you have perpetually and obstinately declined it! which to my understanding is a very evident sign, that there is not any truth in your cause, nor (which is impossible there should be) strength in your arguments! especially considering what our Saviour hath told us, *Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

5. In the mean while, though you despaired of compassing your desire this honest way, yet you have not omitted to tempt me, by base and unworthy considerations, to desert the cause which I had undertaken; letting me understand from you, by an acquaintance common to us both, how that "in case my work should come to light, my inconstancy in religion" (so you miscall my constancy in following that way to heaven, which for the present seems to me the most probable) "should be to my great shame painted to the life;" that "my own writings should be produced against myself; that I should be urged to answer my own motives against Protestantism; and that such things should be published to the world touching my belief" (for my painter I must expect should have great skill in perspective) "of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Deity of our Saviour, and all supernatural verities as should endanger all my benefices, present and future:" that "this warning was given me not out of fear what I could say (for that catholics, If they might wish any ill, would beg the publication of my book, for respects obvious enough), but out of a mere charitable desire of my good and reputation;" and that "all this was said upon a supposition that I was answering, or had a mind to answer, Charity Maintained; if not, no harm was done." To which courteous premonition, as I remember, I desired the gentleman who dealt between us to return this answer, or to this effect: That I believed the doctrine of the Trinity, the Deity of our Saviour, and all other supernatural verities revealed in Scripture, as truly and as heartily as yourself, or any man; and, therefore, herein your charity was very much mistaken; but much more, and more uncharitably, in conceiving me a man that was to be wrought upon with these *terribiles visu formæ*, those carnal and base fears which you presented to me, which were very proper motives for the devil and his instruments to tempt poor-spirited men out of the way of conscience and honesty, but very incongruous, either for teachers of truth to make use of, or for lovers of truth (in which company I had been long agone matriculated) to hearken to with any regard. But if you were indeed desirous that I should not answer Charity Maintained, one way there was, and but one, whereby you might obtain your desire; and that was, by letting me know when and where I might attend you; and, by a fair conference, to be written down on both sides, convincing mine

understanding (who was resolved not to be a recusant if I were convicted) that any one part of it, any one argument in it, which was of moment and consequence, and whereon the cause depends, was indeed unanswerable. This was the effect of my answer, which I am well assured was delivered; but reply from you I received none but this, that you would have no conference but in print; and soon after finding me of proof against all these batteries, and thereby, I fear, very much enraged, you took the resolution of the furious goddess, in the poet, madded with the unsuccessfulness of her malice,

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo!

6. For certainly those indign contumelies, that mass of portentous and execrable calumnies, wherewith in your pamphlet of Directions to N. N. you have loaded not only my person in particular, but all the learned and moderate divines of the church of England, and all Protestants in general, nay, all wise men of all religions but your own, could not proceed from any other fountain.

7. To begin with the last; you stick not, in the beginning of your first chapter, to fasten the imputation of atheism and irreligion upon all wise and gallant men that are not of your own religion; in which uncharitable and unchristian judgment, void of all colour or shadow of probability, I know yet by experience, that very many of the bigots of your faction are partakers with you. God forbid I should think the like of you! yet if I should say that in your religion there want not some temptations unto, and some principles of, irreligion and atheism, I am sure I could make my assertion much more probable than you have done or can make this horrible imputation.

8. For to pass by, first, that which experience justifies, that where and when your religion hath most absolutely commanded, there and then atheism hath most abounded. To say nothing, secondly, of your notorious and confessed forging of so many false miracles, and so many lying legends, which is not unlikely to make suspicious men to question the truth of all; nor to object to you, thirdly, the abundance of your weak and silly ceremonies, and ridiculous observances in your religion, which, in all probability, cannot but beget secret contempt and scorn of it in wise and considering men; and consequently atheism and impiety, if they have this persuasion settled in them (which is too rife among you, and which you account a piece of wisdom and gallantry), that if they be not of your religion, they were as good be of none at all; nor to trouble you, fourthly, with this, that a great part of your doctrine, especially in the points contested, makes apparently for the temporal ends of the teachers of it, which yet, I fear, is a great scandal to many *beau esprits* among you; only I should desire you to consider attentively, when you conclude so often from the differences of protestants, that they have no certainty of any part of their religion, no, not of those points wherein they agree, whether you do not that that which so magisterially you direct me not to do, that is, proceed "a destructive way, and object arguments against your adversaries, which tend to the overthrow of all religion?" And whether, as you argue thus, "Protestants differ in many things, therefore they have no certainty of anything;" so an atheist or sceptic may not conclude as well, Christians and the professors of all religions differ in many things, therefore they have no certainty in anything? Again, I should desire you to tell me ingenuously, whether it be not too probable, that your portentous doctrine of transubstantiation, joined with your forementioned persuasion of "No Papists, no Christians" hath brought a great many others, as well as himself, to Averroes his resolution, *Quandoquidem Christiani adorant quod comedunt, sit anima mea cum philosophis?* Whether your requiring men, upon only probable and prudential motives, to yield a most certain assent unto things in human reason impossible, and telling them, as you do too often, that they were as good not believe at all, as believe with any lower degree of faith; be not a likely way to make considering men scorn your religion (and consequently all, if they know no other), as requiring things contradictory, and impossible to be performed? Lastly, whether your pretence, that there is no good ground to believe Scripture, but your

Church's infallibility, joined with your pretending no ground for this but some texts of Scripture, be not a fair way to make them that understand themselves believe neither church nor Scripture?

9. Your calumnies against protestants in general are set down in these words, chap. ii. § 2, "The very doctrine of protestants, if it be followed closely, and with coherence to itself, must of necessity induce Socinianism. This I say confidently, and evidently prove, by instancing in one error, which may well be termed the capital and mother heresy, from which all other must follow at ease; I mean their heresy in affirming that the perpetual visible church of Christ, descended by a never-interrupted succession from our Saviour to this day, is not infallible in all that it proposeth to be believed as revealed truths. For if the infallibility of such a public authority be once impeached, what remains but that every man is given over to his own wit and discourse? And talk not here of Holy Scripture; for if the true church may err in defining what scriptures be canonical, or in delivering the sense and meaning thereof, we are still devolved, either upon the private spirit (a foolery now exploded out of England, which finally leaving every man to his own conceits, ends in Socinianism), or else upon natural wit and judgment, for examining and determining what scriptures contain true or false doctrine, and in that respect, ought to be received or rejected. And, indeed, take away the authority of God's church, no man can be assured that any one book, or parcel of Scripture, was written by Divine inspiration, or that all the contents are infallibly true, which are the direct errors of Socinians. If it were but for this reason alone, no man, who regards the eternal salvation of his soul, would live or die in protestancy, from which so vast absurdities as these or the Socinians must inevitably follow. And it ought to be an unspeakable comfort to all us catholics, while we consider that none can deny the infallible authority of our church, but jointly he must be left to his own wit and ways; must abandon all infused faith and true religion, if he do but understand himself aright." In all which discourse, the only true word you speak is, "This I say confidently;" as for "proving evidently," that I believe you reserved for some other opportunity; for the present, I am sure you have been very sparing of it.

10. You say, indeed, confidently enough, that "the denial of the church's infallibility is the mother heresy, from which all other must follow at ease;" which is so far from being a necessary truth, as you make it, that it is indeed a manifest falsehood. Neither is it possible for the wit of man, by any good, or so much has probable consequence, from the denial of the church's infallibility, to deduce any one of the ancient heresies, or any one error of the Socinians, which are the heresies here entreated of. For who would not laugh at him that should argue thus: Neither the church of Rome nor any other church is infallible; *ergo*, the doctrine of Arius, Pelagius, Eutyches, Nestorius, Photinus, Manichæus, was true doctrine? On the other side it may be truly said, and justified by very good and effectual reason, that he that affirms with you the pope's infallibility, puts himself into his hands and power, to be led by him, at his ease and pleasure, into all heresy, and even to hell itself; and cannot with reason say (so long as he is constant to his grounds), *Domine, cur ita facis?* but must believe white to be black, and black to be white; virtue to be vice, and vice to be virtue; nay (which is an horrible, but a most certain truth), Christ to be antichrist, and antichrist to be Christ, if it be possible for the pope to say so: which, I say, and will maintain, however you daub and disguise it, is indeed to make men apostatize from Christ to his pretended vicar, but real enemy. For that name, and no better (if we may speak truth without offence), I presume he deserves, who under pretence of interpreting the law of Christ (which authority, without any word of express warrant, he has taken upon himself) doth in many parts evacuate and dissolve it: so dethroning Christ from his dominion over men's consciences, and instead of Christ, setting up himself; inasmuch as he that requires that his interpretations of any law should be obeyed as true and genuine, seem they to men's understandings never so dissonant and discordant from it (as the bishop of Rome does), requires indeed that his interpretations should be the laws; and he that is firmly prepared in mind to believe and receive all such interpretations without judging of them, and though to his private judgment they seem unreasonable, is

indeed congruously disposed to hold adultery a venial sin, and fornication no sin, whensoever the pope and his adherents shall so declare. And whatsoever he may plead yet either wittingly or ignorantly, he makes the law and the lawmaker both stales, and obeys only the interpreter. As if I should pretend that I should submit to the laws of the King of England, but should indeed resolve to obey them in that sense which the King of France should put upon them, whatsoever it were; I presume every understanding man would say, that I did indeed obey the King of France, and not the King of England. If I should pretend to believe the Bible, but that I would understand it according to the sense which the chief mufti should put upon it, who would not say that I were a Christian in pretence only, but indeed a Mahumetan?

11. Nor will it be to purpose for you to pretend that the precepts of Christ are so plain, that it cannot be feared that any pope should ever go about to dissolve them, and pretend to be a Christian: for not to say that you now pretend the contrary; to wit, "that the law of Christ is obscure even in things necessary to be believed and done;" and by saying so, have made a fair way for any foul interpretation of any part of it: certainly, that which the church of Rome hath already done in this kind is an evident argument, that (if once she had this power unquestioned, and made expedite and ready for use, by being contracted to the pope) she may do what she pleaseth with it. Who that had lived in the primitive church would not have thought it as utterly improbable, that ever they should have brought in the worship of images, and picturing of God, as now it is that they should legitimate fornication? Why may we not think they may in time take away the whole communion from the laity, as well as they have taken away half of it? Why may we not think that any text and any sense may not be accorded, as well as the whole fourteenth chapter of the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians is reconciled to the Latin service? How is it possible any thing should be plainer forbidden than the worship of angels in the Epistle to the Colossians? than the *teaching for doctrines men's commands* in the Gospel of St. Mark? And therefore seeing we see these things done, which hardly any man would have believed that had not seen them, why should we not fear that this unlimited power may not be used hereafter with as little moderation, seeing devices have been invented how men may worship images without idolatry, and kill innocent men, under pretence of heresy, without murder? Who knows not that some tricks may not be hereafter devised, by which lying with other men's wives shall be no adultery, taking away other men's goods no theft? I conclude, therefore, that if Solomon himself were here, and were to determine the difference, which is more likely to be mother of all heresy, the denial of the church's, or the affirming of the pope's infallibility, that he would certainly say, *This is the mother, give her the child*.

12. You say again confidently, that "if this infallibility be once impeached, every man is given over to his own wit and discourse;" which, if you mean *discourse* not guiding itself by Scripture, but only by principles of nature, or perhaps by prejudices and popular errors, and drawing consequences not by rule, but chance, is by no means true; if you mean by *discourse*, right reason grounded on Divine revelation, and common notions written by God in the hearts of all men, and deducing, according to the never-failing rules of logic, consequent deductions from them; if this be it which you mean by *discourse*, it is very meet and reasonable and necessary, that men, as in all their actions, so especially in that of greatest importance, the choice of their way to happiness, should be left unto it; and he that follows this in all his opinions and actions and does not only seem to do so, follows always God; whereas he that followeth a company of men, may ofttimes follow a company of beasts: and in saying this, I say no more than St. John to all Christians in these words: *Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits, whether they be of God, or no*. And the rule he gives them to make this trial by, is, to consider whether they *confess Jesus to be the Christ;* that is, the guide of their faith, and Lord of their actions; not, whether they acknowledge the pope to be his vicar; I say no more than St. Paul, in exhorting all Christians *to try all things, and hold fast that which is good;* than St. Peter, in commanding all Christians *to be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in them:* than our Saviour himself, in forewarning all his followers,that *if they blindly follow blind*

guides, both leaders and followers should fall into the ditch: and again, in saying even to the people, *Yea, and why of yourselves judge ye not what is right?* And though by passion, or precipitation, or prejudice, by want of reason, or not using what they have, men may be, and are oftentimes, led into error and mischief; yet, that they cannot be misguided by *discourse*, truly so called, such as I have described, you yourself have given them security. For what is discourse, but drawing conclusions out of premises by good consequence? Now, the principles which we have settled, to wit, the Scriptures, are on all sides agreed to be infallibly true. And you have told us in the fourth chapter of this pamphlet, that "from truth no man can, by good consequence, infer falsehood; therefore, by discourse no man can possibly be led to error; but if he err in his conclusions, he must of necessity either err in his principles (which here cannot have place), or commit some error in his discourse; that is indeed, not discourse, but seem to do so.

13. You say, thirdly, with sufficient confidence, "that if the true church may err in defining what scriptures be canonical, or in the delivering the sense thereof, then we must follow either the private spirit, or else natural wit and judgment; and by them examine what scriptures contain true or false doctrine, and in that respect ought to be received or rejected." All which is apparently untrue; neither can any proof of it be pretended. For though the present church may possibly err in her judgment touching this matter, yet have we other directions in it besides the private spirit and the examination of the contents (which latter way may conclude the negative very strongly, to wit, that such or such a book cannot come from God, because it contains irreconcilable contradictions; but the affirmative it cannot conclude, because the contents of a book may be all true, and yet the book not written by Divine inspiration); other direction therefore I say we have besides either of these three, and that is, the testimony of the primitive Christians.

14. You say, fourthly, with convenient boldness, that "this infallible authority of your church being denied no man can be assured that any parcel of Scripture was written by Divine inspiration:" which is an untruth, for which no proof is pretended; and besides, void of modesty, and full of impiety: the first, because the experience of innumerable Christians is against it, who are sufficiently assured that the Scripture is divinely inspired, and yet deny the infallible authority of your church or any other: the second, because if I cannot have ground to be assured of the Divine authority of Scripture, unless I first believe your church infallible, then I can have no ground at all to believe it; because there is no ground, nor can any be pretended, why I should believe your church infallible, unless I first believe the Scripture Divine.

15. Fifthly and lastly, you say, with confidence in abundance, that "none can deny the infallible authority of your church, but he must abandon all infused faith and true religion, if he do but understand himself;" which is to say, agreeable to what you had said before, and what out of the abundance of your heart you speak very often, "that all Christians besides you are open fools or concealed atheists." All this you say with notable confidence (as the manner of sophisters is to place their confidence of prevailing in their confident manner of speaking); but then for the evidence you promised to maintain this confidence that is quite vanished and become invisible.

16. Had I a mind to recriminate now, and to charge papists (as you do protestants) that they lead men to Socinianism, I could certainly make a much fairer show of evidence than you have done: for I would not tell you, You deny the infallibility of the church of England; ergo, you lead to Socinianism; which yet is altogether as good an argument as this—Protestants deny the infallibility of the Roman church; ergo, they induce Socinianism: nor would I resume my former argument, and urge you, that by holding the pope's infallibility you submit yourself to that capital and mother heresy, by advantage whereof he may lead you at ease to believe virtue vice, and vice virtue; to believe Antichristianity Christianism, and Christianity Antichristianism: he may lead you to Socinianism, to Turcism, nay, to the devil himself, if he have a mind to it; but I would show you, that divers ways the doctors of your church do the principal

and proper work of the Socinians for them, undermining the doctrine of the Trinity, by denying it to be supported by those pillars of the faith which alone are fit and able to support it—I mean Scripture, and the consent of the ancient doctors.

17. For Scripture, your men deny very plainly and frequently that this doctrine can be proved by it. See, if you please, this plainly taught, and urged very earnestly by Cardinal Hosius, de Author. Sac. 1. 3. p. 53; by Gordonius Huntlæcus, tom. l. Controv. l. de Verbo Dei. c. 19; by Gretserus and Tannerus, in Colloquio Ratisbon; and also by Vega, Possevin, Wickus, and others.

18. And then for the consent of the ancients: that that also delivers it not, by whom are we taught but by papists only? Who is it that makes known to all the world that Eusebius, that great searcher and devourer of the Christian libraries, was an Arian? Is it not your great Achilles, Cardinal Perron, in his third book and second chapter of his reply to King James? Who is it that informs us that Origen (who never was questioned for any error in this matter in or near his time) "denied the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost?" Is it not the same great cardinal, in his book of the Eucharist against M. du Plessis, 1. 2. c. 7? Who is it that pretends that "Irenæus hath said those things which he that should now hold would be esteemed an Arian? Is it not the same person, in his reply to King James, in the fifth chapter of the fourth observation? And doth he not in the same place peach Tertullian also, and in a manner give him away to the Arians; and pronounce generally of the Fathers before the Council of Nice, that Arians would gladly be tried by them? And are not your fellow Jesuits also, even the prime men of your order, prevaricators in this point as well as others? Doth not your friend Mr. Fisher or Mr. Floyd, in his book of the Nine Questions proposed to him by King James, speak dangerously to the same purpose; in his discourse of the resolution of faith, towards the end? giving us to understand, "that the new reformed Arians bring very many testimonies of the ancient Fathers, to prove that in this point they did contradict themselves, and were contrary to one another; which places whosoever shall read will clearly see that to common people they are unanswerable; yea, that common people are not capable of the answers that learned men yield unto such obscure passages." And hath not your great antiquary Petavius, in his notes upon Epiphanius, in Hær. 69, been very liberal to the adversaries of the doctrine of the Trinity, and in a manner given them for patrons and advocates, first Justin Martyr, and then almost all the Fathers before the Council of Nice; whose speeches, he says, touching this point, *cum orthodoxæ fides regula minime consentiunt?* Hereunto I might add, that the Dominicans and Jesuits between them in another matter of great importance, viz., God's prescience of future contingents, give the Socinians the premises out of which their conclusion doth unavoidably follow: for the Dominicans maintain, on the one side, that "God can foresee nothing but what he decrees;" the Jesuits on the other side, that "he doth not decree all things:" and from hence the Socinians conclude (as it is obvious for them to do) that "he doth not foresee all things." Lastly, I might adjoin this, that you agree with one consent, and settle for a rule unquestionable, that no part of religion can be repugnant to reason; whereupon you in particular subscribe unawares in saying, "From truth no man can by good consequence infer falsehood;" which is to say, in effect, that reason can never lead any man to error. And after you have done so, you proclaim to all the world (as you in this pamphlet do very frequently), that "if men follow their reason and discourse," they will (if they understand themselves) he led to Socinianism. And thus you see with what probable matter I might furnish out and justify my accusation, if I should charge you with leading men to Socinianism; yet do I not conceive that I have ground enough for this odious imputation. And much less should you have charged protestants with it, whom you confess to abhor and detest it, and who fight against it, not with the broken reeds and out of the paper fortresses of an imaginary infallibility, which were only to make sport for their adversaries, but with *the sword of the Spirit, the word of God*; of which we may say most truly, what David said of Goliath's sword, offered him by Ahimelech, *Non est sicut iste*, "There is none comparable to it."

19. Thus Protestants in general, I hope, are sufficiently vindicated from your calumny. I proceed now to do the same service for the divines of England; whom you question first in point of learning and sufficiency, and then in point of conscience and honesty, as prevaricating in the religion which they profess, and inclining to popery. Their learning, you say, consists only in "some superficial talent of preaching, languages, and elocution, and not in any deep knowledge of philosophy, especially of metaphysics; and much less of that most solid, profitable, subtle, and (*O rem ridiculam, Cato, et iocosam!*) succinct method of school divinity;" wherein you have discovered in yourself the true genius and spirit of detraction. For taking advantage from that wherein envy itself cannot deny but they are very eminent, and which requires great sufficiency of substantial learning, you disparage them as insufficient in all things else: as if, forsooth, because they dispute not eternally—*utrum chimera bombinans in vacuo, possit comedere secundas intentiones*—whether a million of angels may not sit upon a needle's point—because they fill not their brains with notions that signify nothing, to the utter extermination of all reason and common sense, and spend not an age in weaving and unweaving subtle cobwebs, fitter to catch flies than souls, therefore they have no deep knowledge in the acroamatical part of learning. But I have too much honoured the poorness of this detraction to take notice of it.

20. The other part of your accusation strikes deeper, and is more considerable: and that tells us, that "protestantism waxeth weary of itself; that the professors of it, they especially of greatest worth, learning, and authority, love temper and moderation; and are at this time more unresolved where to fasten, than at the infancy of their church;" that "their churches begin to look with a new face their walls to speak a new language; their doctrine to be altered in many things, for which their progenitors forsook the then visible church of Christ: for example—the pope not antichrist: prayer for the dead: *limbus patrum:* pictures: that the church hath authority in determining controversies of faith, and to interpret Scripture about free will, predestination, universal grace:" that "all our works are not sins: merit of good works: inherent justice: faith alone doth not justify: charity to be preferred before knowledge traditions: commandments possible to be kept:" that "their Thirty-nine Articles are patient, nay ambitious, of some sense wherein they may seem catholic:" that "to allege the necessity of wife and children in these days, is but a weak plea for a married minister to compass a benefice:" that "Calvinism is at length accounted heresy, and little less than treason:" that "men in talk and writing use willingly the once fearful names of priests and altars:" that "they are now put in mind, that for exposition of Scripture they are by canon bound to follow the Fathers; which if they do with sincerity, it is easy to tell what doom will pass against protestants, seeing, by the confession of protestants, the Fathers are on the papists' side, which the answerer to some so clearly demonstrated that they remained convinced:" in fine, as the Samaritans saw in the disciples' countenances that they meant to go to Jerusalem, so you pretend it is even legible in the foreheads of these men that they are even going, nay, making haste to Rome; which scurrilous libel, void of all truth, discretion, and honesty, what effect it may have wrought, what credit it may have gained with credulous papists (who dream what they desire, and believe their own dreams), or with ill-affected, jealous, and weak protestants, I cannot tell: but one thing I dare boldly say, that you yourself did never believe it.

21. For did you indeed conceive, or had any probable hope, that such men as you describe, men of worth, of learning, and authority too, were friends and favourers of your religion, and inclinable to your party; can any man imagine that you would proclaim it, and bid the world take heed of them? *Sic notus Ulysses?* Do we know the Jesuits no better than so? What, are they turned prevaricators against their own faction? Are they likely men to betray and expose their own agents and instruments, and to awaken the eves of jealousy, and to raise the clamour of the people against them? Certainly, your zeal to the see of Rome, testified by your fourth vow of special obedience to the pope, proper to your order, and your cunning carriage of all affairs for the greater advantage and advancement of that see, are clear demon-

strations that if you had thought thus, you would never have said so. The truth is, they that can run to extremes in opposition against you; they that pull down your infallibility, and set up their own; they that declaim against your tyranny, and exercise it themselves over others; are the adversaries that give you greatest advantage, and such as you love to deal with: whereas, upon men of temper and moderation, such as will oppose nothing because you maintain it, but will draw as near to you, that they may draw you to them, as the truth will suffer them; such as require of Christians to believe only in Christ, and will damn no man nor doctrine without express and certain warrant from God's word; upon such as these you know not how to fasten: but if you chance to have conference with any such (which yet, as much as possibly you can, you avoid and decline), you are very speedily put to silence, and see the indefensible weakness of your cause laid open to all men. And this, I verily believe, is the true reason that you thus rave and rage against them; as foreseeing your time of prevailing, or even of subsisting, would be short, if other adversaries gave you no more advantage than they do.

22. In which persuasion also I am much confirmed by consideration of the silliness and poorness of those suggestions, and partly of the apparent vanity and falsehood of them, which you offer in justification of this wicked calumny. For what if our devotion towards God out of a desire that He should be worshipped as *in spirit and in truth* in the first place, so also *in the beauty of holiness?*—what if out of fear that too much simplicity and nakedness in the public service of God, may beget in the ordinary sort of men a dull and stupid irreverence; and out of hope that the outward state and glory of it, being well disposed and wisely moderated, may engender, quicken, increase, and nourish the inward reverence, respect, and devotion, which is due unto God's sovereign majesty and power?—what if out of a persuasion and desire that papists may be won over to us the sooner, by the removing of this scandal out of their way; and out of an holy jealousy, that the weaker sort of protestants might be the easier seduced to them by the magnificence and pomp of their church service, in case it were not removed?—I say, what if out of these considerations the governors of our church, more of late than formerly, have set themselves to adorn and beautify the places *where God's honour dwells*, and to make them as heaven-like as they ran with earthly ornaments. Is this a sign that they are warping towards popery? Is this devotion in the church of England an argument that she is coming over to the church of Rome? Sir Edwin Sands, I presume, every man will grant, had no inclination that way; yet he, forty years since, highly commended this part of devotion in papists, and makes no scruple of proposing it to the imitation of protestants; little thinking that they who would follow his counsel, and endeavour to take away this disparagement of protestants, and this glorying of papists, should have been censured for it, as making way and inclining to popery. His words to this purpose are excellent words; and because they show plainly that what is now practised was approved by zealous protestants so long ago, I will here set them down.

23. "This one thing I cannot but highly commend in that sort and order: they spare nothing which either cost can perform in enriching, or skill in adorning, the temple of God; or to set out his service with the greatest pomp and magnificence that can be devised. And although for the most part much baseness and childishness is predominant in the masters and contrivers of their ceremonies, yet this outward state and glory, being well disposed, doth engender, quicken, increase, and nourish the inward reverence, respect, and devotion, which is due unto sovereign majesty and power. And although I am not ignorant that many men well reputed have embraced the thrifty opinion of that disciple, who thought all to be wasted that was bestowed upon Christ in that sort, and that it were much better bestowed upon the poor) yet with an eye perhaps that themselves would be his quarter-almoners); notwithstanding, I must confess, it will never sink into my heart, that in proportion of reason the allowance for furnishing out of the service of God should be measured by the scant and strict rule of mere necessity (a proportion so low, that nature, to other most bountiful, in matter of necessity hath not failed, no, not the most ignoble creatures of the world); and that for ourselves, no measure of heaping, but the most we can get; no rule of expense, but

to the utmost pomp we list: or that God himself had so enriched the lower parts of the world with such wonderful varieties of beauty and glory, that they might serve only to the pampering of mortal man in his pride; and that in the service of the high Creator, Lord, and Giver (the outward glory of whose higher palace may appear by the very lamps that we see so far off burning gloriously in it), only the simpler, baser, cheaper, less noble, less beautiful, less glorious things should be employed; especially seeing as in princes' courts, so in the service of God also, this outward state and glory, being well disposed, doth (as I have said) engender, quicken, increase, and nourish the inward reverence, respect, and devotion, which is due to so sovereign majesty and power: which those whom the use thereof cannot persuade into, would easily, by the want of it, be brought to confess. For which cause I crave leave to be excused by them herein, if, in zeal to the common Lord of all, I choose rather to commend the virtue of an enemy, than to flatter the vice and imbecility of a friend." And so much for this matter.

24. Again; what if the names of *priests* and *altars*, so frequent in the ancient Fathers, though not now in the popish sense, he now resumed and more commonly used in England than of late times they were; that so the colourable argument of their conformity, which is but nominal with the ancient church, and our inconformity, which the governors of the church would not have so much as nominal, may be taken away from them; and the church of England may be put in a state, in this regard, more justifiable against the Roman than formerly it was, being hereby enabled to say to papists (whensoever these names are objected), we also use the names of *priests* and *altars*, and yet believe neither the corporal presence, nor any proper and propitiatory sacrifice?

25. What if protestants be now put in mind, that for exposition of Scripture they are bound by a canon to follow the ancient Fathers; which whosoever doth with sincerity, it is utterly impossible he should be a papist? And it is most falsely said by you, that you know, that to some protestants I clearly demonstrated, or ever so much as undertook, or went about to demonstrate the contrary. What if the Centurists be censured somewhat roundly by a protestant divine, for affirming that "the keeping of the Lord's day was a thing indifferent for two hundred years?" Is there in all this, or any part of it, any kind of proof of this scandalous calumny? Certainly, if you can make no better arguments than these, and have so little judgment as to think these any, you have great reason to decline conferences, and Signior Con to prohibit you from writing books any more.

26. As for the points of doctrine, wherein you pretend that these divines begin of late to falter, and to comply with the church of Rome; upon a due examination of particulars, it will presently appear, first, that part of them always have been, and now are, held constantly one way by them: as, the authority of the church in determining controversies of faith, though not the infallibility of it; that there is inherent justice, though so imperfect that it cannot justify; that there are traditions, though none necessary; that charity is to be preferred before knowledge; that good works are not properly meritorious; and, lastly, that faith alone justifies, though that faith justifies not which is alone. And, secondly, for the remainder, that they every one of them have been anciently, without breach of charity, disputed among protestants: such, for example, were the questions about the pope's being the antichrist; the lawfulness of some kind of prayers for the dead; the estate of the fathers' souls before Christ's ascension; free will; predestination; universal grace; the possibility of keeping God's commandments; the use of pictures in the church: wherein that there hath been anciently diversity of opinion amongst protestants, it is justified to my hand by a witness with you beyond exception, even your great friend Mr. Brerely, "whose care, exactness, and fidelity" (you say in your preface) "is so extraordinary great." Consult him therefore, tract 3, sect. 7, of his Apology, and in the 9, 10, 11, 14, 24, 26, 27, 37, subdivisions of that section, you shall see, as in a mirror, yourself proved an egregious calumniator, for charging protestants with innovation, and inclining to popery, under pretence, forsooth, that their doctrine begins of late to be altered in these points. Whereas Mr. Brerely will inform you, they have been anciently, and even from the beginning of the Reformation,

controverted amongst them, though perhaps the stream and current of their doctors run one way, and only some brook or rivulet of them the others.

27. And thus my friends, I suppose, are clearly vindicated from your scandals and calumnies. It remains now, in the last place, I bring myself fairly off from your foul aspersions, that so my person may not be (as indeed howsoever it should not be) any disadvantage or disparagement to the cause, nor any scandal to weak Christians.

28. Your injuries then to me (no way deserved by me, but by differing in opinion from you, wherein yet you surely differ from me as much as I from you) are especially three: for, first, upon hearsay, and refusing to give me opportunity of begetting in you a better understanding of me, you charge me with a great number of false and impious doctrines, which I will not name in particular, because I will not assist you so far in the spreading of my own undeserved defamation—but whosoever teaches or holds them, *let him be anathema!* The sum of them all, cast up by yourself in your first chapter, is this: "Nothing ought or can be certainly believed, further than it may be proved by evidence of natural reason;" (where, I conceive, natural reason is opposed to supernatural revelation);—and whosoever holds so, *let him be anathema!* And moreover, to clear myself once for all from all imputations of this nature, which charge me injuriously with denial of supernatural verities, I profess sincerely that I believe all those books of Scripture which the church of England accounts canonical to be the infallible word of God: I believe all things evidently contained in them; all things evidently, or even probably deducible from them: I acknowledge all that to be heresy, which by the act of parliament primo of Queen Elizabeth is declared to be so, and only to be so; and though in such points which may be held diversely of divers men *salva fidei compage*, I would not take any man's liberty from him, and humbly beseech all men that they would not take mine from me; yet this much I can say (which I hope will satisfy any man of reason), that whatsoever hath been held necessary to salvation, either by the catholic church of all ages, or by the consent of Fathers, measured by Vincentius Lyrinensis's rule, or is held necessary, either by the catholic church of this age, or by the consent of protestants, or even by the church of England, that, against the Socinians, and all others whatsoever, I do verily believe and embrace.

29. Another great and manifest injury you have done me, in charging me to have forsaken your religion, because it conduced not to my temporal ends, and suited not with my desires and designs; which certainly is an horrible crime, and whereof if you could convince me by just and strong presumptions I should then acknowledge myself to deserve that opinion which you would fain induce your credents unto, that I changed not your religion for any other, but for none at all. But of this great fault my conscience acquits me, and God, who only knows the hearts of all men, knows that I am innocent: neither doubt I, but all they who know me, and amongst them many persons of place and quality, will say they have reason in this matter to be my compurgators. And for you, though you are very affirmative in your accusation, yet you neither do nor can produce any proof or presumption for it; but forgetting yourself (as it is God's will ofttimes that slanderers should do), have let fall some passages, which being well weighed, will make considering men apt to believe that you did not believe yourself. For how is it possible you should believe that I deserted your religion for ends, and against the light of my conscience, out of a desire of preferment; and yet, out of scruple of conscience, should refuse (which also you impute to me) to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles, that is, refuse to enter at the only common door which here in England leads to preferment? Again, how incredible is it that you should believe that I forsook the profession of your religion, as not suiting with my desires and designs, which yet reconciles the enjoying of the pleasures and profits of sin here, with the hope of happiness here-after, and proposes as great hope of temporal advancements to the capable servants of it, as any, nay, more than any religion in the world; and, instead of this, should choose Socinianism, a doctrine, which, howsoever erroneous in explicating the mysteries of religion, and allowing greater liberty of opinion in speculative matters, than any other company of

Christians doth, or they should do; yet certainly, which you, I am sure, will pretend and maintain to explicate the laws of Christ with more rigour, and less indulgence and condescendence to the desires of flesh and blood than your doctrine doth; and besides, such a doctrine, by which no man in his right mind can hope for any honour and preferment, either in this church or state, or any other; all which clearly demonstrates that this foul and false aspersion, which you have cast upon me, proceeds from no other fountain but a heart abounding with gall and bitterness of uncharitableness, and even blinded with malice towards me; or else from a perverse zeal to your superstition, which secretly suggests this persuasion to you:—that for the catholic cause nothing is unlawful, but that you may make use of such indirect and crooked arts as these to blast my reputation, and to possess men's minds with disaffection to my person; lest otherwise, peradventure, they might with some indifference hear reason from me. God, I hope, which bringeth light out of darkness, will turn your counsels to foolishness, and give all good men grace to perceive how weak and ruinous that religion must be, which needs supportance from such tricks and devices: so I call them, because they deserve no better name. For what are all these personal matters, which hitherto you spoke of, to the business in hand? If it could be proved that Cardinal Bellarmine was indeed a Jew, or that Cardinal Perron was an atheist; yet I presume you would not accept of this for an answer to all their writings in defence of your religion. Let then my actions, intentions, and opinions be what they will, yet I hope truth is nevertheless truth, nor reason ever the less reason, because I speak it. And therefore the Christian reader, knowing that his salvation or damnation depends upon his impartial and sincere judgment of these thing's, will guard himself I hope, from these impostures, and regard not the person, but the cause and the reasons of it: not who speaks, but what is spoken; which is all the favour I desire of him, as knowing that I am desirous not to persuade him, unless it be truth whereunto I persuade him.

30. The third and last part of my accusation was, that I answer out of "principles which protestants themselves will profess to detest;" which indeed were to the purpose, if it could be justified. But besides that it is confuted by my whole book, and made ridiculous by the approbations premised unto it, it is very easy for me out of your own mouth and words to prove it a most injurious calumny. For what one conclusion is there in the whole fabric of my discourse that is not naturally deducible out of this one principle, that "all things necessary to salvation are evidently contained in scripture?" or what one conclusion almost of importance is there in your book which is not by this one clearly confutable?

31. Grant this, and it will presently follow, in opposition to your first conclusion, and the argument of your first chapter, that amongst men of different opinions, touching the obscure and controverted questions of religion, such as may with probability be disputed on both sides (and such are the disputes of protestants), good men and lovers of truth on all sides may be saved; because all necessary things being supposed evident concerning them, with men so qualified, there will be no difference: there being no more certain sign that a point is not evident, than that honest and understanding and indifferent men, and such as give themselves liberty of judgment after a mature consideration of the matter, differ about it.

32. Grant this, and it will appear, secondly, that the means whereby the revealed truths of God are conveyed to our understanding, and which are to determine all controversies in faith necessary to be determined, may be, for anything you have said to the contrary, not a church, but the Scripture; which contradicts the doctrine of your second chapter.

33. Grant this, and the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental will appear very good and pertinent. For those truths will be fundamental which are evidently delivered in Scripture, and commanded to be preached to all men; those not fundamental, which are obscure. And nothing will hinder but that the catholic church may err in the latter kind of the said points; because truths not necessary to the salvation, cannot be necessary to the being of a church; and because it is not absolutely

necessary that God should assist his church any further than to bring her to salvation, neither will there be any necessity at all of any infallible guide, either to consign unwritten traditions, or to declare the obscurities of the faith: not for the former end, because this principle being granted true, nothing unwritten can be necessary to be consigned: nor for the latter, because nothing that is obscure can be necessary to be understood, or not mistaken. And so the discourse of your whole third chapter will presently vanish.

34. Fourthly. For the creeds containing the fundamentals of simple belief, though I see not how it may be deduced from this principle, yet the granting of this plainly renders the whole dispute touching the creed unnecessary. For if all necessary things, of all sorts, whether of simple belief or practice, be confessed to be clearly contained in Scripture, what imports it, whether those of one sort be contained in the creed?

35. Fifthly. Let this be granted and the immediate corollary, in opposition to your fifth chapter, will be and must be, that not protestants for rejecting, but the church of Rome for imposing upon the faith of Christians doctrines unwritten and unnecessary, and for disturbing the church's peace, and dividing unity for such matters, is in a high degree presumptuous and schismatical.

36. Grant this, sixthly, and it will follow unavoidably, that protestants cannot possibly be heretics, seeing they believe all things evidently contained in Scripture, which are supposed to be all that is necessary to be believed: and so your sixth chapter is clearly confuted.

37. Grant this, lastly, and it will be undoubtedly consequent, in contradiction to your seventh chapter, that no man can show more charity to himself than by continuing a protestant; seeing protestants are supposed to believe, and therefore may accordingly practise, at least by their religion are not hindered from practising and performing, all things necessary to salvation.

38. So that the position of this one principle is the direct over-throw of your whole book; and therefore I needed not, nor indeed have I made use of any other. Now this principle, which is not only the corner-stone, or chief pillar, but even the basis, and the adequate foundation of my answer, and which, while it stands firm and unmovable, cannot but be the supporter of my book, and the certain ruin of yours, in so far from being, according to your pretence, detested by all protestants, that all protestants whatsoever, as you may see in their harmony of confessions, unanimously profess and maintain it. And you yourself (chap. vi. § 30), plainly confess as much, in saying, "The whole edifice of the faith of protestants is settled on these two principles: these particular books are canonical scripture; and the sense and meaning of them is plain and evident, at least in all points necessary to salvation."

39. And thus your venom against me is in a manner spent, saving only that there remains two little impertinencies, whereby you would disable me from being a fit advocate for the cause of protestants. The first, because I refuse to subscribe the Articles of the church of England; the second, because I have set down in writing motives which sometimes induced me to forsake protestantism, and hitherto have not answered them.

40. By the former of which objections, it should seem, that either you conceive the Thirty-nine Articles the common doctrine of all protestants; and if they be, why have you so often upbraided them with their many and great differences; or else, that it is the peculiar defence of the church of England, and not the common cause of all protestants, which is here undertaken by me; which are certainly very gross mistakes. And yet why he who makes scruple of subscribing the truth of one or two propositions, may not yet be fit enough to maintain that those who do subscribe them are in a savable condition, I do not understand. Now though I hold not the doctrine of all protestants absolutely true (which with reason cannot be required of me, while they hold contradictions), yet I hold it free from all impiety, and from all error destructive of salvation, or in itself damnable: and this I think in reason may sufficiently qualify me for a maintainer of this assertion, that protestancy destroys not salvation. For the church of England, I

am persuaded, that the constant doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox, that whosoever believes it, and lives according to it, undoubtedly he shall be saved; and that there is no error in it which may necessitate or warrant any man to disturb the peace or renounce the communion of it. This, in my opinion, is all intended by subscription; and thus much, if you conceive me not ready to subscribe your charity, I assure you, is much mistaken.

41. Your other objection against me is yet more impertinent and frivolous than the former; unless perhaps it be a just exception against a physician, that himself was sometimes in, and recovered himself from, that disease which he undertakes to cure; or against a guide in a way, that at first, before he had experience himself, mistook it, and afterwards found his error and amended it. That noble writer, Michael de Montaigne, was surely of a far different mind; for he will hardly allow any physician competent, but only for such diseases as himself had passed through: and a far greater than Montaigne, even he that said, *Tu conversus confirma fratres*, gives us sufficiently to understand, that they which have themselves been in such a state as to need conversion, are not thereby made incapable of, but rather engaged and obliged unto, and qualified for, this charitable function.

42. Neither am I guilty of that strange and preposterous zeal (as you esteem it) which you impute to me, for having been so long careless, in removing this scandal against protestants, and answering my own Motives, and yet now showing such fervour in writing against others. For neither are they other motives, but the very same, for the most part, with those that abused me, against which this book which I now publish is in a manner wholly employed: and besides, though you Jesuits take upon you to have such large and universal intelligence of all state affairs and matters of importance; yet I hope such a contemptible matter as an answer of mine to a little piece of paper, may very probably have been written and escaped your observation. The truth is, I made an answer to them three years since and better, which perhaps might have been published, but for two reasons: one, because the Motives were never public until you made them so; the other, because I was loth to proclaim to all the world so much weakness as I showed in suffering myself to be abused by such silly sophisms: all which proceed upon mistakes and false suppositions, which unadvisedly I took for granted; as when I have set down the motives in order by subsequent answers to them, I shall quickly demonstrate, and so make an end.

43. The motives then were these:

1. "Because perpetual visible profession, which could never be wanting to the religion of Christ, or any part of it, is apparently wanting to protestant religion, so far as concerns the points in contestation.

2. "Because Luther and his followers, separating from the church of Rome, separated also from all churches, pure and impure, true or false, then being in the world; upon which ground I conclude, that either God's promises did fail of performance, if there were then no church in the world which held all things necessary, and nothing repugnant to salvation; or else, that Luther and his sectaries, separating from all churches then in the world, and so from the true, if there were any true, were damnable schismatics.

3. "Because, if any credit may be given to as creditable records as any are extant, the doctrine of Catholics hath been frequently confirmed; and the opposite doctrine of protestants confounded with supernatural and Divine miracles.

4. "Because many points of protestant doctrine are the damned opinions of heretics condemned by the primitive church.

5. "Because the prophecies of the Old Testament, touching the conversion of kings and nations to the true religion of Christ, have been accomplished in and by the catholic Roman religion, and the professors of it; and not by protestant religion, and the professors of it.

6. "Because the doctrine of the church of Rome is conformable, and the doctrine of protestants contrary to the doctrine of the Fathers of the primitive church, even by the confession of protestants

themselves; I mean, those Fathers who lived within the compass of the first 600 years; to whom protestants themselves do very frequently and very confidently appeal.

7. "Because the first pretended reformers had neither extraordinary commission from God, nor ordinary mission from the church, to preach protestant doctrine.

8. "Because Luther, to preach against the mass (which contains the most material points now in controversy), was persuaded by reasons suggested to him by the devil himself, disputing with him. So himself professeth, in his book *de Missa Privata;* that all men might take heed of following him, who professeth himself to follow the devil.

9. "Because the protestant cause is now, and hath been from the beginning, maintained with gross falsifications and calumnies; whereof their prime controversy writers are notoriously and in high degree guilty.

10. "Because by denying all human authority, either of pope or council or church, to determine controversies of faith, they have abolished all possible means of suppressing heresy, or restoring unity to the church."

These are the motives. Now my answers to them follow briefly and to order.

44. To the first. God hath neither decreed nor foretold that his true doctrine should *de facto* be always visibly professed, without any mixture of falsehood.

To the second. God hath neither decreed nor foretold that there shall be always a visible company of men free from all error in itself damnable. Neither is it always of necessity schismatical to separate from the external communion of a church, though wanting nothing necessary; for if this church, supposed to want nothing necessary, require me to profess against my conscience that I believe some error, though never so small and innocent, which I do not believe, and will not allow me her communion but upon this condition, in this case the church for requiring this condition is schismatical, and not I for separating from the church.

To the third. If any credit may be given to records, far more creditable than these, the doctrine of protestants, that is, the Bible, hath been confirmed, and the doctrine of papists, which is in many points plainly opposite to it, confounded, with supernatural and Divine miracles, which, for number and glory, outshine popish pretended miracles, as much as the sun doth an *ignis fatuus*, those I mean, which were wrought by our Saviour Christ and his apostles. Now this book, by the confession of all sides, confirmed by innumerable miracles, foretells me plainly that in after-ages great signs and wonders shall be wrought in confirmation of false doctrine; and that I am not to believe any doctrine which seems to my understanding repugnant to the first, though an angel from heaven should teach it; which were certainly as great a miracle as any that was ever wrought in attestation of any part of the doctrine of the church of Rome. But that true doctrine should in all ages have the testimony of miracles, that I am nowhere taught; so that I have more reason to suspect and be afraid of pretended miracles, as signs of false doctrine, than much to regard them as certain arguments of the truth. Besides, setting aside the Bible, and the tradition of it, there is as good story for miracles wrought by those who lived and died in opposition to the doctrine of the Roman church (as by St. Cyprian, Colmannus, Columbanus, Aidanus, and others), as there is for those that are pretended to be wrought by the members of that church. Lastly, it seems to me no strange thing, that God in his justice should permit some true miracles to be wrought to delude them, who have forged so many, as apparently the professors of the Roman doctrine have, to abuse the world.

To the fourth. All those were not heretics, which by Philastrius, Epiphanius, or St. Austin were put in the catalogue of heretics.

To the fifth. Kings and nations have been and may be converted by men of contrary religions.

To the sixth. The doctrine of papists is confessed by papists contrary to the Fathers in many points.

To the seventh. The pastors of a church cannot but have authority from it to preach against the abuses of it, whether in doctrine or practice, if there be any in it: neither can any Christian want an ordinary commission from God to do a necessary work of charity after a peaceable manner, when there is nobody else that can or will do it. In extraordinary cases, extraordinary courses are not to be disallowed. If some Christian laymen should come into a country of infidels, and had ability to persuade them to Christianity, who would say he might not use it for want of commission?

To the eighth. Luther's conference with the devil might be, for aught I know, nothing but a melancholy dream. If it were real, the devil might persuade Luther from the mass, hoping by doing so to keep him constant to it; or that others would make his dissuasion from it an argument for it (as we see papists do), and be afraid of following Luther, as confessing himself to have been persuaded by the devil.

To the ninth. *Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra*. Papists are more guilty of this fault than protestants. Even this very author in this very pamphlet hath not so many leaves as falsifications and calumnies.

To the tenth. Let all men believe the Scripture, and that only, and endeavour to believe it in the true sense, and require no more of others, and they shall find this not only a better, but the only means to suppress heresy and restore unity. For he that believes the Scripture sincerely, and endeavours to believe it in the true sense cannot possibly be an heretic. And if no more than this were required of any man to make him capable of the church's communion, then all men so qualified, though they were different in opinion, notwithstanding any such difference, must be of necessity one in communion.

THE AUTHOR OF

CHARITY MAINTAINED,

HIS PREFACE TO THE READER.

"GIVE me leave (good reader) to inform thee, by way of preface, of three points: the first concerns D. Potter's Answer to Charity Mistaken. The second relates to this Reply of mine. And the third contains some premonitions or prescriptions, in case D. Potter, or any in his behalf, think fit to rejoin.

2. "For the first point, concerning D. Potter's Answer, I say in general, reserving particulars to their proper places, that in his whole book he hath not so much as once truly and really fallen upon the point in question; which was, whether both catholics and protestants can be saved in their several professions? and therefore Charity Mistaken judiciously pressing those particulars, wherein the difficulty doth precisely consist, proves in general that there is but one true church; that all Christians are obliged to hearken to her; that she must be ever visible and infallible; that to separate one's self from her communion is schism; and to dissent from her doctrine is heresy, though it be in points never so few, or never so small in their own nature; and therefore that the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental is wholly vain, as it is applied by protestants. These (I say) and some other general grounds, Charity Mistaken handles; and out of them doth clearly evince, that any the least difference in faith cannot stand with salvation on both sides. And therefore, since it is apparent that catholics and protestants disagree in very many points of faith, they both cannot hope to be saved without repentance; and, consequently, as we hold that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation, so must they also believe that we cannot be saved, if they judge their own religion to be true, and ours to be false. And whosoever disguiseth this truth is an enemy to souls, which he deceives with ungrounded false hope of salvation in different faiths and religions. And this Charity Mistaken performed exactly, according to that which appears to have been his design, which was not to descend to particular disputes, as D. Potter affectedly does; namely, whether or no the Roman church be the only church of Christ: and much less whether general councils be infallible: whether the pope may err in his decrees common to the whole church: whether he be above a general council: whether all points of faith be contained in Scripture: whether faith be resolved into the authority of the church, as into its last formal object and motive: and least of all did he discourse of images, communion under both kinds, public service in an unknown tongue, seven sacraments, sacrifice of the mass, indulgences, and *index expurgatorius*. All which and divers other articles D. Potter (as I said) draws by violence into his book: and he might as well have brought in pope Joan, or antichrist, or the Jews who are permitted to live in Rome; which are common themes for men that want better matter, as D. Potter was forced to fetch in the aforesaid controversies, that so he might dazzle the eyes and distract the mind of the reader, and hinder him from perceiving that in his whole Answer he uttereth nothing to the purpose and point in question; which if he had followed closely, I dare well say he might have despatched his whole book in two or three sheets of paper. But the truth is, he was loth to affirm plainly, that generally both catholics and protestants may be saved. And yet seeing it to be most evident that protestants cannot pretend to have any true church before Luther, except the Roman, and such as agreed with her; and, consequently, that they cannot hope for salvation if they deny it to us; he thought best to avoid this difficulty by confusion of language, and to fill up his book with points which make nothing to the purpose;

wherein he is less excusable, because he must grant that those very particulars, to which he digresseth, are not fundamental errors, though it should be granted that they be errors, which indeed are catholic verities; for since they be not fundamental, nor destructive of salvation, what imports it whether we hold them or no, forasmuch as concerns our possibility to be saved?

3. "In one thing only he will perhaps seem to have touched the point in question: to wit, in his distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental; because some may think that a difference in points which are not fundamental breaks not the unity of faith, and hinders not the hope of salvation in persons so disagreeing. And yet, in this very distinction he never speaks to the purpose indeed, but only says that there are some points so fundamental, as that all are obliged to know and believe them explicitly; but never tells us whether there be any other points of faith which a man may deny or disbelieve, though they be sufficiently presented to his understanding as truths revealed or testified by Almighty God; which was the only thing in question. For if it be damnable, as certainly it is, to deny or disbelieve any one truth witnessed by Almighty God, though the thing be not in itself of any great consequence or moment; and since, of two disagreeing in matters of faith, one must necessarily deny some such truth; it clearly follows that amongst men of different faiths or religions, one only can be saved, though their difference consist of divers, or but even one point, which is not in its own nature fundamental, as I declare at large in divers places of my first part. So that it is clear D. Potter, even in this his last refuge and distinction, never comes to the point in question; to say nothing that he himself doth quite overthrow it, and plainly contradict his whole design, as I show in the third chapter of my first part.

4. "And as for D. Potter's manner of handling those very points, which are utterly beside the purpose, it consists only in bringing vulgar, mean objections, which have been answered a thousand times; yea, and some of them are clearly answered in Charity Mistaken; but he takes no knowledge at all of any such answers, and much less does he apply himself to confute them. He allegeth also authors with so great corruption and fraud, as I would not have believed, if I had not found it by clear and frequent experience. In his second edition, he has indeed left out one or two gross corruptions, amongst many others no less notorious; having, as it seems, been warned by some friends that they could not stand with his credit: but even in this his second edition he retracts them not at all, nor declares that he was mistaken in the first; and so his reader of the first edition shall ever be deceived by him, though withal he read the second. For preventing of which inconvenience, I have thought it necessary to take notice of them, and discover them in my Reply.

5. "And for conclusion of this point I will only say, that D. Potter might have well spared himself the pains, if he had ingenuously acknowledged where the whole substance, yea, and sometimes the very words and phrases of his book, may be found in far briefer manner, namely, in a sermon of D. Usher's, preached before our late sovereign lord King James, the 20th of June, 1624, at Wansted; containing A Declaration of the Universality of the Church of Christ, and the Unity of Faith professed therein; which sermon having been roundly and wittily confuted by a catholic divine, under the name of Paulus Veridicus, within the compass of about four sheets of paper, D. Potter's Answer to Charity Mistaken was in effect confuted before it appeared. And this may suffice for a general censure of his Answer to Charity Mistaken.

6. "For the second, touching my reply: if you wonder at the bulk thereof, compared either with Charity Mistaken, or D. Potter's Answer, I desire you to consider well of what now I am about to say, and then I hope you will see that I was cast upon a mere necessity of not being so short as otherwise might paradventure be desired. Charity Mistaken is short, I grant, and yet very full and large, for as much as concerned his design, which you see was not to treat of particular controversies in religion, no, not so much as to debate whether or no the Roman church be the only true church of Christ, which indeed would have required a large volume, as I have understood there was one then coming forth, if it had not

been prevented by the treatise of Charity Mistaken, which seemed to make the other intended work a little less seasonable at that time. But Charity Mistaken proves only in general out of some universal principles, well backed and made good by choice and solid authorities, that of two disagreeing in points of faith, one only without repentance can be saved; which aim exacted no great bulk. And as for D. Potter's Answer, even that also is not so short as it may seem. For if his marginal notes, printed in a small letter, were transferred into the text, the book would appear to be of some bulk: though indeed it might have been very short, if he had kept himself to the point treated by Charity Mistaken, as shall be declared anon. But, contrarily, because the question debated betwixt Charity Mistaken and D. Potter is a point of the highest consequence that can be imagined, and, in regard that there is not a more pernicious heresy, or rather indeed ground of atheism, than a persuasion that men of different religions may be saved, if otherwise, forsooth, they lead a kind of civil and moral life; I conceive that my chief endeavour was not to be employed in answering D. Potter; but that it was necessary to handle the question itself somewhat at large, and not only to prove in general that both protestants and catholics cannot be saved, but to show also that salvation cannot be hoped for out of the catholic Roman church; and yet withal, not to omit to answer all the particulars of D. Potter's book, which may any ways import. To this end I thought it fit to divide my Reply into two parts: in the former whereof the main question is handled by a continued discourse, without stepping aside to confute the particulars of D. Potter's Answer; though yet so, as that even in this first part I omit not to answer such passages of his as I find directly in my way, and naturally belong to the points whereof I treat; and, in the second part, I answer D. Potter's treatise section by section, as they lie in order. I here therefore entreat the reader, that if he heartily desire satisfaction in this so important question, he do not content himself with that which I say to D. Potter in my second part, but that he take the first before him, either all, or at least, so much as may serve most to his purpose of being satisfied in those doubts which press him most. For which purpose, I have caused a table of the chapters of the first part, together with their titles and arguments, to be prefixed before my Reply.

7. "This was then a chief reason why I could not be very short: but yet there wanted not also divers other causes of the same effect. For there are so several kinds of ptotestants, through the difference of tenets which they hold, as that if a man convince but one kind of them, the rest will conceive themselves to be as truly unsatisfied, and even unspoken to, as if nothing had been said therein at all. As for example, some hold a necessity of a perpetual visible church, and some hold no such necessity. Some of them hold it necessary to be able to prove it distinct from ours; and others, that their business is despatched when they have proved ours to have been always visible; for then they will conceive that theirs hath been so: and the like may be truly said of very many other particulars. Besides, it is D. Potter's fashion (wherein he is very far from being the first, so I pray God he prove the last of that humour) to touch in a word many trivial old objections, which, if they be not all answered, it will and must serve the turn to make the ignorant sort of men believe and brag, as if some main unanswerable matter had been subtilly and purposely omitted: and everybody knows that some objection may be very plausibly made in few words, the clear and solid answer whereof will require more leaves of paper than one. And, in particular, D. Potter doth couch his corruption of authors within the compass of so few lines, and with so great confusedness and fraud, that it requires much time, pains, and paper, to open them so distinctly, as that they may appear to every man's eye. It was also necessary to show what D. Potter omits in Charity Mistaken, and the importance of what is omitted; and sometimes to set down the very words themselves that are omitted: all which could not but add to the quantity of my Reply. And as for the quality thereof, I desire thee, good reader, to believe, that whereas nothing is more necessary than books for answering of books, yet I was so ill furnished in this kind, that I was forced to omit the examination of divers authors cited by D. Potter, merely upon necessity; though I did very well perceive, by most apparent circumstances, that I must probably have been sure enough to find them plainly misalleged, and much wronged: and

for the few which are examined, there hath not wanted some difficulty to do it. For the times are not for all men alike; and D. Potter hath much advantage therein. But truth is truth, and will ever be able to justify itself in the midst of all difficulties which may occur. As for me, when I allege protestant writers, as well domestical as foreign, I willingly and thankfully acknowledge myself obliged for divers of them to the author of the book entitled, The Protestant's Apology for the Roman Church, who calls himself John Brerely; whose care, exactness, and fidelity, is so extraordinary great, as that he doth not only cite the books, but the editions also, with the place and time of their printing, yea, and often the very page and line where the words are to be had. And if you happen not to find what he cites, yet suspend your judgment till you have read the corrections placed at the end of his book; though it be also true, that, after all diligence and faithfulness on his behalf, it was not in his power to amend all the faults of the prints: in which prints we have difficulty enough for many evident reasons, which must needs occur to any prudent man.

8. "And forasmuch as concerns the manner of my Reply, I have procured to do it without all bitterness or gall of invective words, both forasmuch as may import either protestants in general, or D. Potter's person in particular; unless, for example, he will call it bitterness for me to term a gross impertinency, a sleight, or a corruption, by those very names, without which I do not know how to express the things: and yet therein I can truly affirm that I have studied how to deliver them in the most moderate way, to the end I might give as little offence as possibly I could, without betraying the cause. And if any unfit phrase may peradventure have escaped my pen (as I hope none hath, it was beside and against my intention; though I must needs profess, that D. Potter gives so many and so just occasions of being round with him, as that perhaps some will judge me to have been rather remiss than moderate. But since in the very title of my Reply I profess to maintain charity, I conceive the excess will be more excusable amongst all kinds of men, if it fall to be in mildness, than if it had appeared in too much zeal. And if D. Potter have a mind to charge me with ignorance, or any thing of that nature, I can and will ease him of that labour, by acknowledging in myself as many and more personal defects than he can heap upon me. Truth only, and sincerity, I so much value and profess, as that he shall never be able to prove the contrary in any one least passage or particle against me.

9. "In the third and last place, I have thought fit to express myself thus:—If D. Potter or any other resolve to answer my Reply, I desire that he will observe some things which may tend to his own reputation, the saving of my unnecessary pains, and especially to the greater advantage of truth. I wish then that he would be careful to consider wherein the point of every difficulty consists, and not impertinently to shoot at rovers, and affectedly mistake one thing for another. As for example, to what purpose (forasmuch as concerns the question between D. Potter and Charity Mistaken) doth he so often and seriously labour to prove that faith is not resolved into the authority of the church, as into the formal object and motive thereof? or that all points of faith are contained in Scripture? or that the church cannot make new articles of faith? or that the church of Rome, as it signifies that particular church or diocese, is not all one with the universal church? or that the pope as a private doctor may err? with many other such points as will easily appear in their proper places. It will also be necessary for him not to put certain doctrines upon us, from which he knows we disclaim as much as himself.

10. "I must, in like manner, entreat him not to recite my reasons and discourses by halves, but to set them down faithfully and entirely, for as much as in very deed concerns the whole substance of the thing in question; because the want sometime of one word may chance to make void or lessen the force of the whole argument. And I am the more solicitous about giving this particular caveat, because I find how ill he hath complied with the promise which he made in his Preface to the Reader, not to omit without answer any one thing of moment in all the discourse of Charity Mistaken. Neither will this course be a cause that his rejoinder grow too large, but it will be occasion of brevity to him, and free me also from the

pains of setting down all the words which he omits, and himself of demonstrating that what he omitted was not material. Nay, I will assure him, that if he keep himself to the point of every difficulty, and not weary the reader, and overcharge his margent with unnecessary quotations of authors in Greek and Latin, and sometime also in Italian and French, together with proverbs, sentences of poets, and such grammatical stuff, nor affect to cite a multitude of our catholic school divines to no purpose at all, his book will not exceed a competent size, nor will any man in reason be offended with that length which is regulated by necessity. Again, before he come to set down his answer, or propose his arguments, let him consider very well what may be replied, and whether his own objections may not be retorted against himself, as the reader will perceive to have happened often to his disadvantage in my Reply against him. But especially I expect, and truth itself exacts at his hand, that he speak clearly and distinctly, and not seek to walk in darkness, so to delude and deceive his reader, now saying, and then denying, and always speaking with such ambiguity, as that his greatest care may seem to consist in a certain art to find a shift, as his occasions might chance either now or hereafter to require, and as he might fall out to be urged by diversity of several arguments. And to the end it may appear that I deal plainly, as I would have him also do, I desire that he declare himself concerning these points.

11. "First. Whether our Saviour Christ have not always had, and be not ever to have, a visible true church on earth? And whether the contrary doctrine be not a damnable heresy.

12. "Secondly. What visible church there was before Luther, disagreeing from the Roman church, and agreeing with the pretended church of protestants?

13. "Thirdly. Since he will be forced to grant that there can be assigned no visible true church of Christ, distinct from the church of Rome, and such churches as agreed with her when Luther first appeared, whether it doth not follow that she hath not erred fundamentally; because every such error destroys the nature and being of the church, and so our Saviour Christ should have had no visible church on earth.

14. "Fourthly. If the Roman church did not fall into any fundamental error, let him tell us how it can be damnable to live in her communion, or to maintain errors which are known and confessed not to be fundamental or damnable.

15. "Fifthly. If her errors were not damnable, nor did exclude salvation, how can they be excused from schism who forsook her communion upon pretence of errors which were not damnable?

16. "Sixthly. If D. Potter have a mind to say that her errors are damnable or fundamental, let him do us so much charity as to tell us in particular what those fundamental errors be. But he must still remember (and myself must be excused for repeating it), that it he say the Roman church erred fundamentally, he will not be able to show that Christ our Lord had any visible church on earth when Luther appeared: and let him tell us how protestants had, or can have, any church which was universal, and extended herself to all ages, if once he grant that the Roman church ceased to be the true church of Christ, and, consequently, how they can hope for salvation if they deny it to us.

17. "Seventhly. Whether any one error maintained against any one truth, though never so small in itself, yet sufficiently propounded as testified or revealed by Almighty God, do not destroy the nature and unity of faith, or at least is not a grievous offence excluding salvation?

18. "Eighthly. If this be so, how can Lutherans, Calvinists, Zuinglians, and all the rest of disagreeing protestants, hope for salvation, since it is manifest that some of them must needs err against some such truth as is testified by Almighty God, either fundamental or at least not fundamental?

19. "Ninthly. We constantly urge and require to have a particular catalogue of such points as he calls fundamental: a catalogue, I say, in particular, and not only some general definition or description, wherein protestants may perhaps agree, though we see that they differ when they come to assign what points in particular be fundamental; and yet upon such a particular catalogue much depends: as for

example, in particular, whether or no a man doth not err in some points fundamental or necessary to salvation? and whether or no Lutherans, Calvinists, and the rest, do disagree in fundamentals? which if they do the same heaven cannot receive them all.

20. "Tenthly and lastly. I desire that in answering to these points he would let us know distinctly what is the doctrine of the protestant English church concerning them, and what he utters only as his own private opinion.

21. "These are the questions which for the present I find it fit and necessary for me to ask of D. Potter, or any other who will defend his cause or impugn ours. And it will be in vain to speak vainly, and to tell me that a fool may ask more questions in an hour than a wise man can answer in a year, with such idle proverbs as that: for I ask but such questions as for which he gives occasion in his book, and where he declares not himself but after so ambiguous and confused a manner, as that truth itself can scarce tell how to convince him so, but that with ignorant and ill-judging men he will seem to have somewhat left to say for himself, though papists (as he calls them) and puritans should press him contrary ways at the same time: and these questions concern things also of high importance, as whereupon the knowledge of God's church, and true religion, and consequently salvation of the soul, depends. And now, because he shall not tax me with being like those men in the gospel, whom our blessed Lord and Saviour charged with laying heavy burdens upon other men's shoulders, who yet would not touch them with their finger, I oblige myself to answer, upon any demand of his, both to all these questions, if he find that I have not done it already, and to any other, concerning matter of faith, that he shall ask. And I will tell him very plainly what is catholic doctrine and what is not, that is, what is defined or what is not defined, and rests but in discussion among divines.

22. "And it will be here expected that he perform these things as a man who professeth learning should do; not flying from questions which concern things as they are considered in their own nature, to accidental or rare circumstances of ignorance, incapacity, want of means to be instructed, erroneous conscience, and the like; which being very various and different, cannot be well comprehended under any general rule. But in delivering general doctrines, we must consider things as they be *ex natura rei,* or *per se loquendo* (as divines speak), that is, according to their natures, if all circumstances concur proportionable thereunto. As for example, some may for a time have invincible ignorance even of some fundamental article of faith, through want of capacity, instruction, or the like; and so not offend either in such ignorance or error; and yet we must absolutely say that error in any one fundamental point is damnable; because so it is, if we consider things in themselves abstracting from accidental circumstances in particular persons: as contrarily if some man judge some act of virtue or some indifferent action to be a sin, in him it is a sin indeed, by reason of his erroneous conscience; and yet we ought not to say absolutely that virtuous or indifferent actions are sins; and in all sciences we must distinguish the general rules from their particular exceptions. And therefore when, for example, he answers to our demand, whether he hold that Catholics may be saved, or whether their pretended errors be fundamental and damnable? he is not to change the state of the question, and have recourse to ignorance, and the like; but to answer concerning the errors being considered what they are apt to be in themselves, and as they are neither increased nor diminished by accidental circumstances.

23. "And the like I say of all the other points, to which I once again desire an answer without any of these or the like ambiguous terms, *in some sort, in some sense, in some degree*, which may be explicated afterward as strictly or largely as may best serve his turn; but let him tell us roundly and particularly in what sort, in what sense, in what degree he understands those and the like obscure mincing phrases. If he proceed solidly after this manner, and not by way of mere words, more like a preacher to a vulgar auditory than like a learned man with a pen in his hand, thy patience shall be less abused, and truth will also receive more right. And since we have already laid the grounds of the question, much may be said

hereafter in few words, if (as I said) be keep close to the real point of every difficulty, without wandering into impertinent disputes, or multiplying vulgar and threadbare objections and arguments, or labouring to prove what no man denies, or making a vain ostentation by citing a number of schoolmen, which every puny brought up in schools is able to do; and if he cite his authors with such sincerity, as no time need be spent in opening his corruptions; and finally, if he set himself at work with this consideration, that we are to give a most strict account to a most just and impartial Judge, of every period, line, and word that passeth under our pen. For if at the latter day we shall be arraigned for every idle word which is spoken, so much more will that be done for every idle word which is written, as the deliberation wherewith it passeth makes a man guilty of more malice; and as the importance of the matter which is treated of in books concerning true faith and religion, without which no soul can be saved, makes a man's errors more material than they could be if the question were but of toyes."

ANSWER TO THE PREFACE.

AD § 1 and 2. If beginnings be ominous (as they say they are). D. Potter hath cause to look for great store of uningenuous dealing from you; the very first words you speak of him, viz., that he hath not so much as once truly and really fallen upon the point in question, being a most unjust and immodest imputation.

2. For, first, the point in question was not that which you pretend, Whether both papists and protestants can be saved in their several professions? but, Whether you may without uncharitableness affirm that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation? And that this is the very question is most apparent and unquestionable, both from the title of Charity Mistaken, and from the arguments of the three first chapters of it, and from the title of your own Reply. And therefore if D. Potter had joined issue with his adversary only thus far, and, not meddling at all with papists, but leaving them to stand or fall to their own Master, had proved protestants living and dying so capable of salvation, I cannot see how it could justly be charged upon him, that he had not once truly and really fallen upon the point in question. Neither may it be said that your question here and mine are in effect the same, seeing it is very possible that the true answer to the one might have been affirmative, and to the other negative. For there is no incongruity, but it may be true, that you and we cannot both be saved; and yet as true, that without uncharitableness you cannot pronounce us damned. For all ungrounded and unwarrantable sentencing men to damnation is either in a propriety of speech uncharitable, or else (which for my purpose is all one) it is that which protestants mean, when they say papists for damning them are uncharitable. And, therefore, though the author of C. M. had proved as strongly as he hath done weakly, that one heaven could not receive protestants and papists both; yet certainly, it was very hastily and unwarrantably, and therefore uncharitably concluded, that protestants were the part that was to be excluded. As, though Jews and Christians cannot both be saved, yet a Jew cannot justly, and therefore not charitably, pronounce a Christian damned.

3. But, then, secondly to show your dealing with him very injurious; I say, he doth speak to this very question very largely, and very effectually; as by confronting his work and Charity M. together will presently appear. Charity M. proves, you say, in general, that "there is but one church." D. Potter tells him his labour is lost in proving the unity of the catholic church, whereof there is no doubt of controversy: and herein, I hope, you will grant he answers right and to the purpose. C. M. proves, you say, secondly, that "all Christians are obliged to hearken to the church." D. Potter answers, "It is true; yet not absolutely in all things, but only when she commands those things which God doth not countermand." And this also, I hope, is to his purpose, though not to yours. C. M. proves, you say, thirdly, that "the church must be ever visible and infallible." For her visibility, D. Potter denies it not; and as for her infallibility, he grants it in fundamentals, but not in superstructures. C. M. proves, you say, fourthly, that "to separate one's self from the church's communion is schism." D. Potter grants it, with this exception, unless there be necessary cause to do so; unless the conditions of her communion be apparently unlawful. C. M. proves, you say, lastly, that "to dissent from her doctrine is heresy, though it be in points never so few and never so small; and therefore, that the distinction of points fundamental and unfundamental, as it is

applied by protestants, is wholly vain." This D. Potter denies; shows the reasons brought for it weak and unconcluding; proves the contrary by reasons unanswerable: and therefore, that the distinction of points into fundamental and not fundamental, as it is applied by protestants, is very good. Upon these grounds, you say, C. M. clearly evinces, that "any least difference in faith cannot stand with salvation; and therefore seeing catholics and protestants disagree in very many points in faith, they both cannot hope to be saved without repentance;" you must mean, without an explicit and particular repentance, and dereliction of their errors; for so C. M. hath declared himself (p. 14), where he hath these words: "We may safely say, that a man who lives in protestancy, and is so far from repenting it, as that he will not so much as acknowledge it to be a sin, though he be sufficiently informed thereof," &c. From whence it is evident, that in his judgment there can be no repentance of an error without acknowledging it to be a sin. And to this D. Potter justly opposes: that "both sides, by the confession of both sides, agree in more points than are simply and indispensably necessary to salvation, and differ only in such as are not precisely necessary: that it is very possible a man may die in error, and yet die with repentance, as for all his sins of ignorance, so, in that number, for the errors in which he dies: with a repentance though not explicit and particular, which is not simply required, yet implicit and general, which is sufficient: so that he cannot but hope, considering the goodness of God, that the truths retained on both sides, especially those of the necessity of repentance from dead works and faith in Jesus Christ, if they be put in practice, may be an antidote against the errors held on either side; to such be means, and says, as being diligent in seeking truth and desirous to find it, yet miss of it through human frailty, and die in error." If you will but attentively consider and compare the undertaking of C. M. and D. Potter's performance in all these points, I hope you will be so ingenuous as to acknowledge that you have injured him much, in imputing tergiversation to him, and pretending, that through his whole book he hath not once truly and really fallen upon the point in question. Neither may you or C. M. conclude him from hence (as covertly you do) an enemy to souls, by deceiving them with ungrounded false hopes of salvation; seeing the hope of salvation cannot be ungrounded, which requires and supposes belief and practice of all things absolutely necessary unto salvation, and repentance of those sins and errors which we fall into by human frailty; nor a friend to indifferency in religion seeing he gives them only hope of pardon of errors who are desirous, and, according to the proportion of their opportunities and abilities, industrious to find the truth; or at least truly repentant that they have not been so. Which doctrine is very fit to excite men to a constant and impartial search of truth, and very far from teaching them that it is indifferent what religion they are of; and, without all controversy, very honourable to the goodness of God, with which how it can consist, not to be satisfied with his servants' true endeavours to know his will, and do it, without full and exact performance, I leave it to you and all good men to judge.

4. As little justice methinks you show, in quarrelling with him for descending to the particular disputes here mentioned by you. For to say nothing that many of these questions are immediately and directly pertinent to the business in hand, as the 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and all of them fall in of themselves into the stream of his discourse, and are not drawn in by him; and besides are touched for the most part rather than handled: to say nothing of all this, you know right well, if he conclude you erroneous in any one of all these, be it but in the communion in one kind, or the language of your service, the infallibility of your church is evidently overthrown: and this being done, I hope there will be "no such necessity of hearkening to her in all things: it will be very possible to separate from her communion in some things without schism; and from her doctrine, so far as it is erroneous, without heresy: then all that she proposes will not be, *eo ipso,* fundamental, because she proposes it;" and so presently all Charity Mistaken will vanish into smoke and clouds and nothing.

5. You say he was loth to affirm plainly, that generally both Catholics and protestants may be saved: which yet is manifest he doth affirm plainly of protestants throughout his book; and of erring papists, that

"have sincerely sought the truth, and failed of it, and die with a general repentance" (p. 77, 78). And yet you deceive yourself if you conceive he had any other necessity to do so, but only that he thought it true. For we may and do pretend, that before Luther there were many true churches beside the Roman, which agreed not with her: in particular, the Greek church. So that what you say is evidently true, is indeed evidently false. Besides, if he had any necessity to make use of you in this matter, he needed not for this end to say, that now in your church salvation may be had, but only, that before Luther's time it might be; then when your means of knowing the truth were not so great, and when your ignorance might be more invincible, and therefore excusable. So that you may see, if you please, it is not for ends, but for the love of truth, that we are thus charitable to you.

6. Neither is it material that these particulars he speaks against are not fundamental errors; for though they be not destructive of salvation, yet the conviction of them may be, and is, destructive enough of his adversaries' assertion; and if you be the man I take you for, you will not deny they are so. For certainly no consequence can be more palpable than this: The church of Rome doth err in this or that, therefore it is not infallible. And this perhaps you perceived yourself, and therefore demanded not, since they be not fundamental, what imports it whether we hold them or no, simply; but, for as much as concerns our possibility to be saved. As if we were not bound by the love of God and the love of truth to be zealous in the defence of all truths that are any way profitable, though not simply necessary to salvation! or as if any good man could satisfy his conscience without being so affected and resolved! our Saviour himself having assured us, that *he that shall break one of his least commandments* (some whereof you pretend are concerning venial sins, and consequently the keeping of them not necessary to salvation), *and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven*.

7. But then it imports very much, though not for the possibility that you may be saved, yet for the probability that you will be so; because the holding of these errors, though it did not merit, might yet occasion damnation: as the doctrine of indulgences may take away the fear of purgatory, and the doctrine of purgatory the fear of hell; as you well know it does too frequently. So that though a godly man might be saved with these errors, yet by means of them many are made vicious, and so damned. By them, I say, though not for them. No godly layman, who is verily persuaded that there is neither impiety nor superstition in the use of your Latin service, shall be damned, I hope, for being present at it; yet the want of that devotion which the frequent hearing the offices understood might happily beget in them, the want of that instruction and edification which it might afford them, may very probably hinder the salvation of many which might otherwise have been saved. Besides, though the matter of an error may be only something profitable, not necessary, yet the neglect of it may be a damnable sin; as, not to regard venial sins is in the doctrine of your schools mortal. Lastly, as venial sins, you say, dispose men to mortal; so the erring from some profitable, though lesser truth, may dispose a man to error in greater matters: as for example, the belief of the pope's infallibility is, I hope, not unpardonably damnable to every one that holds it; yet if it be a falsehood (as most certainly it is), it puts a man into a very congruous disposition to believe antichrist, if he should chance to get into that see.

8. Ad § 3. In his distinctions of points fundamental and not fundamental, he may seem, you say, to have touched the point, but does not so indeed; because, though he says there are some points so fundamental as that all are obliged to believe them explicitly, yet he tells you not whether a man may disbelieve any other points of faith, which are sufficiently presented to his understanding as truths revealed by Almighty God. Touching which matter of sufficient proposal, I beseech you to come out of the clouds, and tell us roundly and plainly what you mean by "points of faith sufficiently propounded to a man's understanding, as truths revealed by God." Perhaps you mean such as the person to whom they are proposed understands sufficiently to be truths revealed by God. But how then can he possibly choose but believe them? or how is it not an apparent contradiction, that a man should disbelieve what himself

understands to be a truth, or any Christian what he understands or but believes to be testified by God? D. Potter might well think it superfluous to tell you this is damnable; because indeed it is impossible. And yet one may very well think, by your saying, as you do hereafter, that "the impiety of heresy consists in calling God's truth in question," that this should be your meaning. Or do you esteem all those things sufficiently presented to his understanding as Divine truths, which by you, or any other man, or any company of men whatsoever, are declared to him to be so? I hope you will not say so; for this were to oblige a man to believe all the churches, and all the men in the world, whensoever they pretend to propose Divine revelation. D. Potter, I assure you from him, would never have told you this neither. Or do you mean by "sufficiently propounded as Divine truths," all that your church propounds for such? That you may not neither; for the question between us is this: Whether your church's proposition be a sufficient proposition? And therefore to suppose this, is to suppose the question, which you know in reasoning is always a fault. Or, lastly, do you mean (for I know not else what possibly you can mean) by "sufficiently presented to his understanding as revealed by God," that which, all things considered, is so proposed to him, that he might, and should, and would believe it to be true and revealed by God, were it not for some voluntary and avoidable fault of his own, that interposeth itself between his understanding and the truth presented to it? This is the best construction that I can make of your words; and if you speak of truths thus proposed and rejected, let it be as damnable as you please to deny or disbelieve them. But then I cannot but be amazed to hear you say, that D. Potter never tells you whether there be any other points of faith besides those which we are bound to believe explicitly, which a man may deny or disbelieve, though they be sufficiently presented to his understanding as truths revealed or testified by Almighty God; seeing the light itself is not more clear than D. Potter's declaration of himself for the negative in this question, p. 245—250 of his book; where he treats at large of this very argument, beginning his discourse thus: "It seems fundamental to the faith, and for the salvation of every member of the church, that he acknowledge and believe all such points of faith, as whereof he may be convinced that they belong to the doctrine of Jesus Christ." To this conviction he requires three things: "clear revelation, sufficient proposition, and capacity and understanding in the hearer. For want of clear revelation, he frees the church before Christ and the disciples of Christ from any damnable error, though they believed not those things which he that should now deny were no Christian. To sufficient proposition he requires two things: 1. That the points he perspicuously laid open in themselves. 2. So forcibly as may serve to remove reasonable doubts to the contrary, and satisfy a teachable mind concerning it against the principles in which he hath been bred to the contrary. This proposition," he says, is not limited to the pope or church, but extended to all means whatsoever, by which a man may be convinced in conscience that the matter proposed is Divine revelation; which he professes to be done sufficiently, not only when his conscience doth expressly bear witness to the truth, but when it would do so, if it were not choked and blinded by some unruly and unmortified lust in the will; the difference being not great between him that is wilfully blind, and him that knowingly gainsayeth the truth. The third thing he requires is capacity and ability to apprehend the proposal, and the reasons of it; the want whereof excuseth fools and madmen, &c. But where there is no such impediment, and the will of God is sufficiently propounded, there," saith he, "he that opposeth is convinced of error; and he who is thus convinced is an heretic; and heresy is a work of the flesh which excludeth from salvation" [he means without repentance]. "And hence it followeth, that it is fundamental to a Christian's faith, and necessary for his salvation, that he believe all revealed truths of God, whereof he may be convinced that they are from God." This is the conclusion of D. Potter's discourse; many passages whereof you take notice of in your subsequent disputations, and make your advantage of them. And therefore I cannot but say again, that it amazeth me to hear you say that he declines this question, and never tells you "whether or no there be any other points of faith, which, being sufficiently propounded as Divine revelations, may be denied and disbelieved." He tells you plainly there

are none such; and therefore you cannot say that he tells you not whether there be any such. Again, it is almost as strange to me, why you should say this was the only thing in question, "whether a man may deny or disbelieve any point of faith sufficiently presented to his understanding as a truth revealed by God." For to say that anything is a thing in question, methinks, at the first hearing of the words, imports, that it is by some affirmed, and denied by others. Now you affirm, I grant, but what protestant ever denied that it was a sin to give God the lie; which is the first and most obvious sense of these words. Or which of them ever doubted that to disbelieve is then a fault, when the matter is so proposed to a man, that he might and should, and were it not for his own fault, would believe it? Certainly, he that questions either of these, justly deserves to have his wits called in question. Produce any one protestant that ever did so, and I will give you leave to say it is the only thing in question. But then I must tell you, that your ensuing argument—viz., To deny a truth witnessed by God is damnable; but of two that disagree, one must of necessity deny some such truth, therefore one only can be saved—is built upon a ground clean different from this postulate. For though it be always a fault to deny what either I do know or should know to be testified by God; yet that which by a cleanly conveyance you put in the place thereof, to deny a truth witnessed by God simply, without the circumstance of being known or sufficiently proposed, is so far from being certainly damnable, that it may be many times done without any the least fault at all. As if God should testify something to a man in the Indies, I that had no assurance of this testification should not be obliged to believe it. For in such cases the rule of the law hath place, *Idem est non esse et non apparere;* not to be at all, and not to appear to me, is to me all one. *If I had not come and spoken unto you* (saith our Saviour), *you had had no sin*.

10. As little necessity is there for that which follows: that "of two disagreeing in a matter of faith, one must deny some such truth;" whether by *such* you understand "testified at all by God," or, "testified or sufficiently propounded." For it is very possible the matter in controversy may be such a thing where God hath not at all declared himself, or not so fully and clearly as to oblige all men to hold one way, and yet be so over-valued by the parties in variance as to be esteemed a matter of faith, and one of those things of which our Saviour says, *He that believeth not shall be damned*. Who sees not that it is possible two churches may excommunicate and damn each other for keeping Christmas ten days sooner or later, as well as Victor excommunicated the churches of Asia for differing from him about Easter-day? and yet I believe you will confess that God had not then declared himself about Easter, nor hath now about Christmas. Anciently some good catholic bishops excommunicated and damned others for holding there were antipodes; and in this question I would fain know on which side was the sufficient proposal. The contra-remonstrants differ from the remonstrants about the point of predetermination as a matter of faith; I would know in this thing also which way God hath declared himself, whether for predetermination or against it. Stephen, bishop of Rome, held it as a matter of faith and apostolic tradition, that heretics gave true baptism; others there were, and they as good catholics as he, that held that this was neither matter of faith nor matter of truth. Justin Martyr and Irenæus held the doctrine of the millenaries as a matter of faith: and though Justin Martyr deny it, yet you, I hope, will affirm that some good Christians held the contrary. St. Augustin, I am sure, held the communicating of infants as much apostolic tradition as the baptising of them: whether the bishop and the church of Rome of his time held so too, or held otherwise, I desire you to determine. But sure I am the church of Rome at this present holds the contrary. The same St. Austin held in no matter of faith, that the bishops of Rome were judges of appeals from all parts of the church catholic, no, not in major causes and major persons: whether the bishop or church of Rome did then hold the contrary, do you resolve me; but now I am resolved that they do so. In all these differences, the point in question is esteemed and proposed by one side at least as a matter of faith, and by the other rejected as not so: and either this is to disagree in matters of faith, or you will have no means to show that we do disagree. Now, then, to show you how weak and sandy the foundation is on which the

whole fabric both of your book and church depends, answer me briefly to this dilemma; either in these oppositions one of the opposite parts erred damnably, and denied God's truth sufficiently propounded, or they did not. If they did, then they which do deny God's truth sufficiently propounded may go to heaven; and then you are rash and uncharitable in excluding us, though we were guilty of this fault. If not, then there is no such necessity, that of two disagreeing about a matter of faith, one should deny God's truth sufficiently propounded: and so the major and minor of your argument are proved false. Yet, though they were as true as gospel, and as evident as mathematical principles, the conclusion (so impertinent is it to the premises) might still be false. For that which naturally issues from these propositions is not—therefore one only can be saved; but—therefore one of them does something that is damnable. But with what logic or what charity you can infer either as the immediate production of the former premises, or as a corollary from this conclusion—therefore one only can be saved—I do not understand; unless you will pretend that this consequence is good—Such a one doth something damnable, therefore he shall certainly be dammed: which whether it be not to overthrow the article of our faith, which promises remission of sins upon repentance, and consequently to ruin the gospel of Christ, I leave it to the pope and the cardinals to determine. For if against this it be alleged that no man can repent of the sin wherein he dies, this much I have already stopped, by showing, that if it be a sin of ignorance, this is in no way incongruous.

11. Ad § 4. You proceed in slighting and disgracing your adversary, pretending his objections are mean and vulgar, and such as have been answered a thousand times. But if your cause were good, these arts would be needless. For though some of his objections have been often shifted, by men that make a profession of devising shifts and evasions to save themselves and their religion from the pressure of truth, by men that are resolved they will say something, though they can say nothing to purpose; yet I doubt not to make it appear, that neither by others have they been truly and really satisfied, and that the best answer you give them is to call them mean and vulgar objections.

12. Ad § 5. "But his pains might have been spared: for the substance of his discourse is in a sermon of Dr. Usher's, and confuted four years ago by Paulus Veridicus." It seems, then, the substance of your Reply is in Paulus Veridicus, and so your pains also might well have been spared. But had there been no necessity, to help and piece out your confuting his arguments with disgracing his person (which yet you cannot do), you would have considered, that to them who compare D. Potter's book and the archbishop's sermon, this aspersion will presently appear a poor detraction, not to be answered, but scorned. To say nothing, that in D. Potter being to answer a book by express command from royal authority, to leave anything material unsaid, because it had been said before, especially being spoken at large, and without any relation to the discourse which he was to answer, had been a ridiculous vanity and fond prevarication.

13. Ad § 6. In your sixth parag. I let all pass saving only this: "that a persuasion that men of different religions" (you must mean, or else you speak not to the point, Christians of divers opinions and communions) "may be saved, is a most pernicious heresy, and even a ground of atheism." What strange extractions chemistry can make, I know not; but sure I am, he that by reason would infer this conclusion—that there is no God, from this ground—that God will save men in different religions, must have a higher strain in logic than you or I have hitherto made show of. In my apprehension, the other part of the contradiction—that there is a God, should much rather follow from it. And whether contradictions will flow from the same fountain, let the learned judge. Perhaps you will say, you intended not to deliver here a positive and measured truth, and which you expected to be called to account for; but only a high and tragical expression of your just detestation of the wicked doctrine against which you write: if you mean so, I let it pass: only I am to advertise the less wary reader, that passionate expressions and vehement asseverations are no arguments, unless it be of the weakness of the cause that is defended by them, or the man that defends it. And to remember you of what Boethius says of some such things as these—*Nubila mens est, hæc ubi regnant*. For my part, I am not now in a passion; neither will I speak one

word which I think I cannot justify to the full; and I say, and will maintain, that to say that Christians of different opinions and communions (such, I mean, who hold all those things that are simply necessary to salvation) may not obtain pardon for the errors wherein they die ignorantly by a general repentance, is so far from being a ground of atheism, that to say the contrary is to cross in diameter a main article of our creed, and to overthrow the gospel of Christ.

14. § 7 and 8. To the two next parag. I have but two words to say. The one is, that I know no protestants that hold it necessary to be able to prove a perpetual visible church distinct from yours. Some perhaps undertake to do so, as a matter of courtesy; but I believe you will be much to seek for any one that holds it necessary. For though you say that Christ hath promised there shall be a perpetual visible church, yet you yourselves do not pretend that he hath promised there shall be histories and records always extant of the professors of it in all ages; nor that he hath any where enjoined us to read those histories, that we may be able to show them.

15. The other is that Brerely's great exactness, which you magnify so and amplify, is no very certain demonstration of his fidelity. A romance may be told with as much variety of circumstances as a true story.

16. Ad § 9 and 10. Your desires that I would in this rejoinder avoid impertinences—not impose doctrines upon you which you disclaim—set down the substance of your reasons faithfully and entirely—not weary the reader with unnecessary quotations—object nothing to you which I can answer myself, or which may be returned upon myself—and, lastly (which you repeat again in the end of your preface), speak as clearly and distinctly and univocally as possibly I can—are all very reasonable, and shall be by me most punctually and fully satisfied. Only I have reason to complain, that you give us rules only, and not good example in keeping them. For in some of these things I shall have frequent occasion to show, that *Medice, cura teipsum*, may very justly be said unto you; especially for objecting what might easily have been answered by you, and may be very justly returned upon you.

17. To your ensuing demands, though some of them be very captious and insnaring, yet I will give you as clear and plain and ingenuous answers as possibly I can.

18. Ad § 11. To the first, then, about the perpetuity of the visible church, my answer is—that I believe our Saviour, ever since his ascension, hath had in some place or other a visible true church on earth; I mean a company of men that professed at least so much truth as was absolutely necessary for their salvation. And I believe that there will be some where or other such a church to the world's end. But the contrary doctrine I do at no hand believe to be a damnable heresy.

19. Ad § 12. To the second, What visible church there was before Luther disagreeing from the Roman? I answer, that before Luther there were many visible churches in many things disagreeing from the Roman; but not that the whole catholic church disagreed from her, because she herself was a part of the whole, though much corrupted. And to undertake to name a catholic church disagreeing from her, is to make her no part of it, which we do not nor need not pretend. And for men agreeing with protestants in all points, we will then produce them, when you shall either prove it necessary to be done—which you know we absolutely deny—or when you shall produce a perpetual succession of professors, which in all points have agreed with you, and disagreed from you in nothing. But this my promise, to deal plainly with you, I conceive and so intended it to be very like his, who undertook to drink up the sea, upon condition that he to whom the promise was made should first stop the rivers from running in. For this unreasonable request which you make to us is to yourselves so impossible, that in the next age after the apostles you will never be able to name a man whom you can prove to have agreed with you in all things, nay (if you speak of such whose works are extant and unquestioned), whom we cannot prove to have disagreed from you in many things. Which I am so certain of, that I will venture my credit and my life upon it.

20. Ad § 13. To the third, Whether, seeing there cannot be assigned any visible true church distinct from the Roman, it follows not that she erred not fundamentally? I say, in our sense of the word

fundamental, it does follow. For if it be true that there was then no church distinct from the Roman, then it must be either because there was no church at all, which we deny; or because the Roman church was the whole church, which we also deny; or because she as a part of the whole, which we grant. And if she were a true part of the church, then she retained those truths which were simply necessary to salvation, and held no errors which were inevitably and unpardonably destructive of it. For this is precisely necessary to constitute any man or any church a member of the church catholic. In our sense therefore of the word *fundamental*, I hope she erred not fundamentally, but in your sense of the word I fear she did; that is, she held something to be Divine revelation which was not, something not to be which was.

21. Ad § 14. To the fourth, How it could be damnable to maintain her errors, if they were not fundamental? I answer, 1, Though it were not damnable, yet if it were a fault, it was not to be done. For a venial sin with you is not damnable; yet you say it is not to be committed for the procuring any good: *Non est faciendum malum vel minimum, ut eveniat bonum vel maximum*. It is damnable to maintain an error against conscience, though the error in itself, unto him that believes it, be not damnable. Nay, the profession not only of an error, but even of a truth, if not believed, when you think on it again, I believe you will confess to be a mortal sin; unless you will say hypocrisy and simulation in religion is not so. 2. Though we say the errors of the Roman church were not destructive of salvation, but pardonable even to them that died in them, upon a general repentance; yet we deny not but in themselves they were damnable. Nay, the very saying they were pardonable implies they need pardon, and therefore in themselves were damnable; damnable meritoriously, though not effectually. As a poison may be deadly in itself, and yet not kill him that together with the poison takes an antidote; or as felony may deserve death, and yet not bring it on him that obtains the king's pardon.

22. Ad § 15. To the fifth, How can they be excused from schism who forsook her communion upon pretence of errors which were not damnable? I answer, all that we forsake in you is only the belief and practice and profession of your errors. Hereupon you cast us out of your communion; and then, with a strange and contradictious and ridiculous hypocrisy, complain that we forsake it. As if a man should thrust his friends out of doors, and then be offended at his departure. But for us not to forsake the belief of your errors, having discovered them to be errors, was impossible; and therefore to do so could not be damnable, believing them to be errors. Not to forsake the practice and profession of them, had been damnable hypocrisy; supposing that (which you vainly run away with, and take for granted) those errors in themselves were not damnable. Now to do so, and, as matters now stand, not to forsake your communion, is apparently contradictious; seeing the condition of your communion is, that we must profess to believe all your doctrines, not only not to be damnable errors (which will not content you), but also to be certain and necessary and revealed truths. So that to demand why we forsook your communion upon pretence of errors which are not damnable, is in effect to demand why we forsook it upon our forsaking it? For to pretend that there are errors in your church, though not damnable, is *ipso facto* to forsake your communion, and to do that which both in your account, and, as you think, in God's account, puts him that does so out of your communion. So that either you must free your church from requiring the belief of any error whatsoever, damnable and not damnable, or, whether you will or no, you must free us from schism; for schism there cannot be in leaving your communion, unless we were obliged to continue in it. Man cannot be obliged by man, but to what either formally or virtually he is obliged by God; for all just power is from God. God, the eternal truth, neither can nor will oblige us to believe any the least and the most innocent falsehood to be a Divine truth, that is, to err: nor to profess a known error, which is to lie. So that if you require the belief of any error among the conditions of your communion, our obligation to communicate with you ceaseth, and so the imputation of schism to us vanisheth into nothing; but lies heavy upon you for making our separation from you just and necessary, by requiring unnecessary and unlawful conditions of your communion. Hereafter, therefore, I entreat you,

let not your demand be, how could we forsake your communion without schism, seeing you erred not damnably? but, how could we do so without schism, seeing you erred not at all? which if either you do prove, or we cannot disprove it, we will (I at least will for my part) return to your communion, or subscribe myself schismatic. In the mean time, μένωμεν ὥσπερ ἐμεν.

23. Yet notwithstanding all your errors, we do not renounce your communion totally and absolutely, but only leave communicating with you in the practice and profession of your errors. The trial whereof will be to propose some form of worshipping God, taken wholly out of Scripture; and herein if we refuse to join with you, then, and not till then, may you justly say we have utterly and absolutely abandoned your communion.

24. Ad § 16. Your sixth demand I have already satisfied in my answers to the second and the fourth, and in my reply ad § 2, toward the end. And though you say your repeating must be excused, yet I dare not be so confident, and therefore, forbear it.

25. Ad § 17. To the seventh, Whether error against any one truth sufficiently propounded as testified by God, destroy not the nature and unity of faith, or at least is not a grievous offence, excluding salvation? I answer, if you suppose, as you seem to do, the proposition so sufficient, that the party to whom it is made is convinced, that it is from God, so that the denial of it involves also with it, the denial of God's veracity, any such error destroys both faith and salvation. But if the proposal be only so sufficient, not that the party to whom it is made is convinced, but only that he should, and but for his own fault would have been convinced of the Divine verity of the doctrine proposed, the crime then is not so great; for the belief of God's veracity may still consist with such an error. Yet a fault I confess it is, and (without repentance) damnable, if, all circumstances considered, the proposal be sufficient. But then I must tell you, that the proposal of the present Roman church is only pretended to be sufficient for this purpose, but is not so; especially all the rays of the Divinity, which they pretend to shine so conspicuously in her proposals, being so darkened and even extinguished with a cloud of contradiction, from Scripture, reason, and the ancient church.

26. Ad § 18. To the eighth, How of disagreeing protestants, both parts may hope for salvation, seeing some of them must needs err against some truth testified by God? I answer, the most disagreeing protestants that are, yet thus far agree; 1. That those books of Scripture which were never doubted of in the church are the undoubted word of God, and a perfect rule of faith. 2. That the sense of them, which God intended, whatsoever it is, is certainly true; so that they believe implicitly even those very truths against which they err; and why an implicit faith in Christ and his word should not suffice as well as an implicit faith in your church, I have desired to be resolved by many of your side, but never could. 3. That they are to use their best endeavours to believe the Scripture in the true sense, and to live according to it. This if they perform (as I hope many on all sides do) truly and sincerely, it is impossible but that they should believe aright in all things necessary to salvation; that is, in all those things which appertain to the covenant between God and man in Christ; for so much is not only plainly, but frequently contained in Scripture. And believing aright touching the covenant, if they for their parts perform the condition required of them, which is sincere obedience, why should they not expect that God will perform his promise, and give them salvation? For, as for other things, which lie without the covenant, and are therefore less necessary, if by reason of the seeming conflict which is oftentimes between Scripture and reason and authority on the one side, and Scripture, reason, and authority on the other; if by reason of the variety of tempers, abilities, educations, and unavoidable prejudices, whereby men's understandings are variously formed and fashioned, they do embrace several opinions, whereof some must be erroneous; to say that God will damn them for such errors, who are lovers of him, and lovers of truth, is to rob man of his comfort, and God of his goodness; it is to make man desperate and God a tyrant. But "they deny truths testified by God, and therefore shall be damned."—Yes, if they knew them to be thus testified by

him, and yet would deny them; that were to give God the lie, and questionless damnable. But if you should deny a truth which God had testified but only to a man in the Indies (as I said before), and this testification you had never heard of, or at least had no sufficient reason to believe that God had so testified, would you not think it a hard case to be damned for such a denial? Yet consider, I pray, a little more attentively, the difference between them, and you will presently acknowledge the question between them is not at any time, or in any thing, whether God says true or no; or whether he says this or no; but, supposing he says this, and says true, whether he means this or no. As for example: between Lutherans, Calvinists, and Zuinglians, it is agreed that Christ spake these words, *This is my body;* and that whatsoever he meant in saying so is true: but what he meant, and how he is to be understood, that is the question. So that though some of them deny a truth by God intended, yet you can with no reason or justice accuse them of denying the truth of God's testimony, unless you can plainly show that God hath declared, and that plainly and clearly, what was his meaning in these words: I say plainly and clearly; for he that speaks obscurely and ambiguously, and no where declares himself plainly, sure he hath no reason to be much offended if he be mistaken. When, therefore, you can show, that in this and all other their controversies, God hath interposed his testimony on one side or other; so that either they do see it said will not; or were it not for their own voluntary and avoidable fault, might and should see it, and do not: let all such errors be as damnable as you please to make them. In the mean while, if they suffer themselves neither to be betrayed into their errors, nor keep in them by any sin of their will; if they do their best endeavours to free themselves from all errors, and yet fail of it through human frailty; so well am I persuaded of the goodness of God, that if in me alone should meet a confluence of all such errors of all the protestants in the world that were thus qualified, I should not be so much afraid of them all, as I should be to ask pardon for them. For whereas that which you affright us with, of calling God's veracity in question, is but a panic fear, a fault that no man thus qualified is or can be guilty of; to ask pardon of simple and purely involuntary errors is tacitly to imply that God is angry with us for them, and that were to impute to him the strange tyranny of requiring brick when he gives no straw; of expecting to gather where he strewed not; to reap, where he sowed not; of being offended with us for not doing what he knows we cannot do. This I say upon a supposition that they do their best endeavours to know God's will and do it; which he that denies to be possible knows not what he says; for he says, in effect, that men cannot do what they can do; for to do what a man can do, is to do his best endeavour. But because this supposition, though certainly possible, is very rare and admirable; I say, secondly, that I am verily persuaded that God will not impute errors to them as sins, who use such a measure of industry in finding truth, as human prudence and ordinary discretion (their abilities and opportunities, their distractions and hinderances, and all other things considered) shall advise them unto, in a matter of such consequence. But if herein also we fail, then our errors begin to be malignant, and justly imputable, as offences against God, and that love of his truth which he requires in us. You will say, then, that for those erring protestants which are in this case, which evidently are far the greater part, they sin damnably in erring, and therefore there is little hope of their salvation. To which I answer, that the consequence of this reason is somewhat strong against a protestant, but much weakened by coming out of the mouth of a papist. For all sins with you are not damnable; and therefore protestant errors might be sins, and yet not damnable. But yet, out of courtesy to you, we will remove this rub out of your way; and for the present suppose them mortal sins; and is there then no hope of salvation for him that commits them? Not, you will say, if he die in them without repentance; and such protestants you speak of, who without repentance die in their errors. Yea, but what if they die in their errors with repentance? Then I hope you will have charity enough to think they may be saved. Charity Mistaken makes it indeed for granted that this supposition is destructive of itself: and that it is impossible and incongruous that a man should repent of those errors wherein he dies, or die in those whereof lie repents. But it was wisely done of him to take it for granted; for most certainly he could not have spoken

one word of sense for the confirmation of it. For seeing protestants believe, as well as you, God's infinite and most admirable perfections in himself, more than most worthy of all possible love: seeing they believe, as well as you, his infinite goodness to them, in creating them of nothing; in creating them according to his own image; in creating all things for their use and benefit; in streaming down his favours on them every moment of their lives; in designing them, if they serve him, to infinite and eternal happiness; in redeeming them, *not with corruptible things*, but the precious blood of his beloved Son: seeing they believe, as well as you, his infinite goodness and patience towards them, in expecting their conversion, in wooing, alluring, leading, and by all means which his wisdom can suggest unto him, and man's nature is capable of, drawing them to repentance and salvation; seeing they believe these things as well as you, and, for aught you know, consider them as much as you (and if they do not, it is not their religion, but they that are to blame)—what can hinder but that the consideration of God's most infinite goodness to them, and their own almost infinite wickedness against him, God's Spirit co-operating with them, may raise them to a true and sincere and cordial love of God? And seeing sorrow for having injured or offended the person beloved, or when we fear we may have offended him, is the most natural effect of true love; what can hinder but that love which hath ofttimes constrained them to lay down their lives for God (which our Saviour assures us is the noblest sacrifice we can offer), may produce in them an universal sorrow for all their sins, both which they know they have committed, and which they fear they may have? In which number, their being negligent, or not dispassionate, or not unprejudicate enough in seeking the truth, and the effect thereof, their errors, if they be sins, cannot but be comprised. In a word, what should hinder but that that prayer—*Delicta sua quis intelligit? Who can understand his faults? Lord, cleanse thou me from my secret sins*—may be heard and accepted by God, as well from a protestant that dies in some errors, as from a papist that dies in some other sins of ignorance, which perhaps he might more easily have discovered to be sins, than a protestant could his error to be errors? As well from a protestant that held some error, which (as he conceived) God's word and his reason (which is also in some sort God's word) led him unto, as from a Dominican, who perhaps took up his opinion upon trust, not because he had reason to believe it true, but because it was the opinion of his order; for the same man, if he had light upon another order, would in all probability have been of the other opinion: for what else is the cause that generally all the Dominicans are of one opinion, and all the Jesuits of the other? I say, from a Dominican who took up his opinion upon trust; and that such an opinion (if we believe the writers of your order) as, if it be granted true, it were not a point-matter what opinions any man held, or what actions any man did: for the best would be as had as the worst, and the worst as good as the best. And yet such is the partiality of your hypocrisy, that, of disagreeing papists, neither shall deny the truth testified by God, but both may hope for salvation: but of disagreeing protestants (though they differ in the same thing), one side must deny God's testimony, and be incapable of salvation. That a Dominican, through culpable negligence, living and dying in his error, may repent of it, though he knows it not; or be saved, though he do not: but if a protestant do the very same thing, in the very same point, and die in his error, his case is desperate. The sum of all that hath been said to this demand, is this:—1. That no erring protestant denies any truth testified by God, under this formality, as testified by him; nor which they know or believe to be testified by him. And therefore it is an horrible calumny in you to say—they call God's veracity in question: for God's undoubted and unquestioned veracity is to them the ground why they do hold all they do hold: neither do they hold any opinion so stiffly, but they will forego it rather than this one—that all which God says is true. 2. God hath not so clearly and plainly declared himself in most of these things which are in controversy between protestants, but that an honest man, whose heart is right to God, and one that is a true lover of God and of his truth, may, by reason of the conflict of contrary reasons on both sides, very easily, and therefore excusably mistake, and embrace error for truth, and reject truth for error. 3. If any protestant or papist be betrayed into or kept in any error by any sin of his will (as it is to be feared many

millions are), such error is, as the cause of it, sinful and damnable; yet not exclusive of all hope of salvation, but pardonable, if discovered, upon a particular explicit repentance; if not discovered, upon a general and implicit repentance for all sins, known and unknown: in which number all sinful errors must of necessity be contained.

27. Ad § 19. To the ninth, wherein you are so urgent for a particular catalogue of your fundamentals; I answer almost in your own words, that we also constantly urge and require to have a particular catalogue of your fundamentals, whether they be written verities, or unwritten traditions, or church definitions, all which, you say, integrate the material object of your faith: in a word, of all such points as are defined and sufficiently proposed; so that whosoever denies, or doubts of any of them, is certainly in the state of damnation. A catalogue, I say, in particular of the proposals; and not only some general definition or description, under which you lurk deceitfully, of what and what only is sufficiently proposed: wherein yet you do not very well agree. For many of you hold the pope's proposal *ex cathedra* to be sufficient and obliging; some, a council without a pope; some, of neither of them severally, but only both together; some, not this neither in matter of manners, which Bellarmine acknowledges, and tells us it is all one in effect as if they denied it sufficient in matter of faith; some not in matter of faith neither think this proposal infallible, without the acceptation of the church universal; some deny the infallibility of the present church, and only make the tradition of all ages the infallible propounder: yet if you were agreed what and what only is the infallible propounder this would not satisfy us; nor yet to say, that all is fundamental which is propounded sufficiently by him; for though agreeing in this, yet you might still disagree whether such or such a doctrine were propounded or not: or, if propounded, whether sufficiently, or only unsufficiently. And it is so known a thing that in many points you do so, that I assure myself you will not deny it. Therefore we constantly urge and require a particular and perfect inventory of all those Divine revelations which, you say, are sufficiently propounded; and that such an one to which all of your church will subscribe, as neither redundant nor deficient; which when you give in with one hand, you shall receive a particular catalogue of such points as I call fundamental with the other. Neither may you think me unreasonable in this demand, seeing upon such a particular catalogue of your sufficient proposals as much depends as upon a particular catalogue of our fundamentals. As for example, whether or no a man do not err in some point defined and sufficiently proposed; and whether or no those that differ among you differ in fundamentals; which if they do, one heaven (by your own rule) cannot receive them all. Perhaps you will here complain, that this is not to satisfy your demand, but to avoid it, and to put you off, as the Areopagites did hard causes, *ad diem longissimum*, and bid you come again a hundred years hence. To deal truly, I did so intend it should be. Neither can you say my dealing with you is injurious, seeing that I require nothing of you, but that what you require of others you should show it possible to be done, and just and necessary to be required. For, for my part, I have great reason to suspect it is neither the one nor the other: for whereas the verities which are delivered in Scripture may be very fitly divided into such as were written because they were necessary to be believed (of which rank are those only which constitute and make up the covenant between God and man in Christ); and then such as are necessary to be believed not in themselves, but only by accident, because they were written; of which rank are many matters of history, of prophecy, of mystery, of policy, of economy, and such like, which are evidently not intrinsical to the covenant: now to sever exactly and punctually these verities one from the other, what is necessary in itself, and antecedently to the writing, from what is but only profitable in itself, and necessary only because written, is a business of extreme great difficulty, and extreme little necessity. For, first, he that will go about to distinguish, especially in the story of our Saviour, what was written because it was profitable, from what was written because necessary, shall find an intricate piece of business of it, and almost impossible that he should be certain he hath done it, when he hath done it. And then it is apparently unnecessary to go about it, seeing he that believes all, certainly believes all that is necessary;

and he that doth not believe all (I mean all the undoubted parts of the undoubted books of Scripture), can hardly believe any; neither have we reason to believe he doth so. So that, that protestants give you not a catalogue of fundamentals, it is not from tergiversation (as you suspect, who for want of charity to them always suspect the worst), but from wisdom and necessity: for they may very easily err in doing it; because though all which is necessary be plain in Scripture, yet all which is plain is not therefore written because it was necessary; for what greater necessity was there that I should know St. Paul left his cloak at Troas, than those worlds of miracles which our Saviour did, which were never written? And when they had done it, it had been to no purpose; there being as matters now stand, as great necessity of believing those truths of Scripture which are not fundamental, as those that are. You see then what reason we have to decline this hard labour, which you, a rigid task-master, have here put upon us. Yet instead of giving you a catalogue of fundamentals, with which I dare say you are resolved, before it come, never to be satisfied; I will say that to you, which, if you please, may do you as much service; and this it is—that it is sufficient for any man's salvation that he believe the Scripture; that he endeavour to believe it in the true sense of it, as far as concerns his duty; and that he conform his life unto it either by obedience or repentance. He that does so (and all protestants, according to the *dictamen* of their religion, should do so) may be secure that he cannot err fundamentally. And they that do so cannot differ in fundamentals. So that, notwithstanding their differences, and your presumption, the same heaven may receive them all.

28. Ad § 20. Your tenth and last request is, to know distinctly what is the doctrine of the protestant English church in these points, and what my private opinion? which shall be satisfied when the church of England hath expressed herself in them; or when you have told us what is the doctrine of your church in the question of predetermination, or the immaculate conception.

29. Ad § 21 and 22. These answers, I hope, in the judgment of indifferent men, are satisfactory to your questions, though not to you: for I have either answered them, or given you a reason why I have not. Neither, for aught I can see, have I flitted from things considered in their own nature to accidental or rare circumstances; but told you my opinion plainly what I thought of your errors in themselves; and what as they were qualified or malignified with good or bad circumstances. Though I must tell you truly, that I see no reason, the question being of the damnableness of error, why you should esteem ignorance, incapacity, want of means to be instructed, accidental and rare circumstances: as if knowledge, capacity, having means of instruction concerning the truth of your religion or ours, were not as rare and unusual in the adverse part of either, as ignorance, incapacity, and want of means of instruction; especially how erroneous conscience can be a rare thing in those that err, or how unerring conscience is not much more rare, I am not able to apprehend. So that, to consider men of different religions (the subject of this controversy) in their own nature, and without circumstances, must be to consider them neither as ignorant nor as knowing; neither as having, nor as wanting means of instruction; neither as with capacity, nor without it; neither with erroneous, nor yet with unerring conscience. And then what judgment can you pronounce of them, all the goodness and badness of an action depending on the circumstances? Ought not a judge, being to give sentence of an action, to consider all the circumstances of it? Or is it possible he should judge rightly that doth not so? Neither is it to purpose that circumstances being various cannot be well comprehended under any general rule: for though under any general rule they cannot, yet under many general rules they may be comprehended. The question here is, you say, whether men of different religions may be saved? Now the subject of this question is an ambiguous term, and may be determined and invested with diverse and contrary circumstances; and, accordingly, contrary judgments are to be given of it. And who can then be offended with D. Potter for distinguishing before he defines? (the want whereof is the chief thing that makes defining dangerous) who can find fault with him for saying, "If, through want of means of instruction, incapacity, invincible or probable ignorance, a man die in error, he may be saved; but if he be negligent in seeking the truth, unwilling to find it, either doth see

it and will not, or might see it and will not, that his case is dangerous, and without repentance desperate?" This is all that D. Potter says, neither rashly damning all that are of a different opinion from him, nor securing any that are in matter of religion sinfully, that is, willingly, erroneous. The author of this reply (I will abide by it) says the very same thing; neither can I see what adversary he hath in the main question but his own shadow; and yet, I know not out of what frowardness, finds fault with D. Potter for affirming that which himself affirms: and to cloud the matter, whereas the question is, whether men by ignorance, dying in error, may be saved? would have them considered neither as erring nor ignorant. And when the question is, whether the errors of the papists be damnable?—to which we answer, that to them that do or might know them to be errors, they are damnable; to them that do not, they are not—he tells us, "that this is to change the state of the question"—whereas, indeed, it is to state the question, and free it from ambiguity before you answer it—and "to have recourse to accidental circumstances;" as if ignorance were accidental to error, or as if a man could be considered as in error, and not be considered as in ignorance of the truth from which he errs! Certainly error against a truth must needs presuppose a nescience of it; unless you will say that a man may at once resolve for a truth, and resolve against it; assent to it, and dissent from it; know it to be true, and believe it not to be true. Whether knowledge and opinion touching the same thing may stand together, is made a question in the schools: but he that would question whether knowing a thing and doubting of it, much more, whether knowing it to be true and believing it to be false, may stand together, deserves, without question, no other answer but laughter. Now if error and knowledge cannot consist, then error and ignorance must be inseparable. He then that professeth your errors may well be considered either as knowing or as ignorant. But him that does err indeed, you can no more conceive without ignorance, than long without quantity, virtuous without quality, a man and not a living creature, to have gone ten miles and not to have gone five, to speak sense and not to speak. For as the latter in all these is implied in the former, so is ignorance of a truth supposed in error against it. Yet such a man, though not conceivable without ignorance simply, may be very well considered either as with or without voluntary and sinful ignorance. And he that will give a wise answer to this question,—whether a papist dying a papist may be saved according to God's ordinary proceeding? must distinguish him according to these several considerations, and say, he may be saved, if his ignorance were either invincible, or at least unaffected and probable; if otherwise, without repentance he cannot.

To the rest of this Preface I have nothing to say, saying what hath been said, but this: that it is no just exception to an argument to call it vulgar and threadbare: truth can neither be too common nor superannuated, nor reason ever worn out. Let your answers be solid and pertinent, and we will never find fault with them for being old or common.

CHARITY

MAINTAINED BY CATHOLICS.

CHAPTER I.

The state of the question; with a summary of the reasons for which amongst men of different religions, one side only can be saved.

"NEVER is malice more indiscreet, than when it chargeth others with imputation of that, to which itself becomes more liable, even by that very act of accusing others; for though guiltiness be the effect of some error, yet usually it begets a kind of moderation, so far forth, as not to let men cast such aspersions upon others, as most apparently reflect upon themselves. Thus cannot the poet endure that Gracchus, who was a factious and unquiet man, should be inveighing against sedition: and the Roman orator rebukes philosophers, who, to wax glorious, superscribed their names upon those very books which they entitled, Of the Contempt of Glory. What then shall we say of D. Potter, who, in the title and text of his whole book, doth so tragically charge want of charity on all such Romanists as dare affirm that protestancy destroyeth salvation; while he himself is in act of pronouncing the like heavy doom against Roman catholics? For, not satisfied with much uncivil language, in affirming the Roman church many ways to have played the harlot, and in that regard deserved a bill of divorce from Christ, and detestation of Christians; in styling her that proud and cursed dame of Rome, which takes upon her to revel in the house of God; in talking of an idol to be worshipped at Rome; he comes at length to thunder out his fearful sentence against her: 'For that mass of errors,' saith he, 'in judgment and practice, which is proper to her, and wherein she differs from us, we judge a reconciliation impossible, and to us (who are convicted in conscience of her corruptions) damnable.' And in another place he saith, 'For us who are convinced in conscience that she errs in many things, a necessity lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors. By the acerbity of which censure, he doth not only make himself guilty of that which he judgeth to be a heinous offence in others, but freeth us from all colour of crime by this his unadvised recrimination. For if Roman catholics be likewise convicted in conscience of the errors of protestants, they may, and must, in conformity to the Doctor's own rule, judge a reconciliation with them to be also damnable. And thus, all the want of charity, so deeply charged on us, dissolves itself into this poor wonder—Roman catholics believe in their conscience that the religion they profess is true, and the contrary false.

2. "Nevertheless, we earnestly desire and take care that our doctrine may not be defamed by misinterpretation. Far be it from us, by way of insultation, to apply it against protestants, otherwise than as they are comprehended under the generality of those who are divided from the only one true church of Christ our Lord, within the communion whereof he hath confined salvation. Neither do we understand why our most dear countrymen should be offended if the universality be particularised under the name of protestants first given to certain Lutherans, who, protesting that they would stand out against the imperial decrees, in defence of the Confession exhibited at Augsburg, were termed protestants, in regard of such their protesting; which Confessio Augustana disclaiming from, and being disclaimed by, Calvinists

and Zuinglians, our naming or exemplifying a general doctrine under the particular name of protestantism ought not in any particular manner to be odious in England.

3. "Moreover, our meaning is not, as misinformed persons may conceive, that we give protestants over to reprobation; that we offer no prayers in hope of their salvation; that we hold their case desperate; God forbid! We hope, we pray for their conversion; and sometimes we find happy effects of our charitable desires. Neither is our censure immediately directed to particular persons. The tribunal of particular judgments is God's alone; when any man, esteemed a protestant, leaveth to live in this world, we do not instantly with precipitation avouch that he is lodged in hell. For we are not always acquainted with what sufficiency or means he was furnished for instruction; we do not penetrate his capacity to understand his catechist; we have no revelation what light may have cleared his errors, or contrition retracted his sins, in the last moment before his death. In such particular cases we wish more apparent signs of salvation, but do not give any dogmatical sentence of perdition. How grievous sins disobedience, schism, and heresy are, is well known; but to discern how far the natural malignity of those great offences might be checked by ignorance, or some such lessening circumstance, is the office rather of prudence than of faith.

4. "Thus we allow protestants as much charity as D. Potter spares us, for whom, in the words above mentioned, and elsewhere, he makes ignorance the best hope of salvation. Much less comfort can we expect from the fierce doctrine of those chief protestants, who teach that for many ages before Luther Christ had no visible church upon earth. Not these men alone, or such as they, but even the Thirty-nine Articles, to which the English protestant clergy subscribe, censure our belief so deeply, that ignorance can scarce, or rather not at all, excuse us from damnation. Our doctrine of transubstantiation is affirmed to be repugnant to the plain words of Scripture; our masses to be blasphemous fables; with much more to be seen in the Articles themselves. In a certain confession of the Christian faith, at the end of their books of Psalms collected into metre, and printed *cum privilegio regis regali*, they call us idolaters, and limbs of antichrist; and having set down a catalogue of our doctrines, they conclude that for them we shall after the general resurrection be damned to unquenchable fire.

5. "But yet, lest any man should flatter himself with our charitable mitigation's, and thereby wax careless in search of the true church, we desire him to read the conclusion of the second part, where the matter is more explained.

6. "And because we cannot determine what judgment may be esteemed rash or prudent, except by weighing the reasons upon which it is grounded, we will here, under one aspect, present a summary of those principles, from which we infer, that protestancy in itself unrepented destroys salvation; intending afterward to prove the truth of every one of the grounds, till, by a concatenation of sequels, we fall upon the conclusion, for which we are charged with want of charity.

7. "Now this is our gradation of reasons: Almighty God having ordained mankind to a supernatural end of eternal felicity, hath, in his holy providence, settled competent and convenient means whereby that end may be attained. The universal grand origin of all such means is the incarnation and death of our blessed Saviour, whereby he merited internal grace for us, and founded an external visible church, provided and stored with all those helps which might be necessary for salvation. From hence it followeth, that in this church among other advantages, there must be some effectual means to beget and conserve faith, to maintain unity, to discover and condemn heresies, to appease and reduce schisms, and to determine all controversies in religion. For without such means the church should not be furnished with helps sufficient to salvation, nor God afford sufficient means to attain that end to which himself ordained mankind. This means to decide controversies in faith and religion (whether it should be the Holy Scripture, or whatsoever else) must be endued with an universal infallibility in whatsoever it propoundeth for a Divine truth, that is, as revealed, spoken, or testified by Almighty God, whether the matter of its nature be great or small. For if it were subject to error in any one thing, we could not in any other yield

it infallible assent; because we might with good reason doubt whether it chanced not to err in that particular.

8. "Thus far all must agree to what we have said, unless they have a mind to reduce faith to opinion. And even out of these grounds alone, without further proceeding, it undeniably follows, that of two men dissenting in matters of faith, great or small, few or many, the one cannot be saved without repentance, unless ignorance accidentally may in some particular person plead excuse. For in that case of contrary belief, one must of necessity be held to oppose God's word of revelation sufficiently represented to his understanding by an infallible propounder; which opposition to the testimony of God is undoubtedly a damnable sin, whether otherwise the thing so testified be in itself great or small. And thus we have already made good what was promised in the argument of this chapter, that amongst men of different religions one is only capable of being saved.

9. "Nevertheless, to the end that men may know in particular what is the said infallible means upon which we are to rely in all things concerning faith, and accordingly we may judge in what safety or danger, more or less, they live; and because D. Potter descendeth to divers particulars about Scriptures and the church, &c.; we will go forward, and prove, that although Scripture be in itself most sacred, infallible, and Divine, yet it alone can not be to us a rule or judge, fit and able to end all doubts and debates emergent in matters of religion; but that there must be some external, visible, public, living judge, to whom all sorts of persons, both learned and unlearned, may without danger of error have recourse, and in whose judgment they may rest for the interpreting and propounding of God's word or revelation. And this living judge we will most evidently prove to be no other but that holy catholic, apostolic, and visible church, which our Saviour purchased with the effusion of his most precious blood.

10. "If once therefore it be granted, that the church is that means which God hath left for deciding all controversies in faith, it manifestly will follow that she must be infallible in all her determinations, whether the matters of themselves be great or small; because, as we said above, it must be agreed on all sides, that if that means which God hath left to determine controversies were not infallible in all things proposed by it, as truths revealed by Almighty God, it could not settle in our minds a firm and infallible belief of any one.

11. "From this universal infallibility of God's church, it followeth, that whosoever wittingly denieth any one point proposed by her, as revealed by God, is injurious to his Divine Majesty, as if he could either deceive or be deceived in what he testifieth: the averring whereof were not only a fundamental error, but would overthrow the very foundation of all fundamental points; and, therefore, without repentance, could not possibly stand with salvation.

12. "Out of these grounds we will show, that although the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental be good and useful, as it is delivered and applied by catholic divines, to teach what principal articles of faith Christians are obliged explicitly to believe; yet that it is impertinent to the present purpose of excusing any man from grievous sin, who knowingly disbelieves, that is, believes the contrary of that which God's church proposeth as Divine truth. For it is one thing not to know explicitly something testified by God, and another positively to oppose what we know he hath testified. The former may often be excused from sin, but never the latter, which only is in the case in question.

13. "In the same manner shall be demonstrated, that to allege the Creed as containing all articles of faith necessary to be explicitly believed, is not pertinent to free from sin the voluntary denial of any other point known to be defined by God's church. And this were sufficient to overthrow all that D. Potter allegeth concerning the creed; though yet, by way of supererogation, we will prove, that there are divers important matters of faith which are not mentioned at all in the Creed.

14. "From the aforesaid main principle, that God hath always had, and always will have, on earth, a church visible, within whose communion salvation must be hoped; and infallible, whose definitions we

ought to believe; we will prove that Luther, Calvin, and all other, who continue the division in communion or faith from that visible church, which at and before Luther's appearance was spread over the world, cannot be excused from schism and heresy, although they opposed her faith but in one only point; whereas it is manifest they dissent from her in many and weighty matters, concerning as well belief as practice.

15. "To these reasons, drawn from the virtue of faith, we will add one other taken from *charitas propria*, the virtue of charity, as it obligeth us not to expose our soul to hazard of perdition, when we can put ourselves in a way much more secure, as we will prove that of the Roman catholics to be.

16. "We are then to prove these points: First, that the infallible means to determine controversies in matters of faith, is the visible church of Christ. Secondly, that the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental maketh nothing to our present question. Thirdly, that to say the Creed contains all fundamental points of faith, is neither pertinent nor true. Fourthly, that both Luther and all they who after him persist in division from the communion and faith of the Roman church cannot be excused from schism. Fifthly, nor from heresy. Sixthly and lastly, that in regard of the precept of charity towards one's self, protestants be in a state of sin as long as they remain divided from the Roman church. And these six points shall be several arguments for so many ensuing chapters.

17. "Only I will here observe, that it seemeth very strange that protestants should charge us so deeply with want of charity, for only teaching that both they and we cannot be saved, seeing themselves must affirm the like of whosoever opposeth any least point delivered in Scripture, which they hold to be the sole rule of faith. Out of which ground they must be enforced to let all our former inferences pass for good: for is it not a grievous sin to deny ally one truth contained in holy writ?—is there in such denial any distinction between points fundamental and not fundamental sufficient to excuse from heresy?—is it not impertinent to allege the Creed containing all fundamental points of faith, as if, believing it alone, we were at liberty to deny all other points of Scripture? In a word, according to Protestants, oppose not Scripture, there is no error against faith; oppose it in any least point, the error, if Scripture be sufficiently proposed (which proposition is also required before a man can be obliged to believe even fundamental points), must be damnable. What is this, but to say with us, of persons contrary in whatsoever point of belief, one party only can be saved? And D. Potter must not take it ill, if catholics believe they may be saved in that religion for which they suffer. And if by occasion of this doctrine men will still be charging us with want of charity, and be resolved to take scandal where none is given, we must comfort ourselves with that grave and true saying of St. Gregory, 'If scandal be taken from declaring a truth, it is better to permit scandal than forsake the truth.' But the solid grounds of our assertion, and the sincerity of our intention, in uttering what we think, yields us confidence, that all will hold for most reasonable the saying of pope Gelasius to Anastasius the emperor, 'Far be it from the Roman emperor, that he should hold it for a wrong to have truth declared to him!' Let us therefore begin with that point which is the first that can be controverted betwixt protestants and us, forasmuch as concerns the present question, and is contained in the argument of the next ensuing chapter."

THE

ANSWER TO THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Shewinq, that the adversary grants the former question, and proposeth a new one; and that there is no reason why, among men of different opinions and communions, one side only can be saved.

AD § 1. Your first onset is very violent: D. Potter is charged with malice and indiscretion for being uncharitable to you, while he is accusing you of uncharitableness. Verily a great fault and folly, if the accusation be just; if unjust, a great calumny. Let us see then how you make good your charge. The effect of your discourse, if I mistake not, is this:—D. Potter chargeth the Roman church with many and great errors; judgeth reconciliation between her doctrine and ours impossible; and that for them who are convicted in conscience of her errors not to forsake her in them, or to be reconciled unto her is damnable: therefore if Roman catholics be convicted in conscience of the errors of protestants, they may and must judge a reconciliation with them damnable; and consequently to judge so, is no more uncharitable in them, than it is in the Doctor to judge as he doth.—All this I grant; nor would any protestant accuse you of want or charity, if you went no further; if you judged the religion of protestants damnable to them only who profess it, being convicted in conscience that it is erroneous. For if a man judge some act of virtue to be a sin, in him it is a sin indeed: so you have taught us (p. 19). So, if you be convinced, or rather, to speak properly, persuaded in conscience, that our religion is erroneous, the profession of it, though itself most true, to you would be damnable. This therefore I subscribe very willingly, and withal, that if you said no more, D. Potter and myself should not be to papists only, but even to protestants, as uncharitable as you are; for I shall always profess and glory in this uncharitableness of judging hypocrisy a damnable sin. Let hypocrites then and dissemblers on both sides pass. It is not towards them, but good Christians: not to protestant professors, but believers, that we require your charity. What think you of those that believe so verily the truth of our religion, that they are resolved to die in it, and, if occasion were, to die for it? What charity have you for them. What think ye of those that, in the days of our fathers, laid down their lives for it? Are you content that they should be saved, or do you hope they may be so? Will you grant, that, notwithstanding their errors, there is good hope they might die with repentance? and if they did so, certainly they are saved. If you will do so, this controversy is ended. No man will hereafter charge you with want of charity. This is as much as either we give you or expect of you, while you remain in your religion. But then you must leave abusing silly people with telling them (as your fashion is) that protestants confess papists may be saved, but papists confess not so much of protestants; therefore yours is the safer way, and in wisdom and charity to our own souls we are bound to follow it. For, granting this, you grant as much hope of salvation to protestants, as protestants do to you. If you will not, but will still affirm, as Charity Mistaken doth, that protestants, not dissemblers, but believers, without a particular repentance of their religion cannot be saved; this, I say, is a want of charity, into the society whereof D. Potter cannot be drawn but with palpable and transparent sophistry. For, I pray, Sir, what dependence is there between these propositions: We that hold protestant religion false should be damned if we should profess it; therefore they also shall be damned that hold it true? Just as if you should conclude, because *he that doubts is damned if he eat*, therefore he that doth not doubt is damned also if he eat. And therefore though your religion to us, and ours to you, if professed against conscience, would be damnable; yet may it well be uncharitable to define it shall be so, to them that profess either this or that according to conscience. This recrimination therefore upon D. Potter, wherewith you begin, is a plain fallacy; and I fear your proceedings will be answerable to these beginnings.

2. Ad § 2. In this paragraph protestants are thus far comforted, that they are not sent to hell without company; which the poet tells us is the miserable comfort of miserable men. Then we in England are requested not to be offended with the name of protestants. Which is a favour I shall easily grant, if by it be understood those that protest, not against imperial edicts, but against the corruptions of the church of Rome.

3. Ad § 3—6. That you give us not over to reprobation, that you pray and hope for our salvation—if it be a charity, it is such a one as is common to Turks and Jews and pagans with us. But that which follows is extraordinary; neither do I know any man that requires more of you than there you pretend to. For there you tell us, "that when any man esteemed a protestant dies, you do not instantly avouch that he is lodged in hell."—Where the word *esteemed* is ambiguous; for it may signify esteemed truly, and esteemed falsely. He may be esteemed a protestant that is so; and may be esteemed a protestant that is not so. And therefore I should have had just occasion to have laid to your charge the transgression of your own chief prescription, which, you say, truth exacts at our hands, that is, to speak clearly or distinctly, and not to walk in darkness;—but that your following words to my understanding, declare sufficiently that you speak of both sorts. For there you tell us, that the reasons why you damn not any man that dies with the esteem of a protestant, are, 1. "Because you are not always acquainted with what sufficiency of means he was furnished for instruction;"—you must mean touching the falsehood of his own religion and the truth of yours: which reason is proper to those that are protestants in truth, and not only in estimation. 2. "Because you do not penetrate his capacity to understand his catechist;" which is also peculiar to those who, for want of capacity, (as you conceive) remain protestants indeed, and are not only so accounted. 3. "Because you have no revelation what light might clear his errors," which belongs to those which were esteemed protestants, but indeed were not so. 4. "Because you have no revelation what contrition might have retracted his sins:" which reason being distinct from the former, and divided from it by the disjunctive particle *or*, insinuates unto us, that though no light did clear the errors of the dying protestant, yet contrition might, for aught you know, retract his sins; which appropriates this reason also to protestants truly so esteemed. I wish, with all my heart, that in obedience to your own prescription, you had expressed yourself in this matter more fully and plainly. Yet that which you say doth plainly enough afford us these corollaries:

1. That whatsoever protestant wanteth capacity, or, having it, wanteth sufficient means of instruction to convince his conscience of the falsehood of his own, and the truth of the Roman religion, by the confession of his most rigid adversaries, may be saved, notwithstanding any error in his religion.

2. That nothing hinders but that a protestant, dying a protestant, may die with contrition for all his sins.

3. That if he do die with contrition, he may and shall be saved.

4. All these acknowledgments we have from you while you are, as you say, stating, but, as I conceive granting, the very point in question; which was, as I have already proved out of C. M., whether, without uncharitableness, you may pronounce that protestants, dying in the belief of their religion, and without particular repentance and dereliction of it, cannot possibly be saved; which C. M. affirms universally, and without any of your limitations. But this presumption of his you thus qualify, by saying, that this sentence cannot be pronounced truly, and therefore sure not charitably; neither of those protestants that want means sufficient to instruct and convince them of the truth of your religion, and the falsehood of their own; nor of those who, though they have neglected the means they might have had, died with contrition, that is, with a sorrow for all their sins, proceeding from the love of God. So that, according to your doctrine, it shall remain upon such only as either were, or but for their own fault might have been, sufficiently convinced of the truth of your religion, and the falsehood of their own, and yet die in it without contrition. Which doctrine if you would stand to, and not pull down and pull back with one hand

what you give and build with the other, this controversy were ended; and I should willingly acknowledge that which follows in your fourth paragraph, that you allow protestants as much charity as D. Potter allows you. But then I must entreat you to alter the argument of this chapter, and not to go about to give us reasons, why amongst men of different religions one side only can be saved absolutely; which your reasons drive at: but you must temper the crudeness of your assertion by saving—"one side only can be saved, unless want of conviction, or else repentance, excuse the other." Besides you must not abstain from damning any protestant in particular, but from affirming in general that protestants dying in their religion cannot be saved: for you must always remember to add this caution—unless they were excusably ignorant of the falsehood of it, or died with contrition. And then, considering that you cannot know whether or no, all things considered, they were convinced sufficiently of the truth of your religion, and the falsehood of their own, you are obliged by charity to judge the best, and hope they are not. Considering again, that notwithstanding their errors they may die with contrition, and that it is no way improbable that they do so, and the contrary you cannot be certain of, you are bound in charity to judge and hope they do so. Considering thirdly and lastly that if they die not with contrition, yet it is very probable they may die with attrition; and that this pretence of yours, that contrition will serve without actual confession, but attrition will not, is but a nicety or fancy; or, rather, to give it the true name, a device of your own, to serve ends and purposes—God having no where declared himself, but that wheresoever he will accept of that repentance which you are pleased to call *contrition*, he will accept of that which you call *attrition:* for though he like best the bright flaming holocaust of love, yet he rejects not, he quencheth not, the smoking flax of that repentance (if it be true and effectual) which proceeds from hope and fear: these things, I say, considered (unless you will have the charity of your doctrine rise up in judgment against your uncharitable practice), you must not only not be peremptory in damning protestants, but you must hope well of their salvation; and out of this hope you must do for them as well as others, those, as you conceive, charitable offices, of praying, giving alms, and offering sacrifice, which usually you do for those of whose salvation you are well and charitably persuaded (for I believe you will never conceive so well of protestants, as to assure yourselves they go directly to heaven). These things when you do, I believe you think as charitably as you speak; but until then, as he said in the comedy, *Quid verba audiam, cum facta videam?* so may I say to you, *Quid verba audiam, cum facta non videam?* To what purpose should you give us charitable words, which presently you retract again, by denying us your charitable actions? And as these things you must do, if you will stand to and make good this pretended charity, so must I tell you again and again, that one thing you must not do: I mean, you must not affright poor people out of their religion with telling them, that by the confession of both sides your way is safe, but, in your judgment, ours undoubtedly damnable; seeing neither you deny salvation to protestants dying with repentance, nor we promise it to you if ye die without it. For to deal plainly with you, I know no protestant that hath any other hope of your salvation but upon these grounds—that unaffected ignorance may excuse you, or true repentance obtain pardon for you; neither do the heavy censures, which protestants (you say) pass upon your errors, any way hinder but they may hope as well of you upon repentance as I do. For the fierce doctrine, which God knows who teacheth, that Christ for many ages before Luther had no visible church upon earth, will be mild enough, if you conceive them to mean (as perhaps they do) by no visible church, none pure and free from corruptions, which in your judgment is all one with no church. But the truth is the corruption of the church and the destruction of it is not all one. For if a particular man or church may (as you confess they may) hold some particular errors and yet be a member of the church universal; why may not the church hold some universal error, and yet be still the church? especially seeing, you say, it is nothing but "opposing the doctrine of the church that makes an error damnable," and it is impossible that the church should oppose the church—I mean that the present church should oppose itself. And then for the English protestants, though they censure your errors deeply, yet, by your favour, with their deepest

censure it may consist, that invincible ignorance may excuse you from damnation for them: for you yourself confess, "that ignorance may excuse errors even in fundamental articles of faith: so that a man so erring shall not offend at all in such his ignorance or error:"—they are your own words, pref. § 22. And again, with their heaviest censure it may well consist, that your errors, though in themselves damnable, yet may prove not damning to you, if you die with true repentance for all your sins, known and unknown.

5. Thus much charity, therefore, if you stand to what you have said, is interchangeably granted by each side to the other, that neither religion is so fatally destructive, but that by ignorance or repentence salvation may be had on both sides;—though with a difference that keeps papists still on the more uncharitable side. For whereas we conceive a lower degree of repentance (that which they call *attrition*) if it be true and effectual, and convert the heart of the penitent, will serve in them; they pretend (even this author which is most charitable towards us), that without contrition there is no hope for us. But though protestants may not obtain this purchase at so easy a rate as papists, yet (even papists being judges) they may obtain it: and though there is no entrance for them but at the only door of contrition, yet they may enter; heaven not inaccessible them. Their errors are no such impenetrable isthmuses between them and salvation, but that contrition may make a way through them. All their schism and heresy is no such fatal poison, but that, if a man join with it the antidote of a general repentance, he may die in it, and live for ever. Thus much then being acknowledged, I appeal to any indifferent reader whether C. M. be not by his hyperaspist forsaken in the plain field, and the point in question granted to D. Potter, viz. that protestancy, even without a particular repentance, is not destructive of salvation. So that all the controversy remaining now, is not simply whether protestancy unrepented destroys salvation? as it was at first proposed, but whether protestancy in itself (that is, abstracting from ignorance and contrition) destroys salvation? So that as a foolish fellow who gave a knight the lie, desiring withal leave of him to set his knighthood aside, was answered by him that he would not suffer any thing to be set aside that belonged unto him; so might we justly take it amiss, that conceiving, as you do, ignorance and repentance such necessary things for us, you are not more willing to consider us with them than without them. For my part, such is my charity to you, that considering what great necessity you have, as much as any Christian society in the world, that these sanctuaries of ignorance and repentance should always stand open, I can very hardly persuade myself so much as in my most secret consideration to divest you of these so needful qualifications: but whensoever your errors, superstitions, and impieties come into my mind (and, besides the general bonds of humanity and Christianity, my own particular obligations to many of you, such and so great, that you cannot perish without a part of myself), my only comfort is amidst these agonies, that the doctrine and practice too of repentance is yet remaining in your church; and that though you put on a face of confidence of your innocence in point of doctrine, yet you will be glad to stand in the eye of mercy as well as your fellows, and not be so stout as to refuse either God's pardon or the king's.

6. But for the present, protestancy is called to the bar, and though not sentenced by you to death without mercy, yet arraigned of so much natural malignity (if not corrected by ignorance or contrition) as to be in itself destructive of salvation. Which controversy I am content to dispute with you, tying myself to follow the rules prescribed by you in your preface. Only I am to remember you, that the adding of this limitation, *in itself,* hath made this a new question; and that this is not the conclusion for which you were charged with want of charity: but that whereas, according to the grounds of your own religion, "protestants may die in their supposed errors, either with excusable ignorance or with contrition, and if they do so, may be saved," you still are preremptory in pronouncing them damned. Which position, supposing your doctrine true and ours false, as it is far from charity (whose essential character it is to judge and hope the best), so I believe that I shall clearly evince this new but more moderate assertion of yours to be far from verity, and that it is popery, and not protestancy, which in itself destroys salvation.

7. Ad § 7 and 8. In your gradation I shall rise so far with you as to grant, that Christ founded a visible church, stored with all helps necessary to salvation, particularly with sufficient means to beget and conserve faith, to maintain unity, and compose schisms, to discover and condemn heresies, and to determine all controversies in religion which were necessary to be determined. For all these purposes he gave at the beginning (as we may see in the Epistle to the Ephesians) apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and doctors; who by word of mouth taught their contemporaries, and by writings (wrote indeed by some, but approved by all of them) taught their Christian posterity to the world's end, how all these ends, and that which is the end of all these ends, salvation, is to be achieved. And these means the providence of God hath still preserved, and so preserved, that they are sufficient for all these intents. I say sufficient, though through the malice of men not always effectual, for that the same means may be sufficient for the compassing an end, and nor effectual, you must not deny, who hold that God gives to all men sufficient means of salvation, and yet that all are not saved. I said, also, sufficient to determine all controversies which were necessary to be determined. For if some controversies may for many ages be undetermined, and yet in the mean while men be saved, why should, or how can, the church's being furnished with effectual means to determine all controversies in religion be necessary to salvation, the end itself to which these means are ordained being, as experience shows, not necessary? Plain sense will teach every man that the necessity of the means must always be measured by, and can never exceed, the necessity of the end. As, if eating be necessary only that I may live, then certainly, if I have no necessity to live, I have no necessity to eat; if I have no need to be at London, I have no need of a horse to carry me thither; if I have no need to fly, I have no need of wings. Answer me then, I pray, directly, and categorically; is it necessary that all controversies in religion should be determined, or is it not? If it be, why is the question of predetermination, of the immaculate conception, of the pope's indirect power in temporalities, so long undetermined? If not, what is it but hypocrisy to pretend such great necessity of such effectual means for the achieving that end which is itself not necessary? Christians therefore have, and shall have, means sufficient (though not always effectual) to determine, not all controversies, but all necessary to be determined. I proceed on further with you, and grant that this means to decide controversies in faith and religion must be endued with an universal infallibility in whatsoever it propoundeth for a divine truth. For if it may be false in any one thing of this nature, in any thing which God requires men to believe, we can yield unto it but a wavering and fearful assent in any thing. These grounds therefore I grant very readily, and give you free leave to make your best advantage of them. And yet, to deal truly, I do not perceive how from the denial of any of them it would follow that faith is opinion, or, from the granting them, that it is not so, but for my part, whatsoever clamour you have raised against me, I think no otherwise of the nature of faith, I mean historical faith, than generally both protestants and papists do: for I conceive it an assent to Divine revelations upon the authority of the revealer; which though in many things it differ from opinion (as commonly the word *opinion* is understood) yet in some things I doubt not but you will confess that it agrees with it. As, first, that as opinion is an assent, so is faith also. Secondly, that as opinion, so faith, is always built upon less evidence than that of sense or science; which assertion you not only grant, but mainly contend for, in your sixth chapter. Thirdly and lastly, that as opinion, so faith, admits degrees; and that as there may be a strong and weak opinion, so there may be a strong and weak faith. These things, if you will grant (as sure if you be in your right mind you will not deny any of them), I am well contented that this ill-sounding word, *opinion*, should be discarded, and that among the intellectual habits you should seek out some other genus for faith. For I will never contend with any man about words who grants my meaning.

8. But though the essence of faith exclude not all weakness and imperfection, yet may it be inquired, whether any certainty of faith, under the highest degree, may be sufficient to please God and attain salvation? Whereunto I answer, that though men are unreasonable, God requires not any thing but

reason: they will not be pleased without a downweight: but God is contented if the scale be turned: they pretend that heavenly things cannot be seen to any purpose but by the midday light; but God will be satisfied if we receive any degree of light which makes us leave the *works of darkness, and walk as children of the light:* they exact a certainty of faith above that of sense or science; God desires only that we believe the conclusion, as much as the premises deserve; that the strength of our faith be equal or proportionable to the credibility of the motives to it. Now though I have and ought to have an absolute certainty of this thesis, "All which God reveals for truth is true," being a proposition that may be demonstrated, or rather so evident to any one that understands it that it needs it not; yet of this hypothesis, "That all the articles of our faith were revealed by God," we cannot ordinarily have any rational and acquired certainty, more than moral, founded upon these considerations: first, that the goodness of the precepts of Christianity, and the greatness of the promises of it, shows it, of all other religions, most likely to come from the Fountain of goodness. And then, that a constant, famous, and very general tradition, so credible that no wise man doubts of any other which hath but the fortieth part of the credibility of this; such and so credible a tradition tells us, that God himself hath set his hand and seal to the truth of this doctrine, by doing great and glorious and frequent miracles in confirmation of it. Now our faith is an assent to this conclusion, that the doctrine of Christianity is true; which being deduced from the former thesis, which is metaphysically certain, and from the former hypothesis, whereof we can have but a moral certainty, we cannot possibly by natural means be more certain of it than of the weaker of the premises; as a river will not rise higher than the fountain from which it flows. For the conclusion always follows the worser part, if there be any worse; and must be negative, particular, contingent, or but morally certain, if any of the propositions from whence it is derived be so: neither can we be certain of it in the highest degree, unless we be thus certain of all the principles whereon it is grounded: as a man cannot go or stand strongly, if either of his legs be weak: or, as a building cannot be stable, if any one of the necessary pillars thereof be infirm and instable; or, as if a message be brought me from a man of absolute credit with me, but by a messenger that is not so, my confidence of the truth of the relation cannot but be rebated and lessened by my diffidence in the relater.

9. Yet all this I say not, as if I doubted that the Spirit of God, being implored by devout and humble prayer, and sincere obedience, may and will by degrees advance his servants higher, and give them a certainty of adherence beyond their certainty of evidence. But what God gives as a reward to believers is one thing; and what he requires of all men as their duty is another; and what he will accept of, out of grace and favour, is yet another. To those that believe, and live according to their faith, he gives by degrees the spirit of obsignation and confirmation, which makes them know (though how they know not) what they did but believe; and to be as fully and resolutely assured of the gospel of Christ, as those which heard it from Christ himself with their ears, which saw it with their eyes, which looked upon it, and whose hands handled the word of life. He requires of all, that their faith should be (as I have said) proportionable to the motives and reasons enforcing to it; he will accept of the weakest and lowest degree of faith, if it be living and effectual unto true obedience. For he it is that *will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed*. He did not reject the prayer of that distressed man that cried unto him, *Lord, I believe; Lord, help mine unbelief.* He commands us to receive them that are weak in faith, and thereby declares that he receives them. And as nothing avails with him but faith which worketh by love; so any faith, if it be but as a grain of mustard-seed, if it work by love, shall certainly avail with him, and be accepted of him. Some experience makes me fear that the faith of considering and discoursing men is like to be cracked with too much straining; and that being possessed with this false principle, that it is in vain to believe the gospel of Christ with such a kind or degree of assent as they yield to other matters of tradition, and finding that their faith of it is to them undiscernible, from the belief they give to the truth of other stories, are in danger not to believe at all, thinking not at all as good as to no purpose; or else, though indeed they do

believe it, yet to think they do not, and to cast themselves into wretched agonies and perplexities, as fearing they have not that, without which it is impossible to please God and obtain eternal happiness. Consideration of this advantage, which the devil probably may make of this fancy, made me willing to insist somewhat largely on the refutation of it.

10. I return now thither from whence I have distressed, and assure you, concerning the grounds aforelaid, which were, that there is a rule of faith whereby controversies may be decided which are necessary to be decided, and that this rule is universally infallible, that notwithstanding any opinion I hold, touching faith or anything else. I may and do believe them as firmly as you pretend to do; and therefore you may build on in God's name; for by God's help I shall always embrace whatsoever structure is naturally and rationally laid upon them, whatsoever conclusion may to my understanding be evidently deduced from them. You say, out of them it undeniably follows, that, of two disagreeing in matter of faith, the one cannot be saved but by repentance or ignorance: I answer, by distinction of those terms, "two dissenting in a matter of faith;" for it may be either in a thing which is indeed a matter of faith in the strictest sense, that is, something the belief whereof God requires under pain of damnation; and so the conclusion is true, though the consequence of it from your former premises either is none at all, or so obscure that I can hardly discern it: or it may be, as it often falls out, concerning a thing which, being indeed no matter of faith, is yet overvalued by the parties at variance, and esteemed to be so; and in this sense it is neither consequent nor true. The untruth of it I have already declared in my examination of your preface: the inconsequence of it is of itself evident: for who ever heard of a wilder collection than this—

> "God hath provided means sufficient to decide all controversies in religion necessary to be decided:
> "This means is universally infallible:
> "Therefore, of two that differ in anything, which they esteem a matter of faith, one cannot be saved."

He that can find any connexion between these propositions, I believe will be able to find good coherence between the deaf plaintiff's accusation in the Greek epigram, and the deaf defendant's answer, and the deaf judge's sentence: and to contrive them all into a formal categorical syllogism.

11. Indeed, if the matter in agitation were plainly decided by this infallible means of deciding controversies, and the parties in variance knew it to be so, and yet would stand out in their dissension; this were, in one of them, direct opposition to the testimony of God, and undoubtedly a damnable sin. But if you take the liberty to suppose what you please, you may very easily conclude what you list. For who is so foolish as to grant you these unreasonable postulates, that every emergent controversy of faith is plainly decided by the means of decision which God hath appointed, and that of the parties litigant one is always such a convicted recusant as you pretend? Certainly, if you say so, having no better warrant than you have or can have for it, this is more proper and formal uncharitableness than ever was charged upon you. Methinks, with much more reason, and much more charity, you might suppose that many of these controversies, which are now disputed among Christians (all which profess themselves lovers of Christ, and truly desirous to know his will and do it), are either not decidable by that means which God has provided, and so not necessary to be decided; or, if they be, yet not so plainly and evidently as to oblige all men to hold one way: or, lastly, if decidable, and evidently decided, yet you may hope that the erring party, by reason of some veil before his eyes, some excusable ignorance or unavoidable prejudice, doth not see the question to be decided against him, and so opposeth not that which he doth know to be the work of God, but only that which you know to be so, and which he might know, were he void of prejudice. Which is a fault, I confess, but a fault which is incident even to good and honest men very often; and not of such a gigantic disposition as you make it, to fly directly upon God Almighty, and to give him the lie to his face.

12. Ad § 9—16. In all this long discourse, you only tell us what you will do, but do nothing. Many positions there are, but proofs of them you offer none, but reserve them to the chapters following; and there, in their proper places, they shall be examined. The sum of all your assumpts collected by yourself, § 16, is this:

That "the infallible means of determining controversies is the visible church."

That "the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental maketh nothing to the present question."

That "to say the Creed containeth all fundamentals is neither pertinent nor true."

That "whosoever persist in division from the communion and faith of the Roman church are guilty of schism and heresy."

That "in regard of the precept of charity towards one's self protestants are in a state of sin, while they remain divided from the Roman church."

To all these assertions I will content myself for the present to oppose this one—that not one of them all is true. Only I may not omit to tell you, that if the first of them were as true as the pope himself desires it should be, yet the corollary which you deduce from it would be utterly inconsequent—that whosoever denies any point proposed by the church is injurious to God's Divine majesty; as if he could deceive, or be deceived. For though your church were indeed as infallible a profounder of Divine truths as it pretends to be, yet if it appeared not to me to be so, I might very well believe God most true, and your church most false. As, though the gospel of St. Matthew be the word of God; yet if I neither knew it to be so nor believed it, I might believe in God, and yet think that Gospel a fable. Hereafter, therefore, I must entreat you to remember, that our being guilty of this impiety depends not only upon your being, but upon our knowing that you are so. Neither must you argue thus—The church of Rome is the infallible propounder of Divine verities, therefore he that opposeth her calls God's truth in question; but thus rather—The church of Rome is so, and protestants know it to be so; therefore, in opposing her, they impute to God that either he deceives them or is deceived himself. For as I may deny something which you upon your knowledge have affirmed, and yet never disparage your honesty, if I never knew that you affirmed it; so I may be undoubtedly certain of God's omniscience and veracity, and yet doubt of something which he hath revealed, provided I do not know nor believe that he hath revealed it. So that, though your church be the appointed witness of God's revelations, yet, until you know that we know she is so, you cannot without foul calumny impute to us, that we charge God blasphemously with deceiving or being deceived. You will say, perhaps, that this is directly consequent from our doctrine—that the church may err, which is directed by God in all her proposals. True, if we knew it to be directed by him, otherwise not; much less if we believe and know the contrary. But, then, if it were consequent from our opinion, have you so little charity as to say that men are justly chargeable with all the consequences of their opinions? Such consequences, I mean, as they do not own, but disclaim: and if there were a necessity of doing either, would much rather forsake their opinion than embrace these consequences? What opinion is there that draws after it such a train of portentous blasphemies, as that of the Dominicans by the judgment of the best writers of your own order? And will you say now that the Dominicans are justly chargeable with all those blasphemies? If not, seeing your case (take it at the worst) is but the same, why should not your judgment of us be the same? I appeal to all those Protestants that have gone over to your side, whether, when they were most averse from it, they did ever deny or doubt of God's omniscience or veracity; whether they did ever believe, or were taught that God did deceive them, or was deceived himself? Nay, I provoke to you yourself, and desire you to deal truly, and to tell us whether you do in your heart believe that we do indeed not believe the eternal veracity of the eternal Verity? And if you judge so strangely of us, having no better ground for it than you have or can have, we shall not need any further proof of your uncharitableness towards us, this being the extremity of true uncharitableness. If not, then I hope, having

no other ground but this (which sure is none at all) to pronounce us damnable heretics, you will cease to do so; and hereafter (as, if your ground be true, you may do with more truth and charity) collect thus—They only err damnably who oppose what they know God hath testified: but protestants sure do not oppose what they know God hath testified; at least we cannot with charity say they do; therefore they either do not err damnably, or with charity we cannot say they do so.

13. Ad § 17. "Protestants," you say, "according to their own grounds must hold, that of persons contrary in whatsoever point of belief one part only can be saved, therefore it is strangely done of them to charge papists with want of charity for holding the same." The consequence I acknowledge, but wonder much what it should be that lays upon protestants any necessity to do so? You tell us it is their holding Scripture the sole rule of faith; for this, you say, obligeth them to pronounce them damned that oppose any least point delivered in Scripture. This I grant, if they oppose it after sufficient declaration, so that either they know it to be contained in Scripture, or have no just probable reason, and which may move an honest man to doubt whether or no it be there contained. For to oppose, in the first case, in a man that believes the Scripture to be the word of God, is to give God the lie. To oppose in the second, is to be obstinate against reason; and therefore a sin, though not so great as the former. But then this is nothing to the purpose of the necessity of damning all those that are of contrary belief; and that for these reasons: first, because the contrary belief may be touching a point not at all mentioned in Scripture; and such points, though indeed they be not matters of faith, yet by men in variance are often overvalued, and esteemed to be so. So that though it were damnable to oppose any point contained in Scripture, yet persons of a contrary belief (as Victor and Polycrates, St. Cyprian and Stephen) might both be saved, because their contrary belief was not touching any point contained in Scripture. Secondly, because the contrary belief may be about the sense of some place of Scripture which is ambiguous, and with probability capable of divers senses; and in such cases it is no marvel, and sure no sin, if several men go several ways. Thirdly, because the contrary belief may be concerning points wherein Scripture may, with so great probability, be alleged on both sides (which is a sure note of a point not necessary), that men of honest and upright hearts, true lovers of God and of truth, such as desire above all things to know God's will and to do it, may, without any fault at all, some go one way and some another, and some (and those as good men as either of the former) suspend their judgment, and expect some Elias to solve doubts and reconcile repugnancies. Now in all such questions, one side or other (whichsoever it is) holds that which indeed is opposite to the sense of the Scripture which God intended; for it is impossible that God should intend contradictions. But then this intended sense is not so fully declared, but that they which oppose it may verily believe that they indeed maintain it, and have great show of reason to induce them to believe so; and therefore are not to be damned, as men opposing that which they either know to be a truth delivered in Scripture, or have no probable reason to believe the contrary; but rather, in charity, to be acquitted and absolved, as men who endeavour to find the truth, but fail of it through human frailty.

This ground being laid, the answer to your ensuing interrogatories, which you conceive impossible, is very obvious and easy.

14. To the first: "Whether it be not in any man a grievous sin to deny any one truth contained in holy writ?" I answer—Yes, if he knew it to be so, or have no probable reason to doubt of it; otherwise not.

15. To the second: "Whether there be in such denial any distinction between fundamental and not fundamental sufficient to excuse from heresy? I answer—Yes, there is such a distinction. But the reason is, because these points, either in themselves or by accident, are fundamental, which are evidently contained in Scripture, to him that knows them to be so: those not fundamental, which are there-hence deducible, but probably only, not evidently.

16. To the third: "Whether it be not impertinent to allege the Creed as containing all fundamental points of faith, as if believing it alone we were at liberty to deny all other points of Scripture?" I answer—It

was never alleged to any such purpose; but only as a sufficient, or rather more than a sufficient, summary of those points of faith, which were of necessity to be believed actually and explicitly; and that only of such which were merely and purely *credenda*, and not *agenda*.

17. To the fourth, drawn as a corollary from the former: "Whether this be not to say, that of persons contrary in belief one part only can be saved?" I answer—By no means: for they may differ about points not contained in Scripture: they may differ about the sense of some ambiguous text of Scripture: they may differ about some doctrines, for and against which scriptures may be alleged with so great probability, as may justly excuse either part from heresy and a self-condemning obstinacy. And, therefore, though D. Potter do not take it ill that you believe yourselves may be saved in your religion, yet notwithstanding all that hath yet been pretended to the contrary, he may justly condemn you, and that out of your own principles, of uncharitable presumption, for affirming, as you do, that "no man can be saved out of it."

CHAPTER II.

What is that means whereby the revealed truths of God are conveyed to our understanding, and which must determine controversies in faith and religion?

"OF our estimation, respect, and reverence to Holy Scripture, even protestants themselves do in fact give testimony, while they possess it from us, and take it upon the integrity of our custody. No cause imaginable could avert our will from giving the function of supreme and sole judge to holy writ, if both the thing were not impossible in itself, and if both reason and experience did not convince our understanding, that by this assertion contentions are increased and not ended. We acknowledge Holy Scripture to be a most perfect rule, for as much as writing can be a rule: we only deny that it excludes either Divine tradition, though it be unwritten, or an external judge, to keep, to propose, to interpret it in a true, orthodox, and catholic sense. Every single book, every chapter, yea, every period of Holy Scripture, is infallibly true, and wants no due perfection. But must we therefore infer, that all other books of Scripture are to be excluded, lest by addition of them we may seem to derogate from the perfection of the former? When the first books of the Old and New Testament were written, they did not exclude unwritten traditions, nor the authority of the church to decide controversies: and who hath then so altered their nature, and filled them with such jealousies, as that now they cannot agree for fear of mutual disparagement? What greater wrong is it for the written word to be compartner now with the unwritten, than for the unwritten, which was once alone, to be afterward joined with the written? Who ever heard, that to commend the fidelity of a keeper were to disauthorise the thing committed to his custody? Or, that to extol the integrity and knowledge, and to avouch the necessity of a judge in suits of law, were to deny perfection in the law? Are there not in commonwealths, besides the laws, written and unwritten customs, judges appointed to declare both the one and the other, as several occasions may require?

2. "That the Scripture alone cannot be judge in controversies of faith, we gather very clearly from the quality of a writing in general; from the nature of holy writ in particular, which must be believed as true and infallible; from the editions and translations of it; from the difficulty to understand it without hazard of error; from the inconveniences that must follow upon the ascribing of sole judicature to it; and, finally, from the confessions of our adversaries. And, on the other side, all these difficulties ceasing, and all other qualities requisite to a judge concurring in the visible church of Christ our Lord, we must conclude, that she it is to whom, in doubts concerning faith and religion, all Christians ought to have recourse.

3. "The name, notion, nature, and properties of a judge cannot in common reason agree to any mere writing, which, be it otherwise in its kind never so highly qualified with sanctity and infallibility, yet it must ever be, as all writings are, deaf, dumb, and inanimate. By a judge, all wise men understand a person endued with life and reason, able to hear, to examine, to declare his mind to the disagreeing parties, in such sort, as that each one may know whether the sentence be in favour of his cause or against his pretence; and he must be appliable, and able to do all this, as the diversity of controversies, persons, occasions, and circumstances may require. There is a great and plain distinction between a judge and a rule: for as in a kingdom the judge has his rule to follow, which are the received laws and customs; so are they not fit or able to declare or be judges to themselves, but that office must belong to a living judge. The Holy Scripture may be and is a rule, but cannot be a judge, because it being always the same, cannot declare itself any one time, or upon any one occasion, more particularly than upon any other; and let it be read over an hundred times, it will still be the same, and no more fit alone to terminate controversies in faith, than the law would be to end suits, if it were given over to the fancy and gloss of every single man.

5. “This difference betwixt a judge and a rule D. Potter perceived, when, more than once having styled the Scripture a judge, by way of correcting that term, he adds, ‘or rather a rule;’ because he knew that an inanimate writing could not be a judge. From hence also it was, that though protestants in their beginning affirmed Scripture alone to be the judge of controversies, yet upon a more advised reflection they changed the phrase, and said, that not Scripture, but the Holy Ghost speaking in Scripture, is judge in controversies; a difference without a disparity. The Holy Ghost speaking only in Scripture is no more intelligible to us than the Scripture in which he speaks; as a man speaking only in Latin can be no better understood than the tongue wherein he speaketh. And therefore to say a judge is necessary for deciding controversies about the meaning of Scripture, is as much as to say he is necessary to decide what the Holy Ghost speaks in Scripture. And it were a conceit, equally foolish and pernicious, if one should seek to take away all judges in the kingdom upon this nicety—that albeit laws cannot be judges, yet the law-maker speaking in the law may perform that office, as it the law-maker speaking in the law were with more perspicuity understood than the law whereby he speaketh.

5. “But though some writing were granted to have a privilege to declare itself upon supposition that it were maintained in being, and preserved entire from corruptions; yet it is manifest that no writing can conserve itself, nor can complain or denounce the falsifier of it; and therefore it stands in need of some watchful and not-erring eye to guard it, by means of whose assured vigilancy we may undoubtedly receive it sincere and pure.

6. “And suppose it could defend itself from corruption, how could it assure us that itself were canonical, and of infallible verity? By saying so? Of this very affirmation there will remain the same question still: how can it prove itself to be infallibly true? Neither can there ever be an end of the like multiplied demands, till we rest in the external authority of some person or persons bearing witness to the world that such or such a book is Scripture; and yet upon this point, according to protestants, all other controversies in faith depend.

7. “That Scripture cannot assure us that itself is canonical Scripture, is acknowledged by some protestants in express words, and by all of them in deeds. Mr. Hooker, whom D. Potter ranketh among men of great learning and judgment, saith, ‘Of things necessary, the very chiefest is to know what books we are to esteem holy; which point is confessed impossible for the Scripture itself to teach.’ And this he proveth by the same argument which we lately used, saying thus: ‘It is not the word of God which doth or possibly can assure us, that we do well to think it his word. For if any one book of Scripture did give testimony to all, yet still that Scripture which giveth testimony to the rest would require another Scripture to give credit unto it. Neither could we come to any pause whereon to rest, unless besides Scripture there were something which might assure us,’ &c. And this he acknowledges to be the church. By the way, if of things necessary the very chiefest cannot possibly be taught by Scripture, as this man of so great learning affirmeth, and demonstratively proveth, how can the protestant clergy of England subscribe to their sixth Article? wherein it is said of the Scripture, ‘Whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation:’ and concerning their belief and profession of this Article, they are particularly examined when they are ordained priests and bishops. With Hooker, his defendant Covel doth punctually agree. Whitaker likewise confesseth, that the question about canonical Scriptures is defined to us, not by ‘testimony of the private spirit, which,’ saith he, ‘being private and secret, is unfit to teach and refel others;’ but (as he acknowledgeth) ‘by the ecclesiastical tradition: an argument,’ saith he, ‘whereby may be argued and convinced what books be canonical and what be not.’ Luther saith, ‘This indeed the church hath, that she can discern the word of God from the word of men:’ as Augustine confesseth; ‘that he believed the gospel, being moved by the authority of the church, which did preach this to be the gospel.’ Fulk teacheth, that the church hath judgment to discern true writings from

counterfeit, and the word of God from the writing of men; and that this judgment she hath not of herself, but of the Holy Ghost.' And to the end that you may not be ignorant from what church you must receive Scriptures, hear your first patriarch Luther speaking against them, who (as he saith) brought in anabaptism, that so they might despite the pope. 'Verily,' saith he, 'these men build upon a weak foundation: for by this means they ought to deny the whole Scripture, and the office of preaching: for all these we have from the pope; otherwise we must go make a new Scripture.'

8. "But now in deeds they all make good, that without the church's authority no certainty can be had what scripture is canonical, while they cannot agree in assigning the canon of the Holy Scripture. Of the Epistle of St. James, Luther had these words: 'The Epistle of James is contentious, swelling, dry, strawy, and unworthy of an apostolical spirit.' Which censure of Luther, Illricus acknowledgeth and maintaineth. Chemnitius teacheth, that the Second Epistle of Peter, the Second and Third of John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the Epistle of Jude, and the Apocalypse of John, are apocryphal, as not having sufficient testimony of their authority, and therefore that nothing in controversy can be proved out of these books. The same is taught by divers other Lutherans: and if some other amongst them be of a contrary opinion since Luther's time, I wonder what new infallible ground they can allege, why they leave their master and so many of his prime scholars? I know no better ground, than because they may with as much freedom abandon him, as he was bold to alter that canon of Scripture which he found received in God's church.

9. "What books of Scripture the protestants of England hold for canonical is not easy to affirm. In their sixth Article they say, 'In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church.' What mean they by these words—that by the church's consent they are assured what Scriptures be canonical? This were to make the church judge, and not Scriptures alone. Do they only understand the agreement of the church to be a probable inducement? Probability is no sufficient ground for an infallible assent of faith. By this rule (of whose authority was never any doubt in the church) the whole Book of Esther must quit the canon, because some in the church have excluded it from the canon, as Melito Asianus, Athanasins, and Gregory Nazianzen. And Luther (if protestants will be content that he be in the church) saith, 'The Jews place the Book of Esther in the canon; which yet, if I might be judge, doth rather deserve to be put out of the canon.' And of Ecclesiastes he saith, 'This book is not full; there are in it many abrupt things: he wants boots and spurs, that is, he hath no perfect sentence, he rides upon a long reed, like me when I was in the monastery.' And much more is to be read in him; who saith further, that the said book was not written by Solomon, but by Syrach, in the time of the Maccabees, and that it is like to the Talmud (the Jews' Bible), out of many books heaped into one work, perhaps out of the library of King Ptolomeus. And further he saith, that he does not believe all to have been done that there is set down. And he teacheth the Book of Job to be as it were an argument for a fable (or comedy), to set before us an example of patience. And he delivers this general censure of the prophets' books—'The sermons of no prophet were written whole and perfect; but their disciples and auditors snatched now one sentence and then another, and so put them all into one book, and by this means the Bible was conserved.' If this were so, the books of the prophets, being not written by themselves, but promiscuously and casually by their disciples, will soon be called in question. Are not these errors of Luther fundamental? and yet, if protestants deny the infallibility of the church, upon what certain ground can they disprove these Lutheran and Luciferian blasphemies? O godly reformer of the Roman church! But to return to our English canon of Scripture. In the New Testament, by the above-mentioned rule (of whose authority was never any doubt in the church), divers books of the New Testament must be discanonized, to wit, all those of which some ancients have doubted, and those which divers Lutherans have of late denied. It is worth the observation, how the beforementioned sixth Article doth specify by name all the books of the Old Testament which

they hold for canonical; but those of the New, without naming any one, they shuffle over with this generality—'All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account them canonical. The mystery is easy to be unfolded. If they had descended to particulars, they must have contradicted some of their chiefest brethren. 'As they are commonly received,' &c. I ask, by whom? By the church of Rome? Then by the same reason they must receive divers books of the Old Testament which they reject. By Lutherans? Then with Lutherans they may deny some books of the New Testament. If it be the greater or less number of voices that must cry up or down the canon of Scripture, our Roman canon will prevail: and among protestants the certainty of their faith must be reduced to an uncertain controversy of fact, whether the number of those who reject, or of those others who receive such and such scriptures, be greater: their faith must alter according to years and days. When Luther first appeared, he and his disciples were the greater number of that new church; and so this claim (of being 'commonly received') stood for them, till Zuinglius and Calvin grew to some equal or greater number than that of the Lutherans, and then this rule of 'commonly received' will canonise their canon against the Lutherans. I would gladly know why, in the former part of their Article, they say both of the Old and New Testament, "In the name of the Holy Scripture, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church:' and in the latter part, speaking again of the New Testament, they give a far different rule, saying, 'All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we receive, and account them canonical.' This, I say, is a rule much different from the former ('of whose authority was never any doubt in the church'); for some books might be said to be 'commonly received,' although they were sometime doubted of by some. If to be 'commonly received' pass for a good rule to know the canon of the New Testament, why not of the Old? Above all, we desire to know upon what infallible ground in some books they agree with us against Luther and divers principal Lutherans, and in others jump with Luther against us? But seeing they disagree among themselves, it is evident that they have no certain rule to know the canon of Scripture, in assigning whereof some of them must of necessity err; because of contradictory propositions, both cannot be true.

10. "Moreover, the letters, syllables, words, phrase, or matter contained in Holy Scripture, have no necessary or natural connexion with Divine revelation or inspiration; and therefore by seeing, reading, or understanding them, we cannot infer that they proceed from God, or be confirmed by Divine authority; as because creatures involve a necessary relation, connexion, and dependence upon their Creator, philosophers may, by the light of natural reason, demonstrate the existence of one prime cause of all things. In holy writ there are innumerable truths not surpassing the sphere of human wit, which are, or may be, delivered by pagan writers, in the self-same words and phrases as they are in Scripture. And as for some truths peculiar to Christians (for example, the mystery of the blessed Trinity, &c.), the only setting them down in writing is not enough to be assured that such a writing is the undoubted word of God; otherwise some sayings of Plato, Trismegistus, Sibyls, Ovid, &c., must be esteemed canonical scripture, because they fall upon some truths proper to Christian religion. The internal light and inspiration which directed and moved the authors of canonical Scripture, is a hidden quality infused into their understanding and will, and hath no such particular sensible influence into the external writing, that in it we can discover, or from it demonstrate, any such secret light and inspiration; and, therefore, to be assured that such a writing is Divine, we cannot know from itself alone, but by some other extrinsical authority.

11. "And here we appeal to any man of judgment, whether it be not a vain brag of some protestants to tell us, 'that they wot full well what is Scripture by the light of Scripture itself,' or (as D. Potter words it) 'by that glorious beam of Divine light which shines therein;' even as our eye distinguisheth light from darkness, without any other help than light itself; and as our ear knows a voice by the voice itself alone. But this vanity is refuted by what we said even now, that the external Scripture hath no apparent or

necessary connexion with Divine inspiration or revelation. Will D. Potter hold all his brethren for blind men, for not seeing that glorious beam of Divine light which shines in Scripture, about which they cannot agree? Corporal light may be discerned by itself alone, as being evident, proportionate, and connatural to our faculty of seeing. That Scripture is Divine and inspired by God, is a truth exceeding the natural capacity and compass of man's understanding, to us obscure, and to be believed by Divine faith, which, according to the apostle, is *argumentum non apparentium*, an argument, or conviction of things not evident—and therefore no wonder if Scripture do not manifest itself by itself alone, but must require some other means for applying it to our understanding. Nevertheless, their own similitudes and instances make against themselves: for suppose a man had never read or heard of sun or moon, fire, candle, &c., and should be brought to behold a light, yet in such sort as that the agent or cause efficient from which it proceeded were kept hidden from him; could such a one, by beholding the light, certainly know whether it were produced by the sun or moon, &c.? or if one heard a voice, and had never known the speaker, could he know from whom in particular that voice proceeded? They who look upon Scripture may well see that some one wrote it: but that it was written by Divine inspiration, how shall they know: Nay, they cannot so much as know who wrote it, unless they first know the writer, and what hand he writes; as likewise I cannot know whose voice it is which I hear, unless I first both know the person who speaks, and with what voice he useth to speak: and yet even all this supposed, I may perhaps be deceived. For there may be voices so like, and hands so counterfeited, that men may be deceived by then, as birds were by the grapes of that skilful painter. Now since Protestants affirm, knowledge concerning God as our supernatural end must be taken from Scripture, they cannot in Scripture alone discern that it is his voice, or writing, because they cannot know from whom a writing or voice proceeds, unless first they know the person who speaketh or writeth: nay, I say more; by Scripture alone they cannot so much as know that any person doth in it or by it speak anything at all: because one may write without intent to signify or affirm anything, but only to set down, or, as it were, paint such characters, syllables, and words, as men are wont to set copies, not caring what the signification of the words imports; or as one transcribes a writing which himself understands not; or when one writes what another dictates; and in other such cases, wherein it is clear that the writer speaks nothing in such his writing: and therefore by it we cannot hear or understand his voice. With what certainty then can any man affirm, that by Scripture itself they can see that the writers did intend to signify anything at all; that they were apostles, or other canonical authors; that they wrote their own sense, and not what was dictated by some other man; and finally and especially, that they wrote by the infallible direction of the Holy Ghost"

12. "But let us be liberal, and for the present suppose [not grant] that Scripture is like to corporal light, by itself alone able to determine and move our understanding to assent; yet the similitude proves against themselves: for light is not visible except to such as have eyes, which are not made by the light, but must be presupposed as produced by some other cause. And therefore to hold the similitude, Scripture can be clear only to those who are endued with the eye of faith; or, as D. Potter above cited saith, to all that 'have eyes to discern the shining beams thereof;' that is, to the believer as immediately after he speaketh. Faith then must not originally proceed from Scripture, but it is to be presupposed, before we can see the light thereof; and consequently there must be some other means precedent to Scripture to beget faith, which can be no other than the church.

13. "Others affirm, that they know canonical Scriptures to be such by the title of the books. But how shall we know such inscriptions or titles to be infallibly true? From this their answer our argument is strengthened, because divers apocryphal writings have appeared under the titles and names of sacred authors; as, the Gospel of Thomas, mentioned by St. Augustine; the Gospel of Peter, which the Nazarenes did use, as Theodoret witnesseth; with which Seraphion, a catholic bishop, was for some time deceived, as may be read in Eusebius, who also speaketh of the Apocalypse of Peter. The like may be said

of the Gospels of Barnabas, Bartholomew, and other such writings specified by Pope Gelasius. Protestants reject likewise some part of Esther and Daniel, which bear the same titles with the rest of those books, as also both we and they hold for apocryphal the third and fourth books which go under the name of Esdras, and yet both of us receive his first and second book; wherefore titles are not sufficient assurance what books be canonical; which D. Covel acknowledgeth in these words: 'It is not the word of God which doth or possibly can assure us, that we do well to think it is the word of God; the first outward motion leading men so to esteem of the Scripture is the authority of God's church, which teacheth us to receive Mark's Gospel, who was not an apostle, and to refuse the Gospel of Thomas, who was an apostle; and to retain Luke's Gospel, who saw not Christ, and to reject the Gospel of Nicodemus, who saw him.'

14. "Another answer, or rather objection, they are wont to bring—that the Scripture being a principle, needs no proof among Christians. So D. Potter. But this is either a plain begging of the question, or manifestly untrue, and is directly against their own doctrine and practice. If they mean that Scripture is one of those principles which, being the first and most known in all sciences, cannot be demonstrated by other principles, they suppose that which is in question, whether there be not some principle (for example, the church) whereby we may come to the knowledge of Scripture. If they intend that Scripture is a principle, but not the first and most known in Christianity, then Scripture may be proved. For principles that are not the first, nor known of themselves, may and ought to be proved before we can yield assent either to them, or to other verities depending on them. It is repugnant to their own doctrine and practice, inasmuch as they are wont to affirm that one part of Scripture may be known to be canonical, and may be interpreted by another. And since every scripture is a principle sufficient upon which to ground Divine faith, they must grant that one principle may and sometimes must be proved by another. Yea, this their answer, upon due ponderation, falls out to prove what we affirm, for since all principles cannot be proved, we must (that our labour may not be endless) come at length to rest in some principle which may not require any other proof: such is tradition, which involves an evidence of fact; and from hand to hand, and age to age, bringing us up to the times and persons of the apostles, and our Saviour himself cometh to be confirmed by all those miracles and other arguments, whereby they convinced their doctrine to be true. Wherefore the ancient fathers avouch, that we must receive the sacred canon upon the credit of God's church. St. Athanasius saith, that only four Gospels are to be received, because the canons of the holy and catholic church have so determined. The third council of Carthage, having set down the books of the Holy Scripture, gives the reason, because 'We have received from our fathers that those are to be read in the church.' St. Augustine, speaking of the Acts of the Apostles, saith, 'To which book I must give credit, if I give credit to the gospel, because the catholic church doth alike recommend to me both these books.' And in the same place he hath also these words: 'I would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the catholic church did move me.' A saying so plain, that Zuinglius is forced to cry out, 'Here I implore your equity to speak freely, whether the saying of Augustine seems not over-bold, or else unadvisedly to have fallen from him.'

15. "But suppose they were assured what books were canonical, this will little avail them, unless they be likewise certain in what language they remain uncorrupted, or what translations be true. Calvin acknowledgeth corruption in the Hebrew text; which if it he taken without points, is so ambiguous, that scarcely any one chapter, yea period, can be securely understood without the help of some translation: if with points, these were, after St. Hierome's time, invented by the perfidious Jews, who either by ignorance might mistake, or upon malice force the text to favour their impieties. And that the Hebrew text still retains much ambiguity, is apparent by the disagreeing translations of Novelists; which also proves the Greek, for the New Testament, not to be void of doubtfulness, as Calvin confesseth it to be corrupted. And although both the Hebrew and Greek were pure, what doth this help, if only Scripture be the rule of faith, and so very few be able to examine the text in these languages? All then must be reduced to the

certainty of translations into other tongues, wherein no private man having any promise or assurance of infallibility, protestants who rely upon Scripture alone, will find no certain ground for their faith: as accordingly Whitaker affirmeth, 'Those who understand not the Hebrew and Greek do err often and unavoidably.'

16. "Now concerning the translations of protestants, it will be sufficient to set down what the laborious, exact, and judicious author of the Protestants' Apology, &c, dedicated to our late King James, of famous memory, hath to this purpose; "To omit,' saith he, 'particulars, whose recital would be infinite, and to touch this point but generally only, the translation of the New Testament by Luther is condemned by Andreas Osiander, Keckermannus, and Zuinglius, who saith hereof to Luther—Thou dost corrupt the word of God, thou art seen to be a manifest and common corrupter of the Holy Scriptures: how much are we ashamed of thee, who have hitherto esteemed thee beyond all measure, and now prove thee to be such a man!' And in like manner doth Luther reject the translation of the Zuinglians, terming them, in matter of divinity, fools, asses, antichrists, deceivers, and of ass-like understanding. Insomuch that when Froschoverus, the Zuinglian printer of Zurich, sent him a Bible translated by the divines there, Luther would not receive the same; but sending it back, rejected it, as the protestant writers, Hospinianus and Lavatherus, witness. The translation set forth by Œcolampadius, and the divines of Basil, is reproved by Beza, who affirmeth, that the Basil translation 'is in many places wicked, and altogether differing from the mind of the Holy Ghost.' The translation of Castalio is condemned by Beza, as being sacrilegious, wicked, and ethnical. As concerning Calvin's translation, that learned protestant writer, Carolus Molinæus, saith thereof, 'Calvin in his harmony maketh the text of the gospel to leap up and down;' he uses violence to the letter of the gospel; and, besides this, addeth to the text. As touching Beza's translation (to omit the dislike had thereof by Selneccerus, the German protestant of the university of Jena), the aforesaid Molinæus saith of him—*de facto mutat textum*, he actually changeth the text'—and giveth further sundry instances of his corruptions: as also Castalio, that learned Calvinist, and most learned in the tongues, reprehendeth Beza in a whole book of this matter, and saith, 'that to note all his errors in translation would require a great volume.' And M. Parker saith, 'As for the Geneva Bibles, it is to be wished that either they may be purged from those manifold errors which are both in the text and in the margent, or else utterly prohibited: all which confirmeth your majesty's grave and learned censure, in your thinking the Geneva translation to be worst of all; and that in the marginal notes annexed to the Geneva translation some are very partial, untrue, seditious,' &c. Lastly, concerning the English translation the puritans say, 'Our translation of the Psalms, comprised in our Book of Common Prayer, doth in addition, subtraction, and alteration, differ from the truth of the Hebrew in two hundred places at the least: insomuch as they do therefore profess to rest doubtful, whether a man with a safe conscience may subscribe thereunto.' And Mr. Carlisle saith of the English translators, that they 'have depraved the sense, obscured the truth, and deceived the ignorant; that in many places they do detort the Scriptures from the right sense;' and that 'they show themselves to love darkness more than light, falsehood more than truth.' And the ministers of Lincolne diocese give their public testimony, terming the English translation 'a translation that taketh away from the text; that addeth to the text and that sometime to the changing or obscuring of the meaning of the Holy Ghost' Not without cause, therefore, did your majesty affirm, that you 'could never yet see a Bible well translated into English.' Thus far the author of the Protestants' Apology, &c. And I cannot forbear to mention, in particular, that famous corruption of Luther, who in the text where it is said (Rom. iii. 23), *We account a man to be justified by faith, without the works of the law*, in favour of justification by faith alone, translateth, *justified by faith alone*. As likewise the falsification of Zuinglius is no less notorious, who, in the Gospels of St. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and in St. Paul, in place of *This is my body, This is my blood*, translates, *This signifies my body*, *This signifies my blood.* And here let protestants consider duly of these points: salvation cannot be hoped for without true faith: faith,

according to them, relies upon Scripture alone: Scripture must be delivered to most of them by the translations: translations depend on the skill and honesty of men, in whom nothing is more certain than a most certain possibility to err; and no greater evidence of truth, than that it is evident some of them embrace falsehood, by reason of their contrary translations. What then remaineth, but that truth, faith, salvation, and all, must in them rely upon a fallible and uncertain ground? How many poor souls are lamentably seduced, while from preaching ministers they admire a multitude of texts of Divine Scripture, but are indeed the false translations and corruptions of erring men! Let them therefore, if they will be assured of true Scriptures, fly to the always visible catholic church, against which the gates of hell can never so far prevail, as that she shall be permitted to deceive the Christian world with false Scriptures. And Luther himself, by unfortunate experience, was at length forced to confess this much, saying 'If the world last longer, it will be again necessary to receive the decrees of councils, and to have recourse to them, by reason of divers interpretations of Scripture which now reign.' On the contrary side, the translation approved by the Roman church is commended even by our adversaries; and D. Covel in particular saith, 'that it was used in the church one thousand three hundred years ago, and doubteth not to prefer that translation before others.' Insomuch, that whereas the English translations be many, and among themselves disagreeing, he concludeth, that of all those the approved translation authorised by the Church of England is that which cometh nearest to the vulgar, and is commonly called the Bishops' Bible. So that the truth of that translation which we use must be the rule to judge of the goodness of their Bibles; and therefore they are obliged to maintain our translation, if it were but for their own sake.

17. "But doth indeed the source of their manifold uncertainties stop here? No: the chiefest difficulty remains, concerning the true meaning of Scripture; for attaining whereof if protestants had any certainty, they could not disagree so hugely as they do. Hence Mr. Hooker saith, 'We are right sure of this, that nature, Scripture, and experience, have all taught the world to seek for the ending of contentions by submitting itself unto some judicial and definite sentence, whereunto neither part that contendeth may under any pretence or colour refuse to stand.' Doctor Field's words are remarkable to this purpose: 'Seeing,' saith he, 'the controversies of religion in our times are grown in number so many, and in nature so intricate, that few have time and leisure, fewer strength of understanding, to examine them; what remaineth for men desirous of satisfaction in things of such consequence, but diligently to search out which among all the societies in the world is that blessed company of holy ones, that household of faith, that spouse of Christ, and church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of truth that so they may embrace her communion, follow her directions, and rest in her judgment?'

18. "And now that the true interpretation of Scripture ought to be received from the church, it is also proved, by what we have already demonstrated, that she it is who must declare what books be true Scripture; wherein if she be assisted by the Holy Ghost, why should we not believe her to be infallibly directed concerning the true meaning of them? Let protestants, therefore, either bring some proof out of Scripture that the church is guided by the Holy Ghost in discerning true Scripture, and not in delivering the true sense thereof; or else give us leave to apply against them the argument which St. Augustine opposed to the Manichcans in these words: 'I would not believe the gospel unless the authority of the church did move me. Them, therefore, whom I obeyed, saying, Believe the gospel, why should I not obey, saying to me, Do not believe Manicheus (Luther, Calvin, &c.)? Choose what thou pleasest. If thou shalt say, Believe the catholics, they warn me not to give any credit to you. If therefore I believe them, I cannot believe thee. If thou say, Do not believe the catholics, thou shalt not do well in forcing me to the faith of Manicheus, because by the preaching of catholics I believed the gospel itself. If thou say, You did well to believe them [catholics] commending the gospel, but you did not well to believe them discommending Manicheus; dost thou think me so very foolish, that without any reason at all I should believe what thou wilt, and not believe what thou wilt not?' And do not protestants perfectly resemble these men, to whom

St. Augustine spake, when they will have men to believe the Roman church delivering Scripture, but not to believe her condemning Luther and the rest? Against whom, when they first opposed themselves to the Roman church, St. Augustine may have seemed to have spoken no less prophetically than doctrinally, when he said, 'Why should I not most diligently inquire what Christ commanded of them before all others, by whose authority I was moved to believe that Christ commanded any good thing? Canst thou better declare to me what he said, whom I would not have thought to have been, or to be, if the belief thereof had been recommended by thee to me? This therefore I believed by fame, strengthened with celebrity, consent, antiquity. But every one may see that you, so few, so turbulent, so new, can produce nothing deserving authority. What madness is this? Believe them [catholics] that we ought to believe Christ; but learn of us what Christ said. Why, I beseech thee? Surely, if they [catholics] were not at all, and could not teach me any thing, I would more easily persuade myself that I were not to believe Christ, than that I should learn any thing concerning him from any other than them by whom I believed him.' If therefore we receive the knowledge of Christ and Scriptures from the church, from her also we take his doctrine, and the interpretation thereof.

19. "But besides all this, the Scripture cannot be judge of controversies; who ought to be such, as that to him not only the learned veterans, but also the unlearned and novices, may have recourse; for these being capable of salvation, and endued with faith of the same nature with that of the learned, there must be some universal judge, which the ignorant may understand, and to whom the greatest clerks must submit. Such is the church; and the Scripture is not such.

20. "Now the inconveniences which may follow by referring all controversies to Scripture alone are very clear: for by this principle all is finally in very deed and truth reduced to the internal private spirit, because there is really no middle way betwixt a public external and a private internal voice; and whosoever refuseth the one, must of necessity adhere to the other.

21. "This tenet also of protestants, by taking the office of judicature from the church, comes to confer it upon every particular man, who, being driven from submission to the church, cannot be blamed if he trust himself as far as any other, his conscience dictating, that wittingly he means not to cozen himself, as others maliciously may do: which inference is so manifest, that it hath extorted from divers protestants the open confession of so vast an absurdity. Hear Luther: 'The governors of churches, and pastors of Christ's sheep, have indeed power to teach, but the sheep ought to give judgment, whether they propound the voice of Christ or of aliens.' Lubbertus saith, 'As we have demonstrated that all public judges may be deceived in interpreting; so we affirm that they may err in judging. All faithful men are private judges, and they also have power to judge of doctrines and interpretations.' Whitaker, even of the unlearned, saith, 'They ought to have recourse unto the more learned; but in the mean time we must be careful not to attribute to them over-much, but so that still we retain our own freedom.' Bilson also affirmeth, that 'the people must be discerners and judges of that which is taught.' This same pernicious doctrine is delivered by Brentius, Zanchius, Cartwright, and others exactly cited by Brerely: and nothing is more common in every protestant's mouth, than that he admits of fathers, councils, church, &c., as far as they agree with Scripture; which upon the matter is himself. Thus heresy ever falls upon extremes: it pretends to have Scripture alone for judge of controversies; and in the mean time sets up as many judges as there are men and women in the Christian world. What good statesmen would they be, who should ideate or fancy such a commonwealth, as these men have framed to themselves as a church! They verify what St Augustine objecteth against certain heretics: 'You see that you go about to overthrow an authority of Scripture, and that every man's mind may be to himself a rule what he is to allow or disallow in every scripture.'

22. "Moreover, what confusion to the church, what danger to the commonwealth, this denial of the authority of the church may bring, I leave to the consideration of any judicious, indifferent man. I will

only set down some words of D. Potter, who, speaking of the proposition of revealed truths, sufficient to prove him that gainsaveth them to be an heretic, saith thus: 'This proposition of revealed truths is not by the infallible determination of pope or church,' [pope and church being excluded, let us hear what more secure rule he will prescribe], 'but by whatsoever means a man may be convinced in conscience of Divine revelation. If a preacher do clear any point of faith to his hearers; if a private Christian do make it appear to his neighbour that any conclusion or point of faith is delivered by Divine revelation of God's word; if a man himself (without any teacher) by reading the Scriptures, or hearing them read, be convinced of the truth of any such conclusion; this is a sufficient proposition to prove him that gainsayeth any such proof to be an heretic, an obstinate opposer of the faith.' Behold what goodly safe propounders of faith arise in place of God's universal visible church, which must yield to a single preacher, a neighbour, a man himself if he can read, or at least have ears to hear Scripture read! Verily I do not see but that every well-governed civil commonwealth ought to concur towards the exterminating of this doctrine, whereby the interpretation of Scripture is taken from the church and conferred upon every man, who, whatsoever is pretended to the contrary, may be a passionate, seditious creature.

23. "Moreover, there was no Scripture or written words for about two thousand years from Adam to Moses, whom all acknowledge to have been the first author of canonical Scripture: and again, for about two thousand years more, from Moses to Christ our Lord, Holy Scripture was only among the people of Israel; and yet there were Gentiles endued in those days with Divine faith, as appeareth in Job and his friends. Wherefore during so many ages the church alone was the decider of controversies, and instructor of the faithful. Neither did the word written by Moses deprive that church of her former infallibility, or other qualities requisite for a judge: yea, D. Potter acknowledgeth, that besides the law, there was a living judge in the Jewish church, endued with an absolutely infallible direction in cases of moment, as all points belonging to Divine faith are. Now the church of Christ our Lord was before the Scriptures of the New Testament, which were not written instantly, nor all at one time, but successively upon several occasions; and some after the decease of most of the apostles; and after they were written they were not presently known to all churches; and of some there was doubt in the church for some ages after our Saviour. Shall we then say, that according as the church by little and little received Holy Scripture, she was by the like degrees divested of her possessed infallibility and power to decide controversies in religion? that some churches had one judge of controversies, and others another? that with months or years, as new canonical scripture grew to be published, the church altered her whole rule of faith, or judge of controversies? After the apostles' time, and after the writing of scriptures, heresies would be sure to rise, requiring in God's church, for their discovery and condemnation, infallibility, either to write new canonical scripture, as was done in the apostles' time by occasion of emergent heresies, or infallibility to interpet scriptures already written, or, without Scripture, by Divine written traditions, and assistance of the Holy Ghost, to determine all controversies; as Tertullian saith, 'The soul is before the letter; and speech before books; and sense before style.' Certainly such addition of Scripture, with derogation or subtraction from the former power and infallibility of the church, would have brought to the world division in matters of faith, and the church had rather lost than gained by Holy Scripture (which ought to be far from our tongues and thoughts); it being manifest, that for decision of controversies infallibility settled in a living judge is incomparably more useful and fit, than if it were conceived as inherent in some inanimate writing. Is there such repugnance betwixt infallibility in the church, and existence of Scripture, that the production of the one must be the destruction of the other? Must the church wax dry, by giving to her children the milk of sacred writ? No, no: her infallibility was and is derived from an inexhausted fountain. If protestants will have the Scripture alone for their judge, let them first produce some scripture affirming, that by the entering thereof infallibility went out of the church. D. Potter may remember what himself teacheth; that

the church is still endued with infallibility in points fundamental; and, consequently, that infallibility in the church doth well agree with the truth, the sanctity, yea, with the sufficiency of Scripture, for all matters necessary to salvation. I would therefore gladly know out of what text he imagineth that the church, by the coming of Scripture, was deprived of infallibility in some points and not in others? He affirmeth, that the Jewish synagogue retained infallibility in herself, notwithstanding the writing of the Old Testament: and will he so unworthily and unjustly deprive the church of Christ of infallibility by reason of the New Testament? Especially if we consider that in the Old Testament, laws, ceremonies, rites, punishments, judgments, sacraments, sacrifices, &c., were more particularly and minutely delivered to the Jews, than in the New Testament is done: our Saviour leaving the determination or declaration of particulars to his spouse the church, which therefore stands in need of infallibility more than the Jewish synagogue. D. Potter, against this argument, drawn from the power and infallibility of the synagogue, objects, that we might as well infer, that 'Christians must have one sovereign prince over all, because the Jews had one chief judge.' But the disparity is very clear: the synagogue was a type and figure of the church of Christ; not so their civil government of Christian commonwealths or kingdoms: the church succeeded to the synagogue, but not Christian princes to Jewish magistrates: and the church is compared to a house, or a family; to an army, to a body, to a kingdom, &c, all which require one master, one general, one head, one magistrate, one spiritual king; as our blessed Saviour with *fiet unum ovile* joined *unus pastor;* one sheepfold, one pastor: but all distinct kingdoms or commonwealths are not one army, family, &c. And, finally, it is necessary to salvation that all have recourse to one church; but for temporal weal, there is no need that all submit or depend upon one temporal prince, kingdom, or commonwealth: and therefore our Saviour hath left to his whole church, as being one, one law, one Scripture, the same sacraments, &c. Whereas kingdoms have their several laws, different governments, diversity of powers, magistracy, &c. And so this objection returneth upon D. Potter. For as in the one community of the Jews there was one power and judge to end debates and resolve difficulties; so in the church of Christ, which is one, there must be some one authority to decide all controversies in religion.

24. "This discourse is excellently proved by ancient St. Irenæus in these words: 'What if the apostles had not left scriptures, ought we not to have followed the order of tradition which they delivered to those to whom they committed the churches? To which order many nations yield assent who believe in Christ, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit of God, without letters or ink, and diligently keeping ancient tradition. It is easy to receive the truth from God's church, seeing the apostles have most fully deposited in her, as in a rich storehouse, all things belonging to truth. For what? If there should arise any contention of some small question, ought we not to have recourse to the most ancient churches, and from them to receive what is certain and clear concerning the present question?'

25. "Besides all this, the doctrine of protestants is destructive of itself: for either they have certain and infallible means not to err in interpreting Scripture, or they have not: if not, then the Scripture (to them) cannot be a sufficient ground for infallible faith, nor a meet judge of controversies. If they have certain infallible means, and so cannot err in their interpretations of Scriptures, then they are able with infallibility to hear, examine, and determine all controversies of faith; and so they may be, and are, judges of controversies, although they use the Scriptures as a rule. And thus, against their own doctrine, they constitute another judge of controversies beside Scripture alone.

26. "Lastly, I ask D. Potter whether this assertion, 'Scripture alone is judge of all controversies in faith,' be a fundamental point of faith or no? He must be well-advised before he say that it is a fundamental point; for he will have against him as many protestants as teach that by Scripture alone it is impossible to know what books be Scripture; which yet, to protestants, is the most necessary and chief point of all other. D. Covel expressly saith, 'Doubtiess it is a tolerable opinion in the church of Rome, if

they go no further, as some of them do not' [he should have said, as none of them do], 'to affirm that the Scriptures are holy and Divine in themselves, but so esteemed by us, for the authority of the church.' He will likewise oppose himself to those his brethren, who grant that controversies cannot be ended without some external living authority, as we noted before. Besides, how can it be in us a fundamental error to say the Scripture alone is not judge of controversies, seeing (not-withstanding this our belief) we use for interpreting of Scripture all the means which they prescribe: as prayer, conferring of places, consulting the originals, &c., and to these add the instruction and authority of God's church, which even by his confession cannot err damnably, and may afford us more help than can be expected from the industry, learning, or wit of any private person? and finally, D. Potter grants that the church of Rome doth not maintain any fundamental error against faith; and consequently he cannot affirm that our doctrine, in this present controversy, is damnable. If he answer, that their tenet about the Scriptures being the only judge of controversies is not a fundamental point of faith; then, as he teacheth that the universal church may err in points not fundamental, so I hope he will not deny but particular churches and private men are much more obnoxious to error in such points; and in particular in this, that Scripture alone is judge of controversies: and so the very principle upon which their whole faith is grounded remains to them uncertain. And on the other side, for the selfsame reason, they are not certain but that the church is judge of controversies; which if she be, then their case is lamentable who in general deny her this authority, and in particular controversies oppose her definitions. Besides, among public conclusions defended in Oxford in the year 1633, to the questions, 'Whether the church have authority to determine controversies in faith,' and 'to interpret Holy Scripture?' the answer to both is affirmative.

27. "Since then the visible church of Christ our Lord is that infallible means whereby the revealed truths of Almighty God are conveyed to our understanding, it followeth, that to oppose her definitions is to resist God himself; which blessed St. Augustine plainly affirmeth, when speaking of the controversy about rebaptization of such as were baptized by heretics, he saith, 'This is neither openly nor evidently read, neither by you nor by me; yet if there were any wise man, of whom our Saviour had given testimony, and that he should be consulted in this question, we should make no doubt to perform what he should say, lest we might seem to gainsay not him so much as Christ, by whose testimony he was recommended. Now Christ beareth witness to his church.' And a little after, 'Whosoever refuseth to follow the practice of the church doth resist our Saviour himself, who by his testimony recommends the church.' I conclude therefore with this argument: Whosoever resisteth that means which infallibly proposeth to us God's word or revelation, commits a sin which unrepented excludes salvation; but whosoever resisteth Christ's visible church, doth resist that means which infallibly proposeth to us God's word or revelation; therefore, whosoever resisteth Christ's visible church, commits a sin which unrepented excludes salvation. Now what visible church was extant when Luther began his pretended reformation, whether it were the Roman or protestant church; and whether he and other protestants do not oppose that visible church which was spread over the world before and in Luther's time; is easy to be determined, and importeth every one most seriously to ponder, as a thing whereon eternal salvation dependeth. And because our adversaries do here most insist upon the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental, and in particular teach that the church may err in points not fundamental, it will be necessary to examine the truth and weight of this evasion, which shall be done in the next chapter."

AN

ANSWER TO THE SECOND CHAPTER:

Concerning the means whereby the revealed truths of God are conveyed to our understanding, and which must determine controversies in faith and religion.

AD § 1. He that would usurp an absolute lordship and tyranny over any people, need not put himself to the trouble and difficulty of abrogating and disannulling the laws made to maintain the common liberty; for he may frustrate their intent, and compass his own design as well, if he can get the power and authority to interpret them as he pleases, and add to them what he pleases, and to have his interpretations and additions stand for laws; if he can rule his people by his laws, and his laws by his lawyers. So the church of Rome, to establish her tyranny over men's consciences, needed not either to abolish or corrupt the Holy Scriptures, the pillars and supporters of Christian liberty (which in regard of the numerous multitude of copies dispersed through all places, translated into almost all languages, guarded with all solicitous care and industry, had been an impossible attempt); but the more expedite way, and therefore more likely to be successful, was to gain the opinion and esteem of the public and authorised interpreter of them, and the authority of adding to them what doctrine she pleased, under the title of traditions or definitions. For by this means she might both serve herself of all those clauses of Scripture which might be drawn to cast a favourable countenance upon her ambitious pretences, which in case the Scripture had been abolished she could not have done; and yet be secure enough of having either her power limited, or her corruptions and abuses reformed by them; this being once settled in the minds of men—that unwritten doctrines, if proposed by her, were to be received with equal reverence to those that were written; and that the sense of Scripture was not that which seemed to men's reason and understanding to be so, but that which the church of Rome should declare to be so, seemed it never so unreasonable and incongruous. The matter being once thus ordered, and the Holy Scriptures being made in effect not your directors and judges (no further than you please), but your servants and instruments, always pressed and in readiness to advance your designs, and disabled wholly with minds so qualified to prejudice or impeach them; it is safe for you to put a crown on their head, and a reed in their hands, and to bow before them, and cry, *Hail, King of the Jews!* to pretend a great deal of esteem, and respect, and reverence to them, as here you do. But to little purpose is verbal reverence without entire submission and sincere obedience; and as our Saviour said of some, so the Scripture, could it speak, I believe would say to you, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not that which I command you?* Cast away the vain and arrogant pretence of infallibility, which makes your errors incurable. Leave picturing God, and worshipping him by pictures. *Teach not for doctrine the commandments of men*. Debar not the laity of the testament of Christ's blood. Let your public prayers, and psalms and hymns, be in such language as is for the edification of the assistants. Take not from the clergy that liberty of marriage which Christ hath left them. Do not impose upon men that humility of worshipping angels which St. Paul condemns. Teach no more proper sacrifices of Christ but one. Acknowledge them that die in Christ to be blessed, and to *rest from their labours*. Acknowledge the sacrament, after consecration, to be bread and wine, as well as Christ's body and blood. Acknowledge the gift of contingency, without marriage, not to be given at all. Let not the weapons of your warfare he carnal, such as are massacres, treasons, persecutions, and, in a word, all means either violent or fraudulent: these, and other things, which the Scripture commands you, do, and then we shall willingly

give you such testimony as you deserve; but till you do so, to talk of estimation, respect, and reverence to the Scripture, is nothing else but talk.

2. For neither is that true which you pretend, "that we possess the Scripture from you, or take it upon the integrity of your custody:" but upon universal tradition, of which you are but a little part. Neither, if it were true that protestants acknowledged the integrity of it to have been guarded by your alone custody, were this any argument of your reverence towards them. For, first, you might preserve them entire, not for want of will, but of power, to corrupt them, as it is a hard thing to poison the sea. And then, having prevailed so far with men, as either not to look at all into them, or but only through such spectacles as you should please to make for them, and to see nothing in them, though as clear as the sun, if it any way made against you: you might keep them entire, without any thought or care to conform your doctrine to them, or reform it by them (which were indeed to reverence the Scriptures); but out of a persuasion that you could qualify them well enough with your glosses and interpretations, and make them sufficiently conformable to your present doctrine, at least in their judgment who were prepossessed with this persuasion, that "your church was to judge of the sense of Scripture, not to be judged by it."

3. For whereas you say, "no cause imaginable could avert your will from giving the function of supreme and sole judge to holy writ: but that the thing is impossible, and that by this means controversies are increased, and not ended;" you mean, perhaps, that you can or will imagine no other cause but these. But sure there is little reason you should measure other men's imaginations by your own, who perhaps may be so clouded and veiled with prejudice, that you cannot, or will not, see that which is most manifest. For what indifferent and unprejudicate man may not easily conceive another cause which (I do not say does, but certainly) may pervert your wills, and avert your understandings from submitting your religion and church to a trial by Scripture? I mean the great and apparent and unavoidable danger which by this means you would fall into, of losing the opinion which men have of your infallibility, and consequently your power and authority over men's consciences, and all that depends upon it. So that though *Diana of the Ephesians* be cried up, yet it may be feared that with a great many among you (though I censure or judge no man), the other cause which wrought upon Demetrius and the craftsmen, may have with you also the more effectual, though more secret influence; and that is, that *by this craft we have our living;* by this craft, I mean of keeping your proselytes from an indifferent trial of your religion by Scripture, and making them yield up and captivate their judgment unto yours. Yet had you only said *de facto*, that no other cause did avert your own will from this, but only these which you pretend, out of charity I should have believed you. But seeing you speak not of yourself, but of all of your side, whose hearts you cannot know, and profess not only that there is no other cause, but that "no other is imaginable," I could not let this pass without a censure. As for the impossibility of Scriptures being the sole judge of controversies, that is, the sole rule for men to judge them by (for we mean nothing else), you only affirm it without proof, as if the thing were evident of itself: and therefore I, conceiving the contrary to be more evident, might well content myself to deny it without refutation: yet I cannot but desire you to tell me, if Scripture cannot be the judge of any controversy, how shall that touching the church and the notes of it be determined? And if it be the sole judge of this one, why may it not of others? Why not of all? Those only excepted wherein the Scripture itself is the subject of the question, which cannot be determined but by natural reason, the only principle, beside Scripture, which is common to Christians.

4. Then for the imputation of "increasing contentions, and not ending them," Scripture is innocent of it; as also this opinion, "that controversies are to be decided by Scripture." For if men did really and sincerely submit their judgments to Scripture, and that only, and would require no more of any man but to do so, it were impossible but that all controversies touching thing necessary and very profitable should be ended; and if others were continued or increased, it were no matter.

5. In the next words we have direct boys' play, a thing given with one hand, and taken away with the other; an acknowledgment made in one line, and retracted in the next. "We acknowledge," say you, "Scripture to be a perfect rule, for as much as a writing can be a rule: only we deny that it excludes unwritten tradition." As if you should have said, "We acknowledge it to be as perfect a rule as writing can be; only we deny it to be as perfect a rule as a writing may be. Either therefore you must revoke your acknowledgment, or retract you retraction of it; for both cannot possibly stand together. For if you will stand to what you have granted, that Scripture is as perfect a rule of faith as a writing can be, you must then grant it both so complete, that it needs no addition, and so evident, that it needs no interpretation: for both these properties are requisite to a perfect rule, and a writing is capable of both these properties.

6. That both these properties are requisite to a perfect rule, it is apparent; because that is not perfect in any kind which wants some parts belonging to its integrity: as, he is not a perfect man that wants any part appertaining to the integrity of a man; and therefore that which wants any accession to make it a perfect rule, of itself is not a perfect rule. And then, the end of a rule is to regulate and direct. Now every instrument is more or less perfect in its kind, as it is more or less fit to attain the end for which it is ordained: but nothing obscure or unevident, while it is so, is fit to regulate and direct them to whom it is so: therefore it is requisite also to a rule (so far as it is a rule) to be evident: otherwise indeed it is no rule, because it cannot serve for direction. I conclude, therefore, that both these properties are required to a perfect rule—both to be so complete as to need no addition, and to be so evident as to need no interpretation.

7. Now that a writing is capable of both these perfections, it is so plain that I am even ashamed to prove it. For he that denies it must say that something may be spoken which cannot be written. For if such a complete and evident rule of faith may be delivered by word of mouth, as you pretend it may, and is; and whatsoever is delivered by word of mouth may also be written; then such a complete and evident rule of faith may also be written. If you will have more light added to the sun, answer me then to these questions: Whether your church can set down in writing all these, which she pretends to be Divine unwritten traditions, and add them to the verities already written? And whether she can set us down such interpretations of all obscurities in the faith as shall need no further interpretations? If she cannot, then she hath not that power which you pretend she hath, of being an infallible teacher of all Divine verities, and an infallible interpreter of obscurities in the faith; for she cannot teach us all Divine verities, if she cannot write them down; neither is that an interpretation which needs again to be interpreted. If she can, let her do it, and then we shall have a writing, not only capable of, but actually endowed with, both these perfections, of being both so complete as to need no addition, and so evident as to need no interpretation. Lastly, whatsoever your church can do or not do, no man can, without blasphemy, deny that Christ Jesus, if he had pleased, could have writ us a rule of faith so plain and perfect, as that it should have wanted neither any part to make up its integrity, nor any clearness to make it sufficiently intelligible. And if Christ could have done this, then the thing might have been done: a writing there might have been endowed with both these properties. Thus therefore I conclude: a writing may be so perfect a rule, as to need neither addition nor interpretation: but "the Scripture you acknowledge a perfect rule, for as much as a writing can be a rule;" therefore it needs neither addition nor interpretation.

8. You will say, that "though a writing he never so perfect a rule of faith, yet it must be beholden to tradition to give it this testimony, that it is a rule of faith and the word of God." I answer, first, there is no absolute necessity of this; for God might, if he thought good, give it the attestation of perpetual miracles. Secondly, that it is one thing to be a perfect rule of faith; another, to be proved so unto us. And thus though a writing could not be proved to us, to be a perfect rule of faith by its own saying so, for nothing is proved true by, being read or written in a book, but only by tradition, which is a thing credible of itself; yet it may be so in itself, and contain all the material objects, all the particular articles of our faith, without

any dependence upon tradition; even this also not excepted, that this writing doth contain the rule of faith. Now when protestants affirm against papists, that Scripture is a perfect rule of faith, their meaning is not, that by Scripture all things absolutely may be proved which are to be believed: for it can never be proved by Scripture to a gainsayer that there is a God, or that the book called Scripture is the word of God; for he that will deny these assertions when they are spoken, will believe them never a whit the more because you can show them written: but their meaning is, that the Scripture, to them which presuppose it Divine, and a rule of faith, as papists and protestants do, contains all the material objects of faith, is a complete and total, and not only an imperfect and a partial rule.

9. "But every book and chapter and text of Scripture is infallible, and wants no due perfection, and yet excludes not the addition of other books of Scripture; therefore the perfection of the whole Scripture excludes not the addition of unwritten tradition." I answer, every text of Scripture, though it hath the perfection belonging to a text of Scripture, yet it hath not the perfection requisite to a perfect rule of faith; and that only is the perfection which is the subject of our discourse. So that this is to abuse your reader with the ambiguity of the word *perfect*. In effect, as if you should say, a text of Scripture may be a perfect text, though there be others beside it; therefore the whole Scripture may be a perfect rule of faith, though there be other parts of this rule besides the Scripture, and though the Scripture be but a part of it.

10. The next argument to the same purpose is, for sophistry, cousin-german to the former: "When the first books of Scripture were written, they did not exclude unwritten traditions; therefore now also, that all the books of Scripture are written, traditions are not excluded." The sense of which argument (if it have any) must be this: when only a part of the Scripture was written, that a part of the Divine doctrine was unwritten; therefore now, when all the Scripture is written, yet some part of the Divine doctrine is yet unwritten. If you say your conclusion is not, that it is so, but without disparagement to Scripture may be so; without disparagement to the truth of Scripture, I grant it; but without disparagement to the Scripture's being a perfect rule, I deny it. And now the question is not of the truth, but the perfection of it, which are very different things, though you would fain confound them. For Scripture might very well be all true, though it contain not all necessary Divine truth. But unless it do so, it cannot be a perfect rule of faith; for that which wants any thing is not perfect. For I hope you do not imagine that we conceive any antipathy between God's word written and unwritten, but that both might very well stand together. All that we say is this—that we have reason to believe that God, *de facto*, hath ordered the matter so, that all the gospel of Christ, the whole covenant between God and man, is now written. Whereas, if he had pleased, he might so have disposed it, that part might have been written, and part unwritten; but then he would have taken order, to whom we should have had recourse for that part of it which was not written; which seeing he hath not done (as the progress shall demonstrate) it is evident he hath left no part of it unwritten. We know no man therefore that says it were any injury to the written word to be joined with the unwritten, if there were any wherewith it might be joined; but that we deny. The fidelity of a keeper may very well consist with the authority of the thing committed to his custody. But we know no one society of Christians that is such a faithful keeper as you pretend. The Scripture itself was not kept so faithfully by you; but that you suffered infinite variety of readings to creep into it; all which could not possibly be Divine; and yet, in several parts of your church, all of them, until the last age, were so esteemed. The interpretations of obscure places of Scripture, which without question the apostles taught the primitive Christians, are wholly lost; there remains no certainty scarce of any one. Those worlds of miracles which our Saviour did, which were not written, for want of writing are vanished out of the memory of men; and many profitable things which the apostles taught and writ not—as that which St. Paul glanceth at in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, of the cause of the hindrance of the coming of antichrist—are wholly lost and extinguished; so unfaithful or negligent hath been this keeper of Divine verities, whose eyes, like the Keeper's of Israel (you say), have *never slumbered nor slept*. Lastly, we deny

not but a judge and a law might well stand together, but we deny that there is any such judge of God's appointment. Had he intended any such judge he would have named him, lest otherwise (as now it is) our judge of controversies should be our greatest controversy.

11. Ad § 2—6. In your second paragraph, you sum up those arguments wherewith you intend to prove that "Scripture alone cannot be judge in controversies:" wherein I profess unto you beforehand, that you will fight without an adversary. For though protestants, being warranted by some of the fathers, have called Scripture *the judge of controversy*, and you, in saying here that "Scripture *alone* cannot be judge," imply that it may be called in some sense a judge, though not alone; yet to speak properly (as men should speak when they write of controversies in religion), the Scripture is not a judge of controversies, but a rule only, and the only rule, for Christians to judge them by. Every man is to judge for himself with the judgment of discretion, and to choose either his religion first, and then his church, as we say; or, as you, his church first, and then his religion. But, by the consent of both sides, every man is to judge and choose; and the rule whereby he is to guide his choice, if he be a natural man, is reason; if he be already a Christian, Scripture; which we say is a rule to judge controversies by. Yet not all simply, but all the controversies of Christians, of those that are already agreed upon this first principle, that the Scripture is the word of God. But that there is any man, or any company of men, appointed to be judge for all men, that we deny; and that, I believe, you will never prove. The very truth is, we say no more in this matter than evidence of truth hath made you confess in plain terms in the beginning of this chapter; viz. "that Scripture is a perfect rule of faith, for as much as a writing can be a rule." So that all your reasons, whereby you labour to dethrone the Scripture from this office of judging, we might let pass as impertinent to the conclusion which we maintain, and you have already granted; yet out of courtesy we will consider them.

12. Your first is this: "A judge must be a person fit to end controversies; but the Scripture is not a person, nor fit to end controversies, no more than the law would be without the judges; therefore, though it may be a rule, it cannot be a judge." Which conclusion I have already granted: only my request is, that you will permit Scripture to have the properties of a rule, that is, to be fit to direct every one that will make the best use of it, to that end for which it was ordained; and that is as much as we need desire. For as if I were to go a journey, and had a guide which could not err, I needed not to know my way; so, on the other side, if I know my way, or have a plain rule to know it by, I shall need no guide. Grant therefore Scripture to be such a rule, and it will quickly take away all necessity of having an infallible guide. But "without a living judge it will be no fitter," you say, "to end controversies, than the law alone to end suits." I answer, if the law were plain and perfect, and men honest and desirous to understand aright, and obey it, he that says it were not fit to end controversies, must either want understanding himself, or think the world wants it. Now the Scripture, we pretend, in things necessary is plain and perfect; and men, we say, are obliged, under pain of damnation, to seek the true sense of it, and not to wrest it to their preconceived fancies. Such a law, therefore, to such men cannot but be very fit to end all controversies necessary to be ended. For others that are not so, they will end when the world ends, and that is time enough.

13. Your next encounter is with them who, acknowledging the Scripture a rule only, and not a judge, make the Holy Ghost, speaking in Scripture, the judge of controversies. Which you disprove by saying, that the Holy Ghost, speaking only in Scripture, is no more intelligible to us than the Scripture in which he speaks. But by this reason neither the pope nor a council can be a judge neither. For first, denying the Scriptures, the writings of the Holy Ghost, to be judges, you will not, I hope, offer to pretend that their decrees, the writings of men, are more capable of this function; the same exceptions, at least, if not more and greater, lying against them as do against Scripture. And then what you object against the Holy Ghost speaking in Scripture, to exclude him from this office, the same I return upon them and their decrees, to debar them from it; that they speaking unto us only in their decrees, are no more intelligible than the decrees in which they speak. And, therefore, if the Holy Ghost, speaking in Scripture, may not be a judge

for this reason; neither may they, speaking in their decrees, be judges for the same reason. If the pope's decrees (you will say) be obscure, he can explain himself, and so the Scripture cannot. But the Holy Ghost, that speaks in Scripture, can do so if he please; and when he is pleased, will do so. In the mean time, it will he fit for you to wait his leisure, and to be content that those things of Scripture which are plain should be so, and those which are obscure should remain obscure, until he please to declare them. Besides, he can (which you cannot warrant me of the pope or a council) speak at first so plainly, that his words shall need no further explanation; and so in things necessary we believe he hath done. And if you say, the decrees of councils, touching controversies, though they be not the judge, yet they are the judge's sentence; so I say, the Scripture, though not the judge, is the sentence of the judge. When therefore you conclude, that to say a judge is necessary for deciding controversies about the meaning of Scripture, is as much as to say, he is necessary to decide what the Holy Ghost speaks in Scripture: this I grant is true; but I may not grant that a judge (such an one as we dispute of) is necessary, either to do the one or the other. For if the Scripture (as it is in things necessary) be plain, why should it be more necessary to have a judge to interpret it in plain places, than to have a judge to interpret the meaning of a council's decrees, and others to interpret their interpretations, and others to interpret theirs, and so on for ever? And where they are not plain, there if we, using diligence to find the truth, do yet miss of it and fall into error, there is no danger in it. They that err, and they that do not err, may both be saved. So that those places which contain things necessary, and wherein error were dangerous, need no infallible interpreter, because they are plain: and those that are obscure need none, because they contain not things necessary, neither is error in them dangerous.

13. The law-maker speaking in the law, I grant it, is no more easily understood than the law itself, for his speech is nothing else but the law: I grant it very necessary, that besides the law-maker speaking in the law, there should be other judges, to determine civil and criminal controversies, and to give every man that justice which the law allows him. But your argument drawn from hence, to show a necessity of a visible judge in controversies of religion, I say is sophistical; and that for many reasons.

14. First, Because the variety of civil cases is infinite, and therefore there cannot be possibly laws enough provided for the determination of them; and therefore there must be a judge to supply, out of the principles of reason, the interpretation of the law where it is defective. But the Scripture (we say) is a perfect rule of faith, and therefore needs no supply of the defects of it.

15. Secondly, To execute the letter of the law, according to rigour, would be many times unjust, and therefore there is need of a judge to moderate it; whereof in religion there is no use at all.

16. Thirdly, In civil and criminal causes the parties have for the most part so much interest, and very often so little honesty, that they will not submit to a law, though never so plain, if it be against them; or will not see it to be against them, though it be so never so plainly: whereas if men were honest, and the law were plain and extended to all cases, there would be little need of judges. Now in matters of religion, when the question is, whether every man be a fit judge and chooser for himself, we suppose men honest, and such as understand the difference between a moment and eternity. And such men, we conceive, will think it highly concerns them to be of the true religion, but nothing at all that this or that religion should be the true. And then we suppose that all the necessary points of religion are plain and easy, and consequently every man in this cause to be a competent judge for himself; because it concerns himself to judge right as much as eternal happiness is worth. And if through his own default he judge amiss, he alone shall suffer for it.

17. Fourthly, In civil controversies we are obliged only to external passive obedience, and not to an internal and active. We are bound to obey the sentence of the judge, or not to resist it, but not always to believe it just; but in matters of religion, such a judge is required whom we should be obliged to believe

to have judged aright. So that in civil controversies every honest understanding man is fit to be a judge; but in religion none but he that is infallible.

18. Fifthly, In civil causes there is means and power, when the judge hath decreed, to compel men to obey his sentence; otherwise, I believe, laws alone would be to as much purpose for the ending of differences, as laws and judges both. But all the power in the world is neither fit to convince nor able to compel a man's conscience to consent to any thing. Worldly terror may prevail so far as to make men profess a religion which they believe not (such men, I mean, who know not that there is a heaven provided for martyrs, and a hell for those that dissemble such truths as are necessary to be professed); but to force either any man to believe what he believes not, or any honest man to dissemble what he does believe (if God commands him to profess it), or to profess what he does not believe, all the powers in the world are too weak, with all the powers of hell to assist them.

19. Sixthly, In civil controversies the case cannot be so put, but there may be a judge to end it, who is not a party; in controversies of religion, it is in a manner impossible to be avoided, but the judge must be a party. For this must be the first, whether he be a judge or no, and in that he must be a party. Sure I am, the pope, in the controversies of our time, is a chief party; for it highly concerns him, even as much as his popedom is worth, not to yield any one point of his religion to be erroneous. And he is a man subject to like passions with other men. And therefore we may justly decline his sentence, for fear temporal respects should either blind his judgment, or make him pronounce against it.

20. Seventhly, In civil controversies, it is impossible Titius should hold the land in question and Sempronius too; and therefore either the plaintiff must injure the defendant by disquieting his possession, or the defendant wrong the plaintiff by keeping his right from him: but in controversies of religion the case is otherwise. I may hold my opinion, and do you no wrong; and you yours, and do me none: nay, we may both of us hold our opinion, and yet do ourselves no harm, provided the difference be not touching any thing necessary to salvation, and that we love truth so well, as to be diligent to inform our conscience, and constant in following it.

21. Eighthly, For the deciding of civil controversies, men may appoint themselves a judge; but in matters of religion, this office may be given to none but whom God hath designed for it, who doth not always give us those things which we conceive most expedient for ourselves.

22. Ninthly and lastly, For the ending of civil controversies, who does not see it is absolutely necessary, that not only judges should be appointed, but that it should be known and unquestioned who they are? Thus all the judges of our land are known men, known to be judges, and no man can doubt or question but these are the men. Otherwise, if it were a disputable thing who were these judges, and they had no certain warrant for their authority, but only some topical congruities, would not any man say, such judges, in all likelihood, would rather multiply controversies than end them? So likewise if our Saviour, the King of Heaven, had intended that all controversies in religion should be by some visible judge finally determined, who can doubt but in plain terms he would have expressed himself about this matter? He would have said plainly, "The bishop of Rome I have appointed to decide all emergent controversies;" for that our Saviour designed the bishop of Rome to this office, and yet would not say so, nor cause it to be written, *ad rei memoriam*, by any of the evangelists or apostles so much as once, but leave it to be drawn out of uncertain principles, by thirteen or fourteen more uncertain consequences—he that can believe it, let him.

23. All these reasons, I hope, will convince you, that though we have, and have great necessity of, judges in civil and criminal causes; yet you may not conclude from thence, that there is any public authorised judge to determine controversies in religion, nor any necessity there should be any.

24. "But the Scripture stands in need of some watchful and unerring eye to guard it, by means of whose assured vigilance we may undoubtedly receive it sincere and pure." Very true; but this is no other

than the watchful eye of Divine Providence; the goodness whereof will never suffer that the Scripture should be depraved and corrupted, but that in them should be always extant a conspicuous and plain way to eternal happiness. Neither can anything be more palpably unconsistent with his goodness, than to suffer Scripture to be undiscernibly corrupted in any matter of moment, and yet to exact of men the belief of those verities which, without the fault, or knowledge, or possibility of prevention, were defaced out of them. So that God requiring of men to believe Scripture in its purity, engages himself to see it preserved in sufficient purity; and you need not fear but he will satisfy his engagement. You say, "we can have no assurance of this but your church's vigilancy." But if we had no other, we were in a hard case; for who could then assure us that your church hath been so vigilant as to guard Scripture from any the least alteration? there being various lections in the ancient copies of your Bibles. What security can your new-raised office of assurance give us, that the reading is true which you now receive, and that false which you reject? Certainly, they that anciently received and made use of these divers copies, were not all guarded by the church's vigilancy from having their Scripture altered from the purity of the original in many places. For of different readings, it is not in nature impossible that all should be false; but more than one cannot possibly be true. Yet the want of such a protection was no hindrance to their salvation; and why then shall the having of it be necessary for ours? But, then, this vigilancy of your church, what means have we to be ascertained of it? First, the thing is not evident of itself; which is evident, because many do not believe it: neither can anything be pretended to give evidence to it, but only some places of Scripture; of whose incorruption more than any other what is it that can secure me? If you say, the church's vigilancy, you are are in a circle, proving the Scriptures uncorrupted by the church's vigilancy, and the church's vigilancy by the incorruption of some places of Scripture; and again, the incorruption of those places by the church's vigilancy. If you name any other means, then that means which secures me of the Scriptures' incorruption in those places, will also serve to assure me of the same in other places. For my part, abstracting from Divine Providence, which will never suffer the way to heaven to be blocked up, or made invisible, I know no other means (I mean no other natural and rational means (to be assured hereof, than I have that any other book is uncorrupted. For though I have a greater degree of rational and human assurance of that than this, in regard of divers considerations, which make it more credible "that the Scripture hath been preserved from any material alteration;" yet my assurance of both is of the same kind and condition; both moral assurances, and neither physical nor mathematical.

25. To the next argument the reply is obvious: that though we do not believe the books of Scripture to be canonical, because they say so (for other books that are not canonical may say they are, and those that are so may say nothing of it), yet we believe not this upon the authority of your church, but upon the credibility of universal tradition, which is a thing credible of itself, and therefore fit to be rested on; whereas the authority of your church is not so. And therefore your rest thereon is not rational, but merely voluntary. I might as well rest upon the judgment of the next man I meet, or upon the chance of a lottery for it. For by this means I only know I might err, but by relying on you I know I should err. But yet (to return you one suppose for another), suppose I should for this and all other things submit to her direction, how could she assure me that I should not be misled by doing so? She pretends indeed infallibility herein, but how can she assure us that she hath it? What, by Scripture? That, you say, cannot assure us of its own infallibility, and therefore not of yours. What, then, by reason? That, you say, may deceive in other things, and why not in this? How then will she assure us hereof? By saying so? Of this very affirmation there will remain the same question still—how can it prove itself to be infallibly true? Neither can there be an end of the like multiplied demands, till we rest in something, evident of itself, which demonstrates to the world that this church is infallible. And seeing there is no such rock for the infallibility of this church to be settled on, it must of necessity, like the island of Delos, float up and down for ever. And yet upon this point, according to papists, all other controversies in faith depend.

26. To § 7—14. The sum and substance of the ten text paragraphs is this: That it appears by the confessions of some protestants, and the contentious of others, that the questions about the canon of Scripture, what it is; and about the various readings and translations of it, which is true, and which not; are not to be determined by Scripture, and therefore that all controversies of religion are not decidable by Scripture.

27. To which I have already answered, saying, that when Scripture is affirmed to be the rule by which all controversies of religion are to be decided, those are to be excepted out of this generality which are concerning the Scripture itself; for as that general saying of Scripture, *he hath put all things under his feet*, is most true; though yet St. Paul tells us, that when it is said *he hath put all things under him, it is manifest he is excepted who did put all things under him:* so when we say that all controversies of religion are decidable by the Scripture, it is manifest to all, but cavillers, that we do and must except from this generality those which are touching the Scripture itself. Just as a merchant showing a ship of his own may say, "All my substance is in this ship," and yet never intend to deny that his ship is part of his substance, nor yet to say that his ship is in itself. Or as a man may say, that a whole house is supported by the foundation, and yet never mean to exclude the foundation from being a part of the house, or to say that it is supported by itself. Or, as you yourselves use to say, that the bishop of Rome is the head of the whole church, and yet would think us but captious sophisters should we infer from hence, that either you made him no part of the whole, or else made him head of himself. Your negative conclusion, therefore, that these "questions touching Scripture are not decidable by Scripture," you needed not have cited any authorities nor urged any reason to prove it; it is evident of itself, and I grant it without more ado. But your corollary from it, which you would insinuate to your unwary reader, "that therefore they are to be decided by your or any visible church," is a mere inconsequence, and very like his collection, who because Pamphilus was not to have Glycerium for his wife, presently concluded that he must have her; as if there had been no more men in the world but Pamphilus and himself. For so you, as if there were nothing in the world capable of this office but the Scripture or the present church; having concluded against Scripture, you conceive, but too hastily, that you have concluded for the church. But the truth is, neither the one nor the other have anything to do with this matter. For, first, the question, "whether such or such a book be canonical Scripture," though it may be decided negatively out of Scripture, by showing apparent and irreconcilable contradictions between it and some other book confessedly canonical, yet affirmatively it cannot, but only by the testimonies of the ancient churches; any book being to be received as undoubtedly canonical, or to be doubted of as uncertain, or rejected as apocryphal, according as it was received, or doubted of, are rejected by them. Then for the question, "Of various readings, which is the true?" it is in reason evident, and confessed by your own pope, that there is no possible determination of it, but only by comparison with ancient copies. And, lastly, for controversies about different translations of Scripture, the learned have the same means to satisfy themselves in it, as in the questions which happen about the translation of any other author; that is, skill in the language of the original, and comparing translations with it. In which way, if there be no certainty, I would know what certainty you have that your Doway Old, and Rhemish New Testament, are true translations? And then for the unlearned, those on your side are subject to as much, nay, the very same uncertainty with those on ours. Neither is there any reason imaginable wily an ignorant English protestant may not be as secure of the translation of our church, that it is free from error, if not absolutely, yet in matters of moment, as an ignorant English papist can be of his Rhemish Testament or Doway Bible. The best direction I can give them is to compare both together, and where there is no real difference (as in the translation of controverted places I believe there is very little), there to be confident that they are right; where they differ, there to be prudent in the choice of the guides they follow. Which way of proceeding, if it be subject to some possible error, yet it is the best that either we or you have; and it is not required that we use any better than the best we have.

28. You will say, "dependence on your church's infallibility is a better." I answer, it would be so, if we could be infallibly certain that your church is infallible; that is, if it were either evident of itself, and seen by its own light, or could be reduced unto and settled upon some principle that is so. But seeing you yourselves do not so much as pretend to enforce us to the belief hereof by any proofs infallible and convincing, but only to induce us to it by such as are, by your confession, only probable and prudential motives: certainly it will be to very little purpose to put off your uncertainty for the first turn, and to fall upon it at the second; to please yourselves in building your house upon an imaginary rock, when you yourselves see and confess that this very rock stands itself at the best but upon a frame of timber. I answer, secondly, that this cannot be a better way, because we are infallibly certain that your church is not infallible, and indeed hath not the real prescription of this privilege, but only pleaseth herself with her false imagination and vain presumption of it; as I shall hereafter demonstrate by many unanswerable arguments.

29. Now, seeing I make no scruple or difficulty to grant this conclusion of this discourse, that "these controversies about Scripture are not decidable by Scripture;" and have showed that your deduction from it, that "therefore they are to be determined by the authority of some present church," is irrational and inconsequent; I might well forbear to tire myself with an exact and punctual examination of your premises κατὰ πόδα, which whether they be true or false is to the question disputed wholly impertinent; yet because you shall not complain of tergiversation, I will run over them, and let nothing that is material and considerable pass without some stricture or animadversion.

30. You pretend that M. Hooker acknowledgeth, that "that whereon we must rest our assurance that the Scripture is God's word, is the church," and for this acknowledgment you refer us to l. iii. § 8. Let the reader consult the place, and he shall find that he and M. Hooker have been much abused, both by you here, and by M. Brerely and others before you; and that M. Hooker hath not one syllable to your pretended purpose, but very much directly to the contrary. There he tells us, indeed, "that ordinarily the first introduction and probable motive to the belief of the verity is the authority of the church;" but that it is the last foundation whereon our belief hereof is rationally grounded, that, in the same place, he plainly denies. His words are, "Scripture teacheth us that saving truth which God hath discovered unto the world by revelation, and it presumeth us taught otherwise that itself is Divine and sacred. The question then being by what means we are taught this, some answer, that to learn it we have no other way than only tradition; as namely, that so we believe, because both we from our predecessors, and they from theirs, have so received. But is this enough? That which all men's experience teacheth them may not in any wise be denied. And by experience we all know, that the first outward motive leading men so to esteem of the Scripture is the authority of God's church. For when we know the whole church of God hath that opinion of the Scripture, we judge it even at the first an impudent thing for any man bred and brought up in the church to be of a contrary mind without cause. Afterwards, the more we bestow our labour in reading or hearing the mysteries thereof, the more we find that the thing itself doth answer our received opinion concerning it; so that the former inducement prevailing somewhat with us before, doth now much more prevail, when the very thing hath ministered further reason. If infidels or atheists chance at any time to call it in question, this giveth us occasion to sift what reason there is, whereby the testimony of the church concerning Scripture, and our own persuasion which Scripture itself hath confirmed, may be proved a truth infallible. In which case the ancient fathers being often constrained to show what warrant they had so much to rely upon the Scriptures, endeavoured still to maintain the authority of the books of God by arguments such as unbelievers themselves must needs think reasonable, if they judged thereof as they should. Neither is it a thing impossible, or greatly hard, even by such kind of proofs so to manifest and clear that point, that no man living shall be able to deny it, without denying some apparent principle, such as all men acknowledge to be true." By this time I hope the reader sees sufficient proof of

what I said in my reply to your preface, that Mr. Brerely's great ostentation of exactness is no very certain argument of his fidelity.

31. But, "seeing the belief of the Scripture is a necessary thing, and cannot be proved by Scripture, how can the church of England teach, as she doth, Art. VI. that all things necessary are contained in Scripture?"

32. I have answered this already. And here again I say, that all but cavillers will easily understand the meaning of the Article to be, that all the Divine verities, which Christ revealed to his apostles, and the apostles taught the churches, are contained in Scripture; that is, all the material objects of our faith, whereof the Scripture is none, but only the means of conveying them unto us; which we believe not finally and for itself, but for the matter contained in it. So that if men did believe the doctrine contained in Scripture, it should no way hinder their salvation, not to know whether there were any Scripture or no. Those barbarous nations Irenæus speaks of were in this case, and yet no doubt but they might be saved. The end that God aims at is the belief of the gospel, the covenant between God and man; the Scripture he hath provided as a means for this end, and this also we are to believe, but not as the last object of our faith, but as the instrument of it. When therefore we subscribe to the sixth Article, you must understand, that by "articles of faith" they mean the final and ultimate objects of it, and not the means and instrumental objects; and then there will be no repugnance between what they say, and that which Hooker, and D. Covel, and D. Whitaker, and Luther here say.

33. But "protestants agree not in assigning the canon of Holy Scripture; Luther and Illiricus reject the epistle of St. James; Chemnitius, and other Lutherans, the Second of Peter, the Second and Third of John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, of Jude, and the Apocalypse. Therefore, without the authority of the church, no certainty can be had what Scripture is canonical."

34. So also the ancient fathers, and not only fathers, but whole churches, differed about the certainty of the authority of the very same books; and by their difference showed they knew no necessity of conforming themselves herein to the judgment of your or any church; for had they done so, they must have agreed all with that church, and consequently among themselves. Now, I pray, tell me plainly, had they sufficient certainty what scripture was canonical, or had they not? If they had not, it seems there is no great harm or danger in not having such a certainty, whether some books be canonical or not, as you require; if they had, why may not protestants, notwithstanding their differences, have sufficient certainty hereof, as well as the ancient fathers and churches, notwithstanding theirs?

35. You proceed: "and whereas the protestants of England in the sixth Article have these words: 'In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those books, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church;'" you demand, "what they mean by them? Whether that by the church's consent they are assured what Scriptures be canonical?" I answer for them, Yes, they are so. And whereas you infer from hence, "This is to make the church judge," I have told you already that of this controversy we make the church the judge: but not the present church, much less the present Roman church, but the consent and testimony of the ancient and primitive church, which though it be but an highly probable inducement, and no demonstrative enforcement, yet me-thinks you should not deny but it may be a sufficient ground of faith; whose faith, even of the foundation of all your faith, your church's authority is built lastly and wholly upon "prudential motives."

36. But "by this rule the whole Book of Esther must quit the canon, because it was excluded by some in the church: by Melito, Athanasius, and Gregory Nazianzen." Then, for aught I know, he that should think he had reason to exclude it now, might be still in the church, as well as Melito, Athanasius, Naziauzen were. And while you thus inveigh against Luther, and charge him with Luciferian heresy, for doing that which you in this very place confess that saints in heaven before him have done, *are you not partial, and a judge of evil thoughts?*

37. Luther's censures of Ecclesiastes, Job, and the prophets, though you make such tragedies with them, I see none of them but is capable of a tolerable construction, and far from having in them any fundamental heresy. He that condemns him for saying, "The Book of Ecclesiastes is not full, that it hath many abrupt things," condemns him, for aught I can see, for speaking truth. And the rest of the censure is but a bold and blunt expression of the same thing. The Book of Job may be a true history, and yet, as many true stories are and have been, an argument of a fable, to set before us an example of patience. And though the books of the prophets were not written by themselves, but by their disciples, yet it does not follow that they were written casually (though I hope you will not damn all for heretics that say some books of Scripture were written casually). Neither is there any reason they should the sooner be called in question for being written by their disciples, seeing being so written they had attestation from themselves. Was the Prophecy of Jeremy the less canonical for being written by Baruch? Or, because St. Peter, the master, dictated the Gospel, and St. Mark, the scholar, writ it, is it the more likely to be called in question?

38. But, leaving Luther, you return to our English canon of Scripture: and tells us, that "in the New Testament, by the above-mentioned rule (of whose authority was never any doubt in the church), divers books must be discanonised." Not so; for I may believe even those questioned books to have been written by the apostles, and to be canonical; but I cannot in reason believe this of them so undoubtedly, as of those books which were never questioned: at least, I have no warrant to damn any man that shall doubt of them or deny them now, having the example of saints in heaven, either to justify or excuse such their doubting or denial.

39. You observe, in the next place, that "our sixth Article, specifying by name all the books of the Old Testament, shuffles over those of the New with this generality: 'All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account them canonical:'" and in this you fancy to yourself a mystery of iniquity. But if this be all the shuffling that the church of England is guilty of, I believe the church, as well as the king, may give for her motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense;* for all the Bibles, which since the composing of the Articles have been used and allowed by the church of England, do testify and even proclaim to the world, that by "commonly received," they meant received by the church of Rome and other churches before the Reformation. I pray take the pains to look in them, and there you shall find the books which the church of England counts apocryphal marked out, and severed from the rest, with this title in the beginning—"The Books called Apocrypha;" and with this close or seal in the end—"The end of the Apocrypha." And having told you by name, and in particular, what books only she esteems apocryphal, I hope you will not put her to the trouble of telling you, that the rest are in her judgment canonical.

40. "But if by 'commonly received,' she meant by the church of Rome, then by the same reason must she receive divers books of the Old Testament which she rejects."

41. Certainly a very good consequence. The church of England receives the books of the New Testament which the church of Rome receives: therefore she must receive the books of the Old Testament which she receives. As if you should say, If you will do as we in one thing, you must in all things. If you will pray to God with us, ye must pray to saints with us. If you hold with us when we have reason on our side, you must do so when we have no reason.

42. The discourse following is but a vain declamation. No man thinks that this controversy is to be tried by most voices, but by the judgment and testimony of the ancient fathers and churches.

43. But "with what coherence can we say in the former part of the Article, that by 'Scripture we mean those books that were never doubted of;' and in the latter say, 'we receive all the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, whereas of them many were doubted?" I answer, when they say, "of whose authority there was never any doubt in the church," they mean not those only, of whose authority there was simply no doubt at all by any man in the church, but such as were not at any time

doubted of by the whole church, or by all churches, but had attestation, though not universal, yet at least sufficient to make considering men receive them for canonical. In which number they may well reckon those epistles which were sometimes doubted of by some, yet whose number and authority was not so great as to prevail against the contrary suffrages.

44. But "if to be 'commonly received' passed for a good rule to know the canon of the New Testament by, why not of the Old?' You conclude many times very well; but still when you do so, it is out of principles which no man grants: for who ever told you, that to be "commonly received" is a good rule to know the canon of the New Testament by? Have you been trained up in schools of subtlety, and cannot you see a great difference between these two—We receive the books of the New Testament *as they are* commonly received, and we receive those that are commonly received, *because they are so?* To say this, were indeed to make "being commonly received" a rule or reason to know the canon by. But to say the former, doth no more make it a rule, than you should make the church of England the rule of your receiving them, if you should say, as you may, The books of the New Testament we receive for canonical, as they are received by the church of England.

45. You demand "upon what infallible ground we agree with Luther against you in some, and with you against Luther in others?" And I also demand, upon what infallible ground you hold your canon, and agree neither with us nor Luther? For sure your differing from us both, is of itself no more apparently reasonable, than our agreeing with you in part, and in part with Luther. If you say, your church's infallibility is your ground, I demand again some infallible ground, both for the church's infallibility, and for this, that "yours is the church;" and shall never cease multiplying demands upon demands, until you settle me upon a rock: I mean, give such an answer, whose truth is so evident that it needs no further evidence. If you say, "This is universal tradition," I reply, Your church's infallibility is not built upon it, and that the canon of Scripture, as we receive it, is: for we do not profess ourselves so absolutely and undoubtedly certain, neither do we urge others to be so, of those books which have been doubted, as of those that never have.

46. The conclusion of your tenth section is, that "the divinity of a writing cannot be known from itself alone, but by some extrinsical authority;" which you need not prove, for no wise man denies it. But, then, this authority is that of universal tradition, not of your church. For to me it is altogether as αὐτόπιότν, that the Gospel of St. Matthew is the word of God, as that all which your church says is true.

47. That believers of the Scripture, by considering the Divine matter, the excellent precepts, the glorious promises contained in it, may be confirmed in their faith of the Scripture's Divine authority; and that among other inducements and enforcements hereunto, internal argument have their place and force; certainly no man of understanding can deny. For my part, I profess, if the doctrine of the Scripture were not as good, and as fit to come from the Fountain of goodness, as the miracles by which it was confirmed were great, I should want one main pillar of my faith; and for want of it, I fear, should be much staggered in it. Now this, and nothing else, did the Doctor mean in saying, "The believer sees, by that glorious beam of Divine light which shines in Scripture, and by many internal arguments, that the Scripture is of Divine authority." "By this," saith he, "he sees it;" that is, he is moved to, and strengthened in his belief of it; and by this partly, not wholly; by this, not alone, but with the concurrence of other arguments. He that will quarrel with him for saying so, must find fault with the Master of the Sentences, and all his scholars; for they all say the same. The rest of this paragraph I am as willing it should be true as you are to have it; and so let it pass as a discourse wherein we are wholly unconcerned. You might have met with an answerer that would not have suffered you to have said so much truth together; but to me it is sufficient that it is nothing to the purpose.

48. In the next division, out of your liberality, you will suppose that Scripture, like to a corporal light, is by itself alone able to determine and move our understanding to assent; yet notwithstanding this

supposal, "faith still," you say, "must go before Scripture; because as the light is visible only to those that have eyes, so the Scripture only to those that have the eye of faith." But to my understanding, if Scripture do move and determine our understanding to assent, then the Scripture, and its moving, must be before this assent, as the cause must be before its own effect: now this very assent is nothing else but faith, and faith nothing else than the understanding's assent. And therefore (upon this supposal) faith doth and must originally proceed from Scripture, as the effect from its proper cause, and the influence and efficacy of Scripture is to be presupposed before the assent of faith, unto which it moves and determines; and consequently, if this supposition of yours were true, there should need no other means precedent to Scripture to beget faith; Scripture itself being able (as here you suppose) to determine and move the understanding to assent, that is, to believe them, and the verities contained in them. Neither is this to say, that the eyes with which we see are made by the light by which we see. For you are mistaken much, if you conceive that in this comparison faith answers to the eye. But if you will not pervert it, the analogy must stand thus: Scripture must answer to light; the eye of the soul, that is, the understanding, or the faculty of assenting, to the bodily eye; and, lastly, assenting or believing to the act of seeing. As therefore the light, determining the eye to see, though it presupposeth the eye which it determines, as every action doth the object on which it is employed, yet itself is presupposed and antecedent to the act of seeing, as the cause is always to its effect: so, if you will suppose that Scripture, like light, moves the understanding to assent, the understanding (that is, the eye and object on which it works) must be before this influence upon it; but the assent, that is, the belief whereto Scripture moves, and the understanding is moved, which answers to the act of seeing, must come after: for if it did assent already, to what purpose should the Scripture do that which was done before? Nay, indeed, how were it possible it should be so, any more than a father can beget a son that he hath already? or an architect build a house that is built already? or that this very world can be made again before it be unmade? Transubstantiation indeed is fruitful of such monsters; but they that have not sworn themselves to the defence of error will easily perceive that *I am factum facere*, and *factum infectum facere*, are equally impossible. But I digress.

49. The close of this paragraph is a fit cover for such a dish: there you tell us, that "if there must be some other means precedent to Scripture to beget faith, this can be no other than the church." By "the church," we know you do and must understand the Roman church: so that in effect you say, no man can have faith, but he must be moved to it by your church's authority: and that is to say that the king and all other protestants, to whom you write, though they verily think they are Christians, and believe the gospel, because they assent to the truth of it, and would willingly die for it, yet indeed are infidels, and believe nothing. The Scripture tells us, *The heart of man knoweth no man, but the spirit of man which is in him*. And who are you, to take upon you to make us believe that we do not believe what we know we do? But if I may think verily that I believe the Scripture, and yet not believe it, how know you that you believe the Roman church? I am as verily and as strongly persuaded that I believe the Scripture, as you are that you believe the church; and if I may be deceived, why may not you? Again; what more ridiculous, and against sense and experience, than to affirm, that there are not millions amongst you and us that believe upon no other reason than their education, and the authority of their parents and teachers, and the opinion they have of them? the tenderness of the subject, and aptness to receive impressions, supplying the defect and imperfection of the agent. And will you proscribe from heaven all those believers of your own creed, who do indeed lay the foundation of their faith (for I cannot call it by any other name) no deeper than upon the authority of their father, or master, or parish priest? Certainly, if they have no true faith, your church is very full of infidels. Suppose Xaverius by the holiness of his life had converted some Indians to Christianity, who could (for so I will suppose) have no knowledge of your church but from him, and therefore must last of all build their faith of the church upon their opinion of Xaverius: do these remain as very pagans after conversion as they were before? Are they brought to assent in their souls, and obey

in their lives the gospel of Christ, only to be tantalised, and not saved, and not benefited, but deluded by it, because, forsooth, it is a man, and not the church, that begets faith in them? What if their motive to believe be not in reason sufficient? Do they therefore not believe what they do believe, because they do it upon insufficient motives: they choose the faith imprudently perhaps, but yet they choose it. Unless you will have us believe that that which is done is not done, because it is not done upon good reason; which is to say, that never any man living ever did a foolish action. But yet I know not why the authority of one holy man, which apparently hath no ends upon me, joined with the goodness of the Christian faith, might not be a far greater and more rational motive to me to embrace Christianity, than any I can have to continue in paganism. And therefore for shame, if not for love of truth, you must recant the fancy when you write again, and suffer true faith to be many times where your church's infallibility hath no hand in the beginning of it; and be content to tell us hereafter, that we believe not enough; and not go about to persuade us we believe nothing, for fear, with telling us what we know to be manifestly false, you should gain only this, "not to be believed when you speak the truth." Some pretty sophisms you may haply bring us, to make us believe we believe nothing; but wise men know that reason against experience is always sophistical. And therefore, as he that could not answer Zeno's subtilties against the existence of motion, could yet confute them, by doing that which he pretended could not be done; so if you should give me a hundred arguments to persuade me, because I do not believe transubstantiation I do not believe in God, and the knots of them I could not untie, yet I should cut them in pieces with doing that, and knowing that I do so, which you pretend I cannot do.

50. In the thirteenth division we have again much ado about nothing; a great deal of stir you keep in confuting some "that pretend to know canonical Scripture to be such by the titles of the books." But these men you do not name; which makes me suspect you cannot: yet it is possible there may be some such men in the world, for Gusman de Alferache hath taught us, that the fools' hospital is a large place.

51. In the fourteenth § we have very artificial juggling. D. Potter had said, "That the Scripture" [he desires to be understood of those books wherein all Christians agree] "is a principle, and needs not to be proved among Christians." His reason was, because "that needs no further proof is which is believed already. "Now by this (you say) he means either, that the Scripture is one of these first principles, and most known in all sciences, which cannot be proved; which is to suppose it cannot be proved by the church; and that is to suppose the question; or he means, that it is not the most known in Christianity, and then it may be proved. Where we see plainly, that two most different things, "most known in all sciences," and "most known in Christianity," are captiously confounded. As if the Scripture might not be the first and most known principle in Christianity, and yet not the most known in all sciences; or, as if to be a first principle "in Christianity," and "in all sciences," were all one. That Scripture is a principle among Christians, that is, so received by all that it need not be proved in any emergent controversy to any Christian, but may be taken for granted, I think few will deny: you yourselves are of this a sufficient testimony; for urging against us many texts of Scripture, you offer no proof of the truth of them, presuming we will not question it. Yet this is not to deny that tradition is a principle more known than Scripture; but to say, it is a principle not in Christianity, but in reason; not proper to Christians, but common to all men.

52. But "it is repugnant to our practice to hold Scripture a principle, because we are wont to affirm, that one part of Scripture may be known to be canonical, and may be interpreted by another." Where the former device is again put in practice. For to be known to be "canonical," and to be "interpreted," is not all one. That Scripture may be interpreted by Scripture, that Protestants grant, and papists do not deny; neither does that any way hinder, but that this assertion, "Scripture is the word of God, may be among Christians a common principle." But the first, "that one part of Scripture may prove another part

canonical, and need no proof of its own being so;" for that you have produced divers protestants that deny it; but who they are that affirm it, *nosdum constat.*

53. It is superfluous for you to prove out of St. Athanasius and St. Austin, that "we must receive the sacred canon upon the credit of God's church:" understanding by church, as here you explain yourself, the credit of tradition. And that not the tradition of the present church, which we pretend may deviate from the ancient, but "such a tradition which involves an evidence of fact, and from hand to hand, from age to age, bringing us up to the times and persons of the apostles, and our Saviour himself, cometh to be confirmed by all these miracles and other arguments, whereby they convinced their doctrine to be true." Thus you. Now prove the canon of Scripture which you receive by such tradition, and we will allow it: prove your whole doctrine, or the infallibility of your church, by such tradition, and we will yield to you in all things. Take the alleged places of St. Athanasius and St. Austin in this sense (which is your own), and they will not press us any thing at all. We will say, with Athanasius, "that only four Gospels are to be received, because the canons of the holy and catholic church" [understand of all ages since the perfection of the canon] "have so determined."

54. We will subscribe to St. Austin, and say, that "we also would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the catholic church did move us" (meaning by the church, the church of all ages, and that succession of Christians which takes in Christ himself and his apostles). Neither would Zuinglius have needed to cry out upon this saying, had he conceived as you now do, that by the catholic church, the church of all ages, since Christ, was to be understood. As for the council of Carthage, it may speak not of such books only as were certainly canonical, and for the regulating of faith, but also of those which were only profitable, and lawful to be read in the church: which in England is a very slender argument that the book is canonical, where every body knows that apocryphal books are read as well as canonical. But howsoever, if you understand by fathers, not only their immediate fathers and predecessors in the gospel, but the succession of them from the apostles, they are right in the thesis, that "whatsoever is received from these fathers, as canonical, is to be so esteemed;" though in the application of it to this or that particular book they may haply err, and think that book received as canonical which was only received as profitable to be read; and think that book received alway, and by all, which was rejected by some, and doubted of by many.

55. But we cannot be "certain in what language the Scriptures remain uncorrupted." Not so certain, I grant, as of that which we can demonstrate; but certain enough, morally certain, as certain as the nature of the thing will bear: so certain we may be, and God requires no more. We may be as certain as St. Austin was, who, in his second book of Baptism, against the Donatists, c. 3, plainly implies, "the Scripture might possibly be corrupted." He means sure in matters of little moment, such as concern not the covenant between God and man. But thus he saith; the same St. Austin, in his forty-eighth Epistle, clearly intimates, that "in his judgment the only preservative of the Scripture's integrity was the translating it into so many languages, and the general and perpetual use and reading of it in the church; for want whereof the works of particular doctors were more exposed to danger in this kind:" but the canonical Scripture being by this means guarded with universal care and diligence, was not obnoxious to such attempts. And this assurance of the Scripture's incorruption is common to us with him; we therefore are as certain hereof as St. Austin was, and that, I hope, was certain enough. Yet if this does not satisfy you, I say further, we are as certain hereof as your own pope Sixtus Quintus was. He in his preface to his Bible tells us, that "in the pervestigation of the true and genuine text, it was perspicuously manifest to all men, that there was no argument more firm and certain to be relied upon than the faith of ancient books." Now this ground we have to build upon as well as he had; and therefore our certainty is as great, and stands upon as certain grounds as his did.

56. This is not all I have to say in this matter: for I will add, moreover, that we are as certain in what language the Scripture is uncorrupted, as any man in your church was, until Clement the Eighth set forth your own approved edition of your own translation. For you do not, nor cannot, without extreme impudence, deny that, until then, there were great variety of copies current in divers parts of your church, and those very frequent in various lections; all which copies might possibly be false in some things, but more than one sort of them could not possibly be true in all things. Neither were it less impudence to pretend, that any man in your church could until Clement's time have any certainty what that one true copy and reading was (if there were any one perfectly true). Some indeed, that had got Sixtus's Bible, might, after the edition of that, very likely think themselves cocksure of a perfect, true, uncorrupted translation, without being beholden to Clement; but how foully they were abused and deceived that thought so, the edition of Clement differing from that of Sixtus in a multitude of places, doth sufficiently demonstrate.

57. This certainty therefore, in what language the Scripture remains uncorrupted, is it necessary to have it, or is it not? If it be not, I hope we may do well enough without it. If it be necessary, what became of your church for one thousand five hundred years together? All which time you must confess she had no such certainty; no one man being able truly and upon good ground to say, "This or this copy of the Bible is pure and perfect and uncorrupted in all things." And now at present, though some of you are grown to a higher degree of presumption in this point, yet are you as far as ever from any true and real and rational assurance of the absolute purity of your authentic translation, which I suppose myself to have proved unanswerably in divers places.

58. In the sixteenth division, it is objected to protestants, in a long discourse transcribed out of the Protestants' Apology, that their "translations of the Scripture are very different, and by each other mutually condemned. Luther's translation by Zuinglius, and others; that of the Zuinglians, by Luther; the translation of Œcolampadius, by the divines of Basil; that of Castalio, by Beza; that of Beza, by Castalio; that of Calvin, by Carolns Molinæus; that of Geneva, by M. Parker, and King James; and, lastly, one of our translations by the puritans."

59. All which might have been as justly objected against that great variety of translations extant in the primitive church, and made use of by the fathers and doctors of it. For which I desire not that my word, but St. Austin's, may be taken: "They which have translated the Scriptures out of the Hebrew into Greek may be numbered; but the Latin interpreters are innumerable: for whensoever any one, in the first times of Christianity, met with a Greek Bible, and seemed to himself to have some ability in both languages, he presently ventured upon an interpretation." So he, in his second book of Christian Doctrine, chap. 11. Of all these, that which was called the *Italian translation* was esteemed best; so we may learn from the same St. Austin, in chap. 15, of the same book: "Amongst all these interpretations," saith he, "let the Italian be preferred; for it keeps closer to the letter, and is perspicuous in the sense." Yet so far was the church of that time from presuming upon the absolute purity and perfection even of this best translation, that St. Hierom thought it necessary to make a new translation of the Old Testament out of the Hebrew fountain (which himself testifies in his book *De Viris illustribus*), and to correct the vulgar version of the New Testament, according to the truth of the original Greek: amending many errors which had crept into it, whether by the mistake of the author or the negligence of the transcribers which work he undertook and performed at the request of Damasus bishop of Rome. "You constrain me," saith he, "to make a new work of an old: that after the copies of the Scriptures have been dispersed through the whole world, I should sit, as it were, an arbitrator amongst them; and because they vary among themselves, should determine what are those things [in them] which consent with the Greek verity." And after: "Therefore this present preface promises the four Gospels only, corrected by collation with Greek copies. But, that they might not be very dissonant from the custom of the Latin reading, I have so

tempered with my style the translation of the ancients, that those things amended which did seem to change the sense, other things I have suffered to remain as they were." So that in this matter protestants must either stand or fall with the primitive church.

60. The corruption that you charge Luther with, and the falsification that you impute to Zuinglius, what have we to do with them? or why may not we as justly lay to your charge the errors which Lyranus, or Paulus Brugensis, or Laurentius Valla, or Cajetan, or Erasmus, or Arias Montanas, or Augustus Nebiensis, or Pagnine, have committed in their translation?

61. Which yet I say not, as if these translations of Luther and Zuinglius were absolutely indefensible: for what such great difference is there between *faith without the works of the law*, and *faith alone without the works of the law?* or, why does not *without, alone*, signify all one with *alone, without?* Consider the matter a little better, and observe the use of these phrases of speech in our ordinary talk, and perhaps, you will begin to doubt whether you had sufficient ground for this invective. And then for Zuinglius, if it be true (as they say it is) that the language our Saviour spake in had no such word as *to signify*, but used always *to be* instead of it, as it is certain the Scripture does in a hundred places; then this translation, which you so disclaim against, will prove no falsification in Zuinglius, but a calumny in you.

62. "But the faith of protestants relies upon Scripture alone; Scripture is delivered to most of them by translations; translations depend upon the skill and honesty of men, who certainly may err because they are men, and certainly do err, at least some of them, because their translations are contrary. It seems then the faith, and consequently the salvation of protestants, relies upon fallible and uncertain grounds."

63. This objection, though it may seem to do you a great service for the present, yet I fear you will repent the time that ever you urged it against us as a fault, that we make men's salvation depend upon uncertainties; for the objection returns upon you many ways; as first, thus, the salvation of many millions of papists (as they suppose and teach) depends upon their having the sacrament of penance truly administered unto them; this again upon a minister's being a true priest. That such or such a man is priest, not himself, much less any other, can have any possible certainty: for it depends upon a great many contingent and uncertain supposals. He that will pretend to be certain of it must undertake to know for a certainty all these things that follow.

64. First, that he was baptized with due matter. Secondly, with the due form of words, which he cannot know, unless he were both present and attentive. Thirdly, he must know that he was baptized with due intention, and that is, that the minister of his baptism was not a secret Jew, nor a Moor, nor an atheist (of all which kinds, I fear, experience gives you just cause to fear that Italy and Spain have priests not a few), but a Christian, in heart as well as profession (otherwise, believing the sacrament to be nothing, in giving it he could intend to give nothing), nor a Samosatenian, nor an Arian, but one that was capable of having due intention, from which they that believe not the doctrine of the Trinity are excluded by you. And, lastly, that he was neither drunk nor distracted at the administration of the sacrament, nor out of negligence or malice omitted his intention.

65. Fourthly, he must undertake to know that the bishop which ordained him priest ordained him completely with due matter, form, and intention; and, consequently, that he again was neither Jew, nor Moor, nor atheist, nor liable to any such exception as is unconsistent with due intention in giving the sacrament of orders,

66. Fifthly, he must undertake to know that the bishop which made him priest was a priest himself; for your rule is, *Nihil dat quod non habet;* and consequently, that there was again none of the former nullities in his baptism, which might make him incapable of ordination, nor no invalidity in his ordination, but a true priest to ordain him again, the requisite matter and form, and due intention, all concurring.

67. Lastly, he must pretend to know the same of him that made him priest, and him that made him priest, even until he comes to the very fountain of priesthood. For take any one in the whole train and

succession of ordainers, and suppose him, by reason of any defect, only a supposed, and not a true priest; then, according to your doctrine, he could not give a true, but only a supposed priesthood; and they that receive it of him, and again, they that derive it from them, can give no better than they received: receiving nothing but name and shadow, can give nothing but a name and shadow; and so from age to age, from generation to generation, being equivocal fathers beget only equivocal sons; no principle in geometry being more certain than this, that "the unsuppliable defect of any necessary antecedent must needs cause a nullity of all those consequences which depend upon it." In fine, to know this one thing you must first know ten thousand others, whereof not any one is a thing that can be known, there being no necessity that it should be true which only can qualify anything for an object of science, but only at the best a high degree of probability that it is so. But then, that of ten thousand probables no one should be false; that of ten thousand requisites, whereof any one may fail, not one should be wanting; this to me is extremely improbable, and even cousin-german to impossible. So that the assurance hereof is like a machine composed of an innumerable multitude of pieces, of which it is strangely unlikely but some will be out of order; and yet if any one be so, the whole fabric of necessity falls to the ground: and he that shall put them together, and maturely consider all the possible ways of lapsing, and nullifying a priesthood in the church of Rome, I believe will be very inclinable to think, that, amongst a hundred seeming priests, there is not one true one; nay, that it is not a thing very improbable, that amongst those many millions which make up the Romish hierarchy, there are not twenty true. But be the truth in this what it will be, once this is certain, that they which make men's salvation (as you do) depend upon priestly absolution, and this again (as you do) upon the truth and reality of the priesthood that gives it, and this, lastly, upon a great multitude of apparent uncertainties, are not the fittest men in the world to object to others, as a horrible crime, "that they make men's salvation depend upon fallible and uncertain foundations." And let this be the first retorting of your argument.

68. But suppose this difficulty assoiled, and that an angel from heaven should ascertain you (for other assurances you can have none) that the person you make use of is a true priest, and a competent minister of the sacrament of penance; yet still the doubt will remain, whether he will do you that good which he can do, whether he will pronounce the absolving words with intent to absolve you? For perhaps he may bear you some secret malice, and project to himself your damnation for a complete Italian revenge. Perhaps (as the tale is of a priest that was lately burnt in France) he may upon some conditions have compacted with the devil to give no sacraments with intention. Lastly, he may be (for aught you can possibly know) a secret Jew, or Moor, or Antitrinitarian, or perhaps such a one as is so far from intending your forgiveness of sins and salvation by this sacrament, that in his heart he laughs at all these things, and thinks sin nothing, and salvation a word. All these doubts you must have clearly resolved (which can hardly be done but by another revelation) before you can upon good grounds assure yourself that your true priest gives you true and effectual absolution. So that when you have done as much as God requires for your salvation, yet can you by no means be secure, but that you may have the ill luck to be damned; which is to make salvation a matter of chance, and not of choice; and which a man may fail of, not only by an ill life, but by ill fortune. Verily, a most comfortable doctrine for a considering man lying upon his death-bed, who either feels or fears that his repentance is but attrition only, and not contrition, and consequently believes, that if he be not absolved really by a true priest, he cannot possibly escape damnation. Such a man, for his comfort, you tell, first (you that will have "men's salvation depend upon no uncertainties"), that though he verily believe that his sorrow for his sins is a true sorrow, and his purpose for amendment a true purpose, yet he may deceive himself; perhaps it is not; and if it be not, he must be damned. You bid him hope well; but *spes est rei incertæ nomen*. You tell him, secondly, that though the party he confesses to seem to be a true priest, yet, for aught he knows, or for aught himself knows, by reason of some secret, undiscernible invalidity in his baptism or ordination, he may be none; and if he be

none, he can do nothing. This is a hard saying; but this is not the worst. You tell him, thirdly, that he may be in such a state, that he cannot, or if he can, that he will not, give the sacrament with due intention; and if he does not, all is in vain. But case a man by these considerations should be cast into some agonies; what advice, what comfort would you give him? Verily, I know not what you could say to him but this: that first, for the qualification required on his part, he might know that he desired to have true sorrow, and that that is sufficient: but then, if he should ask you, why he might know his sorrow to be a true sorrow, as well as his desire to be sorrowful to be a true desire, I believe you would be put to silence. Then, secondly, to quiet his fears concerning the priest and his intention, you should tell him, by my advice, that God's goodness (which will not suffer him to damn men for not doing better than their best (will supply all such defects as to human endeavours were unavoidable. And, therefore, though his priest were indeed no priest, yet to him he should be as if he were one; and if he gave absolution without intention, yet in doing so he should hurt himself only, and not his penitent. This were some comfort indeed, and this were to settle men's salvation upon reasonable certain grounds. But this, I fear, you will never say; for this were to reverse many doctrines established by your church; and besides, to degrade your priesthood from a great part of their honour, by lessening the strict necessity of the laity's dependence upon them: for it were to say, that "the priest's intention is not necessary to the obtaining of absolution;" which is to say, that it is not in the parson's power to damn whom he will in his parish, because, by this rule, God should supply the defect which his malice had caused: and, besides, it were to say, that "infants dying without baptism might be saved;" God supplying the want of baptism, which to them is unavoidable: but, beyond all this, it were to put into my mouth a full and satisfying answer to your argument, which I am now returning; so that in answering my objection you should answer your own: for then I should tell you, that it were altogether as abhorrent from the goodness of God, and as repugnant to it, to suffer an ignorant layman's soul to perish, merely for being misled by an undiscernible false translation, which yet was commended to him by the church, which (being of necessity to credit some in this matter) he had reason to rely upon, either above all other or as much as any other, as it is to damn a penitent sinner for a secret defect in that desired absolution, which his ghostly father perhaps was an atheist, and could not give him; or was a villain, and would not. This answer, therefore, which alone would serve to comfort your penitent in his perplexities, and to assure him that he cannot fail of salvation, if he will not, for fear of inconvenience you must forbear: and seeing you must, I hope you will, come down from the pulpit, and preach no more against others for "making men's salvation depend upon fallible and uncertain grounds," lest by judging others you make yourselves, and your own church, inexcusable, who are strongly guilty of this fault above all the men and churches of the world; whereof I have already given you two very pregnant demonstrations, drawn from your presumptuous tying God and salvation to your sacraments; and the efficacy of them to your priest's qualifications and intentions.

69. Your making the salvation of infants depend on baptism, a casual thing, and in the power of man to confer or not confer, would yield me a third of the same nature. And your suspending the same on the baptizer's intention, a fourth. And, lastly, your making the real presence of Christ in the eucharist depend upon the casualities of the consecrator's true priesthood and intention, and yet commanding men to believe it for certain that he is present, and to adore the sacrament, which, according to your doctrine, for aught they can possibly know, may be nothing else but a piece of bread, so exposing them to the danger of idolatry, and consequently of damnation, doth offer me a fifth demonstration of the same conclusion, if I thought fit to insist upon them. But I have no mind to draw any more out of this fountain! neither do I think it charity to cloy the reader with uniformity, when the subject affords variety.

70. Sixthly; therefore, I return it thus: the faith of papists relies alone upon their church's infallibility. That there is any church infallible, and that theirs is it, they pretend not to believe, but only upon "prudential motives." Dependence upon prudential motives they confess to be obnoxious to a possibility

of erring. What then remaineth, but truth, faith, salvation, and all, must in them rely upon a fallible and uncertain ground?

71. Seventhly, the faith of papists relies upon the church alone. The doctrine of the church is delivered to most of them by their parish priest, or ghostly father, or at least by a company of priests, who, for the most part, sure, are men and not angels, in whom nothing is more certain than a most certain possibility to err. What then remaineth, but that "truth, faith, salvation, and all, must in them rely upon a fallible and uncertain ground?"

72. Eighthly, thus: it is apparent and undeniable, that many thousands there are who believe your religion upon no better grounds than a man may have for the belief almost of any religion. As some believe it, because their forefathers did so, and they were good people. Some, because they were christened and brought up in it. Some because many learned and religious men are of it. Some, because it is the religion of their country, where all other religions are persecuted and proscribed. Some, because protestants cannot show a perpetual succession of professors of all their doctrines. Some, because the service of your church is more stately and pompous and magnificent. Some, because they find comfort in it. Some, because your religion is further spread, and hath more professors of it, than the religion of Protestants. Some, because your priests compass sea and land to gain proselytes to it. Lastly, an infinite number by chance, and they know not why, but only because they are sure they are in the right. This which I say is a most certain experimented truth, and if you will deal ingenuously, you will not deny it. And, without question, he that builds his faith upon our English translation, goes upon a more prudent ground than any of these can with reason be pretended to be. What then can you allege, but that with you, rather than with us, "truth, and faith, and salvation, and all, rely upon fallible and uncertain grounds?"

73. Ninthly, your Rhemish and Doway translations are delivered to your proselytes (such, I mean, that are dispensed with for the reading of them) for the direction of their faith and lives. And the same may be said of your translations of the Bible into other national languages, in respect of those that are licensed to read them. This, I presume, you will confess. And, moreover, that these translations came not by inspiration, but were the productions of human industry; and that not angels, but men, were the authors of them. Men, I say, mere men, subject to the same passions and to the same possibility of erring with our translators. And then, how does it not unavoidably follow, that in them which depend upon these translations for their direction, "faith, and truth, and salvation, and all, rely upon fallible and uncertain grounds?"

74. Tenthly and lastly (to lay the axe to the root of the tree), the Helena which you so fight for, your vulgar translation, though some of you believe, or pretend to believe it to be, in every particular of it, the pure and uncorrupted word of God; yet others among you, and those as good and zealous catholics as you, are not so confident hereof.

75. First, for all those who have made translations of the whole Bible or any part of it different many times in sense from the vulgar, as Lyranus, Cajetan, Pagnine, Arias, Erasmus, Valla, Steuchus, and others, it is apparent, and even palpable, that they never dreamt of any absolute perfection and authentical infallibility of the vulgar translation. For if they had, why did they in many places reject it, and differ from it?

76. Vega was present at the council of Trent, when the decree was made which made the vulgar edition (then not extant any where in the world) authentical, and not to be rejected upon any pretence whatsoever. At the forming this decree, Vega, I say, was present, understood the mind of the council as well as any man, and professes that he was instructed in it by the president of it, the cardinal S. Cruce. And yet be hath written, that the "council in this decree meant to pronounce this translation free, not simply from all error, but only from such errors, out of which any opinion pernicious to faith and manners might be collected." This Andradius, in his defence of that council, reports of Vega, and assents to

himself. Driedo, in his Book of the Translation of Holy Scripture, hath these words, very pregnant and pertinent to the same purpose:" "The see apostolic hath approved or accepted Hierom's edition, not as so wholly consonant to the original, and so entire and pure and restored in all things, that it may not be lawful for any man, either by comparing it with the fountain, to examine it, or in some places to doubt whether or no Hierom did understand the true sense of the Scripture; but only as an edition to be preferred before all others then extant, and no where deviating from the truth in the rules of faith and good life." Mariana, even where he is a most earnest advocate for the vulgar edition, yet acknowledges the imperfection of it in these words: "The faults of the vulgar edition are not approved by the decree of the council of Trent, a multitude whereof we did collect from the variety of copies. And again, "We maintain that the Hebrew and Greek were by no means rejected by the Trent fathers; and that the Latin edition is indeed approved: yet not so, as if they did deny that some places might be translated more plainly, some more properly, whereof it were easy to produce innumerable examples." And this he there professes to have learnt of Laines, the then general of the society, who was a great part of that council, present at all the actions of it, and of very great authority in it.

77. To this so great authority he adds a reason of his opinion, which with all indifferent men will be of a far greater authority "If the council," saith he, "had purposed to approve an edition in all respects, and to make it of equal authority and credit with the fountains, certainly they ought with exact care first to have corrected the errors of the interpreter;" which certainly they did not.

78. Lastly, Bellarmine himself, though he will not acknowledge any imperfection in the vulgar edition, yet he acknowledges that the case may, and does ofttimes, so fall out, that "it is impossible to discern which is the true reading of the vulgar edition, but only by recourse unto the originals and dependence upon them."

79. From all which it may evidently be collected, that though some of you flatter yourselves with a vain imagination of the certain absolute purity and perfection of your vulgar edition, yet the matter is not so certain and so resolved, but that the best learned men amongst you are often at a stand, and very doubtful sometimes, whether your vulgar translation be true, and sometimes whether this or that be your vulgar translation, and sometimes undoubtedly resolved that your vulgar translation is no true translation, nor consonant to the original, as it was at first delivered. And what then can be alleged, but that out of your own grounds it may be inferred and enforced upon you, that not only in your laymen, but your clergymen and scholars, "faith, and truth, and salvation, and all, depend upon fallible and uncertain grounds?" And thus, by ten several retortions of this one argument, I have endeavoured to show you how ill you have complied with your own advice, which was, "to take heed of urging arguments that might be returned upon you." I should now, by a direct answer, show, that it presseth not us at all; but I have in passing done it already in the end of the second retortion of this argument, and thither I refer the reader.

80. Whereas therefore you exhort them "that will have assurance of true Scriptures to fly to your church for it," I desire to know (if they should follow your advice) how they should be assured that your church can give them any such assurance, which hath been confessedly so negligent, as to suffer many whole books of Scripture to be utterly lost: again, in those that remain, confessedly so negligent, as to suffer the originals of these that remain to be corrupted: and, lastly, so careless of preserving the integrity of the copies of her translation, as to suffer infinite variety of readings to come into them, without keeping any one perfect copy, which might have been as the standard and Polycletus's canon to correct the rest by. So that, "which was the true reading, and which the false, it was utterly undiscernible, but only by comparing them with the originals," which also she pretends "to be corrupted."

81. But "Luther himself, by unfortunate experience, was at length enforced to confess thus much, saying, 'If the world last longer, it will be again necessary to receive the decrees of councils, by reason of divers interpretations of Scripture which now reign.'"

82. And what if Luther, having a pope in his belly (as he was wont to say that most men had), and desiring perhaps to have his own interpretations pass without examining, spake such words in heat of argument? Do you think it reasonable that we should subscribe to Luther's divinations and angry speeches? Will you oblige yourself to answer for all the assertions of your private doctors? If not, why do you trouble us with what Luther says, and what Calvin says? Yet this I say not, as if these words of Luther made any thing at all for your present purpose. For what if he feared, or pretended to fear, that the infallibility of councils being rejected, some men would fall into greater errors than were imposed upon them by the councils? Is this to confess that there is any present visible church upon whose bare authority we may infallibly receive the true Scriptures, and the true sense of them. Let the reader judge. But, in my opinion, to fear a greater inconvenience may follow from the avoiding of the less, is not to confess that the less is none at all.

83. For Dr. Covel's "commending your translation," what is it to the business in hand? Or how proves it the perfection of it which is here contested, any more than St. Augustine's commending the Italian translation argues the perfection of that, or that there was no necessity that St. Hierom should correct it? Dr. Covel commends your translation, and so does the Bishop of Chichester, and so does Dr. James, and so do I. But I commend it for a *good* translation, not for a *perfect*. Good maybe good, and deserve commendations; and yet better may be better. And though he says that "the then approved translation of the church of England is that which cometh nearest the vulgar," yet he does not say that it agrees exactly with it. So that whereas you infer, "that the truth of your translation must be the rule to judge of the goodness of ours;" this is but a vain flourish. For to say of our translations, that is the best which comes nearest the vulgar (and yet it is but one man that says so), is not to say it is therefore the best, because it does so; for this may be true by accident, and yet the truth of our translation no way depend upon the truth of yours; for had that been their direction, they would not only have made a translation that should come near to yours, but such a one which should exactly agree with it, and be a translation of your translation.

84. Ad § 17. In this division you charge us "with great uncertainty concerning the true meaning of Scripture," which hath been answered already, by saying, that if you speak of plain places (and in such all things necessary are contained), we are sufficiently certain of the meaning of them, neither need they any interpreter; if of obscure and difficult places, we confess we are uncertain of the sense of many of them: but then we say there is no necessity we should be certain; for if God's will had been we should have understood him more certainly, he would have spoken more plainly. And we say besides, that as we are uncertain, so are you too; which he that doubts of, let him read your commentators upon the Bible, and observe their various and dissonant interpretations, and he shall in this point need no further satisfaction.

85. But seeing "there are contentions among us, we are taught by nature and Scripture and experience" (so you tell us out of Mr. Hooker) "to seek for the ending of them, by submitting unto some judicial sentence, whereunto neither part may refuse to stand." This is very true. Neither should you need to persuade us to seek such a means of ending all our controversies, if we could tell where to find it. But this we know, that none is fit to pronounce for all the world a judicial definitive obliging sentence in controversies of religion, but only such a man, or such a society of men, as is authorised thereto by God. And besides, we are able to demonstrate, that it hath not been the pleasure of God to give to any man, or society of men, any such authority. And therefore, though we wish heartily that all controversies were ended, as we do that all sin were abolished, yet we have little hopes of the one or the other until the world be ended: and in the mean while think it best to content ourselves with, and to persuade others unto, an unity of charity, and mutual toleration; seeing God hath authorised no man to force all men to unity of opinion. Neither do we think it fit to argue thus. To us it seems convenient there should be one judge of all controversies for the whole world; therefore God hath appointed one: but more modest and more

reasonable to collect thus: God hath appointed no such judge of controversies; therefore, though it seems to us convenient there should be one, yet it is not so: or though it were convenient for us to have one, yet it hath pleased God (for reasons best known to himself) not to allow us this convenience.

86. Dr. Field's words which follow, I confess, are somewhat more pressing; and if he had been infallible, and the words had not slipt unadvisedly from him, they were the best argument in your book. But yet it is evident out of his book, and so acknowledged by some of your own, that he never thought of any one company of Christians invested with such authority from God, that all men were bound to receive their decrees without examination, though they seem contrary to Scripture and reason, which the church of Rome requires. And therefore, if he have in his preface strained too high in commendation of the subject he writes of (as writers very often do in their prefaces and dedicatory epistles), what is that to us? Besides, by "all the societies of the world," it is not impossible, nor very improbable, he might mean, all that are or have been in the world, and so include even the primitive church; and her communion we shall embrace, her direction we shall follow, her judgment we shall rest in, if we believe the Scripture, endeavour to find the true sense of it, and live according to it.

87. Ad § 18. That the true interpretation of the Scripture ought to be received from the church, you need not prove; for it is very easily granted by them, who profess themselves very ready to receive all truths, much more the true sense of Scripture, not only from the church, but from any society of men, nay, from any man whatsoever.

88. That the "church's interpretation of Scripture is always true," that is it which you would have said: and that in some sense may be also admitted; viz. if you speak of that church which before you speak of in the 14th §, that is, of the church of all ages since the apostles. Upon the tradition of which church, you there told us, "we were to receive the Scripture, and to believe it to be the word of God." For there you teach us, that "our faith of Scripture depends on a principle which requires no other proof;" and that "such is tradition, which from hand to hand, and age to age, bringing us up to the times and persons of the apostles, and our Saviour himself, cometh to be confirmed by all those miracles, and other arguments, whereby they convinced their doctrine to be true." Wherefore the ancient fathers avouch, that we must receive the sacred Scripture upon the tradition of this church. The tradition then of this church, you say, must teach us what is Scripture, and we are willing to believe it. And now, if you make it good unto us, that the same tradition, down from the apostles, hath delivered from age to age, and from hand to hand, any interpretation of any Scripture, we are ready to embrace that also. But now, if you will argue thus: The church in one sense tells us what is Scripture, and we believe; therefore if the church, taken in another sense, tells us, this or that is the meaning of the Scripture, we are to believe that also; this is too transparent sophistry to take any but those that are willing to be taken.

89. If there be any traditive interpretation of Scripture, produce it, and prove it to be so: and we embrace it. But the tradition of all ages is one thing, and the authority of the present church, much more of the Roman church, which is but a part, and a corrupted part of the catholic church is another. And therefore, though we are ready to receive both Scripture and the sense of Scripture upon the authority of original tradition, yet we receive neither the one nor the other upon the authority of your church.

90. First, For the Scriptures, how can we receive them upon the authority of your church, who hold now those books to be canonical which formerly you rejected from the canon? I instance in the Book of Maccabees and the Epistle to the Hebrews: the first of these you held not to be canonical in St. Gregory's time, or else he was no member of your church; for it is apparent he held otherwise: the second you rejected from the canon in St. Hierom's time, as it is evident out of many places of his works.

91. If you say (which is all you can say), that "Hierom spake this of the particular Roman church, not of the Roman catholic church;" I answer, there was none such in his time, not that was called so. Secondly, what he spake of the Roman church most be true of all other churches, if your doctrine of the

necessity of the conformity of all other churches to that church were then catholic doctrine. Now then choose whether you will, either that the particular Roman church was not then believed to be the mistress of all other churches, notwithstanding *ad hanc ecclesium, necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est, omnes qui sunt undique fideles;* which Cardinal Perron and his translatress so often translate false: or you say she was, you will run into a greater inconvenience, and be forced to say, that all the churches of that time rejected from the canon the Epistle to the Hebrews, together with the Roman church: and consequently, that the catholic church may err in rejecting from the canon scriptures truly canonical.

Secondly, How can we receive the Scripture upon the authority of the Roman church, which hath delivered at several times scriptures in many places different and repugnant for authentical and canonical? which is most evident out of the place of Malachi, which is so often quoted for the sacrifice of the mass, that either all the ancient fathers had false Bibles, or yours is false: most evident likewise from the comparing of the story of Jacob in Genesis with that which is cited out of it in the Epistle to the Hebrews, according to the vulgar edition: but, above all, to any one who shall compare the Bibles of Sixtus and Clement, so evident, that the wit of man cannot disguise it.

93. And thus you see what reason we have to believe your antecedent, "that your church it is which must declare what books be true Scripture." Now, for the consequence, that certainly is as liable to exception as the antecedent: for if it were true, that God has promised to assist you, for the delivering of true Scripture, would this oblige him, or would it follow from hence that he had obliged himself, to teach you, not only sufficiently, but effectually and irresistibly, the true sense of Scripture? God is not defective in things necessary; neither will he *leave himself without witness*, nor the world without means of knowing his will and doing it. And therefore it was necessary, that by his providence he should preserve the Scripture from any undiscernible corruption in those things which he would have known; otherwise it is apparent it had not been his will that these things should be known, the only means of continuing the knowledge of them being perished. But now neither is God lavish in superfluities; and therefore having given us means sufficient for our direction, and power sufficient to make use of these means, he will not constrain or necessitate us to make use of these means: for that were to cross the end of our creation, which was, to be glorified by our free obedience; whereas necessity and freedom cannot stand together: that were to reverse the law which he hath prescribed to himself in his dealing with man; and that is, to *set life and death before him*, and *leave him in the hands of his own counsel*. God gave the wise men a star to lead them to Christ, but he did not necessitate them to follow the guidance of this star; that was left to their liberty. God gave the children of Israel a *fire to lead them by night*, and *a pillar of cloud by day*; but he constrained no man to follow them; that was left to their liberty. So he gives the church the Scripture; which, in those things which are to be believed or done, are plain and easy to be followed, like the wise men's star. Now that which he desires of us on our part is the obedience of faith, and love of the truth, and desire to find the true sense of it, and industry in searching it, and humility in following, and constancy in professing it; all which if he should work in us by an absolute irresistible necessity, he could no more require of us as our duty, than he can of the sun to shine, of the sea to ebb and flow, and of all other creatures to do those things which by mere necessity they must do, and cannot choose. Besides, what an impudence it is to pretend that your church "is infallibly directed concerning the true meaning of the Scripture," whereas there are thousands of places of Scripture which you do not pretend certainly to understand, and about the interpretation whereof your own doctors differ among themselves! If your church be infallibly directed concerning the true meaning of Scripture, why do not your doctors follow her infallible direction? and if they do, how comes such difference among them in their interpretations?

94. Again, Why does your church thus put her candle under a bushel, and keep her talent of interpreting Scripture infallibly thus long wrapped up in napkins? Why sets she not forth infallible commentaries or expositions upon all the Bible? Is it because this would not be profitable for Christians,

that Scripture should be interpreted? It is blasphemous to say so. The Scripture itself tells us, *all Scripture is profitable*. And the Scripture is not so much the words as the sense. And if it be not profitable, why does she employ particular doctors to interpret Scriptures fallibly? unless we must think that fallible interpretations of Scripture are profitable, and infallible interpretations would not be so?

95. If you say, "The Holy Ghost, which assists the church in interpreting, will move the church to interpret when he shall think fit, and that the church will do it when the Holy Ghost shall move her to do it;" I demand, whether the Holy Ghost's moving of the church to such works as these be resistible by the church or irresistible; if resistible, then the Holy Ghost may move, and the church may not be moved. As certainly the Holy Ghost doth always move to an action, when he shows us plainly that it would be for the good of men, and honour of God; as he that hath any sense will acknowledge, that an infallible exposition of Scripture could not but be; and there is no conceivable reason why such a work should be put off a day, but only because you are conscious to yourselves you cannot do it, and therefore make excuses. But if the moving of the Holy Ghost be irresistible, and you are not yet so moved to go about this work, then I confess you are excused. But then I would know, whether those popes, which so long deferred the calling of a council for the reformation of your church, at length pretended to be effected by the council of Trent, whether they may excuse themselves, for that they were not moved by the Holy Ghost to do it? I would know, likewise, as this motion is irresistible when it comes, so whether it be so simply necessary to the moving of your church to any such public action, that it cannot possibly move without it? that is, whether the pope now could not, if he would, scat himself *in cathedra*, and fall to writing expositions upon the Bible for the direction of Christians to the true sense of it? If you say he cannot, you will make yourself ridiculous; if he can, then I would know, whether he should be infallibly directed in these expositions or no; if he should, then what need he to stay for irresistible motion? Why does he not go about this noble work presently? If he should not, how shall we know that the calling of the council of Trent was not upon his own voluntary motion, or upon human importunity and suggestion, and not upon the motion of the Holy Ghost; and, consequently, how shall we know whether he were assistant to it or no, seeing he assists none but what he himself moves to? And whether he did move the pope to call this council is a secret thing, which we cannot possibly know, nor perhaps the pope himself.

96. If you say your meaning is only, "that the church shall be infallibly guarded from giving any false sense of any scripture, and not infallibly assisted positively to give the true sense of all Scripture," I put to you your own question, Why should we believe the Holy Ghost will stay there? or why may we not as well think he will stay at the first thing, that is, in teaching the church what books be true Scripture? For if the Holy Ghost's assistance be promised to all things profitable, then will he be with them infallibly, not only to guard them from all errors, but to guide them to all profitable truths, such as the true sense of all Scripture would be. Neither could he stay there, but defend them irresistibly from all vices; nor there neither, but infuse into them irresistibly all virtues; for all these things would be much for the benefit of Christians. If you say, he cannot do this without taking away their freewill in living; I say, neither can he necessitate men to believe aright, without taking away their freewill in believing, and in professing their belief.

97. To the place of St. Austin, I answer, that not the authority of the present church, much less of a part of it (as the Roman church is), was that which alone moved St. Austin to believe the gospel, but the perpetual tradition of the churches of all ages. Which you yourself have taught us to be the "only principle by which the Scripture is proved, and which itself needs no proof;" and to which you have referred this very saying of St. Austin, *Ego vero evangelio non crederem, nisi*, &c. chap. ii. § 14. And in the next place which you cite out of this book, *De Util. Cred*. c. 14, he shows that his "motives to believe were fame, celebrity, consent, antiquity." And seeing this tradition, this consent, this antiquity, did as fully and powerfully move him not to believe Manichæus, as to believe the gospel (the Christian tradition being as

full against Manichæus as it was for the gospel), therefore he did well to conclude upon these grounds, that he had as much reason to disbelieve Manichæus as to believe the gospel. Now if you can truly say, that the same fame, celebrity, consent, antiquity, that the same universal and original tradition, lies against Luther and Calvin as did against Manichæus, you may do well to apply the argument against them; otherwise it will be to little purpose to substitute their names instead of Manichæus, unless you can show the thing agrees to them as well as him.

98. If you say, that St. Austin speaks here "of the authority of the present church, abstracted from consent with the ancient;" and therefore you, seeing you have the present church on your side against Luther and Calvin, as St. Austin against Manichæus, may urge the same words against them which St. Austin did against him:

99. I answer, first, That it is a vain presumption of yours, that the "catholic church is of your side." Secondly, That if St. Austin speak here of that present church which moved him to believe the gospel, without consideration of the antiquity of it, and its both personal and doctrinal succession from the apostles, his argument will be like a buskin that will serve any leg; it will serve to keep an Arian or a Grecian from being a Roman Catholic, as well as a catholic from being an Arian or a Grecian; inasmuch as the Arians and Grecians did pretend to the title of catholics and the church, as much as the papists now do. If then you should have come to an ancient Goth or Vandal, whom the Arians converted to Christianity, and should have moved him to your religion, might he not say the very same words to you as St. Austin to the Manichæans: "I would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the church did move me. Them therefore whom I obeyed, saying, Believe the gospel, why should I not obey, saying to me, Do not believe the Homoousians? Choose what thou pleasest: if thou shalt say, Believe the Arians, they warn me not to give any credit to you. If therefore I believe them, I cannot believe thee. If thou say, Do not believe the Arians, thou shalt not do well to force me to the faith of the Homoousians because by the preaching of the Arians I believed the gospel itself. If you say, You did well to believe them commending the gospel, but you did not well to believe them discommending the Homoousians; dost thou think me so very foolish, that without any reason at all I should believe what thou wilt, and not believe what thou wilt not?" It were easy to put these words into the mouth of a Grecian, Abyssine, Georgian, or any other of any religion. And I pray bethink themselves what you would say in such a case, and imagine that we say the very same to you.

100. Whereas you ask, "whether protestants do not perfectly resemble those men to whom St. Austin spake, when they will have men to believe the Roman church delivering Scripture, but not to believe her condemning Luther?" I demand again, whether you be well in your wits to say, that protestants would have men believe the Roman church delivering Scripture, whereas they accuse her to deliver many books for Scripture which are not so? and do not bid men to receive any book which she delivers, for that reason, because she delivers it? And if you meant only, protestants will have men to believe some books to be Scripture which the Roman church delivers for such, may we not then ask, as you do, Do not papists perfectly resemble these men, which will have men believe the church of England delivering Scripture, but not to believe her condemning the church of Rome?

101. And whereas you say, "St. Austin may seem to have spoken prophetically against protestants, when he said, 'Why should I not most diligently inquire what Christ commanded of them before all others by whose authority I was moved to believe that Christ commanded any good thing.'" I answer, until you can show that protestants believe that Christ commanded any good thing, that is, that they believe the truth of Christian religion, upon the authority of the church of Rome, this place must be wholly impertinent to your purpose, which is to make protestants believe your church to be the infallible expounder of Scriptures and judge of controversies. Nay, rather, is it not directly against your purpose? For why may not a member of the church of England, who received his baptism, education, and faith from

the ministry of this church, say just so to you as St. Austin here to the Manichees? Why should not I most diligently inquire what Christ commanded of them (the church of England) before all others by whose authority I was moved to believe that Christ commanded any good thing? Can you, F. or K., or whosoever you are, better declare to me what he said, whom I would not have thought to have been, or to be, if the belief thereof had been recommended by you to me? This therefore (that Christ Jesus did those miracles, and taught that doctrine, which is contained evidently in the undoubted books of the New Testament) I believed by fame, strengthened with celebrity and consent (even of those which in other things are at infinite variance one with another); and lastly, by antiquity (which gives an universal and a constant attestation to them; but every one may see that you, so few (in comparison of all those upon whose consent we ground our belief of Scripture), so turbulent, that you damn all to the fire and to hell that any ways differ from you; that you profess it is lawful for you to use violence and power, whensoever you can have it, for the planting of your own doctrine and extirpation of the contrary; lastly, so new in many of your doctrines—as in the lawfulness and expedience of debarring the laity the sacramental cup, the lawfulness and expedience of your Latin service, transubstantiation, indulgences, purgatory, the pope's infallibility, his authority over kings, &c.—so new, I say, in comparison of the undoubted books of Scripture, which evidently containeth, or rather is, our religion, and the sole and adequate object of our faith; I say, every one man may see that you, so few, so turbulent, so new, can produce nothing deserving authority (with wise and considerate men). What madness is this! Believe then the consent of Christians, which are now and have been ever since Christ in the world, that we ought to believe Christ; but learn of us what Christ said, which contradict and damn all other parts of Christendom. Why, I beseech you? Surely if they were not at all, and could not teach me anything, I would more easily persuade myself that I were not to believe in Christ, than that I should learn anything concerning him from any other than them by whom I believed him; at least, than that I should learn what his religion was from you, who have wronged so exceedingly his miracles and his doctrine, by forging so evidently so many false miracles for the confirmation of your new doctrine, which might give us just occasion, had we no other assurance of them but your authority, to suspect the true ones; who, with forging so many false stories and false authors, have taken a fair way to make the faith of all stories questionable, if we had no other ground for our belief of them but your authority; who have brought in doctrines plainly and directly contrary to that which you confess to be the word of Christ, and which for the most part make either for the honour or profit of the teachers of them; which (if there were no difference between the Christian and the Roman church) would be very apt to make suspicious men believe that Christian religion was a human invention, taught by some cunning impostors only to make themselves rich and powerful; who make a profession of corrupting all sorts of authors—a ready course to make it justly questionable whether any remain uncorrupted. For if you take this authority upon you upon the six ages last past, how shall we know that the church of that time did not usurp the same authority upon the authors of the six last ages before them, and so upwards, until we come to Christ himself? whose questioned doctrines none of them came from the fountain of apostolic tradition, but have insinuated themselves into the streams by little and little: some in one age and some in another; some more anciently, some more lately; and some yet are embryos, yet hatching, and in the shell; as the pope's infallibility, the blessed Virgin's immaculate conception, the pope's power over the temporalities of kings, the doctrine of predetermination, &c., all which yet are, or in time may be, imposed upon Christians under the title of original and apostolical tradition; and that with that necessity, that they are told they were as good believe nothing at all, as not believe these things to have come from the apostles, which they know to have been brought in but yesterday; which whether it be not a ready and likely way to make men conclude thus with themselves;—I am told that I were as good believe nothing at all, as believe some points which the church teacheth me, and not others; and some things which she teacheth to be ancient and certain, I plainly see to be new and false; therefore I

will believe nothing at all;—whether, I say, the aforesaid grounds be not a ready and likely way to make men conclude thus, and whether this conclusion be not too often made in Italy and Spain and France, and in England too, I leave it to the judgment of those that have wisdom and experience. Seeing therefore the Roman church is so far from being a sufficient foundation for our belief in Christ, that it is in sundry regards a dangerous temptation against it, why should I not much rather conclude—Seeing we receive not the knowledge of Christ and Scriptures from the Church of Rome, neither from her must we take his doctrine, or the interpretation of Scripture.

102. Ad § 19. In this number this argument is contained: "The judge of controversies ought to be intelligible to learned and unlearned: the Scripture is not so, and the church is so: therefore the church is the judge, and not the Scripture."

103. To this I answer: As to be understandable is a condition requisite to a judge, so is not that alone sufficient to make a judge; otherwise you might make yourself judge of controversies by arguing, The Scripture is not intelligible by all, but I am; therefore I am judge of controversies. If you say, your intent was to conclude against the Scripture, and not for the church, I demand why then, but to delude the simple with sophistry, did you say in the close of this §, "Such is the church, and the Scripture is not such?" but that you would leave it to them to infer in the end (which indeed was more than you undertook in the beginning), Therefore the church is judge, and Scripture not. I say, secondly, That you still run upon a false supposition, that God hath appointed some judge of all controversies that may happen among Christians about the sense of obscure texts of Scripture; whereas he hath left every one to his liberty herein, in those words of St. Paul, *Quisque abundet ire sensu suo,* &c. I say, thirdly, Whereas some protestants make the Scripture judge of controversies, that they have the authority of fathers to warrant their manner of speaking; as of Optatus.

104. But, speaking truly and properly, the Scripture is not a judge, nor cannot be, but only a sufficient rule for those to judge by that believe it to be the word of God (as the church of England and the church of Rome both do), what they are to believe, and what they are not to believe. I say, sufficiently perfect and sufficiently intelligible in things necessary, to all that have understanding, whether they be learned or unlearned. And my reason hereof is convincing and demonstrative, because nothing is necessary to be believed but what is plainly revealed. For to say, that when a place of Scripture, by reason of ambiguous terms, lies indifferent between divers senses, whereof one is true and the other is false, that God obliges men, under pain of damnation, not to mistake through error and human frailty, is to make God a tyrant; and to say, that he requires us certainly to attain that end, for the attaining whereof we have no certain means; which is to say, that, like Pharaoh, he gives no straw, and requires brick, that he reaps where he sows not; that he gathers where he strews not; that he will not be pleased with our utmost endeavours to please him, without full, and exact, and never-failing performance; that his will is we should do what he knows we cannot do; that he will not accept of us according to that which we have, but requireth of us what we have not. Which whether it can consist with his goodness, with his wisdom, and with his word, I leave it to honest men to judge. If I should send a servant to Paris, or Rome, or Jerusalem, and he using his utmost diligence not to mistake his way, yet notwithstanding meeting often with such places where the road is divided into several ways, whereof every one is as liken to be true and as likely to be false as any other, should at length mistake, and go out of the way, would not any man say that I were an impotent, foolish, and unjust master, if I should be offended with him for so doing? And shall we not tremble to impute that to God which we would take in foul scorn if it were imputed to ourselves? Certainly, I for my part fear I should not love God, if I should think so strangely of him.

105. Again, when you say "that unlearned and ignorant men cannot understand Scripture," I world desire you to come out of the clouds, and tell us what you mean: whether, that they cannot understand all Scripture, or that they cannot understand any Scripture, or that they cannot understand so much as

is sufficient for their direction to heaven. If the first, I believe the learned are in the same case. If the second, every man's experience will confute you; for who is there that is not capable of a sufficient understanding of the story, the precepts, the promises, and the threats of the gospel? If the third, that they may understand something, but not enough for their salvations: I ask you, first, Why then doth St. Paul say to Timothy, *The Scriptures are able to make him wise unto salvation?* Why doth St. Austin say, *Ea quæ manifeste posita sunt in sacris scripturis, omnia continent quæ pertinent ad fidem, moresque vivendi?* Why does every one of the tour evangelists entitle their book, The Gospel, if any necessary and essential part of the gospel were left out of it? Can we imagine that either they omitted something necessary out of ignorance, not knowing it to be necessary? or, knowing it to be so, maliciously concealed it? or, out of negligence, did the work they had undertaken by halves. If none of these things can without blasphemy be imputed to them, considering they were assisted by the Holy Ghost in this work, then certainly it most evidently follows, that every one of them writ the whole gospel of Christ; I mean, all the essential and necessary parts of it. So that if we had no other book of Scripture but one of them alone, we should not want anything necessary to salvation. And what one of them hath more than another, it is only profitable, and not necessary: necessary indeed to be believed, because revealed; but not therefore revealed, because necessary to be believed.

106. Neither did they write only for the learned, but for all men. This being one special means of the preaching of the gospel, which was commanded to be preached, not only to learned men, but to all men. And therefore, unless we will imagine the Holy Ghost and them to have been wilfully wanting to their own desire and purpose, we must conceive that they intended to speak plain, even to the capacity of the simplest; at least, touching all things necessary to be published by them and believed by us.

107. And whereas you pretend, "it is so easy and obvious both for the learned and the ignorant both to know which is the church, and what are the decrees of the church, and what is the sense of the decrees;" I say, this is a vain pretence.

108. For, first, How shall an unlearned man, whom you have supposed now ignorant of Scripture, how shall he know which of all the societies of Christians is indeed the church? You will say, perhaps, "He must examine them by the notes of the church, which are, perpetual visibility, succession, conformity with the ancient church," &c. But how shall we know, first, that these are the notes of the church, unless by Scripture, which, you say, he understands not? You may say, perhaps, he may be told so. But seeing men may deceive, and be deceived, and their words are no demonstrations, how shall he be assured that what they say is true? So that at the first he meets with an impregnable difficulty, and cannot know the church but by such notes, which whether they be the notes of the church he cannot possibly know. But let us suppose this isthmus digged through, and that he is assured these are the notes of the true church; how can he possibly be a competent judge which society of Christians hath title to these notes, and which hath not? seeing this trial of necessity requires a great sufficiency of knowledge of the monuments of Christian antiquity, which no unlearned man can have, because he that hath it cannot be unlearned. As for example, how shall he possibly be able to know whether the church of Rome hath had a perpetual succession of visible professors, which held always the same doctrine which they now hold, without holding any thing to the contrary, unless he hath first examined what was the doctrine of the church in the first age, what in the second, and so forth? And whether this be not a more difficult work than to stay at the first age, and to examine the church by the conformity of her doctrine with the doctrine of the first age, every man of ordinary understanding may judge.

Let us imagine him advanced a step further, and to know which is the church: how shall he know what the church hath decreed, seeing the church hath not been so careful in keeping her decrees, but that many are lost, and many corrupted? Besides, when even the learned among you are not agreed concerning divers things, whether they be *de fide* or not, how shall the unlearned do? Then for the sense

of the decrees, how can he be more capable of the understanding of them, than of plain texts of Scripture, which you will not suffer him to understand? especially seeing the decrees of divers popes and councils are conceived so obscurely, that the learned cannot agree about the sense of them: and then they are written all in such languages, which the ignorant understand not, and therefore must of necessity rely herein upon the uncertain and fallible authority of some particular men, who inform them that there is such a decree. And if the decrees were translated into vulgar languages, why the translators should not be as fallible as you say the translators of Scripture are, who can possibly imagine?

109. Lastly, How shall an unlearned man, or indeed any man, be assured of the certainty of that decree, the certainty whereof depends upon suppositions which are impossible to be known whether they be true or no? for it is not the decree of a council, unless it be confirmed by a true pope. Now the pope cannot be a true pope, if he came in by simony; which whether he did or no, who can answer me? he cannot be a true pope, unless he were baptized; and baptized he was not, unless the minister had due intention. So likewise he cannot be a true pope, unless he were rightly ordained priest; and that again depends upon the ordainer's secret intention, and also upon his having the episcopal character. All which things, as I have formerly proved, depend upon so many uncertain suppositions, that no human judgment can possibly be resolved in them. I conclude, therefore, that not the most learned man amongst you all, no, not the pope himself, can, according to the grounds you go upon, have any certainty that any decree of any council is good and valid, and consequently, not any assurance that it is indeed the decree of a council.

110. Ad § 20. If by a "private spirit" you mean a particular persuasion that a doctrine is true, which some men pretend, but cannot prove to come from the Spirit of God; I say, to refer controversies to Scripture, is not to refer them to this kind of private spirit. For is there not a manifest difference between saying, "The Spirit of God tells me that this is the meaning of such a text" (which no man can possibly know to be true, it being a secret thing), and between saying, "These and these reasons I have to show that this or that is true doctrine, or that this or that is the meaning of such a scripture?" Reason being a public and certain thing, and exposed to all men's trial and examination. But now, if by "private spirit" you understand every man's particular reason, then your first and second inconvenience will presently be reduced to one, and shortly to none at all.

111. Ad § 21. And does not also giving the office of judicature to the church come to confer it upon every particular man? for before any man believes the church infallible, must he not have reason to induce him to believe it to be so? and must he not judge of those reasons, whether they be indeed good and firm, or captious and sophistical? Or would you have all men believe all your doctrine upon the church's infallibility, and the church's infallibility they know not why?

112. Secondly, Supposing they are to be guided by the church, they must use their own particular reason to find out which is the church. And to that purpose you yourselves give a great many notes, which you pretend first to be certain notes of the church, and then to be peculiar to your church, and agreeable to none else; but you do not so much as pretend, that either of those pretences is evident of itself, and therefore you go about to prove them both by reasons; and those reasons, I hope, every particular man is to judge of, whether they do indeed conclude and convince that which they are alleged for; that is, that these marks are indeed certain notes of the church; and then, that your church hath them, and no other.

113. One of these notes, indeed the only note of a true and uncorrupted church, is conformity with antiquity; I mean the most ancient church of all, that is, the primitive and apostolic. Now, how is it possible any man should examine your church by this note, but he must by his own particular judgment find out what was the doctrine of the primitive church, and what is the doctrine of the present church, and be able to answer all these arguments which are brought to prove repugnance between them? Otherwise he shall but pretend to make use of this note for the finding the true church, but indeed make

no use of it, but receive the church at a venture, as the most of you do, not one in a hundred being able to give any tolerable reason for it. So that instead of reducing men to particular reasons, you reduce them to none at all, but to chance and passion and prejudice, and such other ways, which if they lead one to the truth, they lead hundreds, nay thousands, to falsehood. But it is a pretty thing to consider how these men can blow hot and cold out of the same mouth to serve several purposes. Is there hope of gaining a proselyte? Then they will tell you, God hath given every man reason to follow; and *if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch:* that it is no good reason for a man's religion, that he was born and brought up in it; for then a Turk should have as much reason to be a Turk, as a Christian to be a Christian: that every man hath a judgment of discretion; which if they will make use of, they shall easily find that the true church hath always such and such marks, and that their church hath them, and no others but theirs. But then if any of theirs be persuaded to a sincere and sufficient trial of their church, even by their own notes of it, and to try whether they be indeed so conformable to antiquity as they pretend, then their note is changed. You must not use your own reason nor your judgment, but refer all to the church, and believe her to be conformable to antiquity, though they have no reason for it; nay, though they have evident reason to the contrary. For my part, I am certain that God hath given us our reason to discern between truth and falsehood; and he that makes not this use of it, but believes things he knows not why, I say, it is by chance that he believes the truth, and not by choice; and I that cannot but fear that God will not accept of this *sacrifice of fools*.

114. But you that would not have men follow their reason, what would you have them follow? Their passions? or pluck out their eyes, and go blindfold? No, you say, you would have them follow authority. On God's name let them; we also would have them follow authority; for it is upon the authority of universal tradition that we would have them believe Scripture. But then, as for the authority which you would have them follow, you will let them see reason why they should follow it. And is not this to go a little about? To leave reason for a short turn, and then to come to it again, and to do that which you condemn in others? It being indeed a plain impossibility for any man to submit his reason but to reason; for he that doth it to authority must of necessity think himself to have greater reason to believe that authority. Therefore the confession cited by Brerely you need not think to have been extorted from Luther and the rest. It came very freely from them, and what they say, you practise as much as they.

115. And whereas you say, that "a protestant admits of fathers, councils, church, as far as they agree with Scripture, which upon the matter is himself:" I say, you admit neither of them, nor the Scripture itself, but only so far as it agrees with your church; and your church you admit, because you think you have reason to do so: so that by you as well as protestants all is finally resolved into your own reason.

116. Nor do heretics only, but Romish catholics also, "set up as many judges as there are men and women in the Christian world." For do not your men and women judge your religion to lie true before they believe it, as well as the men and women of other religions? O, but you say, "They receive it, not because they think it agreeable to Scripture, but because the church tells them so." But then I hope they believe the church because their own reason tells them they are to do so. So that the difference between a papist and a protestant is this: not that the one judges and the other does not judge, but that the one judges his guide to be infallible, the other his way to be manifest. "This same pernicious doctrine is taught by Brentius, Zanchius, Cartwright, and others." It is so in very deed; but it is taught also by some others, whom you little think of. It is taught by St. Paul where he says, *Try all things; hold fast that which is good*. It is taught by St. John in these words: *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God or no*. It is taught by St. Peter in these: *Be ye ready to render a reason of the hope that is in you*. Lastly, this very pernicious doctrine is taught by our Saviour in these words: *If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch:* and, *Why of yourselves judge you not what is right?* All which speeches, if they do not advise men to make use of their reason for the choice of their religion, I must confess myself to understand nothing.

Lastly, not to be infinite, it is taught by Mr. Knot himself, not in one page only or chapter of his book, but all his book over; the very writing and publishing whereof supposes this for certain, that the readers are to be judges whether his reasons which he brings be strong and convincing, of which sort we have hitherto met with none, or else captious, or impertinences, as indifferent men shall (as I suppose) have cause to judge them.

117. But you demand, "What good statesmen would they be, who should ideate or fancy such a commonwealth as these men have framed to themselves a church?" Truly if this be all the fault they have, that they say, "Every man is to use his own judgment in the choice of his religion, and not to believe this or that sense of Scripture upon the bare authority of any learned man or men, when he conceives he hath reasons to the contrary which are of more weight than their authority; I know no reason, but notwithstanding all this, they might be as good statesmen as any of the society. But what hath this to do with commonwealths, where men are bound only to external obedience unto the laws and judgment of courts, but not to an internal approbation of them, no, nor to conceal their judgment of them, if they disapprove them? As, if I conceived I had reason to mislike the law of punishing simple theft with death, as Sir Thomas More did, I might profess lawfully my judgment, and represent my reasons to the king or commonwealth in a parliament, as Sir Thomas More did, without committing any fault, or fearing any punishment.

118. To the place of St. Austin wherewith this paragraph is concluded, I shall need give no other reply but only to desire you to speak like an honest man, and to say, whether it be all one for a man to "allow and disallow in every scripture what he pleases"—which is either to dash out of Scripture such texts or such chapters because they cross his opinion—or to say (which is worse), "though they be Scripture, they are not true?" whether, I say, for a man thus "to allow and disallow in Scripture what he pleases" be all one, and no greater fault, than to allow that sense of Scripture which he conceives to be true and genuine, and deduced out of the words, and to disallow the contrary? For God's sake, sir, tell me plainly: in those texts of Scripture which you allege for the infallibility of your church, do not you allow what sense you think true, and disallow the contrary? and do you not this by the direction of your private reason? If you do, why do you condemn it in others? If you do not, I pray you tell me what direction you follow, or whether you follow none at all? If none at all, this is like drawing lots, or throwing the dice, for the choice of a religion: if any other, I beseech you tell me what it is. Perhaps you will say the "church's authority;" and that will be to dance finely in a round, thus: to believe the church's infallible authority, because the Scriptures avouch it; and to believe that Scriptures say and mean so, because they are so expounded by the church. Is not this for a father to beget his son, and the son to beget his father? for a foundation to support the house, and the house to support the foundation; Would not Campian have cried out at it, *Ecce quos gyros, quos Mæandros!* And to what end was this going about, when you might as well at first have concluded the church infallible because she says so, as thus to put in Scripture for a mere state, and to say the church is infallible because the Scripture says so, and the Scripture means so because the church says so, which is infallible? Is it not most evident therefore to every intelligent man, that you are enforced of necessity to do that yourself which so tragically you declaim against in others? The church, you say, is infallible; I am very doubtful of it; how shall I know it? The Scripture, you say, affirms it, as in the 59th of Esay, *My spirit that is in thee*, &c. Well, I confess I find there these words, but I am still doubtful whether they be spoken of the church of Christ; and if they be, whether they mean as you pretend. You say the church says so, which is infallible. Yea, but that is the question, and therefore not to be begged, but proved: neither is it so evident as to need no proof; otherwise, why brought you this text to prove it? Nor is it of such a strange quality, above all other propositions, as to be able to prove itself. What then remains but that you say, reasons drawn out of the circumstances of the text will evince that this is the sense of it. Perhaps they will: but reasons cannot convince me, unless I judge of them by

my reason; and for every man or woman to rely on that, in the choice of their religion and in the interpreting of Scripture, you say is a horrible absurdity; and therefore must neither make use of your own in this matter, nor desire me to make use of it.

119. But "universal tradition," you say, and so do I too, "is of itself credible; and that hath in all ages taught the church's infallibility with full consent." If it have, I am ready to believe it; but that it hath, I hope you would not have me take upon your word for that were to build myself upon the church, and the church upon you. Let then the tradition appear; for a secret tradition is somewhat like a silent thunder. You will perhaps produce, for the confirmation of it, some saying of some fathers, who in every age taught this doctrine (as Gualterius in his chronology undertakes to do, but with so ill success, that I heard an able man of your religion profess that "in the first three centuries there was not one authority pertinent"); but how will you warrant that none of them teach the contrary? Again, how shall I be assured that the places have indeed this sense in them, seeing there is not one father for five hundred years after Christ that does say in plain terms, "The church of Rome is infallible?" What! shall we believe your church, that this is their meaning? But this will be again to go into the circle, which made us giddy before; to prove this church infallibly, because tradition says so; tradition to say so, because the fathers say so; the fathers to say so, because the church says so, which is infallible: yea, "but reason will show this to be the meaning of them." Yes, if we may use our reason, and rely upon it: otherwise, as light shows nothing to the blind, or to him that uses not his eyes, so reason cannot prove any thing to him that either hath not or useth not his reason to judge of them.

120. Thus you have excluded yourself from all proof of your church's infallibility from Scripture or tradition: and if you fly, lastly, to reason itself for succour, may it not justly say to you as Jephthah said to his brethren, *Ye have cast me out, and banished me, and do you now come to me for succour?* But if there be no certainty in reason, how shall I be assured of the certainty of those which you allege for this purpose? Either I may judge of them, or not; if not, why do you propose them? if I may, why do you say I may not, and make it such a monstrous absurdity, that men in the choice of their religion should make use of their reason? which yet, without all question, none but unreasonable men can deny to have been the chiefest end why reason was given them.

121. Ad § 22. "A heretic he is," saith D. Potter, "who opposeth any truth, which to be a Divine revelation he is convinced in conscience by any means whatsover; be it by a preacher or layman; be it by reading Scriptures, or hearing them read." And from hence you infer, that "he makes all these safe propounders of faith." A most strange and illogical deduction! For may not a private man by evident reason convince another man, that such or such a doctrine is Divine revelation; and yet though he be a true propounder in this point, yet propound another thing falsely, and without proof, and, consequently, not be a safe propounder in every point? Your preachers in their sermons, do they not propose to men Divine revelations? and do they not sometimes convince men in conscience, by evident proof from Scripture, that the things they speak are Divine revelations? And whosoever, being thus convinced, should oppose this Divine revelation, should he not be a heretic, according to your own grounds, for calling God's own truth into question? And would you think yourself well dealt with, if I should collect from hence, that you make every preacher a safe, that is, an infallible propounder of faith? Be the means of proposal what it will, sufficient or insufficient, worthy of credit or not worthy; though it were, if it were possible, the barking of a dog, or the chirping of a bird; or were it the discourse of the devil himself; yet if I be, I will not say convinced, but persuaded, though falsely, that it is a Divine revelation, and shall deny to believe it, I shall be a formal, though not a material heretic. For he that believes, though falsely, any thing to be Divine revelation, and yet will not believe it to be true, must of necessity believe God to be false; which, according to your own doctrine, is the formality of a heretic.

122. And how it can be any way advantageous to civil government, that men without warrant from God should usurp a tyranny over other men's consciences, and prescribe unto them, without reason, and sometimes against reason, what they shall believe, you must show us plainer, if you desire we should believe. For to say, "Verily, I do not see but it must be so," is no good demonstration: for whereas you say, "that a man may be a passionate and seditious creature;" from whence you would have us infer, that he may make use of his interpretation to satisfy his passion, and raise sedition; there were some colour in this consequence, if we (as you do) made private men infallible interpreters for others; for then indeed they might lead disciples after them, and use them as instruments for their vile purposes. But when we say, they can only interpret for themselves, what harm they can do by their passionate or seditious interpretations, but only endanger both their temporal and eternal happiness, I cannot imagine; for though we deny the pope or church of Rome to be an infallible judge, yet we do not deny but that there are judges which may proceed with certainty enough against all seditious persons, such as draw men to disobedience, either against church or state, as well as against rebels, and traitors, and thieves, and murderers.

123. Ad § 23. The next § in the beginning argues thus: "For many ages there was no Scripture in the world; and for many more there was none in many places of the world; yet men wanted not then and there some certain direction what to believe: therefore there was then an infallible judge." Just as if I should say, York is not my way from Oxford to London, therefore Bristol is: or, A dog is not a horse, therefore he is a man: as if God had no other ways of revealing himself to men, but only by Scripture and an infallible church. St. Chrysostom and Isidorus Pelusiota conceived he might use other mean's. And St. Paul telleth us, that the γνωετὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ *might be known by his works*, and that they had *the law written in their hearts*. Either of these ways might make some faithful men, without either necessity of Scripture or church.

124. "But Dr. Potter says," you say, "In the Jewish church there was a living judge, endowed with an absolute infallible direction in cases of moment; as all points belonging to Divine faith are." And where was that infallible direction in the Jewish church, when they should have received Christ for their Messias, and refused him? Or perhaps this was not a case of moment. Dr. Potter indeed might say very well, not that the high priest was infallible (for certainly he was not), but that his determination was to be of necessity obeyed, though for the justice of it there was no necessity that it should be believed. Besides, it is one thing to say that the living judge in the Jewish church had an infallible direction; another that he was necessitated to follow this direction. This is the privilege which you challenge. But it is that, not this, which the doctor attributes to the Jews. As a man may truly say, the wise men had an infallible direction to Christ, without saying or thinking that they were constrained to follow it, and could not do otherwise.

125. "But either the church retains still her infallibility, or it was divested of it upon the receiving of Holy Scripture, which is absurd." An argument methinks like this: Either you have horns, or you have lost them; but you never lost them, therefore you have them still. If you say, you never had horns; so say I, for aught appears by your reasons, the church never had infallibility.

126. "But some Scriptures were received in some places, and not in others; therefore if Scriptures were the judge of controversies, some churches had one judge and some another." And what great inconvenience is there in that, that one part of England should have one judge, and another another; especially seeing the books of Scripture which were received by those that received fewest, had as much of the doctrine of Christianity in them as they all had which were received by any; all the necessary parts of the gospel being contained in every one of the four Gospels, as I have proved? So that they which had all the books of the New Testament had nothing superfluous; for it was not superfluous, but profitable, that the same thing should be said divers times, and be testified by divers witnesses; and they that had but one of the four Gospels wanted nothing necessary: and therefore it is vainly inferred by you, that "with

months and years, as new canonical Scriptures grew to be published, the church altered her rule of faith and judge of controversies."

127. "Heresies," you say, "would arise after the apostles' time, and after the writing of Scriptures: these cannot be discovered, condemned, and avoided, unless the church be infallible: therefore there must be a church infallible." But I pray tell me, why cannot heresies be sufficiently discovered, condemned, and avoided by them which believe Scripture to be the rule of faith? If Scripture be sufficient to inform us what is the faith, it must of necessity be also sufficient to teach us what is heresy; seeing heresy is nothing but a manifest deviation from and an opposition to the faith. That which is straight will plainly teach us what is crooked; and one contrary cannot but manifest the other. If any one should deny that there is a God; that this God is omnipotent, omniscient, good, just, true, merciful, a rewarder of them that seek him, a punisher of them that obstinately offend him; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world; that it is he by obedience to whom men must look to be saved: if any man should deny either his birth, or passion, or resurrection, or ascension, or sitting at the right hand of God; his having all power given him in heaven and earth; that it is he whom God hath appointed to be judge of the quick and dead; that all men shall rise again at the last day; that they which believe and repent shall be saved; that they which do not believe and repent shall be damned: if a man should hold, that either the keeping of the Mosaical law is necessary to salvation, or that good works are not necessary to salvation: in a word, if any man should obstinately contradict the truth of any thing plainly delivered in Scripture; who does not see that every one which believes the Scripture hath a sufficient means to discover and condemn and avoid that heresy, without any need of an infallible guide? If you say, that "the obscure places of Scripture contain matters of faith," I answer, that it is a matter of faith to believe that the sense of them, whatsoever it is, which was intended by God, is true; for he that doth not so, calls God's truth into question. But to believe this or that to be the true sense of them, or to believe the true sense of them and to avoid the false, is not necessary either to faith or salvation. For if God would have had his meaning in these places certainly known, how could it stand with his wisdom to be so wanting to his own will and end as to speak obscurely? Or how can it consist with his justice, to require of men to know certainly the meaning of those words which he himself hath not revealed? Suppose there were an absolute monarch, that in his own absence from one of his kingdoms had written laws for the government of it, some very plainly, and some very ambiguously and obscurely, and his subjects should keep those that were plainly written with all exactness, and for those that were obscure use their best diligence to find his meaning in them, and obey them according to the sense of them which they conceived; should this king either with justice or wisdom be offended with these subjects, if by reason of the obscurity of them they mistook the sense of them, and failed of performance by reason of their error?

128. "But it is more useful and fit," you say, "for the deciding of controversies, to have, besides an infallible rule to go by, a living infallible judge to determine them: and from hence *you* conclude, that certainly there is such a judge." But why then may not another say, that it is yet more useful, for many excellent purposes, that all the patriarchs should be infallible, than that the pope only should? Another, that it would be yet more useful that all the archbishops of every province should be so, than that the patriarchs only should be so. Another, that it would be yet more useful, if all the bishops of every diocese were so. Another, that it would be yet more available, that all the parsons of every parish should be so. Another, that it would be yet more excellent, if all the fathers of families were so. And, lastly, another, that it were much more to be desired, that every man and every woman were so; just as much as the prevention of controversies is better than the decision of them; and the prevention of heresies better than the condemnation of them; and upon this ground conclude, by your own very consequence, that not only a general council, nor only the pope, but all the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, pastors, fathers, nay all the men in the world, are infallible; if you say now, as I am sure you will, that this conclusion is most gross,

and absurd, against sense and experience, then must also the ground be false from which it evidently and undeniably follows, viz. that that course of dealing with men seems always more fit to Divine Providence, which seems most fit to human reason.

129. And so, likewise, that there should men succeed the apostles which could show themselves to be their successors by doing of miracles, by speaking all kinds of languages, by delivering men to Satan, as St. Paul did Hymenæus and the incestuous Corinthian; it is manifest in human reason, it were incomparably more fit and useful for the decision of controversies, than that the successors of the apostles should have none of these gifts, and for want of the signs of apostleship be justly questionable whether he be his successor or no: and will you now conclude, that the popes have the gift of doing miracles as well as the apostles had?

130. It were in all reason very useful and requisite that the pope should, by the assistance of God's Spirit, be freed from the vices and passions of men, lest otherwise the authority given him for the good of the church he might employ (as divers popes, you well know, have done) to the disturbance and oppression and mischief of it. And will you conclude from hence, that popes are not subject to the sins and passions of other men? that there never have been ambitious, covetous, lustful, tyrannous popes?

131. Who sees not, that for men's direction it were much more beneficial for the church that infallibility should be settled in the pope's person, than in a general council; that so the means of deciding controversies might be speedy, easy, and perpetual; whereas that of general councils is not so? And will you hence infer, that not the church representative, but the pope, is indeed the infallible judge of controversies? Certainly, if you should, the Sorbonne doctors would not think this a good conclusion.

132. It had been very commodious (one would think), that seeing either God's pleasure was the Scripture should be translated, or else in his providence he knew it would be so, that he had appointed some men for his business, and by this Spirit assisted them in it, that so we might have translations as authentical as the original; yet, you see, God did not think fit to do so.

133. It had been very commodious (one would think) that the Scripture should have been, at least for all things necessary, a rule plain and perfect; and yet, you say, it is both imperfect and obscure, even in things necessary.

134. It had been most requisite (one would think) that the copies of the Bibles should have been preserved free from variety of readings, which makes men very uncertain in many places which is the word of God, and which is the error or presumption of man: and yet we see God hath not thought fit so to provide for us.

135. Who can conceive, but that an apostolic interpretation of all the difficult places of Scripture would have been strangely beneficial to the church, especially there being such danger in mistaking the sense of them as is by you pretended, and God in his providence forseeing that the greatest part of Christians would not accept of the pope for the judge of controversies? And yet we see God hath not so ordered the matter.

136. Who doth not see, that supposing the bishop of Rome had been appointed head of the church and judge of controversies, that it would have been infinitely beneficial to the church, perhaps as much as all the rest of the Bible, that in some book of Scripture, which was to be undoubtedly received, this one proposition had been set down in terms, "The bishops of Rome shall be always monarchs of the church, and they, either alone or with their adherents, the guides of faith, and the judges of controversies that shall arise amongst Christians?" This, if you will deal ingenuously, you cannot but acknowledge; for then all true Christians would have submitted to him, as willingly as to Christ himself; neither needed you and your fellows have troubled yourself to invent so many sophisms for the proof of it. There would have been no more doubt of it among Christians, than there is of the nativity, passion, resurrection, or ascension of Christ. You were best now rub your forehead hard, and conclude upon us, that because this would have

been so useful to have been done, therefore it is done. Or if you be (as I know you are) too ingenuous to say so, then must you acknowledge that the ground of your argument, which is the very ground of all these absurdities, is most absurd; and that it is our duty to be humbly thankful for those sufficient, nay, abundant means of salvation, which God hath of his own goodness granted us; and not conclude he hath done that which he hath not done, because, forsooth, in our vain judgments, it seems convenient he should have done so.

137. But you demand, "what repugnance there is between infallibility in the church and existence of Scripture, that the production of the one must be the destruction of the other?" Out of which words I can frame no other argument for you than this: "There is no repugnance between the Scripture's existence and the church's infallibility, therefore the church is infallible." Which consequence will then be good, when you can show, that nothing can be untrue but that only which is impossible; that whatsoever may be done, that also is done. Which if it were true, would conclude both you and me to be infallible, as well as either your church or pope; inasmuch as there is no more repugnance between the Scripture's existence and our infallibility, than there is between theirs.

138. "But if protestants will have the Scripture alone for their judge, let them first produce some scripture, affirming, that by the entering thereof infallibility went out of the church." This argument put in form runs thus: No Scripture affirms that by the entering thereof infallibility went out of the church; therefore there is an infallible church; and therefore the Scripture alone is not judge, that is, the rule to judge by. But as no Scripture affirms that by the entering of it infallibility went out of the church; so neither do we, neither have we any need to do so. But we say, that it continued in the church, even together with the Scriptures, so long as Christ and his apostles were living, and then departed; God in his providence having provided a plain and infallible rule, to supply the defect of living and infallible guides. Certainly, if your cause were good, so great a wit as yours is would devise better arguments to maintain it. We can show no scripture affirming infallibility to have gone out of the church, therefore it is infallible. Somewhat like his discourse that said, It could not be proved out of Scripture that the King of Sweden was dead, therefore he is still living. Methinks, in all reason, you that challenge privileges, and exemption from the condition of men, which is to be subject to error; you that by virtue of this privilege usurp authority over men's consciences; should produce your letters patent from the King of Heaven, and show some express warrant for this authority you take upon you; otherwise you know the rule is, *Ubi contrarium non manifeste probatur, presumitur pro libertate.*

139. "But Dr. Potter may remember what himself teacheth, 'that the church is still endued with infallibility in points fundamental,' and consequently, that infallibility in the church doth well agree with the truth, the sanctity, yea, with the sufficiency of Scripture, for all matters necessary to salvation." Still your discourse is so far from hitting the white, that it roves quite besides the butt. You conclude, that the infallibility of the church may well agree with the truth, the sanctity, the sufficiency of Scripture. But what is this, but to abuse your reader with the proof of that which no man denies? The question is not, Whether an infallible church might agree with Scripture? but, Whether there be an infallible church? *Jam dic, Posthume, de tribus capellis*. Besides, you must know there is a wide difference between being infallible in fundamentals, and being an infallible guide even in fundamentals. Dr. Potter says that the church is the former, that is, there shall be some men in the world, while the world lasts, which err not in fundamentals; for otherwise there should be no church. For to say, The church, while it is the church, may err in fundamentals, implies a contradiction, and is all one as to say, The church, while it is the church, may not be the church. So that to say that the church is infallible in fundamentals signifies no more but this, "There shall be a church in the world for ever." But we utterly deny the church to be the latter; for to say so, were to oblige ourselves to find some certain society of men, of whom we might be certain that they neither do nor can err in fundamentals, nor in declaring what is fundamental, what is not fundamental:

and, consequently, to make any church an infallible guide in fundamentals, would be to make it infallible in all things which she proposes and requires to be believed. This therefore we deny both to your and all other churches of any one denomination, as the Greek, the Roman, the Abyssine; that is, indeed, we deny it simply to any church: for no church can possibly be fit to be a guide, but only a church of some certain denomination: for otherwise no man can possibly know which is the true church, but by a pre-examination of the doctrine controverted; and that were not to be guided by the church to the true doctrine, but by the true doctrine to the church. Hereafter therefore, when you hear protestants say, the church is infallible in fundamentals, you must not conceive them as if they meant as you do, that some society of Christians, which may be known by adhering to some one head, for example, the pope, or the bishop of Constantinople, is infallible in these things; but only thus, that true religion shall never be so far driven out of the world, but that it shall have always, somewhere or other, some that believe and profess it, in all things necessary to salvation.

140. But you "would therefore gladly know out of what text he imagines that the church, by the coming of Scripture, was deprived of infallibility in some points, and not in others?" And I also would gladly know, why you do thus frame to yourself vain imaginations, and then father them upon others? We yield unto you, that there shall be a church which never erreth in some points, because (as we conceive) God hath promised so much; but not, that there shall be such a church which doth or can err in no points, because we find not that God hath promised such a church, and therefore may not promise such a one to ourselves. But for the church's being deprived by the Scripture of infallibility in some points, and not in others, that is a wild notion of your own, which we have nothing to do with.

141. But he affirmeth, that "the Jewish church retained infallibility in herself; and therefore it is unjustly and unworthily done of him to deprive the church of Christ of it." That the Jews had sometimes an infallible miraculous direction from God in some cases of moment, he doth affirm, and had good warrant; but that the synagogue was absolutely infallible, he no where affirms: and therefore it is unjustly and unworthily done of you to obtrude it upon him. And, indeed, how can the infallibility of the synagogue be conceived, but only by settling it in the high priest, and the company adhering and subordinate unto him? And whether the high priest was infallible, when he believed not Christ to be the Messias, but condemned and excommunicated them that so professed, and caused him to be crucified for saying so, I leave it to Christians to judge. But then suppose God had been so pleased to do as he did not, to appoint the synagogue an infallible guide; could you by your rules of logic constrain him to appoint such an one to Christians also, or say unto him, that in wisdom he could not do otherwise? Vain man, that will be thus always tying God to your imaginations! It is well for us that he leaves us not without directions to him; but if he will do this sometimes by living guides, sometimes by written rules, what is that to you? May not he do what he will with his own?

142. And whereas you say, for the further enforcing of this argument, "that there is greater reason to think the church should be infallible than the synagogue; because to the synagogue all laws and ceremonies, &c., were more particularly and minutely delivered than in the New Testament is done, our Saviour leaving particulars to the determination of the church." But I pray walk not thus in generality, but tell us what particulars? If you mean particular rites and ceremonies, and orders for government, we grant it, and you know we do so. Our Saviour only hath left a general injunction by St. Paul, *Let all things be done decently and in order*. But what order is fittest, i. e. what time, what place, what manner, &c., is fittest, that he hath left to the discretion of the governors of the church. But if you mean that he hath only concerning matters of faith, the subject in question, prescribed in general that we are to hear the church, and left it to the church to determine what particulars we are to believe, the church being nothing else but an aggregation of believers; this in effect is to say, he hath left it to all believers to determine what particulars they are to believe. Besides, it is so apparently false, that I wonder how you

could content yourself, or think we should be contented, with a bare saying, without any show or pretence of proof.

143. As for Dr. Potter's objection against this argument, "That as well you might infer, that Christians must have all one king, because the Jews had so;" for aught I can perceive, notwithstanding anything answered by you, it may stand still in force; though the truth is, it is urged by him, not against the infallibility, but the monarchy of the church. For whereas you say, the disparity is very clear: he that should urge this argument for one monarch over the whole world, would say that this is to deny the conclusion, and reply unto you, that there is disparity as matters are now ordered, but that there should not be so; for that there was no more reason to believe that the ecclesiastical government of the Jews was a pattern for the ecclesiastical government of Christians, than the civil of the Jews for the civil of the Christians. He would tell you, that the church of Christ, and all Christian commonwealths and kingdoms, are one and the same thing; and therefore he sees no reason why the synagogue should be a type and figure of the church, and not of the commonwealth. He would tell you, that as the church succeeded the Jewish synagogue, so Christian princes should succeed the Jewish magistrates; that is, the temporal governors of the church should be Christians. He would tell you, that as the church is compared to a house, a kingdom, an army, a body; so all distinct kingdoms might and should be one army, one family, &c., and that it is not so, is the thing he complains of. And therefore you ought not to think it enough to say, it is not so; but you should show why it should not be so; and why this argument will not follow, The Jews had one king, therefore all Christians ought to have; as well as this, The Jews had one high priest over them all, therefore all Christians also ought to have. He might tell you, moreover, that the church may have one Master, one General, one Head, one King, and yet he not be the pope, but Christ. He might tell you, that you beg the question, in saying without proof that it is necessary to salvation that all (whether Christians or churches) have recourse to one church, if you mean by one church one particular church which is to govern and direct all others; and that unless you mean so, you say nothing to the purpose. And besides, he might tell you, and that very truly, that it may seem altogether as available for the temporal good of Christians to be under one temporal prince, or commonwealth, as for their salvation to be subordinate to one visible head: I say, as necessary, both for the prevention of the effusion of the blood of Christians by Christians, and for the defence of Christendom from the hostile invasions of Turks and pagans. And from all this he might infer, that though now, by the fault of men, there were in several kingdoms several laws, governments, and powers; yet that it were much more expedient that there were but one: nay, not only expedient, but necessary, if once your ground be settled for a general rule—that what kind of government the Jews had, that the Christians must have. And if you limit the generality of this proposition, and frame the argument thus: What kind of ecclesiastical government the Jews had, that the Christians must have; but they were governed by one high priest, therefore these must be so; he will say, that the first proposition of this syllogism is altogether as doubtful as the conclusion, and therefore neither fit nor sufficient to prove it, until itself be proved. And then besides, that there is as great reason to believe this: That what kind of civil government the Jews had, that the Christians must have. And so Dr. Potter's objection remains still unanswered: That there is as much reason to conclude a necessity of one king over all Christian kingdoms, from the Jews having one king; as one bishop over all churches, from their being under one high priest.

144. Ad § 24. Neither is this discourse confirmed by Irenæus at all, whether by this discourse you mean that immediately foregoing, of the analogy between the church and the synagogue, to which this speech of Irenæus alleged here by you is utterly and plainly impertinent; or whether by this discourse you mean (as I think you do), not your discourse, but your conclusion which you discourse on; that is, that "your church is the infallible judge in controversies." For neither hath Irenæus one syllable to this purpose, neither can it be deduced out of what he says, with any colour of consequence. For, first, in

saying, "What if the apostles had not left Scripture, ought we not to have followed the order of tradition?' and in saying, "That to this order many nations yield assent, who believe in Christ, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit of God, without letters or ink, and diligently keeping ancient tradition;" doth he not plainly show, that the tradition he speaks of is nothing else but the very same that is written; nothing but to believe in Christ? To which, whether Scripture alone, to them that believe it, be not a sufficient guide, I leave it to you to judge. And are not his words just as if a man should say, If God had not given us the light of the sun, we must have made use of candles and torches; if we had no eyes, we must have felt out our way; if we had no legs, we must have used crutches. And doth not this in effect import, that while we have the sun, we need no candles? While we have our eyes, we need not feel out our way? While we enjoy our legs, we need not crutches? And, by like reason, Irenæus in saying, "If we had no Scripture, we must have followed tradition; and they that have none do well to do so;" doth he not plainly import, that to them that have Scripture and believe it, tradition is unnecessary? which could not be, if the Scripture did not contain evidently the whole tradition. Which whether Irenæus believed or no, these words of his may inform you: *Non enim per aiios*, &c. "We have received the disposition of our salvation from no others, but from them by whom the gospel came unto us. Which gospel truly the apostles first preached, and afterwards by the will of God delivered in writing to us, to be the pillar and foundation of our faith." Upon which place Bellarmine's two observations, and his acknowledgment ensuing upon them, are very considerable, and, as I conceive, as home to my purpose as I could wish them. His first *notandum* is, "That in the Christian doctrine some things are simply necessary for the salvation of all men; as the knowledge of the Articles of the Apostles' Creed; and besides, the knowledge of the Ten Commandments, and some of the sacraments. Other things are not so necessary but that a man may be saved without the explicit knowledge and belief and profession of them." His second note is, "That those things which were simply necessary the apostles were wont to preach to all men; but of other things not all to all, but some things to all; to wit, those things which were profitable for all, other things only to prelates and priests." These things premised, he acknowledgeth, "That all these things were written by the apostles which are necessary for all, and which they were wont to preach to all; but that other things were not all written; and therefore, when Irenæus says, that the apostles wrote what they preached in the world, it is true," saith he, "and not against traditions, because they preached not to the people all things, but only those things which were necessary and profitable for them."

145. So that at the most you can infer from hence but only a suppositive necessity of having an infallible guide, and that grounded upon a false supposition, in case we had no Scripture; but an absolute necessity hereof, and to them who have and believe the Scripture, which is your assumption, cannot with any colour from hence be concluded, but rather the contrary.

146. Neither because, as he says, it was "then easy to receive the truth from God's church," then in the age next after the apostles, then when all the ancient and apostolic churches were at an agreement about the fundamentals of faith, will it therefore follow, that now, one thousand six hundred years after, when the ancient churches are divided almost into as many religions as there are churches, every one being the church to itself; and heretical to all other, that it is as easy, but extremely difficult, or rather impossible, to find the church first independently of the true doctrine, and then to find the truth by the church?

147. As for the last clause of the sentence, it will not any whit advantage, but rather prejudice your assertion. Neither will I seek to avoid the pressure of it, by saying that he speaks of "small questions," and therefore not of questions touching things necessary to salvation, which can hardly be called small questions: but I will favour you so far as to suppose, that saying this of small questions, it is probable he would have said it much more of the great; but I will answer that which is most certain and evident, and which I am confident you yourself, were you as impudent as I believe you modest, would not deny, that

the ancient apostolic churches are not now as they were in Irenæus's time; then they were all at unity about matters of faith, which unity was a good assurance that what they so agreed in came from some one common fountain, and that no other than of apostolic preaching. And this is the very ground of Tertullian's so often mistaken Prescription against Heretics: *Variasse debuerat error ecclesiarum; quod autem apud multos unum est, non est erratum sed traditum:* "If the churches had erred, they could not but have varied; but that which is among so many came not by error, but tradition." But now the case is altered, and the mischief is, that these ancient churches are divided among themselves; and if we have recourse to them, one of them will say, this is the way to heaven, another that. So that now, in place of receiving from them certain and clear truths, we must expect nothing but certain and clear contradictions.

148. Neither will the "apostles' depositing with the church all things belonging to the truth," be any proof that the church shall certainly keep this *depositum* entire and sincere, without adding to it or taking from it; for this whole *depositum* was committed to every particular church, nay, to every particular man which the apostles converted. And yet no man, I think, will say that there was any certainty that it should be kept whole and inviolate by every man and every church. It is apparent out of Scripture it was committed to Timothy, and by him consigned to other faithful men; and yet St. Paul thought it not superfluous earnestly to exhort him to the careful keeping of it: which exhortation you must grant had been vain and superfluous, if the not keeping had been impossible. And therefore though Irenæus says, "the apostles fully deposited in the church all truth," yet he says not, neither can we infer from what he says, that the church should always infallibly keep this *depositum* entire, without the loss of any truth, and sincere, without the mixture of any falsehood.

149. Ad § 25. But you proceed and tell us, "that besides all this, the doctrine of protestants is destructive of itself. For either they have certain and infallible means not to err in interpreting, or not. If not, Scripture to them cannot be a sufficient ground for infallible faith: if they have, and so cannot err in interpreting Scripture, then they are able with infallibility to hear and determine all controversies of faith; and so they may be, and are, judges of controversies, although they use the Scripture as a rule. And thus against their own doctrine they constitute another judge of controversies beside Scripture alone." And may not we with as much reason substitute church and papists instead of Scripture and protestants, and say unto you, besides all this, the doctrine of papists is destructive of itself? For either they have certain and infallible means not to err in the choice of the church and interpreting her decrees, or they have not; if not, then the church to them cannot be a sufficient (but merely a fantastical) ground for infallible faith, nor a meet judge of controversies (for unless I be infallibly sure that the church is infallible, how can I be, upon her authority, infallibly sure that any thing she says is infallible?): if they have certain infallible means, and so cannot err in the choice of their church, and interpreting her decrees, then they are able with infallibility to hear, examine, and determine all controversies of faith, although they pretend to make the church their guide. And thus, against their own doctrine, they constitute another judge of controversies besides the church alone. Nay, every one makes himself a chooser of his own religion, and of his own sense of the church's decrees, which very thing in protestants they so highly condemn; and so in judging others condemn themselves.

150. Neither in saying thus have I only cried quittance with you, but that you may see how much you are in my debt, I will show unto you, that for your sophism against our way I have given you a demonstration against yours. First, I say, your argument against us is a transparent fallacy. The first part of it lies thus: Protestants have no means to interpret, without error, obscure and ambiguous places of Scripture; therefore plain places of Scripture cannot be to them a sufficient ground of faith. But though we pretend not to certain means of not erring in interpreting all Scripture, particularly such places as are obscure and ambiguous, yet this methinks should be no impediment, but that we may have certain means of not erring in and about the sense of those places which are so plain and clear that they need no

interpreters; and in such we say our faith is contained. If you ask me, how I can be sure that I know the true meaning of these places? I ask you again, can you be sure that you understand what I or any man else says? They that heard our Saviour and the apostles preach, could they have sufficient assurance that they understood at any time what they would have them do? If not, to what end did they hear them? If they could, why may we not be as well assured that we understand sufficiently what we conceive plain in their writings?

151. Again, I pray tell us, whether you do certainly know the sense of these Scriptures with which you pretend you are led to the knowledge of your church? If you do not, how know you that there is any church infallible, and that these are the notes of it, and that this is the church that hath these notes? If you do, then give us leave to have the same means and the same abilities to know other plain places which you have to know these. For if all Scripture be obscure, how come you to know the sense of these places? If some places of it be plain, why should we stay here?

152. And now to come to the other part of your dilemma. In saying, "If they have certain means, and so cannot err," methinks you forget yourself very much, and seem to make no difference between having certain means to do a thing, and the actual doing of it. As if you should conclude, because all men have certain means of salvation, therefore all men certainly must be saved, and cannot do otherwise; as if whosoever had a horse, must presently get up and ride; whosoever had means to find out a way, could not neglect those means, and so mistake it. God be thanked that we have sufficient means to be certain enough of the truth of our faith! But the privilege of not being in possibility of erring, that we challenge not, because we have as little reason as you to do so; and you have none at all. If you ask, seeing we may possibly err, how can we be assured we do not? I ask you again, seeing your eyesight may deceive you, how can you be sure you see the sun when you do see it? Perhaps you may be in a dream, and perhaps you, and all the men in the world, have been so, when they thought they were awake, and then only awake when they thought they dreamt. But this I am sure of, as sure as that God is good, that he will require no impossibilities of us: not an infallible, nor a certainly unerring belief, unless he hath given us certain means to avoid error; and if we use those which we have he will never require of us that we use that which we have not.

153. Now from this mistaken ground, That it is all one to have means of avoiding error, and to be in no danger nor possibility of error, you infer upon us an absurd conclusion, "that we make ourselves able to determine controversies of faith with infallibility, and judges of controversies." For the latter part of this inference, we acknowledge and embrace it: we do make ourselves judges of controversies; that is, we do make use of our own understanding in the choice of our religion. But this, if it be a crime, is common to us with you (as I have proved above); and the difference is, not that we are choosers and you not choosers, but that we, as we conceive, choose wisely; but you, being wilfully blind, choose to follow those that are so too, not remembering what our Saviour hath told you, when *the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*. But then again I must tell you, you have done ill to confound together "judges" and "infallible judges;" unless you will say, either that we have no judges in our courts of civil judicature, or that they are all infallible.

154. Thus have we cast off your dilemma, and broken both the horns of it. But now my retortion lies heavy upon you, and will not be turned off. For first you content not yourselves with a moral certainty of the things you believe, nor with such a degree of assurance of them as is sufficient to produce obedience to the condition of the new covenant, which is all that we require. God's Spirit, if he please, may work more, a certainty of adherence beyond a certainty of evidence: but neither God doth, nor man may, require of us, as our duty, to give a greater assent to the conclusion than the premises deserve; to build an infallible faith upon motives that are only highly credible and not infallible, as it were a great and heavy building upon a foundation that hath not strength proportionable. But though God require not of us such

unreasonable things, you do; and tell men they cannot be saved, unless they believe your proposals with an infallible faith. To which end they must believe also your propounder, your church, to be simply infallible. Now how is it possible for them to give a rational assent to the church's infallibility, unless they have some infallible means to know that she is infallible? Neither can they infallibly know the infallibility of this means but by some other, and so on for ever; unless they can dig so deep as to come at length to the rock; that is, to settle all upon something evident of itself, which is not so much as pretended. But the last resolution of all is into motives; which indeed, upon examination, will scarce appear probable, but are not so much as vouched to be any more than very credible. For example, if I ask you, Why you do believe transubstantiation, what can you answer, but because it is a revelation of the prime verity? I demand again, How can you assure yourself or me of that, being ready to embrace it, if it may appear to be so? And what can you say, but that you know it to be so, because the church says so, which is infallible? If I ask, what mean you by your church? you can tell me nothing but the company of Christians which adhere to the pope. I demand then further, why should I believe this company to be the infallible propounder of Divine revelation? And then you tell me, that there are many motives to induce a man to this belief. But are these motives, lastly, infallible? No, say you, but very credible. Well, let them pass for such, because now we have not leisure to examine them. Yet methinks, seeing the motives to believe the church's infallibility are only very credible, it should also be but as credible that your church is infallible; and as credible, and no more, perhaps somewhat less, that her proposals, particularly transubstantiation, are Divine revelations. And methinks you should require only a moral and modest assent to them, and not a Divine, as you call it, and infallible faith. But then of these motives to the church's infallibility, I hope you will give us leave to consider and judge whether they be indeed motives, and sufficient; or whether they be not motives at all, or not sufficient; or whether these motives or inducements to your church be not impeached, and opposed with compulsives and enforcements from it; or lastly, whether these motives which you use be not indeed only motives to Christianity, and not to popery; give me leave, for distinction' sake, to call your religion so. If we may not judge of these things, how can my judgment be moved with that which comes not within its cognizance? If I may, then at least I am to be a judge of all these controversies: 1. Whether every one of these motives be indeed a motive to any church? 2. If to some, whether to yours? 3. If to yours, whether sufficient or insufficient? 4. Whether other societies have not as many and as great motives to draw me to them? 5. Whether I have not greater reason to believe you do err, than that you cannot? And now, sir, I pray let me trouble you with a few more questions. Am I a sufficient judge of these controversies or no? If of these, why shall I stay here, why not of others, why not of all? Nay, doth not the true examining of these few contain and lay upon me the examination of all? What other motives to your church have you, but your notes of it? Bellarmine gives some fourteen or fifteen. And one of these fifteen contains in it the examination of all controversies; and not only so, but of all uncontroverted doctrines. For how shall I, or can I, "know the church of Rome's conformity with the ancient church," unless I know first what the ancient church did hold, and then what the church of Rome doth hold? And, lastly, whether they be conformable, or if in my judgment they seem not conformable, I am then to think the church of Rome not to be the church, for want of the note, which she pretends is proper and perpetual to it? So that, for aught I can see, judges we are and must be of all sides, every one for himself, and God for us all.

155. Ad § 26. I answer: This assertion, that "Scripture alone to judge of all controversies in faith," if it be taken properly, is neither a fundamental nor unfundamental point of faith, nor no point of faith at all, but a plain falsehood. It is not a judge of controversies, but a rule to judge them by; and that not an absolutely perfect rule, but as perfect as a written rule can be; which must always need something else, which is either evidently true, or evidently credible, to give attestation to it, and that in this case is universal tradition. So that universal tradition is the rule to judge all controversies by. But then, because

nothing besides Scripture comes to us with as full a stream of tradition as Scripture, Scripture alone, and no unwritten doctrine, nor no infallibility of any church, having attestation from tradition truly universal; for this reason we conceive, as the apostles' persons, while they were living, were the only judges of controversies, so their writings, now they are dead, are the only rule for us to judge them by; there being nothing unwritten, which can go in upon half so fair cards for the title of apostolic tradition as these things, which by the confession of both sides are not so; I mean, the doctrine of the millenaries, and of the necessity of the eucharist for infants.

156. Yet when we say the Scripture is the only rule to judge all controversies by, methinks you should easily conceive, that we would be understood of all those that are possible to be judged by Scripture, and of those that arise among such as believe the Scripture. For if I had a controversy with an atheist, whether there was a God or no, I would not say that the Scripture were a rule to judge this by; seeing that, doubting whether there be a God or no, he must needs doubt whether the Scripture be the word of God; or if he does not, he grants the question, and is not the man we speak of. So likewise, if I had a controversy about the truth of Christ with a Jew, it would be vainly done of me, should I press him with the authority of the New Testament, which he believes not till out of some principles, common to us both, I had persuaded him that it is the word of God. The New Testament, therefore, while he remains a Jew, would not be a fit rule to decide this controversy, inasmuch as that which is doubted of itself is not fit to determine other doubts. So, likewise, if there were any that believed the Christian religion, and yet believed not the Bible to be the word of God, though they believed the matter of it to be true (which is no impossible supposition; for I may believe a book of St. Austin's to contain nothing but the truth of God, and yet not to have been inspired by God himself); against such men therefore there were no disputing out of the Bible, because nothing in question can be a proof to itself. When therefore we say, Scripture is a sufficient means to determine all controversies, we say not this either to atheists, Jews, Turks, or such Christians (if there be any such) as believe not Scripture to be the word of God; but among such men only as are already agreed upon this, that "the Scripture is the word of God," we say, all controversies that arise about faith are either not at all decidable, and consequently not necessary to be believed one way or other, or they may be determined by Scripture. In a word, that all things necessary to be believed are evidently contained in Scripture, and what is not there evidently contained cannot be necessary to be believed. And our reason hereof is convincing, because nothing can challenge our belief but what hath descended to us from Christ by original and universal tradition. Now nothing but Scripture hath thus descended to us, therefore nothing but Scripture can challenge our belief. Now then, to come up closer to you, and to answer to your question, not as you put it, but as you should have put it; I say, that this position, "Scripture alone is the rule whereby they which believe it to be God's word are to judge all controversies in faith," is no fundamental point; though not for your reasons: for your first and strongest reason, you see, is plainly voided and cut off by my stating of the question as I have done, and supposing in it that the parties at variance are agreed about this, that the Scripture is the word of God: and consequently that this is none of their controversies. To your second, that "controversies cannot be ended without some living authority," we have said already, that necessary controversies may be and are decided; and if they be not ended, this is not through defect of the rule, but through the default of men. And for those that cannot thus be ended, it is not necessary they should be ended; for if God did require the ending of them, he would have provided some certain means for the ending of them. And to your third, I say, that your pretence of using these means is but hypocritical; for you use them with prejudice, and with a settled resolution not to believe any thing which these means happily may suggest unto you, if it any way cross your preconceived persuasion of your church's infallibility. You give not yourselves liberty of judgment in the use of them, nor suffer yourselves to be led by them to the truth, to which they would lead you, would you be but as willing to believe this consequence—Our church doth oppose Scripture, therefore it doth

err, therefore it is not infallible; as you are resolute to believe this—The church is infallible, therefore it doth not err, and therefore it doth not oppose Scripture, though it seem to do so never so plainly.

157. You pray, but it is not that God would bring you to the true religion, but that he would confirm you in your own. You confer places, but it is that you may confirm or colour over with plausible disguises your erroneous doctrines; not that you may judge of them, and forsake them, if there be reason for it. You consult the originals, but you regard them not when they make against your doctrine or translation.

158. You add, not only the authority, but the infallibility, not of God's church, but of the Roman, a very corrupt and degenerous part of it; whereof Dr. Potter never confessed, that it cannot err damnably: and which, being a company made up of particular men, can afford you no help, but the industry, learning, and wit of private men; and, that these helps may not help you out of your error, tell you, that you must make use of none of all these to discover any error in the church, but only to maintain her impossibility of erring. And, lastly, Dr. Potter assures himself, that your doctrine and practices are damnable enough in themselves; only he hopes (and *spes est rei incertæ nomen*), he hopes, I say, that the truths which you retain, especially the necessity of repentance and faith in Christ, will be as an antidote to you against the errors which you maintain; and that your superstruction may burn, yet they amongst you *qui sequuntur Absalonem in simplicitate cordis* may be saved, *yet so as by fire*. Yet his thinking so is no reason for you or me to think so, unless you suppose him infallible; and if you do, why do you write against him?

159. Notwithstanding, though not for these reasons, yet for others, I conceive this doctrine not fundamental; because if a man should believe Christian religion wholly and entirely, and live according to it, such a man, though he should not know or not believe the Scripture to be a rule of faith, no, nor to be the word of God, my opinion is, he may be saved; and my reason is, because he performs the entire condition of the new covenant, which is, that we believe the matter of the gospel, and not that it is contained in these or these books. So that the books of Scripture are not so much the objects of our faith, as the instruments of conveying it to our understanding; and not so much of the being of the Christian doctrine, as requisite to the well-being of it. Irenæus tells us (as M. K. acknowledgeth) of some barbarous nations that "believed the doctrines of Christ, and yet believed not the Scripture to be the word of God; for they never heard of it, and faith comes by hearing." But these barbarous people might be saved: therefore men might be saved without believing the Scripture to be the word of God; much more without believing it to be a rule, and a perfect rule of faith. Neither doubt I, but if the books of Scripture had been proposed to them by the other parts of the church, where they had been before received, and had been doubted of, or even rejected by those barbarous nations, but still by the bare belief and practice of Christianity they might be saved; God requiring of us, under pain of damnation, only to believe the verities therein contained, and not the Divine authority of the books wherein they are contained. Not but that it were now very strange and unreasonable, if a man should believe the matter of these books, and not the authority of the books: and therefore, if a man should profess the not-believing of these, I should have reason to fear he did not believe that. But there is not always an equal necessity for the belief of those things, for the belief whereof there is an equal reason. We have, I believe, as great reason to believe there was such a man as Henry the Eighth, King of England, as that Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate; yet this is necessary to be believed, and that is not so. So that if any man should doubt of or disbelieve that, it were most unreasonably done of him, yet it were no mortal sin, nor no sin at all; God having no where commanded men under pain of damnation to believe all which reason induceth them to believe. Therefore, as an executor that should perform the whole will of the dead should fully satisfy the law, though he did not believe that parchment to be his written will which indeed is so; so I believe, that he who believes all the particular doctrines which integrate Christianity, and lives according to them,

should be saved, though he neither believed nor knew that the Gospels were written by the evangelists, or the Epistles by the apostles.

160. This discourse, whether it be rational and concluding or no, I submit to better judgment; but sure I am, that the corollary which you draw from this position, that this point is not fundamental, is very inconsequent; that is, that we are uncertain of the truth of it, because we say, the whole church, much more particular churches and private men, may err in points not fundamental. A pretty sophism, depending upon this principle; that whosoever possibly may err, he cannot be certain that he doth not err! And upon this ground, what shall hinder me from concluding, that seeing you also hold, that neither particular churches nor private men are infallible even in fundamentals, that even the fundamentals of Christianity remain to you uncertain? A judge may possibly err in judgment; can he therefore never have assurance that he hath judged right? A traveller may possibly mistake his way; must I therefore be doubtful whether I am in the right way from my hall to my chamber? Or can our London carrier have no certainty, in the middle of the day, when he is sober and in his wits, that he is in the way to London? These, you see, are right worthy consequences, and yet they are as like your own, as an egg to an egg, or milk to milk.

161. And "for the selfsame reason," you say, "we are not certain that the church is not judge of controversies." But now this selfsame appears to be no reason; and therefore, for all this, we may be certain enough that the church is no judge of controversies. The ground of this sophism is very like the former, viz., that we can be certain of the falsehood of no propositions but these only, which are damnable errors. But I pray, good sir, give me your opinion of these: the snow is black—the fire is cold—that M. Knot is archbishop of Toledo—that the whole is not greater than a part of the whole—that twice two make not four: in your opinion, good sir, are these damnable heresies, or, because they are not so, have we no certainty of the falsehood of them? I beseech you, sir, to consider seriously with what strange captions you have gone about to delude your king and your country; and if you be convinced they are so, give glory to God, and let the world know it by your deserting that religion which stands upon such deceitful foundations.

162. "Besides," you say, "among public conclusions defended in Oxford the year 1633, to the questions, 'whether the church have authority to determine controversies of faith,' and 'to interpret Holy Scripture?' the answer to both is affirmative." But what now, if I should tell you, that in the year 1632, among public conclusions defended in Doway, one was, that God predeterminates men to all their actions, good, bad, and indifferent? will you think yourself obliged to be of this opinion? If you will, say so: if not, do as you would be done by. Again, methinks so subtle a man as you are should easily apprehend a wide difference between authority to do a thing, and infallibility in doing it; and again, between a conditional infallibility and an absolute. The former, the doctor, together with the Article of the church of England, attributeth to the church, nay, to particular churches, and I subscribe to his opinion; that is, an authority of determining controversies of faith according to plain and evident Scripture and universal tradition, and infallibility while they proceed according to this rule. As if there should arise a heretic that should call in question Christ's passion and resurrection, the church had authority to decide this controversy, and infallible direction how to do it, and to excommunicate this man if he should persist in error. I hope you will not deny but that the judges have authority to determine criminal and civil controversies, and yet I hope you will not say that they are absolutely infallible in their determinations: infallible while they proceed according to law, and if they do so; but not infallibly certain that they shall ever do so. But that the church should be infallibly assisted by God's spirit to decide rightly all emergent controversies, even such as might be held diversely of divers men, *salva compage fidei*, and that we might be absolutely certain that the church should never fail to decree the truth, whether she used means or no, whether she proceed according to her rule or not; or, lastly, that we might be absolutely certain that

she should never fail to proceed according to her rule; this the defender of these conclusions said not; and therefore said no more to your purpose than you have all this while, that is, just nothing.

163. Ad § 27. To the place of St. Austin alleged in this paragraph, I answer, first, that in many things you will not be tried by St. Austin's judgment, nor submit to his authority; not concerning appeals to Rome; not concerning transubstantiation; not touching the use and worshipping of images; not concerning the state of saints' souls before the day of judgment; not touching the Virgin Mary's freedom from actual and original sin; not touching the necessity of the eucharist for infants; not touching the damning infants to hell that die without baptism; not touching the knowledge of saints departed; not touching purgatory; not touching the fallibility of councils, even general councils; not touching perfection and perspicuity in Scriptures in matters necessary to salvation; not touching auricular confession; not touching the half-communion; not touching prayers in an unknown tongue: in these things, I say, you will not stand to St. Austin's judgment, and therefore can with no reason or equity require us to do so in this matter. To St. Austin in heat of disputation against the Donatists, and ransacking all places for arguments against them, we oppose St. Austin out of this heat, delivering the doctrine of Christianity calmly and moderately, where he says, *In iss quæ aperte posita sunt in sacris scripturis, omnia ea reperiuntur quæ continent fidem, moresque vivendi*. 3. We say, he speaks not of the Roman, but the catholic church, of far greater extent, and therefore of far greater credit and authority than the Roman church. 4. He speaks of a point not expressed, but yet not contradicted by Scripture. 5. He says not, that Christ hath recommended the church to us for "an infallible definer of all emergent controversies," but for a "credible witness of ancient tradition." Whosoever therefore refuseth to follow the practice of the church (understand of all places and ages), though he be thought to resist our Saviour, what is that to us, who cast off no practices of the church but such as are evidently postnate to the time of the apostles, and plainly contrary to the practice of former and purer times. Lastly, it is evident, and even to impudence itself undeniable, that upon this ground, "of believing all things taught by the present church as taught by Christ," error was held, for example, "the necessity of the eucharist for infants," and that in St. Austin's time, and that by St. Austin himself; and therefore without controversy this is no certain ground for truth, which may support falsehood as well as truth.

164. To the argument wherewith you conclude, I answer, that though the visible church shall always without fail propose so much of God's revelation as is sufficient to bring men to heaven, for otherwise it will not be the visible church; yet it may sometimes add to this revelation things superfluous, nay hurtful, nay in themselves damnable, though not unpardonable; and sometimes take from it things very expedient and profitable; and therefore it is possible, without sin, to resist in some things the visible church of Christ. But you press us further, and demand, "what visible church was extant, when Luther began, whether it were the Roman or protestant church?" As if it must of necessity either be protestant or Roman; or Roman of necessity if it were not protestant. Yet this is the most usual fallacy of all your disputers, by some specious arguments to persuade weak men that the church of protestants cannot be the true church; and thence to infer, that without doubt it must be the Roman. But why may not the Roman be content to be a part of it, and the Grecian another? And if one must be the whole, why not the Greek church as well as the Roman? there being not one note of your church which agrees not to her as well as to your own, unless it be that she is poor and oppressed by the Turk, and you are in glory and splendour.

165. Neither is it so easy to be determined as you pretend, "that Luther and other protestants opposed the whole visible church in matters of faith;" neither is it so evident that "the visible church may not fall into such a state wherein she may be justly opposed." And lastly, for calling the distinction of points into fundamental and not fundamental an evasion, I believe you will find it easier to call it so than to prove it so. But that shall be the issue of the controversy in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

That the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental is neither pertinent nor true in our present controversy; and that the catholic visible church cannot err in either kind of the said points.

"THIS distinction is abused by protestants to many purposes of theirs; and therefore if it be either untrue or impertinent (as they understand and apply it), the whole edifice built thereon must be ruinous and false. For if you object their bitter and continued discords in matters of faith, without any means of agreement; they instantly tell you (as Charity Mistaken plainly shows), that they differ only in points not fundamental. If you convince them, even by their own confessions, that the ancient fathers taught divers points held by the Roman church against protestants; they reply, that those fathers may nevertheless be saved, because those errors were not fundamental. If you will them to remember that Christ must alway have a visible church on earth, with administration of sacraments and succession of pastors, and that when Luther appeared there was no church distinct from the Roman, whose communion and doctrine Luther then forsook, and for that cause must be guilty of schism and heresy; they have an answer (such as it is), that the catholic church cannot perish, yet may err in points not fundamental, and therefore Luther and other protestants were obliged to forsake her for such errors under pain of damnation: as if, forsooth, it were damnable to hold an error not fundamental nor damnable. If you wonder how they can teach that both catholics and protestants may be saved in their several professions; they salve this contradiction by saying, that we both agree in all fundamental points of faith, which is enough for salvation. And yet, which is prodigiously strange, they could never be induced to give a catalogue what points in particular be fundamental, but only by some general description, or by referring us to the Apostles' Creed, without determining what points therein be fundamental or not fundamental for the matter; and in what sense they be or be not such: and yet concerning the meaning of divers points contained in or reduced to the Creed, they differ both from us and among themselves. And indeed it being impossible for them to exhibit any such catalogue, the said distinction of points, although it were pertinent and true, cannot serve them to any purpose, but still they must remain uncertain whether or no they disagree from one another, from the ancient fathers, and from the catholic church, in points fundamental; which is to say, they have no certainty whether they enjoy the substance of Christian faith, without which they cannot hope to be saved. But of this more hereafter.

2. "And to the end that what shall be said concerning this distinction may be better understood, we are to observe, that there be two precepts which concern the virtue of faith, or our obligation to believe divine truths. The one is by divines called *affirmative*, whereby we are obliged to have a positive explicit belief of some chief articles of Christian faith; the other is termed *negative*, which strictly binds us not to disbelieve, that is, not to believe the contrary of any one point sufficiently represented to our understandings, as revealed or spoken by Almighty God. The said affirmative precept (according to the nature of such commands) enjoins some act to be performed, but not at all times, nor doth it equally bind all sorts of persons in respect of all objects to be believed. For *objects;* we grant that some are more necessary to be explicitly and severally believed than other; either because they are in themselves more great and weighty, or else in regard they instruct us in some necessary Christian duty towards God, ourselves, or our neighbour. For *persons;* no doubt but some are obliged to know distinctly more than others, by reason of their office, vocation, capacity, or the like. For *times;* we are not obliged to be still in act of exercising acts of faith, but according as several occasions permit or require. The second kind of precept, called *negative*, doth (according to the nature of all such commands) oblige universally all persons, in respect of all objects, and at all times, *semper et pro semper*, as divines speak. This general doctrine will be more clear

by examples: I am not obliged to be always helping my neighbour, because the affirmative precept of charity bindeth only in some particular cases; but I am always bound, by a negative precept, never to do him any hurt or wrong. I am not always bound to utter what I know to be true; yet I am obliged never to speak any one least untruth against my knowledge. And (to come to our present purpose) there is no affirmative precept, commanding us to be at all times actually believing any one or all articles of faith; but we are obliged never to exercise any act against any one truth known to be revealed. All sorts of persons are not bound explicitly and distinctly to know all things testified by God either in Scripture or otherwise; but every one is obliged not to believe the contrary of any one point known to be testified by God. For that were in fact to affirm, that God could be deceived, or would deceive; which were to overthrow the whole certainty of our faith wherein the thing most principal is not the point which we believe, which divines call the *material object*, but the chiefest is the motive for which we believe, to wit, Almighty God's infallible revelation or authority, which they term the *formal object* of our faith. In two senses, therefore, and with a double relation, points of faith may be called fundamental, and necessary to salvation; the one is taken with reference to the affirmative precept, when the points are of such quality that there is obligation to know and believe them explicitly and severally. In this sense we grant that there is difference betwixt points of faith, which Dr. Potter to no purpose laboureth to prove against his adversary, who in express words doth grant and explicate it. But the doctor thought good to dissemble the matter, and not to say one pertinent word in defence of his distinction, as it was impugned by Charity Mistaken, and as it is wont to be applied by protestants. The other sense, according to which points of faith may be called fundamental, and necessary to salvation, with reference to the negative precept of faith, is such, that we cannot, without grievous sin and forfeiture of salvation, disbelieve any one point, sufficiently propounded, as revealed by Almighty God. And in this sense we avouch that there is no distinction in points of faith, as if to reject some must be damnable, and to reject others, equally proposed as God's word, might stand with salvation. Yea, the obligation of the negative precept is for more strict than is that of the affirmative, which God freely imposed and may freely release. But it is impossible that he can dispense, or give leave to disbelieve or deny what he affirmeth; and in this sense sin and damnation are more inseparable from error in points not fundamental, than from ignorance in articles fundamental. All this I show by an example, which I wish to be particularly noted for the present, and for divers other occasions hereafter. The Creed of the Apostles contains divers fundamental points of faith, as the Deity, trinity of persons, the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of our Saviour Christ, &c. It contains also some points, for their matter and nature, in themselves not fundamental: as under what judge our Saviour suffered; that he was buried; the circumstance of the time of his resurrection the third day, &c. But yet nevertheless whosoever once knows that these points are contained in the Apostles' Creed, the denial of them is damnable, and is in that sense a fundamental error: and this is the precise point of the present question.

3. "And all that hitherto hath been said is so manifestly true, that no protestant or Christian, if he do but understand the terms and state of the question, can possibly deny it; insomuch, as I am amazed that men, who otherwise are endued with excellent wits, should so enslave themselves to their predecessors in protestantism, as still to harp on this distinction, and never regard how impertinently and untruly it was employed by them at first, to make all protestants seem to be of one faith, because, forsooth, they agree in fundamental points. For the difference amongst protestants consists not in that some believe some points, of which others are ignorant, or not bound expressly to know (as the distinction ought to be applied); but that some of them disbelieve, and directly, wittingly, and willingly oppose what others do believe to be testified by the word of God, wherein there is no difference between points fundamental and not fundamental; because, till points fundamental be sufficiently proposed as revealed by God, it is not against faith to reject them, or rather, without sufficient proposition it is not possible prudently to believe them; and the like is of points not fundamental, which as soon as they come to be sufficiently propounded

as Divine truths, they can no more be denied than points fundamental propounded after the same manner; neither will it avail them to their other end, that for preservation of the church in being, it is sufficient that she do not err in points fundamental. For if in the mean time she maintain any one error against God's revelation, be the thing in itself never so small, her error is damnable, and destructive of salvation.

4. "But D. Potter forgetting to what purpose protestants make use of their distinction, doth finally overthrow it, and yields to as much as we can desire. For, speaking of that measure and quantity of faith without which none can be saved, he saith, 'it is enough to believe some things by a virtual faith, or by a general, and as it were a negative faith, whereby they are not denied or contradicted.' Now our question is, in case that Divine truths, although not fundamental, be denied and contradicted; and therefore, even according to him, all such denial excludes salvation. After, he speaks more plainly. 'It is true,' saith he, 'whatsoever is revealed in Scripture, or propounded by the church out of Scripture, is in some sense fundamental, in regard of the Divine authority of God and his word, by which it is recommended; that is, such as may not be denied or contradicted without infidelity; such as every Christian is bound, with humility and reverence, to believe, whensoever the knowledge thereof is offered to him.' And further, where the revealed will or word of God is sufficiently propounded, there he that opposeth is convinced of error, and he who is thus convinced is a heretic, and heresy is a work of the flesh which excludeth from heaven [Gal. v. 20, 21]: and hence it followeth, that it is fundamental to a Christian's faith, and necessary for his salvation, that he believe all revealed truths of God, whereof he may be convinced that they are from God.' Can anything be spoken more clearly or directly for us, that it is a fundamental error to deny any one point, though never so small, if once it be sufficiently propounded as a Divine truth, and that there is in this sense no distinction betwixt points fundamental and not fundamental? And if any should chance to imagine that it is against the foundation of faith not to believe points fundamental, although they be not sufficiently propounded, D. Potter doth not admit of this difference betwixt points fundamental and not fundamental: for he teacheth, that 'sufficient proposition of revealed truth is required before a man can be convinced;' and for want of sufficient conviction, he excuseth the disciples from heresy, although they believed not our Saviour's resurrection, which is a very fundamental point of faith. Thus then I argue out of D. Potter's own confession: No error is damnable, unless the contrary truth be sufficiently propounded as revealed by God; every error is damnable, if the contrary truth be sufficiently propounded as revealed by God; therefore all errors are alike for the general effect of damnation, if the difference arise not from the manner of being propounded. And what now has become of their distinction?

5. "I will therefore conclude with this argument: according to all philosophy and divinity, the unity and distinction of every thing followeth the nature and essence thereof; and therefore if the nature and being of faith be not taken from the matter which a man believes, but from the motive for which he believes (which is God's word or revelation), we must likewise affirm, that the unity and diversity of faith must be measured by God's revelation (which is alike for all objects), and not by the smallness or greatness of the matter which we believe. Now, that the nature of faith is not taken from the greatness or smallness of the things believed, is manifest; because otherwise one who believes only fundamental points, and another, who together with them doth also believe points not fundamental, should have faith of different natures; yea, there should be as many differences of faith, as there are different points which men believe, according to different capacities or instructions, &c.; all which consequences are absurd; and therefore we must say, that unity in faith doth not depend upon points fundamental or not fundamental, but upon God's revelation equally or unequally proposed; and protestants pretending an unity only by reason of their agreement in fundamental points, do indeed induce as great a multiplicity of faith as there is multitude of different objects which are believed by them; and since they disagree in things equally

revealed by Almighty God, it is evident that they forsake the very formal motive of faith, which is God's revelation, and consequently lose all faith and unity therein.

6. "The first part of the title of this chapter ('that the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental, in the sense of protestants, is both impertinent and untrue,') being demonstrated, let us now come to the second; 'that the church is infallible in all her definitions, whether they concern points fundamental or not fundamental. And this I prove by these reasons:

7. "It hath been showed in the precedent chapter, that the church is judge of controversies in religion; which she could not be, if she could err in any one point; as Dr. Potter would not deny, if he were once persuaded that she is judge: because, if she could err in some points, we could not rely upon her authority and judgment in any one thing.

8. "This same is proved by the reason we alleged before; that seeing the church was infallible in all her definitions ere Scripture was written (unless we will take away all certainty of faith for that time), we cannot with any show of reason affirm, that she hath been deprived thereof by the adjoined comfort and help of sacred writ.

9. "Moreover, to say that the catholic church may propose any false doctrine, maketh her liable to damnable sin and error; and yet Dr. Potter teacheth, that the church cannot err damnably. For if in that kind of oath which divines call *assertorium*, wherein God is called to witness, every falsehood is a deadly sin in any private person whatsoever, although the thing be of itself neither material nor prejudicial to any; because the quantity or greatness of that sin is not measured so much by the thing which is affirmed, as by the manner and authority whereby it is avouched, and by the injury that is offered to Almighty God, in applying his testimony to a falsehood: in which respect it is the unanimous consent of all divines, that in such kinds of oaths, no *levitas materiæ,* that is, smallness of matter, can excuse from a mortal sacrilege against the moral virtue of religion, which respects worship due to God: if, I say, every least falsehood be deadly sin in the foresaid kind of oath, much more pernicious a sin must it be in the public person of the catholic church to propound untrue articles of faith, thereby fastening God's prime verity to falsehood, and inducing and obliging the world to do the same. Besides, according to the doctrine of all divines, it is not only injurious to God's eternal verity to disbelieve things by him revealed, but also to propose as revealed truths things not revealed; as in commonwealths it is a heinous offence to coin either by counterfeiting the metal or the stamp, or to apply the king's seal to a writing counterfeit, although the contents were supposed to be true. And whereas, to show the detestable sin of such pernicious fictions, the church doth most exemplarily punish all broachers of feigned revelations, visions, miracles, prophecies, &c., as in particular appeareth in the council of Lateran, excommunicating such persons: if the church herself could propose false revelations, she herself should have been the first and chiefest deserver to have been censured, and as it were excommunicated by herself. For, as the Holy Ghost saith in Job, *Doth God need your lie, that for him you may speak deceits?* And that of the Apocalypse is most truly verified in fictitious revelations: *If any shall add to these things, God will add unto him the plagues which are written in this book*. And Dr. Potter saith, to 'add to it (speaking of the Creed), is high presumption, almost as great as to detract from it.' And therefore to say the church may add false revelations, is to accuse her of high presumption and of pernicious error, excluding salvation.

10. "Perhaps some will here reply, that although the church may err, yet it is not imputed to her for sin, by reason she doth not err upon malice or wittingly, but by ignorance or mistake.

11. "But it is easily demonstrated that this excuse cannot serve; for if the church be assisted only for points fundamental, she cannot but know that she may err in points not fundamental, at least she cannot be certain that she cannot err, and therefore cannot be excused from headlong and pernicious temerity, in proposing points not fundamental to be believed by Christians as matters of faith, wherein she can have no certainty, yea, which always imply a falsehood and error, and in fact doth always err in the manner in

which she doth propound any matter not fundamental; because she proposeth it as a point of faith certainly true, which yet is always uncertain if she in such things may be deceived.

12. "Besides, if the church may err in points not fundamental, she may err in proposing some scripture for canonical which is not such; or else err in keeping and conserving from corruptions such scriptures as are already believed to be canonical. For I will suppose, that in such apocryphal scripture as she delivers, there is no fundamental error against faith, or that there is no falsehood at all, but only want of divine testification: in which case Dr. Potter must either grant that it is a fundamental error to apply Divine revelation to any point not revealed, or else must yield that the church may err in her proposition or custody of the canon of Scripture: and so we cannot be sure, whether she hath not been deceived already in books recommended by her, and accepted by Christians. And thus we shall have no certainty of Scripture, if the church want certainty in all her definitions: and it is worthy to be observed, that some books of Scripture, which were not always known to be canonical, have been afterwards received for such; but never any one book or syllable defined by the church to be canonical was afterward questioned or rejected for apocryphal: a sign that God's church is infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost never to propose as Divine truth any thing not revealed by God; and, that omission to define points not sufficiently discussed is laudable; but commission in propounding things not revealed inexcusable: into which precipitation our Saviour Christ never hath, nor never will permit his church to fall.

13. "Nay, to limit the general promises of our Saviour Christ made to his church to points only fundamental; namely, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against her;* and that *the Holy Ghost shall lead her into all truth,* &c., is to destroy all faith. For we may, by that doctrine and manner of interpreting the Scripture, limit the infallibility of the apostles' words and preaching only to points fundamental: and whatsoever general texts of Scripture shall be alleged for their infallibility, they may, by Dr. Potter's example, be explicated and restrained to points fundamental. By the same reason it may be further affirmed, that the apostles, and other writers of canonical Scripture, were endued with infallibility only in setting down points fundamental. For if it be urged, that 'all Scripture is divinely inspired;' that 'it is the word of God,' &c.; Dr. Potter hath afforded you a ready answer, to say that 'Scripture is inspired,' &c., only in those parts or parcels wherein it delivereth fundamental points. In this manner Dr. Fotherby saith, 'The apostle twice in one chapter professed, *that this he speaketh, and not the Lord:* he is very well content that where he wants the warrant of the express word of God, that part of his writings should be esteemed as the word of man.' Dr. Potter also speaks very dangerously towards this purpose, § 5, where he endeavoureth to prove that the infallibility of the church is limited to points fundamental, because 'as nature, so God is neither defective in necessaries, nor lavish in superfluities. Which reason doth likewise prove, that the infallibility of Scripture and of the apostles must be restrained to points necessary to salvation, that so God be not accused 'as defective in necessaries, or lavish in superfluities.' In the same place he hath a discourse much tending to this purpose; where, speaking of these words, *The Spirit shall lead you into all truth, and shall abide with you for ever*, he saith, 'Though that promise was directly and primarily made to the apostles (who had the Spirit's guidance in a more high and absolute manner than any since them), yet it was made to them for the behoof of the church, and is verified in the church universal. But all truth is not simply all, but all of some kind. To be led into all truths is to know and believe them. And who is so simple, as to be ignorant that there are many millions of truths (in nature, history, divinity) whereof the church is simply ignorant? How many truths lie unrevealed in the infinite treasure of God's wisdom, wherewith the church is not acquainted! &c. So then the truth itself enforceth us to understand by *all truths* not simply all, not all which God can possibly reveal, but all pertaining to the substance of faith, all truth absolutely necessary to salvation.' Mark what he saith: 'That promise (*the Spirit shall lead you into all truth*) was made directly to the apostles, and is verified in the universal church; but by *all truth* is not understood simply all, but all appertaining to the substance of faith, and absolutely

necessary to salvation.' Doth it not hence follow, that the promise made to the apostles, of being *led into all truth* is to be understood only of all truth absolutely necessary to salvation; and consequently their preaching and writing were not infallible in points not fundamental? Or if the apostles were infallible in all things which they proposed as Divine truth, the like must be affirmed of the church, because Dr. Potter teacheth the said promise to be verified in the church. And as he limits the aforesaid words to points fundamental, so may he restrain what other text soever that can be brought for the universal infallibility of the apostles or Scriptures; so he may, and so he must, lest otherwise he receive this answer of his own from himself: 'How many truths lie unrevealed in the infinite treasure of God's wisdom, wherewith the church is not acquainted!' And therefore, to verify such general sayings, they must be understood of truths absolutely necessary to salvation. Are not these fearful consequences? And yet Dr. Potter will never be able to avoid them, till he come to acknowledge the infallibility of the church in all points by her proposed as Divine truths: and thus it is universally true, that she is *led into all truth*, in regard that our Saviour never permits her to define or teach any falsehood.

14. "All that with any colour may be replied to this argument, is, That if once we call any one book or parcel of Scripture in question, although for the matter it contains no fundamental error, yet it is of great importance, and fundamental, by reason of the consequence; because if once we doubt of one book received for canonical, the whole canon is made doubtful and uncertain, and therefore the infallibility of Scripture must be universal, and not confined within compass of points fundamental.

15. "I answer: for the thing itself it is very true, that if I doubt of any one parcel of Scripture received for such, I may doubt of all and thence by the same parity I infer, that if we doubt of the church's infallibility in some points, we could not believe her in any one, and consequently not in propounding canonical books, or any other points fundamental or not fundamental: which thing being most absurd, and withal most impious, we must take away the ground thereof, and believe that she cannot err in any point great or small: and so this reply doth much more strengthen what we intend to prove. Yet I add, that protestants cannot make use of this reply with any good coherence to this their distinction and some other doctrines which they defend. For if Dr. Potter can tell what points in particular be fundamental (as in his 7th § he pretendeth), then he might be sure, that whensoever he meets with such points in Scripture, in them it is infallibly true, although it may err in others; and not only true, but clear, because protestants teach that in matters necessary to salvation the Scripture is so clear, that all such necessary truths are either manifestly contained therein, or may be clearly deduced from it. Which doctrines being put together, to wit, that Scriptures cannot err in points fundamental; that they clearly contain all such points, and that they can tell what points in particular be such, I mean fundamental; it is manifest that it is sufficient for salvation, that Scripture be infallible only in points fundamental; for supposing these doctrines of theirs to be true, they may be sure to find in Scripture all points necessary to salvation, although it were fallible in other points of less moment: neither will they be able to avoid this impiety against Holy Scripture, till they renounce their other doctrines, and in particular, till they believe that Christ's promises to his church are not limited to points fundamental.

16. "Besides, from the fallibility of Christ's catholic church in some points, it followeth, that no true protestant, learned or unlearned, doth or can with assurance believe the universal church in any one point of doctrine: not in points of lesser moment, which they call not fundamental, because they believe that in such points she may err: not in fundamental, because they must know what points be fundamental before they go to learn of her, lest otherwise they be rather deluded than instructed, in regard that her certain and infallible direction extends only to points fundamental. Now if before they address themselves to the church they must know what points are fundamental, they learn not of her, but will be as fit to teach as to be taught by her: how then are all Christians so often, so seriously, upon so dreadful menaces, by fathers, Scriptures, and our blessed Saviour himself, counselled and commanded to seek, to hear, to

obey the church? St. Austin was of a very different mind from protestants: 'If,' saith he, 'the church through the whole world practise any of these things, to dispute whether that ought to be so done is a most insolent madness.' And in another place he saith, 'That which the whole church holds, and is not ordained by councils, but hath always been kept, is most rightly believed to be delivered by apostolical authority.' The same holy father teacheth, that the custom of baptizing children cannot be proved by Scripture alone, and yet that it is to be believed, as derived from the apostles. 'The custom of our mother the church,' saith he, 'in baptizing infants, is in no wise to be condemned, nor to be accounted superfluous, nor is it at all to be believed, unless it were an apostolical tradition.' And elsewhere: 'Christ is of profit to children baptized: is he therefore of profit to persons not believing? But God forbid that I should say infants do not believe. I have already said, he believes in another, who sinned in another. It is said he believes, and it is of force, and he is reckoned among the faithful that are baptized. This is the authority our mother the church hath; against this strength, against this invincible wall, whosoever rusheth shall be crushed in pieces.' To this argument the protestants, in the conference at Ratisbon, gave this round answer:—*Nos hab Augustino hac in parte libere dissentimus:* 'In this we plainly disagree from Augustin.' Now if this doctrine of baptizing infants be not fundamental in Dr. Potter's sense, then, according to St. Augustin, the infallibility of the church extends to points not fundamental. But if, on the other side, it be a fundamental point, then, according to the same holy doctor, we must rely upon the authority of the church for some fundamental point not contained in Scripture, but delivered by tradition. The like argument I frame out of the same father, about the not rebaptizing of those who were baptized by heretics, whereof he excellently, to our present purpose, speaketh in this manner: 'We follow, indeed, in this matter even the most certain authority of canonical Scripture.' But how? Consider his words: 'Although verily there be brought no example for this point out of the canonical Scriptures, yet even in this point the truth of the same Scripture is held by us, while we do that which the authority of Scriptures doth recommend; that so, because the Holy Scripture cannot deceive us, whosoever is afraid to be deceived by the obscurity of this question, must have recourse to the same church concerning it, which, without any ambiguity, the Holy Scripture doth demonstrate to us.' Among many other points in the aforesaid words, we are to observe, that, according to this holy father, when we prove some points not particularly contained in Scripture by the authority of the church, even in that case we ought not to be said to believe such points without Scripture, because Scripture itself recommends the church; and therefore, relying on her, we rely on Scripture, without danger of being deceived by the obscurity of any question defined by the church. And elsewhere he saith, 'Seeing this is written in no Scripture, we must believe the testimony of the church, which Christ declareth to speak the truth.' But it seems D. Potter is of opinion, that this doctrine about not rebaptizing such as were baptized by heretics is no necessary point of faith, nor the contrary an heresy: wherein he contradicteth St. Augustin, from whom we have now heard, that what the church teacheth is truly said to be taught by Scripture; and consequently to deny this particular point, delivered by the church, is to oppose Scripture itself. Yet if he will needs hold that this point is not fundamental, we must conclude out of St. Augustin (as we did concerning the baptizing of children), that the infallibility of the church reacheth not to points fundamental. The same father, in another place, concerning this very question of the validity of baptism conferred by heretics, saith, 'The apostles indeed have prescribed nothing of this: but this custom ought to be believed to be originally taken from their tradition, as there are many things that the universal church observeth, which are therefore with good reason believed to have been commanded by the apostles, although they be not written.' No less clear is St. Chrysostom for the infallibility of the traditions of the church. For, treating on these words (2 Thess. ii.), *Stand, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by speech or by our epistle*, he saith, 'Hence it is manifest that they delivered not all things by letter, but many things also without writing; and these also are worthy of belief. Let us therefore account the tradition of the church

to be worthy of belief: it is a tradition: seek no more. Which words are so plainly against protestants, that Whitaker is as plain with St. Chrysostom, saying, 'I answer that this is an inconsiderable speech, and unworthy so great a father.' But let us conclude with St. Augustin, that the church cannot approve any error against faith or good manners: 'The church,' saith he, 'being placed between much chaff and cockle, doth tolerate many things; but yet she doth not approve nor dissemble, nor do those things which are against faith or good life.'

17. "And as I have proved that protestants, according to their grounds, cannot yield infallible assent to the church in any one point; so, by the same reason, I prove, that they cannot rely upon Scripture itself in any one point of faith: not in points of lesser moment (or not fundamental), because in such points the catholic church (according to Dr. Potter), and much more any protestant, may err, and think it is contained in Scripture, when it is not: not in points fundamental, because they must first know what points be fundamental, before they can be assured that they cannot err in understanding the Scripture: and consequently, independently of Scripture, they must foreknow all fundamental points of faith, and therefore they do not indeed rely upon Scripture, either for fundamental or not fundamental points.

18. "Besides, I mainly urge D. Potter and other protestants, that they tell us of certain points which they call fundamental, and we cannot wrest from them a list in particular of such points, without which no man can tell whether or no he err in points fundamental, and be capable of salvation. And, which is most lamentable, instead of giving us such a catalogue, they fall to wrangle among themselves about the making of it.

19. "Calvin holds the pope's primacy, invocation of saints, freewill, and such like, to be fundamental errors, overthrowing the gospel. Others are not of his mind, as Melanethon, who saith, in the opinion of himself, and other his brethren, that 'the monarchy of the bishop of Rome is of use or profit, to this end, that consent of doctrine may be retained. An agreement, therefore, may be easily established in this article of the pope's primacy, if other articles could be agreed upon.' If the pope's primacy be a means, 'that consent of doctrine may be retained,' first submit to it, and other articles will be 'easily agreed upon.' Luther also saith of the pope's primacy, it may be borne withal. And why then, O Luther, did you not bear with it? And how can you and your followers be excused from damnable schism, who chose rather to divide God's church, than to bear with that which you confess may be borne withal? But let us go forward. That the doctrine of freewill, prayer for the dead, worshipping of images, worship and invocation of saints, real presence, transubstantiation, receiving under one kind, satisfaction and merit of works, and the mass, be not fundamental errors, is taught *respective* by divers protestants, carefully alleged in the Protestant's Apology, &c., as namely, by Perkins, Cartwright, Frith, Fulk, Henry, Sparke, Goad, Luther, Reynolds, Whitaker, Tindal, Francis Johnston, with others. Contrary to these, is the Confession of the Christian Faith, so called by protestants, which I mentioned heretofore, wherein we are 'damned unto unquenchable fire,' for the doctrine of mass, prayer to saints and for the dead, freewill, presence at idol-service, man's merit, with such like. Justification by faith alone is by some protestants affirmed to be the soul of the church; the only principal origin of salvation; of all other points of doctrine the chiefest and weightiest. Which yet, as we have seen, is contrary to other protestants, who teach, that merit of good works is not a fundamental error; yea, divers protestants defend merit of good works, as may be seen in Brerely. One would think that the king's supremacy, for which some blessed men lost their lives, was once among protestants held for a capital point; but now, Dr. Andrew's, late of Winchester, in his book against Bellarmine, tells us, that it is sufficient to reckon it among true doctrines. And Wotton denies that 'protestants hold the king's supremacy to be an essential point of faith.' O freedom of the new gospel! Hold with catholics the pope, or with protestants the king, or with puritans neither pope nor king, to be head of the church; all is one, you may be saved. Some, as Castalio, and the whole sect of the academical protestants, hold, that doctrines about the supper—baptism—the state and office of Christ—how he is

one with his Father—the trinity—predestination—and divers other such questions, are not necessary to salvation. And (that you may observe how ungrounded and partial their assertions be) Perkins teacheth, that the real presence of our Saviour's body in the sacrament, as it is believed by catholics, is a fundamental error; and yet affirmeth the consubstantiation of Lutherans not to be such, notwithstanding that divers chief Lutherans to their consubstantiation join the prodigious heresy of ubiquitation. Dr. Usher, in his sermon on the Unity of the Catholic Faith, grants salvation to the Ethiopians, who yet with Christian baptism join circumcision. Dr. Potter cites the doctrine of some, whom he termeth men of great learning and judgment, that 'all who profess to love and honour Jesus Christ are in the visible Christian church, and by catholics to be reputed brethren.' One of these men of great learning and judgment is Thomas Morton, by Dr. Potter cited in his margent, whose love and honour to Jesus Christ you may perceive by his saying, that 'the churches of Arians' (who denied our Saviour Christ to be God) 'are to be accounted the church of God, because they do hold the foundation of the gospel, which is faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world.' And, which is more, it seems by these charitable men, that for being a member of the church, it is not necessary to believe one only God. For Dr. Potter, among the arguments to prove Hooker's and Morton's opinion, brings this: 'The people of the ten tribes after their defection, notwithstanding their gross corruption and idolatry,' remaineth still a true church. We may also, as it seemeth by these men's reasoning, deny the resurrection, and yet be members of the true church. For a learned man (saith Dr. Potter in behalf of Hooker's and Morton's opinion) was anciently made a bishop of the catholic church, though he did professedly doubt of the last resurrection of our bodies. Dear Saviour! What times do we behold? If one may be a member of the true church, and yet deny the Trinity of the Persons, the Godhead of our Saviour, the necessity of baptism; if we may use circumcision, and with the worship of God join idolatry; wherein do we differ from Turks and Jews? or rather, are we not worse than either of them? If they who deny our Saviour's Divinity might be accounted the church of God, how will they deny that favour to those ancient heretics, who denied our Saviour's true humanity? And so the total denial of Christ will not exclude one from being a member of the true church. St. Hilary makes it of equal necessity for salvation that we believe our Saviour to be true God and true man, saying, 'This manner of confession we are to hold, that we remember him to be the Son of God and the Son of man, because the one without the other can give no hope of salvation.' And yet Dr. Potter saith of the aforesaid doctrine of Hooker and Morton, 'The reader may be pleased to approve or reject it, as he shall find cause' And in another place, he showeth so much good liking of this doctrine, that he explicateth and proveth the church's perpetual visibility by it. And in the second edition of his book, he is careful to declare and illustrate it more at large than he had done before: howsoever, this sufficiently showeth, that they have no certainty what points be fundamental. As for the Arians in particular, the author whom Dr. Potter cites for it moderate catholic, but is indeed a plain heretic, or rather atheist, Lucian-like, jesting at all religion, places Arianism among fundamental errors: but contrarily, an English protestant divine, masked under the name of Irenæus Philalethes, in a little book in Latin, entitled *Dissertatio de Pace et Concordia Ecclesiæ*, endeavoureth to prove, that even the denial of the blessed Trinity may stand with salvation. Divers protestants have taught, that the Roman church erreth in fundamental points: but Dr. Potter and others teach the contrary; which could not happen, if they could agree what be fundamental points. You brand the Donatists with a note of an error, 'in the matter and the nature of it properly heretical;' because they taught, that the church remained only with them, in the part of Donatus. And yet many protestants are so far from holding that doctrine to be a fundamental error, that themselves go further, and say, that for divers ages before Luther there was no true visible church at all. It is then too apparent, that you have no agreement in specifying what be fundamental points: neither have you any means to determine what they be; for if you have any such means, why do you not agree? You tell us the Creed contains all points fundamental; which although it were true, yet

you see it serves not to bring you to a particular knowledge and agreement in such points. And no wonder: for (besides what I have said already in the beginning of this chapter, and am to deliver more at large in the next) after so much labour and paper spent to prove that the Creed contains all fundamental points, you conclude; 'It remains very probable that the Creed is the perfect summary of those fundamental truths whereof consists the unity of faith and of the catholic church.' Very probable! Then, according to all good logic, the contrary may 'remain very probable,' and so all remain as full of uncertainty as before. The whole rule, you say, and the sole judge of your faith, must be Scripture. Scripture doth indeed deliver Divine truths, but seldom doth qualify them, or declare whether they be or be not absolutely necessary to salvation. You fall heavy upon Charity Mistaken, because he demands a particular catalogue of fundamental points, which yet you are obliged in conscience to do, if you be able. For without such a catalogue, no man can be assured whether or no he have faith sufficient to salvation: and therefore take it not in ill part, if we again and again demand such a catalogue. And that you may see we proceed fairly, I will perform on our behalf what we request of you, and do here deliver a catalogue, wherein are comprised all points by us taught to be necessary to salvation, in these words: 'We are obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe whatsoever the catholic visible church of Christ proposeth, as revealed by Almighty God. If any be of another mind, all catholics denounce him to be no catholic.' But enough of this. And I go forward with the infallibility of the church in all points.

20. "For even out of your doctrine, That the church cannot err in points necessary to salvation, any wise man will infer, that it behoves all who have care of their souls not to forsake her in any one point. First, because they are assured, that although her doctrine proved not to be true in some point, yet even, according to Dr. Potter, the error cannot be fundamental, nor destructive of faith and salvation: neither can they be accused of any the least imprudence in erring (if it were possible) with the universal church. Secondly, since she is, under pain of eternal damnation, to be believed and obeyed in some things, wherein confessedly she is endued with infallibility, I cannot in wisdom suspect her credit in matters of less moment; for who would trust another in matters of highest consequence, and be afraid to rely on him in things of less moment? Thirdly, since (as I said) we are undoubtedly obliged not to forsake her in the chiefest or fundamental points, and that there is no rule to know precisely what and how many those fundamental points be I cannot, without hazard of my soul, leave her in any one point, lest perhaps that point or points, wherein I forsake her, prove indeed to be fundamental, and necessary to salvation. Fourthly, that visible church, which cannot err in points fundamental, doth without distinction propound all her definitions concerning matters, of faith to be believed under anathemas or curses, esteeming all those that resist to be deservedly cast out of her communion, and holding it a point necessary to salvation, that we believe she cannot error, wherein if she speak truth, then to deny any one point in particular, which she defineth, or to affirm in general that she may err, puts a man into a state of damnation: whereas to believe her in such points as are not necessary to salvation cannot endanger salvation; as likewise to remain in her communion can bring no great harm, because she cannot maintain any damnable error or practice; but to be divided from her (she being Christ's catholic church is most certainly damnable. Fifthly, the true church being in lawful and certain possession of superiority and power, to command and require obedience from all Christians in some things, I cannot without grievous sin withdraw my obedience in any one, unless I evidently know that the thing commanded comes not within the compass of those things to which her power extendeth. And who can better inform me how far God's church can proceed, than God's church herself? or to what doctor can the children and scholars with greater reason and more security fly for direction, than to the mother and appointed teacher of all Christians? In following her, I sooner shall be excused, than in cleaving to any particular sect or person, teaching or applying Scriptures against her doctrine or interpretation. Sixthly, the fearful examples of innumerable persons, who, forsaking the church upon pretence of her errors, have failed even in fundamental points,

and suffered shipwreck of their salvation, ought to deter all Christians from opposing her in any one doctrine or practice: as (to omit other, both ancient and modern heresies) we see that divers chief protestants, pretending to reform the corruptions of the church, are come to affirm, that for many ages she erred to death, and wholly perished; which Dr. Potter cannot deny to be a fundamental error against that article of our Creed, 'I believe the catholic church,' as he affirmeth it of the Donatists, because they confined the universal church within Africa, or some other small tract of soil. Lest therefore I may fall into some fundamental error, it is most safe for me to believe all the decrees of that church which cannot err fundamentally; especially if we add, that according to the doctrine of catholic divines, one error in faith, whether it be for the matter itself great or small, destroys faith, as is showed in Charity Mistaken; and consequently, to accuse the church of any one error, is to affirm, that she lost all faith, and erred damnably; which very saying is damnable, because it leaves Christ no visible church on earth.

21. "To all these arguments I add this demonstration: Dr. Potter teacheth, that 'there neither was nor can be any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself.' But if the church of Christ can err in some points of faith, men not only may but must forsake her in those (unless Dr. Potter will have them believe one thing and profess another); and if such errors and corruptions should fall out to be about the church's liturgy, public service, administration of sacraments, and the like, they who perceive such errors must of necessity leave her external communion. And therefore if once we grant the church may err, it followeth that men may and ought to forsake her (which is against Dr. Potter's own words), or else they are inexcusable who left the communion of the Roman church, under pretence of errors which they grant not to be fundamental. And if Dr. Potter think good to answer this argument, he must remember his own doctrine to be, that even the catholic church may err in points not fundamental.

22. "Another argument for the universal infallibility of the church, I take out of Dr. Potter's own words 'If,' saith he, we did not dissent in some opinions from the present Roman church, we could not agree with the church truly catholic." These words cannot be true, unless he presuppose that 'the church truly catholic' cannot err in points not fundamental; for if she may err in such points, the Roman church, which he affirmeth to err only in points 'not fundamental,' may agree with 'the church truly catholic,' if she likewise may err in points 'not fundamental.' Therefore, either he must acknowledge a plain contradiction in his own words, or else must grant, that 'the church truly catholic' cannot err in points 'not fundamental,' which is what we intend to prove.

23. "If *words* cannot persuade you, that in all controversies you must rely upon the infallibility of the church, at least yield your assent to *deeds;* hitherto I have produced arguments drawn as it were *ex natura rei,* from the wisdom and goodness of God, who cannot fail to have left some infallible means to determine controversies, which, as we have proved, can be no other except a visible church, infallible in all her definitions. But because both catholics and protestants receive Holy Scripture, we may thence also prove the infallibility of the church in all matters which concern faith and religion. Our Saviour speaketh clearly: *the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.* And, *I will ask my Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of truth.* And, *But when he, the Spirit of truth, cometh, he shall teach you all truth.* The apostle saith, that the church is *the pillar and ground of truth.* And, *He gave some, apostles; and some prophets, and other some, evangelists; and other some, pastors and doctors; to the consummation of the saints, unto the work of the ministry, unto the edifying of the body of Christ; until we meet all into the unity of faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ: that now we be not children, wavering and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in the wickedness of men, in craftiness, to the circumvention of error.* All which words seem clearly enough to prove that the church is universally infallible; without which unity of faith could not be conserved against *every wind of doctrine.* And yet Dr. Potter limits these promises and privileges to fundamental points, in which

he grants the church cannot err. I urge the words of Scripture, which are universal, and do not mention any such restraint. I allege that most reasonable and received rule, that Scripture is to be understood literally, as it soundeth, unless some manifest absurdity force us to the contrary. But all will not serve to accord our different interpretation. In the mean time, divers of Dr. Potter's brethren step in, and reject his limitation as over-large, and somewhat tasting of papistry: and therefore they restrain the mentioned texts, either to the infallibility which the apostles and other sacred writers had in penning of Scripture, or else to the invisible church of the elect; and to them not absolutely, but with a double restriction, that they shall not fall damnably and finally; and other men have as much right as these to interpose their opinion and interpretation. Behold we are three at debate about the selfsame words of Scripture; we confer divers places and texts; we consult the originals; we examine translations; we endeavour to pray heartily; we profess to speak sincerely; to seek nothing but truth, and the salvation of our own souls and that of our neighbours; and, finally, we use all those means, which by protestants themselves are prescribed for finding out the true meaning of Scripture: nevertheless we neither do, nor have any possible means to agree, as long as we are left to ourselves; and when we should chance to be agreed, the doubt will still remain, whether the thing itself be a fundamental point or no; and yet it were great impiety to imagine that God, the lover of all souls, hath left no certain infallible means to decide both this and all other differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion. Our remedy therefore in these contentions must be, to consult and hear God's visible church, with submissive acknowledgment of her power and infallibility in whatsoever she proposeth as a revealed truth, according to that divine advice of St. Augustin, in these words: 'If at length thou seem to be sufficiently tossed, and hast a desire to put an end to thy pains, follow the way of the catholic discipline, which from Christ himself, by the apostles, hath come down even to us, and from us shall descend to all posterity.' And though I conceive that the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental hath now been sufficiently confuted, yet that no shadow of difficulty may remain, I will particularly refel a common saying of protestants, That it is sufficient for salvation to believe the Apostles' Creed, which they hold to be a summary of all fundamental points of faith."

THE

ANSWER TO THE THIRD CHAPTER

Wherein it is maintained, that the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental is in this present controversy good and pertinent; and that the catholic church may err in the latter kind of the said points.

1. THIS distinction is employed by protestants to many purposes; and therefore if it be pertinent and good (as they understand and apply it), the whole edifice built thereon must be either firm and stable, or, if it be not, it cannot be for any default in this distinction.

2. "If you object to them discords in matters of faith without any means of agreement," they will answer you, that they want not good and solid means of agreement in matters necessary to salvation; viz. their belief of all those things which are plainly and undoubtedly delivered in Scripture, which whoso believes must of necessity believe all things necessary to salvation; and their mutual suffering one another to "abound in their several sense," in matters not plainly and undoubtedly there delivered. And for their agreement in all controversies of religion, either they may have means to agree about them or not; if you say they have, why did you before deny it? if they have not means, why do you find fault with them for not agreeing?

3. You will say, that their fault is, that "by remaining protestants they exclude themselves from the means of agreement which you have," and which by submission to your church they might have also. But if you have means of agreement, the more shame for you that you still disagree. For who, I pray, is more inexcusably guilty for the omission of any duty; they that either have no means to do it, or else know of none they have, which puts them in the same case as if they had none; or they which profess to have an easy and expedite means to do it, and yet still leave it undone? *If you had been blind* (saith our Saviour to the Pharisees), *you had had no sin; but now you say you see, therefore your sin remaineth.*

4. If you say, you "do agree in matters of faith," I say this is ridiculous, for you define matters of faith to be those wherein you agree: so that to say you agree "in matters of faith," is to say you agree in those things wherein you do agree. And do not protestants do so likewise? Do not they agree in those things wherein they do agree?

5. "But you are all agreed, that only those things wherein you do agree are matters of faith." And protestants, if they were wise, would do so too. Sure I am they have reason enough to do so: seeing all of them agree with explicit faith in all those things which are plainly and undoubtedly delivered in Scripture; that is, in all which God hath plainly revealed; and with an implicit faith in that sense of the whole Scripture which God intended, whatsoever it was. Secondly, that which you pretend is false; for else why do some of you hold it against faith, to take or allow the oath of allegiance; others, as learned and honest as they, that it is against faith and unlawful to refuse it, and allow the refusing of it? Why do some of you hold that it is *de fide*, that the pope is head of the church by Divine law, others the contrary? Some hold it *de fide*, that the blessed Virgin was free from actual sin; others, that it is not so. Some, that the pope's indirect power over princes in temporalities is *de fide;* others the contrary. Some, that it is universal tradition, and consequently *de fide*, that the Virgin Mary was conceived in original sin; others the contrary.

6. But what shall we say now, if you be not agreed touching your pretended means of agreement, how then can you pretend to unity, either actual or potential, more than protestants may? Some of you say, the pope alone without a council may determine all controversies; but others deny it. Some, that a general council without a pope may do so; others deny this. Some, both in conjunction are infallible determiners; others again deny this. Lastly, some among you hold the acceptation of the decrees of councils by the

universal church to be the only way to decide controversies; which others deny, by denying the church to be infallible. And, indeed, what way of ending controversies can this be, when either part may pretend that they are part of the church, and they receive not the decree, therefore the whole church hath not received it?

7. Again, means of agreeing differences are either rational and well-grounded, and of God's appointment; or voluntary, and taken up at the pleasure of men. Means of the former nature, we say, you have as little as we. For where hath God appointed, that the pope, or a council, or a council confirmed by the pope, or that society of Christians which adhere to him, shall be the infallible judge of controversies? I desire you to show any one of these assertions plainly set down in Scripture (as in all reason a thing of this nature should be), or at least delivered with a full consent of fathers, or at least taught in plain terms by any one father for four hundred years after Christ. And if you cannot do this (as I am sure you cannot), and yet will still be obtruding yourselves upon us for our judges, who will not cry out,

perisse frontem de rebus?

8. But then for means of the other kind, such as yours are, we have great abundance of them. For besides all the ways which you have devised, which we make use of when we please, we have a great many more, which you yet have never thought of, for which we have as good colour out of Scripture as you have for yours. For first, we could, if we would, try it by lots whose doctrine is true and whose false; and you know it is written, *The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposition of it as from the Lord*. 2. We could refer them to the king, and you know it is written, *A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment. The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord*. We could refer the matter to any assembly of Christians assembled in the name of Christ, seeing it is written, *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*. We may refer it to any priest, because it is written, *The priest's lips shall preserve knowledge. The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' chair*, &c. To any preacher of the gospel, to any pastor or doctor; for to every one of them Christ hath promised, *he will be with them always, even to the end of the world;* and of every one of them it is said, *He that heareth you heareth me*, &c. To any bishop or prelate; for it is written, *Obey your prelates;* and again, *He hath given pastors and doctors*, &c., *lest we should be carried about with every wind of doctrine*. To any particular church or Christians, seeing it is a particular church which is called, *the house of God, the pillar and ground of truth*; and seeing of any particular church it is written, *He that heareth not the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen or publican*. We might refer it to any man that prays for God's Spirit; for it is written, *Every one that asketh receiveth:* and again, *If any man want wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth all men liberally and upbraideth not*. Lastly, we might refer it to the Jews, for without all doubt of them it is written, *My Spirit that is in thee*, &c. All these means of agreement, whereof not any one but hath as much probability from Scripture as that which you obtrude upon us, offer themselves upon a sudden to me; haply many more might be thought on if we had time, but these are enough to show, that would we make use of voluntary and devised means to determine differences, we have them in great abundance. And if you say, These would fail us, and contradict themselves; so, as we pretend, have yours. There have been popes against popes; councils against councils; councils confirmed by popes against councils confirmed by popes; lastly, the church of some ages against the church of other ages.

9. Lastly, whereas you find fault, "that protestants upbraided with their discord, answer, that they differ only in points not fundamental;" I desire you to tell me, whether they do so, or do not so: if they do so, I hope you will not find fault with the answer; if you say they do not so, but in points fundamental also, then they are not members of the same church one with another, no more than with you: and therefore why should you object to any of them their differences from each other, any more than to yourselves their more and greater differences from you?

10. But "they are convinced sometimes even by their own confessions, that the ancient fathers taught divers points of popery; and then they reply, those fathers may nevertheless be saved, because those errors were not fundamental." And may not you also be convinced, by the confessions of your own men, that the fathers taught divers points held by protestants against the church of Rome, and divers against protestants and the church of Rome? Do not your purging indexes clip the tongues and seal up the lips of a great many for such confessions; and is not the above-cited confession of your Doway divines plain and full to the same purpose? And do not you also, as freely as we, charge the fathers with errors, and yet say they were saved? Now what else do we understand by an unfundamental error, but such a one with which a man may possibly be saved? So that still you proceed in condemning others for your own faults, and urging arguments against us which return more strongly upon yourselves.

11. But your will is, "we should remember that Christ must always have a visible church." Ans. Your pleasure shall be obeyed, on condition you will not forget, that there is a difference between perpetual visibility and perpetual purity. As for the answer which you make for us, true it is we believe the catholic church cannot perish, yet that she may and did err in points not fundamental; and that protestants were obliged to forsake those errors of the church, as they did, though not the church for her errors; for that they did not, but continued still members of the church. For it is not all one (though you perpetually confound them) "to forsake the errors of the church," and "to forsake the church;" or "to forsake the church in her error," and "simply to forsake the church;" no more than it is for me to renounce my brother's or my friend's vices or errors, and to renounce my brother or my friend. The former then was done by protestants, the latter was not done: nay, not only not from the catholic, but not so much as from the Roman, did they separate *per omnia;* but only in those practices which they conceived superstitious or impious. If you would at this time propose a form of liturgy which both sides hold lawful, and then they would not join with you in this liturgy, you might have some colour then to say, they renounce your communion absolutely. But as things are now ordered, they cannot join with you in prayers, but they must partake with you in unlawful practices; and for this reason they (not absolutely, but thus far) separate from your communion. And this, I say, they were obliged to do under pain of damnation. "Not as if it were damnable to hold an error not damnable," but because it is damnable outwardly to profess and maintain it, and to join with others in the practice of it, when inwardly they did not hold it. Now had they continued in your communion, that they must have done, viz. have professed to believe, and externally practised your errors, whereof they were convinced that they were errors; which, though the matters of the errors had been not necessary, but only profitable, whether it had not been damnable dissimulation and hypocrisy, I leave it to you to judge. You yourself tell us, within two pages after this, "that you are obliged never to speak any one least lie against your knowledge." § 2. Now what is this but to live in a perpetual lie?

12. As for that which, in the next place, you seem so to wonder at, that "both catholics and protestants, according to the opinion of protestants, may be saved in their several professions, because, forsooth, we both agree in all fundamental points;" I answer, this proposition, so crudely set down, as you have here set it down, I know no protestant will justify; for you seem to make them teach that it is an indifferent thing for the attainment of salvation, whether a man believe the truth or the falsehood; and that they care not in whether of these religions a man live or die, so he die in either of them: whereas all that they say is this, That those amongst you which want means to find the truth, and so die in error; or use the best means they can with industry and without partiality to find the truth, and yet die in error; these men, thus qualified, notwithstanding these errors, may be saved. Secondly, for those that have means to find the truth, and will not use them, they conceive, though their case be dangerous, yet if they die with a general repentance for all their sins, known and unknown, their salvation is not desperate. The truths which they hold, of faith in Christ and repentance, being, as it were, an antidote against their

errors, and their negligence in seeking the truth. Especially, seeing by confession of both sides we agree in much more than is simply and indispensably necessary to salvation.

13. "But seeing we make such various use of this distinction, is it not prodigiously strange that we will never be induced to give in a particular catalogue what points be fundamental?" And why, I pray, is it so "prodigiously strange," that we give no answer to an unreasonable demand? God himself hath told us, that *where much is given, much shall be required; where little is given, little shall be required*. To infants, deaf men, madmen, nothing, for aught we know, is given; and if it be so, of them nothing shall be required. Others, perhaps, may have means only given them to believe, *that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him;* and to whom thus much only is given, to them it shall not be damnable, that they believe but only thus much. Which methinks is very manifest from the apostle, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where, having first said, that *without faith it is impossible to please God*, he subjoins as his reason, *For whosoever cometh unto God must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him*. Where, in my opinion, this is plainly intimated, that this is the *minimum quod sic*, the lowest degree of faith wherewith, in men capable of faith, God will be pleased; and that with this lowest degree he will be pleased, where means of rising higher are deficient. Besides, if without this belief, *that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him*, God will not be pleased, then his will is, that we should believe it. Now his will it cannot be that we should believe a falsehood; it must be therefore true, *that he is a rewarder of them that seek him*. Now it is possible that they which never heard of Christ may seek God; therefore it is true, that even they shall please him, and be rewarded by him: I say rewarded, not with bringing them immediately to salvation without Christ, but with bringing them, according to his good pleasure, first to faith in Christ, and so to salvation. To which belief the story of Cornelius, in the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and St. Peter's words to him, are to me a great inducement. For, first, it is evident he believed not in Christ, but was a mere Gentile, and one that knew not but men might be worshipped; and yet we are assured, that *his prayers and alms* (even while he was in that state) *came up for a memorial before God; that his prayer was heard, and his alms had in remembrance in the sight of God*, ver. 4; that upon his then *fearing God, and working righteousness* (such as it was), *he was accepted with God*. But how accepted? Not to be brought immediately to salvation, but to be promoted to a higher degree of the knowledge of God's will: for so it is in the fourth and fifth verses; *Call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter; he shalt tell thee what thou oughtest to do:* and at ver. 33, *We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*. So that though even in his Gentilism, he was accepted for his present state; yet if he had continued in it, and refused to believe in Christ after the sufficient revelation of the Gospel to him, and God's will to have him believe it, he that was accepted before would not have continued accepted still: for then that condemnation had come upon him, *that light was come unto him, and he loved darkness more than light*. So that (to proceed a step further) to whom faith in Christ is sufficiently propounded as necessary to salvation, to them it is simply necessary and fundamental to believe in Christ; that is, to expect remission of sins and salvation from him, upon the performance of the conditions he requires; among which conditions one is, that we believe what he hath revealed, when it is sufficiently declared to have been revealed by him: for by doing so *we set our seal that God is true*, and that Christ was sent by him. Now that may be sufficiently declared to one (all things considered), which (all things considered) to another is not sufficiently declared; and consequently, that may be fundamental and necessary to one, which to another is not so. Which variety of circumstances makes it impossible to set down an exact catalogue of fundamentals; and proves your request as reasonable as if you should desire us (according to the fable) to make a coat to fit the moon in all her changes; or to give you a garment that will fit all statures; or to make you a dial to serve all meridians; or to design particularly what provision will serve an army for a year; whereas there may be an army of ten thousand, there may be of one hundred thousand: and, therefore, without setting down a catalogue of fundamentals in particular (because none that can be given can

universally serve for all men, God requiring more of them to whom he gives more, and less of them to whom he gives less), we must content ourselves by a general description to tell you what is fundamental; and to warrant us in doing so, we have your example, § 19, where being engaged to give us a catalogue of fundamentals, instead thereof you tell us only in general, "that all is fundamental, and not to be disbelieved under pain of damnation, which the church hath defined." As you therefore think it enough to say in general, "that all is fundamental which the church hath defined," without setting down in particular a complete catalogue of all things which in any age the church hath defined (which, I believe, you will not undertake to do; and if you do, it will be contradicted by your fellows); so in reason you might think it enough for us also to say in general. That it is sufficient for any man's salvation to believe that the Scripture is true, and contains all things necessary for salvation; and to do his best endeavour to find and believe the true sense of it; without delivering any particular catalogue of the fundamentals of faith.

14. Neither doth the want of such a catalogue leave us in such a perplexed uncertainty as you pretend. For though, perhaps, we cannot exactly distinguish in the Scripture what "is revealed, because it is necessary," from what is "necessary, consequently and accidentally, merely because it is revealed;" yet we are sure enough, that all that is necessary any way is there; and therefore in believing all that is there, we are sure to believe all that is necessary. And if we err from the true and intended sense of some, nay, of many, obscure and ambiguous texts of Scripture, we may be sure enough that we err not damnably; because if we do indeed desire and endeavour to find the truth, we may be sure we do so, and as sure that it cannot consist with the revealed goodness of God to damn him for error that desires and endeavours to find the truth.

15. Ad § 2. The effect of this paragraph (for as much as concerns us) is this: that "for any man to deny belief to any one thing, be it great or small, known by him to be revealed by Almighty God for a truth, is, in effect, to charge God with falsehood; for it is to say, that God affirms that to be a truth which he either knows to be not a truth, or which he doth not know to be a truth: and therefore, without all controversy, this is a damnable sin." To this I subscribe with hand and heart, adding withal, that not only he which knows, but he which believes (nay, though it be erroneously), any thing to be revealed by God, and yet will not believe it nor assent unto it, is in the same case, and commits the same sin of derogation from God's most perfect and pure veracity.

16. Ad § 3. I said purposely ("known by himself, and believes himself"); for as, without any disparagement of a man's honesty, I may believe something to be false which he affirms of his certain knowledge to be true, provided I neither know nor believe that he hath so affirmed; so without any the least dishonour to God's eternal, never-failing veracity, I may doubt of or deny some truth revealed by him, if I neither know nor believe it to be revealed by him.

17. Seeing therefore the crime of calling God's veracity in question, and consequently (according to your grounds) of erring fundamentally, is chargeable upon those only that believe the contrary of any one point known, not by others, but themselves, to be testified by God; I cannot but fear (though I hope otherwise) that your heart condemned you of a great calumny and egregious sophistry in imputing fundamental and damnable errors to disagreeing protestants, because, forsooth, "some of them disbelieve, and directly, wittingly, and willingly oppose, what others do believe to be testified by the word of God." The sophistry of your discourse will be apparent if it be contrived into a syllogism: thus therefore in effect you argue.

Whosoever disbelieves any thing known by himself to be revealed by God imputes falsehood to God, and therefore errs fundamentally:

But some protestants disbelieve those things which others believe to be testified by God;

Therefore they impute falsehood to God, and err fundamentally.

Neither can you with any colour pretend, that in these words, "known to be testified by God," you meant, "not by himself, but by any other; "seeing he only in fact affirms, that God doth deceive, or is deceived, who denies some things which himself knows or believes to be revealed by God, as before I have demonstrated. For otherwise, if I should deny belief to some thing which God had revealed secretly to such a man as I had never heard of, I should be guilty of calling God's veracity into question, which is evidently false. Besides, how can it be avoided, but the Jesuits and Dominicans, the Dominicans and Franciscans, must upon this ground differ fundamentally, and one of them err damnably, seeing the one of them disbelieves and willingly opposes what the others believe to be the word of God?

18. Whereas you say, that "the difference among protestants consists not in this, that some believe some points of which others are ignorant, or not bound expressly to know; I would gladly know whether you speak of protestants differing in profession only, or in opinion also. If the first, why do you say presently after, "that some disbelieve what others of them believe?" If they differ in opinion, then sure they are ignorant of the truth of each other's opinions; it being impossible and contradictions, that a man should know one thing to be true and believe the contrary, or know it and not believe it. And if they do not know the truth of each other's opinions, then I hope you will grant they are ignorant of it. If your meaning were, They were not ignorant that each other held these opinions, or of the sense of the opinions which they held; I answer, this is nothing to the convincing of their understandings of the truth of them; and these remaining unconvinced of the truth of them, they are excusable if they do not believe.

19. But "ignorance of what we are expressly bound to know, is itself a fault, and therefore cannot be an excuse:" and therefore if you could show that protestants differ in those points the truth whereof (which can be but one) they were bound expressly to know, I should easily yield that one side must of necessity be in a mortal crime. But for want of proof of this, you content yourself only to say it; and therefore I also might be contented only to deny it, yet I will not, but give a reason for my denial. And my reason is because our obligation expressly to know any Divine truth must arise from God's manifest revealing of it, and his revealing unto us that he hath revealed it, and that his will is we should believe it: now in the points controverted among protestants he hath not so dealt with us, therefore he hath not laid any such obligation upon us. The major of this syllogism is evident, and therefore I will not stand to prove it. The minor also will be evident to him that considers, that in all the controversies of protestants there is a seeming conflict of Scripture with Scripture, reason with reason, authority with authority; which how it can consist with the manifest revealing of the truth of either side, I cannot well understand. Besides, though we grant that Scripture, reason, and authority were all on one side, and the appearances of the other side all easily answerable; yet if we consider the strange power that education and prejudices instilled by it have over even excellent understandings, we may well imagine, that many truths which in themselves are revealed plainly enough, are yet to such or such a man, prepossessed with contrary opinions, not revealed plainly. Neither doubt I but God, who knows whereof we are made, and what passions we are subject unto, will compassionate such infirmities, and not enter into judgment with us for those things which, all things considered, were unavoidable.

20. "But till fundamentals," say you, "be sufficiently proposed (as revealed by God), it is not against faith to reject them; or rather, it is not possible prudently to believe them: and points unfundamental being thus sufficiently proposed as Divine truths, may not be denied: therefore you conclude, there is no difference between them." *Answ*. A circumstantial point may by accident become fundamental, because it may be so proposed, that the denial of it will draw after it the denial of this fundamental truth, That all which God says is true. Notwithstanding in themselves there is a main difference between them; "points fundamental being those only which are revealed by God, and commanded to be preached to all and believed by all. Points circumstantial being such, as though God hath revealed them, yet the pastors of

the church are not bound under pain of damnation particularly to teach them unto all men every where, and the people may be securely ignorant of them."

21. You say, "not erring in points fundamental is not sufficient for the preservation of the church; because any error maintained by it against God's revelation is destructive." I answer, if you mean against God's revelation known by the church to be so, it is true, but impossible that the church should do so; for *ipso facto* in doing it, it were a church no longer. But if you mean against some revelation which the church by error thinks to be no revelation, it is false. The church may ignorantly disbelieve such a revelation, and yet continue a church; which thus I prove: That the gospel was to be preached to all nations, was a truth revealed before our Saviour's ascension, in these words: *Go and teach all nations* (Matt. xxviii. 19): yet, through prejudice or inadvertence, or some other cause, the church disbelieved it, as it is apparent out of the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Acts, until the conversion of Cornelius, and yet was still a church. Therefore to disbelieve some Divine revelation, not knowing it to be so, is not destructive of salvation, or of the being of a church. Again, it is a plain revelation of God, that the sacrament of the eucharist should be administered in both kinds; and that the public hymns and prayers of the church should be in such a language as is most for edification: yet these revelations the church of Rome not seeing, by reason of the veil before their eyes, their church's supposed infallibility, I hope the denial of them shall not be laid to their charge, no otherwise than as building hay and stubble on the foundation, not overthrowing the foundation itself.

22. Ad § 4. In the beginning of this paragraph we have this argument against this distinction: It is enough (by Dr. Potter's confession) to believe some things negatively; i. e. not to deny them; therefore all denial of any Divine truth excludes salvation. As if you should say, One horse is enough for a man to go a journey; therefore without a horse no man can go a journey. As if some Divine truths, viz., those which are plainly revealed, might not be such as of necessity were not to be denied; and others, for want of sufficient declaration, deniable without danger. Indeed, if Dr. Potter had said there had been no Divine truth, declared sufficiently or not declared, but must upon pain of damnation be believed, or at least not denied, then you might justly have concluded as you do; but now, that some may not be denied, and that some may be denied without damnation, why they may not both stand together, I do not yet understand.

23. In the remainder you infer out of Dr. Potter's words, "that all errors are alike damnable, if the manner of propounding the contrary truths be not different;" which, for aught I know, all protestants, and all that have sense, must grant. Yet I deny your illation from hence, that the distinction of points into fundamental and unfundamental is vain and uneffectual for the purpose of protestants. For though, being alike proposed as Divine truths, they are by accident alike necessary; yet the real difference still remains between them, that they are not alike necessary to be proposed.

24. Ad § 5. The next paragraph, if it be brought out of the clouds, will, I believe, have in it these propositions: 1. Things are distinguished by their different natures. 2. The nature of faith is taken, not from the matter believed—for then they that believed different matters should have different faiths—but from the motive to it. 3. This motive is God's revelation. 4. This revelation is alike for all objects. 5. Protestants disagree in things equally revealed by God; therefore they forsake the formal motives of faith; and therefore have no faith nor unity therein. Which is truly a very proper and convenient argument to close up a weak discourse, wherein both the propositions are false for matter, confused and disordered for the form, and the conclusion utterly inconsequent. First, for the second proposition; who knows not that the essence of all habits (and therefore of faith among the rest) is taken from their act and their object? If the habit be general, from the act and object in general; if the habit be special, from the act and object in special. Then for the motive to a thing; that it cannot be of the essence of the thing to which it moves, who can doubt that knows that a motive is an efficient cause, and that the efficient is always extrinsical to the effect? For the fourth, that God's revelation is alike for all objects, it is ambiguous: and if the sense

of it be, that his revelation is an equal motive to induce us to believe all objects revealed by him, it is true, but impertinent: if the sense of it be, that all objects revealed by God are alike (that is, alike plainly and undoubtedly) revealed by him, it is pertinent, but most untrue. Witness the great diversity of texts of Scripture, whereof some are so plain and evident, that no man of ordinary sense can mistake the sense of them; some are so obscure and ambiguous, that to say this or this is the certain sense of them, were high presumption. For the fifth, protestants disagree in things equally revealed by God: in themselves, perhaps, but not equally to them, whose understandings, by reason of their different educations, are fashioned and shaped for the entertainment of various opinions, and consequently more inclined to believe such a sense of Scripture, others to believe another; which to say that God will not take it into his consideration in judging men's opinions, is to disparage his goodness. But to what purpose is it that these things are equally revealed to both (as the light is equally revealed to all blind men), if they be not fully revealed to either? The sense of this scripture, *Why are they then baptized for the dead?* and this, *He shall be saved, yet so as by fire*, and a thousand others, is equally revealed to you and to another interpreter, that is certainly to neither. He now conceives one sense of them, and you another; and would it not be an excellent inference, if I should conclude now as you do—That you "forsake the formal motive of faith, which is God's revelation, and consequently lose all faith and unity therein?" So likewise the Jesuits and Dominicans, and the Franciscans and Dominicans, disagree about things equally revealed by Almighty God; and seeing they do so, I beseech you let me understand, why this reason will not exclude them as well as protestants "from all faith and unity therein?" Thus you have failed of your undertaking in your first part of your title, and that is a very ill omen, especially in points of so strait mutual dependence, that we shall have but slender performance in your second assumpt; which is, "that the church is infallible in all her definitions, whether concerning points fundamental or not fundamental."

25. Ad § 7, 8. The reasons in these two paragraphs, as they were alleged before, so they were before answered, chap. 2. And thither I remit the reader.

26. Ad 9, 10, 11. I grant that the church cannot without damnable sin either deny any thing to be truth which she knows to be God's truth, or propose any thing as his truth which she knows not to be so. But that she may not do this by ignorance or mistake, and so, without damnable sin, that you should have proved, but have not. But say you, "this excuse cannot serve; for if the church be assisted only for fundamental, she cannot but know that she may err in points not fundamental." *Answer*. It does not follow, unless you suppose that the church knows that she is assisted no further: but if, being assisted only so far, she yet did conceive by error her assistance absolute and unlimited, or if, knowing her assistance restrained to fundamentals, she yet conceived by error that she should be guarded from proposing any thing but what was fundamental, then the consequence is apparently false. But, "at least she cannot be certain that she cannot err, and therefore cannot be excused from headlong and pernicious temerity in proposing points not fundamental to be believed by Christians as matters of faith." *Answer*. Neither is this deduction worth any thing, unless it be understood of such unfundamental points as she is not warranted to propose by evident text of Scripture. Indeed, if she propose such, as matters of faith certainly true, she may well be questioned, *Quo warranto?* she builds without a foundation, and says, *Thus saith the Lord*, when the Lord doth not say so: which cannot be excused from rashness and high presumption; such a presumption as an ambassador should commit who should say in his master's name that for which he hath no commission; of the same nature, I say, but of a higher strain, as much as the King of Heaven is greater than any earthly king. But though she may err in some points not fundamental, yet may she have certainty enough in proposing others; as for example, these: that Abraham begat Isaac—that St. Paul had a cloke—that Timothy was sick; because these, though not fundamental, *i.e.* not essential parts of Christianity, yet are evidently and undeniably set down in Scripture, and consequently may be, without all rashness, proposed by the church as certain Divine revelations. Neither is your argument concluding

when you say, "If in such things she may be deceived, she must be always uncertain of all such things;" for my sense may sometimes possibly deceive me, yet I am certain enough that I see what I see, and feel what I feel. Our judges are not infallible in their judgments, yet they are certain enough that they judge aright, and that they proceed according to the evidence that is given, when they condemn a thief or a murderer to the gallows. A traveller is not always certain of his way, but often mistaken; and doth it therefore follow that he can have no assurance that Charing-cross is his right way from the Temple to Whitehall? The ground of your error here is your not distinguishing between actual certainty and absolute infallibility. Geometricians are not infallible in their own science; yet they are very certain of those things which they see demonstrated: and carpenters are not infallible, yet certain of the straightness of those things which agree with the rule and square. So, though the church be not infallibly certain that in all her definitions, whereof some are about disputable and ambiguous matters, she shall proceed according to her rule; yet being certain of the infallibility of her rule, and that in this or that thing she doth manifestly proceed according to it, she may be certain of the truth of some particular decrees, and yet not certain that she shall never decree but what is true.

27. Ad § 12. "But if the church may err in points not fundamental, she may err in proposing Scripture, and so we cannot be assured whether she have not been deceived already." The church may err in her proposition or custody of the canon of Scripture, if you understand by *the church* any present church of one denomination; for example, the Roman, the Greek, or so. Yet have we sufficient certainty of Scripture, not from the bare testimony of any present church, but from universal tradition, of which the testimony of any present church is but a little part. So that here you fall into the fallacy, *a dicto secundum quid, ad dictum simpliciter.* For, in effect, this is the sense of your argument: Unless the church be infallible, we can have no certainty of Scripture from the authority of the church; therefore, unless the church be infallible, we can have no certainty hereof at all. As if a man should say, If the vintage of France miscarry, we can have no wine from France; therefore, if that vintage miscarry, we can have no wine at all. And for the incorruption of Scripture, I know no other rational assurance we can have of it than such as we have of the incorruption of other ancient books, that is, the consent of ancient copies; such I mean for the kind, though it may be far greater for the degree of it. And if the Spirit of God give any man any other assurance hereof, this is not rational and discursive, but supernatural and infused: an assurance it may be to himself, but no argument to another. As for the infallibility of the church, it is so far from being a proof of the Scripture's incorruption, that no proof can be pretended for it but controverted places of Scripture; which yet are as subject to corruption as any other, and more likely to have been corrupted (if it had been possible) than any other, and made to speak as they do, for the advantage of those men, whose ambition it hath been a long time to bring all under their authority. Now then, if any man should prove the Scriptures uncorrupted, because the church says so, which is infallible, I would demand again, touching this very thing, That there is an infallible church, seeing it is not of itself evident, how shall I be assured of it? and what can he answer, but that the Scripture says so, in these and these places? Hereupon I would ask him, how shall I be assured that the Scriptures are incorrupted in these places; seeing it is possible, and not altogether improbable, that these men, which desire to be thought infallible, when they had the government of all things in their own hands, may have altered them for their purpose? If to this he answer again, that the church is infallible, and therefore cannot do so, I hope it would be apparent that he runs round in a circle, and proves the Scripture's incorruption by the church's infallibility, and the church's infallibility by the Scripture's incorruption; and that is, in effect, the church's infallibility by the church's infallibility, and the Scripture's incorruption by the Scripture's incorruption.

28. Now for your observation, that "some books which were not always known to be canonical have been afterwards received for such; but never any book or syllable defined for canonical was after questioned or rejected for apocryphal:" I demand, touching the first sort, whether they were commended

to the church by the apostles as canonical or not? If not, seeing the whole faith was preached by the apostles to the church, and seeing, after the apostles, the church pretends to no new revelations, how can it be an article of faith to believe them canonical? and how can you pretend that your church, which makes this an article of faith, is so assisted as not to propose any thing as a Divine truth which is not revealed by God? If they were, how then is the church an infallible keeper of the canon of the Scripture, which hath suffered some books of canonical Scripture to be lost, and others to lose for a long time their being canonical, at least the necessity of being so esteemed, and afterwards, as it were by the law of *postliminium*, hath restored their authority and canonicalness unto them? If this was delivered by the apostles to the church, the point was sufficiently discussed: and therefore your church's omission to teach it for some ages as an article of faith, nay, degrading it from the number of articles of faith, and putting it among disputable problems, was surely not very laudable. If it were not revealed by God to the apostles, and by the apostles to the church, then can it be no revelation, and therefore her presumption in proposing it as such is inexcusable.

29. And then for the other part of it, "that never any book or syllable defined for canonical was afterwards questioned or rejected for apocryphal;" certainly it is a bold asseveration, but extremely false. For I demand, the Book of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom, the Epistles of St. James and to the Hebrews, were they by the apostles approved for canonical or no? If not, with what face dare you approve them, and yet pretend that all your doctrine is apostolical; especially, seeing it is evident that this point is not deducible, by rational discourse, from any other defined by them? If they were approved by them, this, I hope, was a sufficient definition; and therefore you were best rub your forehead hard, and say that these books were never questioned. But if you do so, then I shall be bold to ask you, what books you meant in saying before, "some books which were not always known to be canonical have been afterwards received?" Then for the Book of Maccabees, I hope you will say, it was defined for canonical before St. Gregory's time; and yet he (lib. 19. Moral. c. 13), citing a testimony out of it, prefaceth to it after this manner: "Concerning which matter we do not amiss if we produce a testimony out of books, although not canonical, yet set forth for the edification of the church; for Eleazer, in the Book of Maccabees," &c: which, if it be not to reject it from being canonical, is, without question, at least to question it. Moreover, because you are so punctual as to talk of words and syllables, I would know whether before Sixtus Quintus's time your church had a defined canon of Scripture, or not? If not, then was your church surely a most vigilant keeper of Scripture, that for one thousand five hundred years had not defined what was Scripture and what was not. If it had, then I demand, was it that set forth by Sixtus? or that set forth by Clement? or a third, different from both? If it were that set forth by Sixtus, then is it now condemned by Clement; if that of Clement, it was condemned I say, but sure you will say contradicted and questioned, by Sixtus; if different from both, then was it questioned and condemned by both, and still lies under the condemnation. But then, lastly, suppose it had been true, "that both some book not known to be canonical had been received, and that never any after receiving had been questioned; how had this been a sign that the church is infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost? In what mood or figure would this conclusion follow out of these premises? Certainly, your flying to such poor signs as these are, is to me a great sign that you labour with penury of better arguments, and that thus to catch at shadows and bulrushes is a shrewd sign of a sinking cause.

30. Ad § 13. We are told here, "that the general promises of infallibility to the church must not be restrained only to points fundamental, because then the apostles' words and writings may also be restrained." The argument put in form, and made complete, by supply of the concealed proposition, runs thus:

The infallibility promised to the present church of any age, is as absolute and unlimited as that promised to the apostles in their preaching and writings:

But the apostles' infallibility is not to be limited to fundamentals:

Therefore neither is the church's infallibility thus to be limited.

Or thus:

The apostles' infallibility in their preaching and writing may be limited to fundamentals, as well as the infallibility of the present church: but that is not to be done: therefore this also is not to be done.

Now to this argument, I answer, that, if by "may be as well" in the major proposition, be understood "may be as possibly," it is true, but impertinent. If by it we understand, "may be as justly and rightly, it is very pertinent, but very false. So that as Dr. Potter "limits the infallibility of the present church unto fundamentals, so another may limit the apostles unto them also." He may do it *de facto*, but *de jure* he cannot; that may be done, and done lawfully; this also may be done, but not lawfully. That may be done, and if it be done cannot be confuted: this also may be done, but if it be done may easily be confuted. It is done to our hand in this very paragraph, by five words taken out of Scripture: *All Scripture is divinely inspired*. Show but as much for the church: show where it is written, That all the decrees of the church are divinely inspired, and the controversy will be at an end. Besides, there is not the same reason for the church's absolute infallibility as for the apostles' and Scripture's. For if the church fall into error, it may be reformed by comparing it with the rule of the apostles' doctrine and Scripture; but if the apostles have erred in delivering the doctrine of Christianity, to whom shall we have recourse for the discovering and correcting their error? Again, there is not so much strength required in the edifice as in the foundation; and if but wise men have the ordering of the building, they will make it much a surer thing that the foundation shall not fail the building, than that the building shall not fall from the foundation. And though the building be to be of brick or stone, and perhaps of wood, yet it may be possibly they will have a rock for their foundation, whose stability is a much more indubitable thing than the adherence of the structure to it. Now the apostles and prophets, and canonical writers, are the foundation of the church, according to that of St. Paul, *built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets;* therefore their stability, in reason, ought to be greater than the church's which is built upon them. Again, a dependent infallibility (especially if the dependence be voluntary) cannot be so certain as that on which it depends: but the infallibility of the church depends upon the infallibility of the apostles, as the straightness of the thing regulated upon the straightness of the rule; and besides, this dependence is voluntary; for it is in the power of the church to deviate from this rule; being nothing else but an aggregation of men, of which every one hath free-will, and is subject to passions and error; therefore the church's infallibility is not so certain as that of the apostles.

31. Lastly, *quid verba audiam, cum facta videam?* If you be so infallible as the apostles were, show it as the apostles did: *They went forth* (saith St. Mark) *and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming their words with signs following*. It is impossible that God should lie, and that the Eternal Truth should set his hand and seal to the confirmation of a falsehood, or of such doctrine as is partly true and partly false. The apostles' doctrine was thus confirmed, therefore it was entirely true, and in no part either false or uncertain. I say, in no part of that which they delivered constantly as a certain Divine truth, and which had the attestation of Divine miracles. For that the apostles themselves, even after the sending of the Holy Ghost, were, and, through inadvertence or prejudice, continued for a time in error, repugnant to a revealed truth, it is, as I have already noted, unanswerably evident from the story of the Acts of the Apostles. For notwithstanding our Saviour's express warrant and injunction, to *go and preach to all nations*, yet until St. Peter was better informed by a vision from heaven, and by the conversion of Cornelius, both he and the rest of the church held it unlawful for them to go or preach the gospel to any but the Jews.

32. And for those things which they profess to deliver as the dictates of human reason and prudence, and not as Divine revelations, why we should take them to be Divine revelations I see no reason; nor how

we can do so, and not contradict the apostles and God himself. Therefore, when St. Paul says in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, vii. 12, *To the rest speak I, not the Lord;* and again, *Concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I deliver my judgment:* if we will pretend that the Lord did certainly speak what St. Paul spake, and that his judgment was God's commandment, shall we not plainly contradict St. Paul and that Spirit by which he wrote? which moved him to write, as in other places, Divine revelations, which he certainly knew to be such; so, in this place, his own judgment touching some things which God had not particularly revealed unto him. And if Dr. Potter did speak to this purpose, "that the apostles were infallible only in these things which they spake of certain knowledge," I cannot see what danger there was in saying so: yet the truth is, you wrong Dr. Potter. It is not he, but Dr. Stapleton in him, that speaks the words you cavil at. "Dr. Stapleton," saith he, p. 140, "is full and punctual to his purpose:" then sets down the effect of his discourse, 1. S. Princ. Doct. 4. c. 15, and in that the words you cavil at; and then, p. 150, he shuts up this paragraph with these words: "Thus Dr. Stapleton." So that, if either the doctrine or the reason be not good, Dr. Stapleton, not Dr. Potter, is to answer for it.

33. Neither do Dr. Potter's ensuing words "limit the apostles' infallibility to truths absolutely necessary to salvation," if you read them with any candour; for it is evident he grants the "church infallible in truth absolutely necessary;" and as evident, that he "ascribes to the apostles the Spirit's guidance, and consequently infallibility, in a more high and absolute manner than any since them." From whence thus I argue: he that grants the church infallible in fundamentals, and ascribes to the apostles the infallible guidance of the Spirit in a more high and absolute manner, than to any since them, limits not the apostles' infallibility to fundamentals: but Dr. Potter grants to the church such a limited infallibility and ascribes to the apostles "the Spirit's infallible guidance in a more high and absolute manner;" therefore he limits not the apostles' infallibility to fundamentals. I once knew a man out of courtesy help a lame dog over a style, and he for requital bit him by the fingers: just so you serve Dr. Potter. He out of courtesy grants you that those words, *The Spirit shall lead you into all truth, and shall abide with you for ever*, though in their high and most absolute sense they agree only to the apostles, yet in a conditional, limited, moderate, secondary sense, they may be understood of the church; but says, that if they be understood of the church, "*all* must not be simply *all*," no, nor so large an *all* as the apostles' *all*, but "all necessary to salvation." And you, to requite his courtesy in granting you thus much, cavil at him, as if he had prescribed these bounds to the apostles also, as well as the present church. Whereas he hath explained himself to the contrary, both in the clause aforementioned, "the apostles who had the Spirit's guidance in a more high and absolute manner than any since them;" and in these words ensuing "whereof the church is simply ignorant;" and again, "wherewith the church is not acquainted." But most clearly in those, which, being most incompatible to the apostles, you with an "&c.," I cannot but fear craftily, have concealed: "How many obscure texts of Scripture which she understands not? How many school questions which she hath not, haply cannot determine? And for matters of fact, it is apparent that the church may err;" and then concludes, that "we must understand by *all truths*, not simply *all*, but" (if you conceive the words as spoken of the church) "all truth absolutely necessary to salvation;" and yet, beyond all this, the negative part of his answer agrees very well to the apostles themselves; for that *all* which they were led unto, was not simply *all*, otherwise St. Paul erred in saying, *We know in part;* but such an *all* as was requisite to make them the church's foundations. Now such they could not be, without freedom from error in all those things which they delivered constantly as certain revealed truths. For if we once suppose they may have erred in some things of this nature, it will be utterly undiscernible what they have erred in, and what they have not. Whereas, though we suppose the church hath erred in some things, yet we have means to know what she hath erred in, and what she hath not; I mean, by comparing the doctrine of the present church, with the doctrine of the primitive church delivered in Scripture. But then, last of all, suppose the doctor had said (which I know he never intended) that this promise, in this place made

to the apostles, was to be understood only of truths absolutely necessary to salvation, is it consequent that he makes their preaching and writing not infallible in points not fundamental? Do you not blush for shame at this sophistry? The Dr. says, no more was promised in this place; therefore he says no more was promised! Are there not other places besides this? And may not that be promised in other places which is not promised in this?

34. "But if the apostles were infallible in all things proposed by them as Divine truths, the like must be affirmed of the church, because Dr. Potter teacheth the said promise to be verified in the church." True, he doth so, but not in so absolute a manner. Now what is opposed to, but or *restrained?* To the apostles, then it was made, and to them only, yet the words are true of the church. And this very promise might have been made to it, though here it is not. They agree to the apostles in a higher, to the church in a lower sense; to the apostles in a more absolute, to the church in a more limited sense. To the apostles absolutely for the church's direction; to the church conditionally by adherence to that direction, and so far as she doth adhere to it. In a word, the apostles were led into all truths by the Spirit, *efficaciter:* the church is led also into all truths by the apostles' writings, *sufficienter:* so that the apostles and the church may be fitly compared to the star and the wise men. The star was directed by the finger of God, and could not but go right to the place where Christ was: but the wise men were led by the star to Christ, led by it, I say, not *efficaciter* or *irresistibiliter*, but *sufficienter;* so that if they would, they might follow it; if they would not, they might choose. So was it between the apostles' writing Scriptures and the church. They in their writings were infallibly assisted to propose nothing as a Divine truth but what was so: the church is also led into all truth, but it is by the intervening of the apostles' writings: but it is as the wise men were led by the star, or as a traveller is directed by a Mercurial statue, or as a pilot by his card and compass, led sufficiently, but not irresistibly; led as that she may follow, not so that she must. For, seeing the church is a society of men, whereof every one (according to the doctrine of the Romish church) hath freewill in believing, it follows, that the whole aggregate hath freewill in believing. And if any man say, that at least it is morally impossible, that of so many, whereof all may believe aright, not any should do so; I answer, it is true, if they did all give themselves any liberty of judgment. But if all (as the case is here) captivate their understandings to one of them, all are as likely to err as that one; and he more likely to err than any other, because he may err, and thinks he cannot, and because he conceives the Spirit absolutely promised to that succession of bishops, of which many have been notoriously and confessedly wicked men, *men of the world:* whereas this Spirit is *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him*. Besides, let us suppose that neither in this nor in any other place God hath promised any more unto them, but to lead them into all truth necessary for their own and other men's salvation; doth it therefore follow that they were, *de facto*, led no further? God, indeed, is obliged by his veracity to do all that he hath promised, but is there any thing that binds him to do any more? May not he be better than his word, but you will quarrel at him? May not his bounty exceed his promise? And may not we have certainty enough that ofttimes it doth so? God at first did not promise to Solomon, in his vision at Gibeon, any more than what he asked, which was *wisdom to govern his people*, and that he gave him. But yet, I hope, you will not deny that we have certainty enough that he gave him something which neither God had promised nor he had asked. If you do, you contradict God himself: for, *Behold* (saith God), *because thou hast asked this thing, I have done according to thy word. Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee; and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee in all thy days.* God, for aught appears, never obliged himself by promise to show St. Paul those unspeakable mysteries which in the third heaven he showed unto him; and yet, I hope, we have certainty enough that he did so. God promises to those that seek his kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, that all things necessary shall be added unto them; and in rigour by his promise he is obliged to do no more;

and if he give them necessaries, he hath discharged his obligation: shall we therefore be so injurious to his bounty towards us, as to say it is determined by the narrow bounds of mere necessity? So, though God hath obliged himself by promise to give his apostles infallibility only in things necessary to salvation; nevertheless, it is utterly inconsequent that he gave them no more, than by the rigour of his promise he was engaged to do; or that we can have no assurance of any further assistance than he gave them; especially when he himself, both by his word and by his works, hath assured us, that he did assist them further. You see by this time that your chain of "fearful consequences" (as you call them) is turned to a rope of sand, and may easily be avoided, without any flying to your imaginary infallibility of the church in all her proposals.

35. Ad § 14, 15. "Doubting of a book received for canonical," may signify, either doubting whether it be canonical, or, supposing it to be canonical, whether it be true. If the former sense were yours, I must then again distinguish of the term *received;* for it may signify, either received by some particular church, or by the present church universal, or the church of all ages. If you meant the word in either of the former senses, that which you say is not true. A man may justly and reasonably doubt of some texts, or some book received by some particular church, or by the universal church of this present time, whether it be canonical or no, and yet have just reason to believe, and no reason to doubt, but that other books are canonical. As Eusebius, perhaps, had reason to doubt of the Epistle of St. James; the church of Rome, in Hierom's time, of the Epistle to the Hebrews: and yet they did not doubt of all the books of the canon, nor had reason to do so. If by *received* you mean "received by the church of all ages," I grant, he that doubts of any one such book hath as much reason to doubt of all. But yet here again I tell you, that it is possible a man may doubt of one such book, and yet not of all; because it is possible men may do not according to reason. If you meant your words in the latter sense, then I confess he that believes such a book to be canonical, i. e., the word of God, and yet (to make an impossible supposition) believes it not to be true, if he will do according to reason, must doubt of all the rest, and believe none. For there being no greater reason to believe any thing true, than because God hath said it, nor no other reason to believe the Scripture to be true, but only because it is God's word, he that doubts of the truth of any thing said by God, hath as much reason to believe nothing that he says; and therefore, if he will do according to reason, neither must nor can believe any thing he says. And upon this ground you conclude rightly, "that the infallibility of true Scripture must be universal, and not confined to points fundamental."

36. And this reason why we should not refuse to believe any part of Scripture, upon pretence that the matter of it is not fundamental, you confess to be convincing. "But the same reason," you say, "is as convincing for the universal infallibility of the church; for," say you, "unless she be infallible in all things, we cannot believe her in any one." But by this reason your proselytes, knowing you are not infallible in all things, must not nor cannot believe you in any thing; nay, you yourself must not believe yourself in any thing, because you know that you are not infallible in all things. Indeed, if you had said, "we could not rationally believe her for her own sake, and upon her own word and authority in any thing." I should willingly grant the consequence. For an authority subject to error can be no firm or stable foundation of my belief in any thing; and if it were in any thing, then this authority, being one and the same in all proposals, I should have the same reason to believe all that I have to believe one; and therefore must either do unreasonably, in believing any one thing, upon the sole warrant of this authority; or unreasonably, in not believing all things equally warranted by it. Let this therefore be granted; and what will come of it? "Why then," you say, "we cannot believe her in propounding canonical books." If you mean still (as you must do, unless you play the sophister) "not upon her own authority," I grant it; for we believe canonical books not upon the "authority of the present church," but upon universal tradition. If you mean not at all, and that with reason we cannot believe these books to be canonical, which the church proposes, I deny it. There is no more consequence in the argument than in this: The devil is not infallible;

therefore, if he says there is one God, I cannot believe him. No geometrician is infallible in all things, therefore not in these things which he demonstrates. Mr. Knot is not infallible in all things, therefore he may not believe that he wrote a book, entitled "Charity Maintained."

37. But "though the reply be good, protestants cannot make use of it, with any good coherence to this distinction, and some other doctrines of theirs; because they pretend to be able to tell what points are fundamental, and what not; and therefore, though they should believe Scripture erroneous in others, yet they might be sure it erred not in these." To this I answer, That if, without dependence on Scripture, they did know what were fundamental, and what not, they might possibly believe the Scripture true in fundamentals, and erroneous in other things. But seeing they ground their belief, that "such and such things only are fundamental," only upon Scripture, and go about to prove their assertion true, only by Scripture; then must they suppose the Scripture true absolutely in all things, or else the Scripture could not be a sufficient warrant to them to believe this thing, that these only points are fundamental. For who would not laugh at them if they should argue thus: The Scripture is true in something; the Scripture says that these points only are fundamental; therefore this is true, that these only are so? For every fresh-man in logic knows, that from mere particulars nothing can be certainly concluded. But, on the other side, this reason is firm and demonstrative: The Scripture is true in all things: but the Scripture says, that these only points are the fundamentals of Christian religion; therefore it is true that these only are so. So that the knowledge of fundamentals, being itself drawn from Scripture, is so far from warranting us to believe the Scripture is or may be in part true and in part false, that itself can have no foundation but the universal truth of Scripture. For to be a fundamental truth presupposes to be a truth; now I cannot know any doctrine to be a Divine and supernatural truth, or a true part of Christianity, but only because the Scripture says so, which is all true; therefore much more can I not know it to be a fundamental truth.

38. Ad § 16. To this paragraph I answer: though, the church being not infallible, I cannot believe her in every thing she says; yet I can and must believe her in every thing she proves, either by Scripture, reason, or universal tradition, be it fundamental or be it not fundamental. This, you say, "we cannot in points not fundamental, because in such we believe she may err:" but this, I know, we can; because though she may err in some things, yet she does not err in what she proves, though it be not fundamental. Again, you say, "we cannot do it in fundamentals, because we must know what points be fundamental before we go to learn of her." Not so. But [seeing faith comes by hearing, and by hearing those who give testimony to it, which none doth but the church, and the parts of it] I must learn of the church, or of some part of it, or I cannot know any thing fundamental or not fundamental. For how can I come to know, that there was such a man as Christ, that he taught such doctrine, that he and his apostles did such miracles in confirmation of it, that the Scripture is God's word, unless I be taught it? So then the church is, though "not a certain foundation and proof of my faith, yet a necessary introduction to it."

39. But "the church's infallible direction extending only to fundamentals, unless I know them before I go to learn of her, I may be rather deluded than instructed by her." The reason and connexion of this consequence, I fear, neither I nor you do well understand. And besides, I must tell you you are too bold in taking that which no man grants you, "that the church is an infallible director in fundamentals." For if she were so, then must we not only learn fundamentals of her, but also "learn of her what is fundamental, and take all for fundamental which she delivers to us as such." In the performance whereof, if I knew any one church to be infallible, I would quickly be of that church. But, good sir, you must needs do us this favour, to be so acute as to distinguish between being "infallible in fundamentals" and being "an infallible guide in fundamentals." That there shall be always "a church infallible in fundamentals," we easily grant: for it comes to no more but this, "that there shall be always a church." But that there shall be always such a church, which is an infallible guide in fundamentals, this we deny. For this cannot be without settling a known infallibility in some one known society of Christians (as the Greek, or the

Roman, or some other church); by adhering to which guide, men might be guided to believe aright in all fundamentals. A man that were destitute of all means of communicating his thoughts to others, might yet, in himself and to himself, be infallible, but he could not be a guide to others. A man or a church that were invisible, so that none could know how to repair to it for direction, could not be an infallible guide, and yet he might be in himself infallible. You see then there is a wide difference between these two; and therefore I must beseech you not to confound them, nor to take the one for the other.

40. But they that "know what points are fundamental, otherwise than by the church's authority, learn not of the church." Yes, they may learn of the church that the Scripture is the word of God, and from the Scripture that such points are fundamental, others are not so; and consequently learn, even of the church, even of your church, that all is not fundamental, nay, all is not true, which the church teacheth to be so. Neither do I see what hinders but a man may learn of a church how to confute the errors of that church which taught him, as well as of my master in physic or the mathematics I may learn those rules and principles by which I may confute my master's erroneous conclusion.

41. But you ask, "if the church be not an infallible teacher, why are we commanded to hear, to seek, to obey the church?" I answer, for commands "to seek the church," I have not yet met with any; and, I believe, you, if you were to show them, would be yourself to seek. But yet if you could produce some such, we might seek the church to many good purposes, without supposing her a guide infallible." And then for hearing and obeying the church," I would fain know, whether none be heard and obeyed but those that are infallible; whether particular churches, governors, pastors, parents, be not to be heard and obeyed? or whether all these be infallible? I wonder you will thrust upon us so often these worn-out objections, without taking notice of their answers.

42. Your argument from St. Austin's first place is a fallacy, *a dicto secundum quid, ad dictum simplicitur:* if the "whole church practise any of these things," ("matters of order and decency," for such only there he speaks of), "to dispute whether that ought to be done, is insolent madness." And from hence you infer, "if the whole church practise any thing, to dispute whether it ought to be done, is insolent madness:" as if there were no difference between "any thing" and "any of these things;" or as if I might not esteem it pride and folly to contradict and disturb the church for matter of order, pertaining to the time and place and other circumstances of God's worship; and yet account it neither pride nor folly, to go about to reform errors, which the church has suffered to come in, and to vitiate the very substance of God's worship. It was a practice of the whole church in St. Austin's time, and esteemed an apostolic tradition even by St. Austin himself, "that the eucharist should be administered to infants:" tell me, sir, I beseech you, had it been insolent madness to dispute against this practice, or had it not? If it had, how insolent and mad are you, that have not only disputed against it, but utterly abolished it! If it had not, then, as I say, you must understand St. Austin's words, not simply of all things, but (as indeed he himself restrained them) of "these things," of "matter of order, decency, and uniformity."

43. In the next place you tell us out of him "that that which hath been always kept, is most rightly esteemed to come from the apostles." Very right; and what then? Therefore the church cannot err in defining of controversies. Sir, I beseech you, when you write again, do us the favour to write nothing but syllogisms; for I find it still an extreme trouble to find out the concealed propositions which are to connect the parts of your enthymemes. As now, for example, I profess unto you I am at my wit's end, and have done my best endeavour, to find some glue, or soder, or cement, or chain, or thread, or any thing to tie this antecedent and this consequent together, and at length am enforced to give it over, and cannot do it.

44. But the doctrines, "that infants are to be baptized, and those that are baptized by heretics, are not to be rebaptized, are neither of them to be proved by Scripture: and yet, according to St. Austin, they are true doctrines, and we may be certain of them upon the authority of the church, which we could not be,

unless the church were infallible; therefore the church is infallible." I answer, that there is no repugnance, but we may be certain enough of the universal traditions of the ancient church; such as in St. Austin's account these were which are here spoken of, and yet not be certain enough of the definitions of the present church, unless you can show (which I am sure you never can do) that the infallibility of the present church was always a tradition of the ancient church. Now your main business is to prove the present church infallible, not so much in consigning ancient tradition, as in defining emergent controversies. Again, it follows not, because the church's authority is warrant enough for us to believe some doctrine, touching which the Scripture is silent; therefore it is warrant enough to believe these, to which the Scripture seems repugnant. Now the doctrines which St. Austin received upon the church's authority are of the first sort, the doctrines for which we deny your church's infallibility are of the second. And therefore though the church's authority might be strong enough to bear the weight which St. Austin laid upon it, yet haply it may not be strong enough to bear that which you lay upon it; though it may support some doctrines without Scripture, yet surely not against it. And last of all, to deal ingenuously with you and the world, I am not such an idolater of St. Austin as to think a thing proved sufficiently because he says it, nor that all his sentences are oracles; and particularly in this thing, that whatsoever was practised or held by the universal church of his time must needs have come from the apostles; though considering the nearness of his time to the apostles, I think it a good probable way, and therefore am apt enough to follow it, when I see no reason to the contrary; yet, I profess, I must have better satisfaction, before I can induce myself to hold it certain and infallible. And this, not because popery would come in at this door, as some have vainly feared, but because by the church universal of some time, and the church universal of other times, I see plain contradictions held and practised; both which could not come from the apostles, for then the apostles had been teachers of falsehood. And therefore, the belief or practice of the present universal church can be no infallible proof that the doctrine so believed, or the custom so practised, came from the apostles. I instance in the doctrine of the millenaries, and the eucharist' necessity for infants; both which doctrines have been taught by the consent of the eminent fathers of some ages, without any opposition from any of their contemporaries; and were delivered by them, not as doctors, but as witnesses; not as their opinions, but apostolic traditions. And therefore measuring the doctrine of the church by all the rules which Cardinal Perron gives us for that purpose, both these doctrines must be acknowledged to have been the doctrines of the ancient church of some age or ages; and that the contrary doctrines were catholic at some other time, I believe you will not think it needful for me to prove. So that either I must say the apostles were fountains of contradictious doctrines, or that being the universal doctrine of this present church is no sufficient proof that it came originally from the apostles. Besides, who can warrant us that the universal traditions of the church were all apostolical; seeing in that famous place for traditions, in Tertullian, *Quicunque traditor*, any author whatsoever is founder good enough for them? And who can secure us that human inventions, and such as came *a quocunque traditore* might not in short time gain the reputation of apostolic; seeing the direction then was, *Præcepta majorum apostolicas traditiones quisque existimat?*

45. No less, you say, is St. Chrysostom "for the infallible traditions of the church." But you were to prove the church infallible, not in her traditions—(which we willingly grant, if they be as universal as the tradition of the undoubted books of Scripture is, to be as infallible as the Scripture is; for neither doth being written make the word of God the more infallible, nor being unwritten make it the less infallible)—not therefore in her universal traditions were you to prove the church infallible, but in all her decrees and definitions of controversies. To this point, when you speak, you shall have an answer; but hitherto you do but wander.

46. But let us see what St. Chrysostom says: "They" (the apostles) "delivered not all things in writing;" (who denies it?) "but many things also without writing:" (who doubts of it?) "and these also are

worthy of belief." Yes, if we knew what they were. But many things are worthy of belief which are not necessary to be believed; as, that Julius Cæsar was Emperor of Rome is a thing worthy of belief, being so well testified as it is, but yet it is not necessary to be believed; a man may be saved without it. Those many works which our Saviour did (which St. John supposes *would not have been contained in a world of books*), if they had been written, or if God, by some other means, had preserved the knowledge of them, had been as worthy to be believed, and as necessary, as those that are written. But to show you how much a more faithful keeper records are than report, those few that were written are preserved and believed; those infinitely more, that were not written, are all lost and vanished out of the memory of men. And seeing God in his providence hath not thought fit to preserve the memory of them, he hath freed us from the obligation of believing them; for every obligation ceaseth, when it becomes impossible. Who can doubt but the primitive Christians, to whom the epistles of the apostles were written, either of themselves understood or were instructed by the apostles, touching the sense of the obscure places of them? These traditive interpretations, had they been written and dispersed as the Scriptures were, had without question been preserved as the Scriptures are. But to show how excellent a keeper of the tradition the church of Rome hath been, or even the catholic church, for want of writing they are all lost, nay, were all lost within a few ages after Christ: so that if we consult the ancient interpreters, we shall hardly find any two of them agree about the sense of any one of them. Cardinal Perron, in his Discourse of Traditions, having alleged this place for them, *Hold the traditions*, &c., tells us, "we must not answer, that St. Paul speaks here only of such traditions which (though not in this Epistle to Thessal. yet) were afterwards written, and in other books of Scripture: because it is upon occasion of tradition (touching the cause of the hinderance of the coming of antichrist) which was never written, that he lays this injunction upon them *to hold the traditions*." Well, let us grant this argument good and concluding: and that the church of the Thessalonians, or the catholic church (for what St. Paul writ to one church he writ to all), were to hold some unwritten traditions, and among the rest, what was the cause of the hinderance of the coming of antichrist. But what if they did not perform their duty in this point, but suffered this tradition to be lost out of the memory of the church? Shall we not conclude, that seeing God would not suffer any thing necessary to salvation to be lost, and he hath suffered this tradition to be lost, therefore the knowledge or belief of it, though it were a profitable thing, yet it was not necessary? I hope you will not challenge such authority over us, as to oblige us to impossibilities, to do that which you cannot do yourselves. It is therefore requisite that you make this command possible to be obeyed, before you require obedience unto it. Are you able then to instruct us so well, as to be fit to say unto its, *Now ye know what withholdeth?* Or do you yourselves know, that ye may instruct us? Can ye, or dare you say, this or this was this hinderance which St. Paul here meant, and all men under pain of damnation are to believe it? Or if you cannot (as I am certain you cannot), go then, and vaunt your church, for the only watchful, faithful, infallible keeper of the apostles' traditions; when here this very tradition, which here in particular was deposited with the Thessalonians and the primitive church, you have utterly lost it; so that there is no footstep or print of it remaining, which with Divine faith we may rely upon. Blessed therefore be the goodness of God, who, seeing that what was not written was in such danger to be lost, took order, that what was necessary should be written! St. Chrysostom's council therefore, of "accounting the church's traditions worthy of belief," we are willing to obey; and if you can of any thing make it appear that it is tradition, we will seek no further. But this we say withal, that we are persuaded you cannot make this appear in any thing, but only in the canon of Scripture; and that there is nothing now extant, and to be known by us, which can put in so good plea to be the unwritten word of God, as the unquestioned books of canonical Scripture to be the written word of God.

47. You conclude this paragraph with a sentence of St. Austin, who says, "The church doth not approve, nor dissemble, nor do those things which are against faith or good life:" and from hence you

conclude, "that it never has done so, nor ever can do so." But though the argument hold in logic *a non posse, ad non esse*, yet I never heard that it would hold back again, *a non esse, ad non posse*. "The church cannot do this, therefore it does not," follows with good consequence: but "The church doth not this, therefore it shall never do it, nor can ever do it,' this I believe will hardly follow. In the epistle next before to the same Januarius, writing of the same matter, he hath these words: "It remains, that the thing you inquire of must be of that third kind of things, which are different in diverse places. Let every one, therefore, do that which he finds done in the church to which he comes; for none of them is against faith or good manners." And why do you not infer from hence, that "no particular church can bring up any custom that is against faith or good manners?" Certainly this consequence hath as good reason for it as the former. If a man say of the church of England (what St. Austin of the church), that she neither approves nor dissembles, nor doth any thing against faith or good manners, would you collect presently, that this man did either make or think the church of England infallible? Furthermore, it is observable out of this and the former epistle, that this church, which did not (as St. Austin, according to you, thought) "approve or dissemble, or do any thing against faith or good life," did not tolerate and dissemble vain superstitions and human presumptions, and suffer all places to be full of them, and to be exacted as, nay, more severely than, the commandments of God himself. This St. Austin himself professeth in this very epistle. "This," saith he, "I do infinitely grieve at, that many most wholesome precepts of the Divine Scripture are little regarded; and in the mean time, all is so full of so many presumptions, that he is more grievously found fault with, who during his octaves toucheth the earth with his naked foot, than he that shall bury his soul in drunkenness." Of these, he says that "they were neither contained in Scripture, decreed by councils, nor corroborated by the custom of the universal church; and though not against faith, yet unprofitable burdens of Christian liberty, which made the condition of the Jews more tolerable than that of Christians." And therefore he professeth of them, *Approbare non possum*, "I cannot approve them:" and, *Ubi facultas tribuitar, resecanda existimo*; "I think they are to be cut off, wheresoever we have power." Yet so deeply were they rooted, and spread so far, through the indiscreet devotion of the people, always more prone to superstition than true piety, and through the connivance of the governors, who should have strangled them at their birth, that himself, though he grieved at them, and could not allow them, yet for fear of offence he durst not speak against them, *Multa hujusmodi, propter nonnullarum vet sanctarum vel turbulentarum personarum scandala devitanda, liberius improbare non audeo:* "many of these these things, for fear of scandalising many holy persons, or provoking those that are turbulent, I dare not "freely disallow." Nay, the catholic church itself did see, and dissemble, and tolerate them; for these are the things of which he presently says after, "The church of God," [and you will have him speak of the true catholic church] "placed between chaff and tares, tolerates many things." Which was directly against the command of the Holy Spirit, given the church by St. Paul, to *stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made her free,* and not to suffer herself to be brought in bondage to these servile burdens. Our Saviour tells the scribes and Pharisees, that *in vain they worshipped God, teaching for doctrines men's commandments: for that, laying aside the commandments of God, they held the traditions of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things*. Certainly, that which St. Augustin complains of as the general fault of Christians of his time was parallel to this: *Multa* (saith he) *quæ in divinis libris saluberrime præcepta sunt, minus curantur;* this I suppose I may very well render in our Saviour's words, *The commandments of God are laid aside;* and then, *Tam multis præsumptiouibus sic plena sunt omnia*, "All things, or all places, are so full of so many presumptions, and those exacted with such severity, nay, with tyranny, that he was more severely censured who in the time of his octaves touched the earth with his naked feet, than he which drowned and buried his soul in drink." Certainly, if this be not *to teach for doctrines men's commandments*, I know not what is; and therefore these superstitious Christians might be said to worship God in vain, as well as the scribes and Pharisees. And yet great variety of superstitions of this kind were then already

spread over the church, being different in diverse places. This is plain from these words of St. Austin concerning them, *Diversorum locorum diversis moribus innumerabiliter variantur;* and apparent, because the stream of them was grown so violent, that he durst not oppose it; *Liberius improbare non audeo*, "I dare not freely speak against them." So that to say the catholic church tolerated all this, and, for fear of offence, durst not abrogate or condemn it, is to say (if we judge rightly of it) that the church, with silence and connivance, generally tolerated Christians to worship God in vain. Now how this tolerating of universal superstition in the church can consist with the assistance and direction of God's omnipotent Spirit to guard it from superstition, and with the accomplishment of that pretended prophecy of the church, *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night;* besides, how these superstitions, being thus nourished, cherished, and strengthened by the practice of the most, and urged with great violence upon others, as the commandments of God, and but fearfully opposed or contradicted by any, might in time take such deep root, and spread their branches so far, as to pass for universal customs of the church, he that does not see, sees nothing. Especially, considering the catching and contagious nature of this sin, and how fast ill weeds spread, and how true and experimented that rule is of the historian, *Exempla non consistunt ubi inciptunt, sed quamlibet in tenuem recepta tramitem latissime evagandi sibi faciunt potestatem*. Nay, that some such superstition had not already, even in St. Austin's time, prevailed so far, as to be *consuetudine universa ecclesiæ roboraturn*, who can doubt that considers, that the practice of communicating infants had even then got the credit and authority, not only of an universal custom, but also of an apostolic tradition?

48. But (you will say) notwithstanding all this, "St. Austin here warrants us, that the church can never either approve, or dissemble, or practise any thing against faith or good life, and so long you may rest securely upon it." Yea, but the same St. Austin tells us, in the same place, that "the church may tolerate human presumptions and vain superstitions, and those urged more severely than the commandments of God:" and whether superstition be a sin or no, I appeal to our Saviour's words before cited, and to the consent of your schoolmen. Besides, if we consider it rightly, we shall find that the church is not truly said only to tolerate these things, but rather that a part, and far the lesser, tolerated and dissembled them in silence, and a part, and far greater, publicly avowed and practised them, and urged them upon others with great violence, and yet continued still a part of the church. Now, why the whole church might not continue the church, and yet do so, as well as a part of the church might continue a part of it, and yet do so, I desire you to inform me.

49. But now, after all this ado, what if St. Austin says not this which is pretended of the church; viz. "that she neither approves, nor dissembles, nor practises any thing against faith or good life," but only of good men in the church; certainly, though some copies read as you would have it, yet you should not have dissembled that others read the place otherwise; viz. *Ecclesia multa tolerat; et tamen quæ sunt contra fidem et bonam vitam, nec bonus approbat*, &c.; "The church tolerates many things; and yet what is against faith or good life, a good man will neither approve, nor dissemble, nor practise."

50. Ad § 17. That Abraham begat Isaac is a point very far from being fundamental; and yet I hope you will grant that protestants believing Scripture to be the word of God, may be certain enough of the truth and certainty of it: for what if they say that the catholic church, and much more themselves, may possibly err us some unfundamental points, is it therefore consequent they can be certain of none such? What if a wiser man than I may mistake the sense of some obscure place of Aristotle, may I not therefore, without any arrogance or inconsequence, conceive myself certain that I understand him in some plain places, which carry their sense before them? And then for points fundamental, to what purpose do you say, that "we must first know what they be, before we can be assured that we cannot err in understanding the Scripture," when we pretend not at all to any assurance that we cannot err, but only to a sufficient certainty that we do not err, but rightly understand those things that are plain, whether fundamental or

not fundamental; that *God is, and is a rewarder of them that seek him;* that there is no salvation but by faith in Christ; that by repentance from dead works, and faith in Christ, remission of sins may be obtained; that there shall be a resurrection of the body: these we conceive both true, because the Scripture says so, and truths fundamental, because they are necessary parts of the gospel, whereof our Saviour says, *Qui non crediderit, damnabitur*. All which we either learn from Scripture immediately, or learn of those that learn it of Scripture; so that neither learned nor unlearned pretend to know these things independently of Scripture. And therefore in imputing this to us, you cannot excuse yourself from having done us a palpable injury.

51. Ad § 18. And I urge you as mainly as you urge Dr. Potter and other protestants, that you tell us that all the traditions, and all the definitions of the church, are fundamental points, and we cannot wrest from you "a list in particular of all such traditions and definitions, without which no man can tell whether or no he err in points fundamental, and be capable of salvation" (for, I hope, erring in our fundamentals is no more exclusive of salvation than erring in yours); "and, which is most lamentable, instead of giving us such a catalogue, you also fall to wrangle among yourselves about the making of it;" some of you, as I have said above, holding some things to be matters of faith, which others deny to be so.

52. Ad § 19. I answer, That these differences between protestants concerning errors damnable and not damnable, truths fundamental and not fundamental, may be easily reconciled. For either the error they speak of "may be purely and simply involuntary," or it may be in respect of the cause of it voluntary. If the cause of it be some voluntary and avoidable fault, the error is itself sinful, and consequently in its own nature damnable; as if, by negligence in seeking the truth, by unwillingness to find it, by pride, by obstinacy, by desiring that religion should be true which suits best with my ends, by fear of men's ill opinion, or any other worldly fear, or any other worldly hope, I betray myself to any error contrary to any Divine revealed truth, that error may be justly styled a sin, and consequently of itself to such a one damnable. But if I be guilty of none of these faults, but be desirous to know the truth, and diligent in seeking it, and advise not at all with flesh and blood about the choice of my opinions, but only with God, and that reason that he hath given me; if I be thus qualified, and yet through human infirmity fall into error, that error cannot be damnable. Again, the party erring may be conceived either to die with contrition, for all his sins known and unknown, or without it; if he die without it, this error in itself damnable will be likewise so unto him; if he die with contrition (as his error can be no impediment but he may), his error, though in itself damnable, to him, according to your doctrine, will not prove so. And therefore some of those authors, whom you quote, speaking of errors whereunto men were betrayed, or wherein they were kept by their fault, or vice, or passion (as for the most part men are); others, speaking of them as errors simply and purely involuntary, and the effects of human infirmity; some, as they were "retracted by contrition" (to use your own phrase), others, as they were not; no marvel that they have passed upon them, some a heavier, and some a milder, some an absolving, and some a condemning sentence: the least of all these errors which here you mention having malice enough too frequently mixed with it to sink a man deep enough into hell; and the greatest of them all being, according to your principles, either no fault at all, or venial, where there is no malice of the will conjoined with it. And if it be, yet, as the most malignant poison will not poison him that receives with it a more powerful antidote; so I am confident your own doctrine will force you to confess, that whosoever dies with faith in Christ, and contrition for all sins, known and unknown (in which heap all his sinful errors must be comprised), can no more be hurt by any the most malignant and pestilent error, than St. Paul by the viper which he shook off into the fire. Now touching the *necessity of repentance from dead works, and faith in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world*, they all agree; and therefore you cannot deny but they agree about all that is simply necessary. Moreover, though if they should go about to choose out of Scripture all these propositions and doctrines which integrate and make up the body of Christian religion, peradventure

there would not be so exact agreement amongst them as some say there was between the seventy interpreters in translating the Old Testament; yet thus far without controversy they do all agree that in the Bible all these things are contained, and therefore, that whosoever doth truly and sincerely believe the Scripture must of necessity, either *in hypothesi* or at least *in thesi*, either formally or at least virtually, either explicitly or at least implicitly, either in act or at least in preparation of mind, believe all things fundamental: it being not fundamental, nor required of Almighty God, to believe the true sense of Scripture in all places, but only that we should endeavour to do so, and be prepared in mind to do so, whensoever it shall be sufficiently propounded to us. Suppose a man in some disease were prescribed a medicine consisting of twenty ingredients, and he, advising with physicians, should find them differing in opinion about it; some of them telling him that all the ingredients were absolutely necessary; some, that only some of them were necessary, the rest only profitable, and requisite *ad melius esse;* lastly, some, that some only were necessary, some profitable, and the rest superfluous, yet not hurtful; yet all with one accord agreeing in this, that "the whole receipt had in it all things necessary" for the recovery of his health, and that if he made use of it he should infallibly find it successful; what wise man would not think they agreed sufficiently for his direction to the recovery of health? Just so these protestant doctors, with whose discords you make such tragedies; agreeing *in thesi* thus far, that the "Scripture evidently contains all things necessary to salvation," both for matter of faith and of practice; and that whosoever believes it, and endeavours to find the true sense of it, and to conform his life unto it, shall certainly perform all things necessary to salvation, and undoubtedly be saved; agreeing, I say, thus far, what matters it for the direction of men to salvation, though they differ in opinion touching what points are absolutely necessary, and what not? what errors absolutely repugnant to salvation, and what not? Especially considering, that although they differ about the question of the necessity of these truths, yet for the most part they agree in this, that truths they are, and profitable at least, though not simply necessary. And though they differ in the question, whether the contrary errors be destructive of salvation or no, yet in this they consent, that errors they are, and hurtful to religion, though not destructive of salvation. Now that which God requires of us is this, that we should believe the doctrine of the gospel to be truths; not all necessary truths, for all are not so; and consequently, the repugnant errors to be falsehoods; yet not all such falsehoods as unavoidably draw with them damnation upon all that hold them, for all do not so.

53. Yea, but you say, "it is very requisite we should agree upon a particular catalogue of fundamental points; for without such a catalogue no man can be assured whether or no he hath faith sufficient to salvation." This I utterly deny, as a thing evidently false, and I wonder you should content yourself magisterially to say so, without offering any proof of it. I might much more justly think it enough barely to deny it, without refutation, but I will not: thus therefore I argue against it:

Without being able to make a catalogue of fundamentals, I may be assured of the truth of this assertion, if it be true, that "the Scripture contains all necessary points of faith, and know that I believe explicitly all that is expressed in Scripture, and implicitly all that is contained in them; now he that believes all this, must of necessity believe all things necessary; therefore, without being able to make a catalogue of fundamentals, I may be assured that I believe all things necessary, and consequently that my faith is sufficient.

I said, of the truth of this assertion, "if it be true:" because I will not here enter into the question of the truth of it, it being sufficient for my present purpose that it may be true, and may be believed without any dependence upon a catalogue of fundamentals: and therefore if this be all your reason to demand a particular catalogue of fundamentals, we cannot but think your demand unreasonable. Especially having yourself expressed the cause of the difficulty of it, and that is, "because Scripture doth deliver Divine truths, but seldom qualifies them, or declares whether they be or be not absolutely necessary to salvation."

Yet not so seldom but that out of it I could give you an abstract of the essential parts of Christianity, if it were necessary; but I have showed it not so by confuting your reason pretended for the necessity of it, and at this time I have no leisure to do you courtesies that are so troublesome to myself. Yet thus much I will promise, that when you deliver a "particular catalogue of your church's proposals" with one hand, you shall receive a particular catalogue of what I conceive fundamental with the other; for as yet I see no such fair proceeding as you talk of, nor any performance on your own part of that which so clamorously you require on ours. For as for the catalogue which here you have given us, in saying, "you are obliged under pain of damnation to believe whatsoever the catholic visible church of Christ proposeth as revealed by Almighty God," it is like a covey of one partridge, or a flock or one sheep, or a fleet composed of one ship, or an army of one man. The author of Charity Mistaken "demands a particular catalogue of fundamental points;" and "we," say you, "again and again demand such a catalogue." And surely if this one proposition, which here you think to stop our mouths with, be a catalogue, yet at least such a catalogue it is not, and therefore as yet you have not performed what you require. For if to set down such a proposition, wherein are comprised all points taught by us to be necessary to salvation, will serve you instead of a catalogue, you shall have catalogues enough. As we are obliged to believe all, under pain of damnation, which God commands us to believe: there is one catalogue. We are obliged, under pin of damnation, to believe all whereof we may be sufficiently assured that Christ taught it his apostles, his apostles the church: there is another. We are obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe God's word, and all contained in it, to be true: there is a third. If these generalities will not satisfy you, but you will be importuning us to tell you in particular what these doctrines are which Christ taught his apostles and his apostles the church, what points are contained in God's word; then, I beseech you, do us reason, and give us a particular and exact inventory of all your church proposals, without leaving out or adding any; such a one which all the doctors of your church will subscribe to: and if you receive not then a catalogue of fundamentals, I for my part will give you leave to proclaim us bankrupts.

53. Besides this deceitful generality of your catalogue (as you call it), another main fault we find with it, that it is extremely ambiguous: and therefore, to draw you out of the clouds, give me leave to propose some questions to you concerning it. I would know, therefore, whether by believing, you mean explicitly or implicitly? If you mean implicitly, I would know whether your church's infallibility be, under pain of damnation, to be believed explicitly or no? Whether any other point or points besides this be, under the same penalty, to be believed explicitly or no? and if any, what they be? I would know what you esteem the proposal of the catholic visible church? In particular, whether the decree of a pope *ex cathedra*, that is, with an intent to oblige all Christians by it, be a sufficient and an obliging proposal? Whether men, without danger of damnation, may examine such a decree, and, if they think they have just cause, refuse to obey it? Whether the decree of a council without the pope's confirmation be such an obliging proposal or no? Whether it be so in case there be no pope, or in case it be doubtful who is pope? Whether the decree of a general council confirmed by the pope be such a proposal, and whether he be a heretic that thinks otherwise? Whether the decree of a particular council confirmed by the pope be such a proposal? Whether the general uncondemned practice of the church for some ages be such a sufficient proposition? Whether the consent of the most eminent fathers of any age, agreeing in the affirmation of any doctrine, not contradicted by any of their contemporaries, be a sufficient proposition? Whether the fathers' testifying such or such a doctrine or practice to be a tradition, or to be the doctrine or practice of the church, be a sufficient assurance that it is so? Whether we be bound, under pain of damnation, to believe every text of the vulgar Bible, now authorised by the Roman church, to be the true translation of the originals of the prophets and evangelists and apostles, without any the least alteration? Whether they that lived when the Bible of Sixtus was set forth were bound, under pain of damnation, to believe the same of that? and if not of that, of what Bible they were bound to believe it? Whether the catholic visible church

be always that society of Christians which adheres to the bishop of Rome? Whether every Christian, that hath ability and opportunity, be not bound to endeavour to know explicitly the proposals of the church? Whether implicit faith in the church's veracity will not save him that actually and explicitly disbelieves some doctrine of the church, not knowing it to be so; and actually believes some damnable heresy, as, that God hath the shape of a man? Whether an ignorant man be bound to believe any point to be decreed by the church, when his priest or ghostly father assures him it is so? Whether his ghostly father may not err in telling him so? and whether any man can be obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe an error? Whether he be bound to believe such a thing defined, when a number of priests, perhaps ten or twenty, tell him it is so? and what assurance he can have, that they neither err not deceive him in this matter? Why implicit faith in Christ or the Scriptures should not suffice for a man's salvation, as well as implicit faith in the church? Whether, when you say "whatsoever the church proposeth," you mean all that ever she proposed, or that only which she now proposeth; and whether she now proposeth all that ever she did propose? Whether all the books of canonical Scripture were sufficiently declared to the church to be so, and proposed as such by the apostles? and if not, from whom the church had this declaration afterwards? If so, whether all men ever since the apostles' time were bound, under pain of damnation, to believe the Epistle of St. James and the Epistle to the Hebrews to be canonical? at least, not to disbelieve it, and believe the contrary? Lastly, why it is not sufficient for any man's salvation to use the best means he can to inform his conscience and to follow the direction of it? To all these demands, when you have given fair and ingenuous answers, you shall hear further from me.

55. Ad § 20. At the first entrance into this paragraph, from our own doctrine, "that the church cannot err in points necessary, it is concluded, if we are wise, we must forsake it in nothing, lest we should forsake it in something necessary." To which I answer, first, that the supposition, as you understand it, is falsely imposed upon us, and, as we understand it, will do you no service. For when we say that there shall be a church always, somewhere or other, unerring in fundamentals, our meaning is but this, that there shall be always a church to the very being whereof it is repugnant that it should err in fundamentals; for if it should do so, it would want the very essence of a church, and therefore cease to be a church. But we never annexed this privilege to any one church of any one denomination, as the Greek or the Roman church; which if we had done, and set up some settled certain society of Christians, distinguishable from all others by adhering to such a bishop for our guide in fundamentals, then indeed, and then only, might you with some colour, though with no certainty, have concluded that we could not in wisdom "forsake this church in any point, for fear of forsaking it in a necessary point." But now that we say not this of any one determinate church, which alone can perform the office of guide or director, but indefinitely of the church, meaning no more but this, "that there shall be always in some place or other some church that errs not in fundamentals," will you conclude from hence, that we cannot in wisdom forsake this or that, the Roman or the Greek church, for fear of erring in fundamentals?

56. Yea, you may say (for I will make the best I can of all your arguments), "that this church, thus unerring in fundamentals, when Luther arose, was by our confession the Roman; and therefore we ought not in wisdom to have departed from it in any thing." I answer, first, that we confess no such thing, that the church of Rome was then this church, but only a part of it, and that the most corrupted and most incorrigible. Secondly, that if by adhering to that church we could have been thus far secured, this argument had some show of reason. But seeing we are not warranted thus much by any privilege of that church, that she cannot err fundamentally, but only from Scripture, which assures us that she doth err very heinously, collect our hope, that the truths she retains and the practice of them may prove an antidote to her against the error which she maintained in such persons as in simplicity of heart follow this Absalom; we should then do against the light of our conscience, and so sin damnably, if we should not abandon the profession of her errors, though not fundamental. Neither can we thus conclude: We may

safely hold with the church of Rome in all her points, for she cannot err damnably: for this is false, she may, though perhaps she doth not: but rather thus: These points of Christianity which have in them the nature of antidotes against the poison of all sins and errors, the church of Rome, though otherwise much corrupted, still retains; therefore we hope she errs not fundamentally, but still, remains a part of the church. But this can be no warrant to us to think with her in all things; seeing the very same Scripture which puts us in hope she errs not fundamentally, assures us that in many things, and those of great moment, she errs very grievously. And these errors, though to them that believe them we hope they will not be pernicious, yet the professing of them against conscience could not but bring to us certain damnation. "As for the fear of departing from some fundamental truths withal, while we depart from her errors;" haply it might work upon us, if adhering to her might secure us from it, and if nothing else could: but both these are false. For, first, adhering to her in all things cannot secure us from erring in fundamentals; because though *de facto* we hope she doth not err, yet we know no privileges she hath but she may err in them herself; and therefore we had need have better security hereof than her bare authority. Then, secondly, without dependence on her at all, we may be secured that we do not err fundamentally; I mean, by believing all things plainly set down in Scripture, wherein all necessary, and most things profitable, are plainly delivered. Suppose I were travelling to London, and knew two ways thither; the one very safe and convenient, the other very inconvenient and dangerous, but yet a way to London; and that I overtook a passenger on the way, who himself believed, and would fain persuade me, there was no other way but the worse, and would persuade me to accompany him in it, because I confessed his way, though very inconvenient and very dangerous, yet a way; so that going that way we might come to our journey's end by the consent of both parties; but he believed my way to be none at all; and therefore I might justly fear, lest, out of a desire of leaving the worst way, I left the true and the only way: if now I should not be more secure upon my own knowledge than frighted by this fallacy, would you not beg me for a fool? Just so might you think of us if we would be frighted out of our own knowledge by this bugbear. For the only and the main reason why we believe you not to err in fundamentals, is your holding the doctrine of faith in Christ and repentance; which knowing we hold as well as you, notwithstanding our departure from you, we must needs know that we do not err in fundamentals, as well as we know that you in some sort do not err in fundamentals, and therefore cannot possibly fear the contrary. Yet let us be more liberal to you, and grant that which can never be proved, that God had said in plain terms, The church of Rome shall never destroy the foundation, but withal had said, that it might and would lay much hay and stubble upon it; that you should never hold any error destructive of salvation, but yet many that were prejudicial to edification: I demand, might we have dispensed with ourselves in the believing and professing these errors in regard of the smallness of them? or, had it not been a damnable sin to do so, though the errors in themselves were not damnable? Had we not as plain direction to depart from you in some things profitable, as to adhere to you in things necessary? In the beginning of your book, when it was for your purpose to have it so, the greatness or smallness of the matter was not considerable, the evidence of the revelation was all in all. But here we must err with you in small things, for fear of losing your direction in greater; and for fear of departing too far from you, not go from you at all, even where we see plainly that you have departed from the truth!

57. Beyond all this, I say, that this which you say "in wisdom we are to do," is not only unlawful, but, if we will proceed according to reason, impossible; I mean, to adhere to you in all things, having no other ground for it, but because you are (as we will now suppose) infallible in some things, that is, in fundamentals. For whether by skill in architecture a large structure may be supported by a narrow foundation, I know not; but sure I am, in reason, no conclusion can be larger than the principles on which it is founded. And, therefore, if I consider what I do, and be persuaded that your infallibility is but limited and particular and partial, my adherence upon this ground cannot possibly be absolute and universal and

total. I am confident, that should I meet with such a man among you (as I am well assured there be many), that would grant your church infallible only in fundamentals, which what they are he knows not, and therefore upon this only reason adheres to you in all things; I say that I am confident that it may be demonstrated, that such a man adheres to you with a fiducial and certain assent in nothing. To make this clear (because at the first hearing it may seem strange), give me leave, good sir, to suppose you the man, and to propose to you a few questions, and to give for you such answers to them as upon this ground you must of necessity give, were you present with me. First, supposing you hold your church infallible in fundamentals, obnoxious to error in other things, and that you know not what points are fundamental, I demand, *C.* Why do you believe the doctrine of transubstantiation? *K.* Because the church hath taught it, which is infallible. *C.* What! Infallible in all things, or only in fundamentals? *K.* In fundamentals only. *C.* Then in other points she may err? *K.* She may. *C.* And do you know what points are fundamental, what not? *K.* No, and therefore I believe her in all things, lest I should disbelieve her in fundamentals. *C.* How know you then whether this be a fundamental point or no? *K.* I know not. *C.* It may be then (for aught you know) an unfundamental point? *K.* Yes, it may be so. *C.* And in these, you said, the church may err? *K.* Yes, I did so. *C.* Then possibly it may err in this? *K.* It may do so. *C.* Then what certainty have you that it does not err in it? *K.* None at all; but upon this supposition, that it is a fundamental. *C.* And this supposition you are uncertain of? *K.* Yes, I told you so before. *C.* And therefore you can have no certainty of that which depends upon this uncertainty, saving only a suppositive certainty, if it be a fundamental truth; which is in plain English to say, you are certain it is true, if it be both true and necessary. Verily, sir, if you have no better faith than this, you are no catholic. *K.* Good words, I pray! I am so, and, God willing, will be so. *C.* You mean in outward profession and practice, but in belief you are not, no more than a protestant is a catholic. For every protestant yields such a kind of assent to all the proposals of the church; for surely they believe them true, if they be fundamental truths. And therefore you must either believe the church infallible in all her proposals, be they foundations or be they superstructions, or you must believe all fundamental which she proposes, or else you are no catholic. *K.* But I have been taught, that, "seeing I believed the church infallible in points necessary, in wisdom I was to believe her in every thing." *C.* That was a pretty plausible inducement to bring you hither; but now you are here, you must go further, and believe her infallible in all things, or else you were as good go back again, which will be a great disparagement to you, and draw upon you both the bitter and implacable hatred of our part, and even with your own the imputation of rashness and levity. You see, I hope, by this time, that though a man did believe your church infallible in fundamentals, yet he hath no reason to do you the courtesy of believing all her proposals; nay, if he be ignorant what these fundamentals are, he hath no certain ground to believe her, upon her authority, in any thing. And whereas you say, it can be no imprudence to err with the church; I say, it may be very great imprudence, if the question be, whether we should err with the present church, or hold true with God Almighty.

58. "But we are, under pain of damnation, to believe and obey her in greater things, and therefore cannot in wisdom suspect her credit in matters of less moment." *Ans.* I have told you already, that this is falsely to suppose that we grant that in some certain points some certain church is infallibly assisted, and under pain of damnation to be obeyed: whereas all that we say is this; that, in some place or other, some church there shall be, which shall retain all necessary truths. Yet, if your supposition were true, I would not grant your conclusion, but with this exception, unless the matter were past suspicion, and apparently certain, that in these things I cannot believe God and believe the church. For then I hope you will grant, that be the thing of never so little moment, were it, for instance, but that St. Paul left his cloke at Troas, yet I were not to gratify the church so far, as for her sake to disbelieve what God himself hath revealed.

59. Whereas you say, "Since we are undoubtedly obliged to believe her in fundamentals, and cannot know precisely what those fundamentals be, we cannot without hazard of our souls leave her in any

point;" I answer, first, that this argument proceeds upon the same false ground with the former. And then, that I have told you formerly, that you fear where no fear is; and though we know not precisely just how much is fundamental, yet we know that the Scripture contains all fundamentals, and more too; and therefore, that in believing that we believe all fundamentals, and more too: and consequently, in departing from you can be in no danger of departing from that which may prove a fundamental truth; for we are well assured that certain errors can never prove fundamental truths.

60. Whereas you add, that "that visible church, which cannot err in fundamentals, propounds all her definitions without distinction to be believed under anathemas;"—*Ans*. Again you beg the question, supposing untruly that there is any "that visible church;" I mean, any visible church of one denomination which cannot err in points fundamental. Secondly, proposing definitions to be believed under anathemas is no good argument that the propounders conceive themselves infallible; but only that they conceive the doctrine they condemn is evidently damnable. A plain proof hereof is this, that particular councils, nay, particular men, have been very liberal of their anathemas which yet were never conceived infallible, either by others or themselves. If any man should now deny Christ to be the Saviour of the world, or deny the resurrection, I should make no great scruple of anathematizing his doctrine, and yet am very far from dreaming of infallibility.

61. And for the "visible church's holding it a point necessary to salvation, that we believe she cannot err," I know no such tenet; unless by *the church* you mean the Roman church, which you have as much reason to do, as that petty king in Afric hath to think himself king of all the world. And therefore your telling us, "If she speak true, what danger is it not to believe her? and if false, that it is not dangerous to believe her," is somewhat like your pope's setting your lawyers to dispute whether Constantine's donation were valid or no; whereas the matter of fact was the far greater question, whether there were any such donation, or rather when without question there was none such. That you may not seem to delude us in like manner, make it appear that the visible church doth hold so as you pretend! and then, whether it be true or false, we will consider afterwards; but, for the present, with this invisible tenet of the visible church we will trouble ourselves no further.

62. The effect of the next argument is this: "I cannot without grievous sin disbobey the church, unless I know she commands those things which are not in her power to command; and how far this power extends none can better inform me than the church; therefore I am to obey, so far as the church requires my obedience." I answer, first, that neither hath the catholic church, but only a corrupt part of it, declared herself, nor required our obedience, in the points contested among us: this, therefore, is falsely and vainly supposed here by you, being one of the greatest questions amongst us. Then, secondly, that God can better inform us what are the limits of the church's power than the church herself; that is, than the Roman clergy, who being men subject to the same passions with other men, why they should be thought the best judges in their own cause, I do not well understand; but yet we oppose against them no human decisive judges, nor any sect or person, but only God and his word. And therefore it is in vain to say, that "in following her, you shall be sooner excused than in following any sect or man applying Scriptures against her doctrine," inasmuch as we never went about to arrogate to ourselves that infallibility or absolute authority which we take away from you. But if you would have spoken to the purpose, you should have said, that in following her you should sooner have been excused than in cleaving to the Scripture and to God himself.

63. Whereas, you say, "the fearful examples of innumerable persons, who, forsaking the church upon pretence of her errors, have failed even in fundamental points, ought to deter all Christians from opposing her in any one doctrine or practice:" this is just as if you should say, Divers men have fallen into Scylla, with going too far from Charybdis; be sure, therefore, you keep close to Charybdis: divers, leaving prodigality, have fallen into covetousness; therefore be you constant to prodigality; many have fallen from

worshipping God perversely and foolishly, not to worship him at all, from worshipping many gods, to worshipping none; this then ought to deter men from leaving superstition or idolatry, for fear of falling into atheism and impiety. This is your council and sophistry; but God says clean contrary, *Take heed you swerve not either to the right hand or to the left; you must not do evil that good may come thereon:* therefore, neither that you may avoid a greater evil, you must not be obstinate in a certain error, for fear of an uncertain. What if some, forsaking the church of Rome, have forsaken fundamental truths? Was this because they forsook the church of Rome? No sure, this is *non causa pro causa;* for else all that have forsaken that church should have done so, which we say they have not: but because they went too far from her, the golden mean, the narrow way, is hard to be found, and hard to be kept; hard, but not impossible; hard, but yet you must not please yourself out of it, though you err on the right hand, though you offend on the milder part; for this is the only way *that leads to life, and few there be that find it*. It is true, if we said there was no danger in being of the Roman church, and there were danger in leaving it, it were madness to persuade any man to leave it. But we protest and proclaim the contrary, and that we have very little hope of their salvation, who, either out of negligence in seeking the truth, or unwillingness to find it, live and die in the errors and impieties of that church; and therefore cannot but conceive those fears to be most foolish and ridiculous, which persuade men to be constant in one way to hell, lest haply, if they leave it, they should fall into another.

64. But "not only others, but even protestants themselves, whose example ought most to move us, pretending to reform the church, are come to affirm that she perished for many ages, which Dr. Potter cannot deny to be a fundamental error against the article of the Creed, 'I believe the catholic church,' seeing he affirms Donatists erred fundamentally in confining it to Africa." To this I answer, first, that the error of the Donatists was not, that they held it possible that some or many or most parts of Christendom might fall away from Christianity, and that the church may lose much of her amplitude, and be contracted to a narrow compass, in comparison of her former extent; which is proved not only possible, but certain, by irrefragable experience; for who knows not that Gentilism and Mahumetism, man's wickedness deserving it, and God's providence permitting it, have prevailed, to the utter extirpation of Christianity, upon far the greater part of the world; and St. Austin, when he was out of the heat of disputation, confesses the militant church to be like the moon, sometimes increasing, and sometimes decreasing. This, therefore, was no error in the Donatists, that they held it possible that the church, from a large extent, might be contracted to a lesser; nor that they held it possible to be reduced to Africa (for why not to Afric then, as well as within these few ages you pretend it was to Europe?) but their error was, that they held *de facto*, this was done, when they had no just ground or reason to do so; and so, upon a vain pretence which they could not justify, separated themselves from the communion of all other parts of the church; and that they required it as a necessary condition to make a man a member of the church, that he should be of their communion, and divide himself from all other communions from which they were divided; which was a condition both unnecessary and unlawful to be required, and therefore the exacting of it was directly opposite to the church's catholicism; in the very same nature with their errors who required circumcision, and the keeping of the law of Moses, as necessary to salvation. For whosoever requires harder or heavier conditions of men than God requires of them, he it is that is properly an enemy of the church's universality, by hindering either men or countries from adjoining themselves to it; which, were it not for these unnecessary and therefore unlawful conditions, in probability would have made them members of it. And seeing the present church of Rome persuades men they were as good (for any hope of salvation they have) not to be Christians, as not to be Roman catholics; believe nothing at all, as not believe all she imposes upon them; be absolutely out of the church's communion, as be out of her communion, or be in any other; whether she be not guilty of the same crime with the Donatists, and those zealots of the Mosaical law, I leave it to the judgment of those that understand reason; this is sufficient

to show the vanity of this argument. But I add, moreover, that you neither have named those protestants who held the church to have perished for many ages, who perhaps held not the destruction, but the corruption of the church; not that the true church, but that the pure church perished; or rather, that the church perished not from its life and existence, but from its purity and integrity, or perhaps from its splendour and visibility; neither have you proved by any one reason, but only affirmed it, to be a fundamental error, to hold that the church militant may possibly be driven out of the world, and abolished for a time from the face of the earth.

65. "But to accuse the church of any error in faith, is to say, she lost all faith; for this is the doctrine of catholic divines, that one error in faith destroys faith." To which I answer, that to accuse the church of some error in faith, is not to say she lost all faith; for this is not the doctrine of all catholic divines: but that he which is an heretic in one article may have true faith of other articles. And the contrary is only said, and not showed, in Charity Mistaken.

66. Ad § 21. Dr. Potter says, "We may not depart from the church absolutely, and in all things;" and from hence you conclude, "therefore we may not depart from it in any thing:" and this argument you call *a demonstration*. But a fallacy, *a dicto simpliciter ad dictum secundum quid*, was not used heretofore to be called a demonstration. Dr. Potter says not that you may not depart from any opinion or any practice of the church; for you tell us in this very place that he says even the catholic may err; and every man may lawfully depart from error. He only says, "you may not cease to be of the church, nor depart from those things which make it so to be;" and from hence you infer a necessity of forsaking it in nothing. Just as if you should argue thus: You may not leave you friend or brother, therefore you may not leave the vice of your friend or the error of your brother. What he says of the catholic church, p. 75, the same he extends presently after "to every true, though never so corrupted part of it." And why do you not conclude from hence, that no particular church (according to his judgment) can fall into any error, and call this *a demonstration* too? For as he says, p. 75, that "there can be no just cause to depart from the whole church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself;" so, p. 76, he tells you, that "whosoever forsakes any one true member of the body, forsakes the whole." So that what he says of the one, he says of the other; and tells you, that neither universal nor particular church, so long as they continue so, may be forsaken: he means absolutely, no more than Christ himself may be forsaken absolutely: for the church is the body of Christ, and whosoever forsakes either the body, or his coherence to any one part of it, must forsake his subordination and relation to the Head. Therefore, whosoever forsakes the church, or any Christian, must forsake Christ himself.

67. But then he tells you plainly in the same place, "that it may be lawful and necessary to depart from a particular church in some doctrines and practices:" and this he would have said even of the catholic church, if there had been occasion; but there was none. For there he was to declare and justify our departure, not from the catholic church, but the Roman, which we maintain to be a particular church. But in other places you confess his doctrine to be, that, even the catholic church may err in points not fundamental; which you do not pretend that he ever imputed to Christ himself. And therefore you cannot with any candour interpret his words as if he had said, We may not forsake the church in any thing, no more than Christ himself; but only thus, We may not cease to be of the church, nor forsake it absolutely and totally, no more than Christ himself; and thus we see sometimes a mountain may travail, and the production be a mouse.

68. Ad § 22. But "Dr. Potter either contradicts himself, or else must grant the church infallible; because he says, 'if we did not differ from the Roman, we could not agree with the catholic;' which saying supposes the catholic church cannot err." *Answ*. This argument, to give it the right name, is an obscure and intricate nothing: and to make it appear so, let us suppose, in contradiction to your supposition, either that the catholic church may err, but doth not, but that the Roman actually doth; or that the

catholic church doth err in some few things, but that the Roman errs in many more. And is it not apparent in both these cases (which yet both suppose the church's fallibility) a man may truly say, Unless I dissent in some opinions from the Roman church, I cannot agree with the catholic; either, therefore, you must retract your imputation laid upon Dr. Potter, or do that which you condemn in him, and be driven to say, that the same man may hold some errors with the church of Rome, and at the same time with the catholic church not hold but condemn them. For otherwise, in neither of these cases is it possible for the same man, at the same time, to agree both with the Roman and the catholic.

69. In all these texts of Scripture, which are here alleged in this last section of this chapter, or in any one of them, or in any other doth God say clearly and plainly, "The bishop of Rome, and that society of Christians which adheres to him, shall be ever the infallible guide of faith?" You will confess, I presume, he doth not, and will pretend it was not necessary. Yet if the king should tell us the lord-keeper should judge such and such causes, but should either not tell us at all, or tell us but doubtfully, who should be lord-keeper, should we be any thing the nearer for him to an end of contentions? Nay rather, would not the dissensions about the person, who it is, increase contentions rather than end them? Just so it would have been, if God had appointed a church to be judge of controversies, and had not told us which was that church. Seeing therefore God doth nothing in vain, and seeing it had been in vain to appoint a judge of controversies, and not to tell us plainly who it is; and seeing, lastly, he hath not told as plainly, no, not at all who it is; is it not evident he hath appointed none? *Objection*. But (you will say perhaps) if it be granted once, that some church of one denomination is the infallible guide of faith, it will be no difficult thing to prove that yours is the church, seeing no other church pretends to be so. *Answer*. Yes, the primitive and the apostolic church pretends to be so. That assures us, that *the Spirit was promised and given unto them, to lead them into all saving truth*, that they might lead others. *Obj*. But that church is not now in the world, and how then can it pretend to be the guide of faith? *Answ*. It is now in the world sufficient to be our guide; not by the persons of those men that were members of it, but by their writings, which do plainly teach us what truth they were led into, and so lead us into the same truth. *Obj*. But these writings were the writings of some particular men, and not of the church of those times: how then doth that church guide us by these writings? Now these places show that a church is to be our guide, therefore they cannot be so avoided. *Answ*. If you regard the conception and production of these writings, they were the writings of particular men; but if you regard the reception and approbation of them, they may be well called the writings of the church, as having the attestation of the church to have been written by those that were inspired and directed by God: as a statute, though penned by some one man, yet being ratified by the parliament, is called the act, not of that man, but of the parliament. *Obj*. But the words seem clearly enough to prove that the church, the present church of every age, is universally infallible. *Answ*. For my part I know I am as willing and desirous that the bishop or church of Rome should be infallible (provided I might know it), as they are to be so esteemed. But he that would not be deceived must take heed, that he take not his desire that a thing should be so, for a reason that it is so. For if you look upon Scripture through such spectacles as these, they will appear to you of what colour pleases your fancies best; and will seem to say, not what they do say, but what you would have them. As some say the manna, wherewith the Israelites were fed in the wilderness, had in every man's mouth that very taste which was most agreeable to his palate. For my part I profess I have considered them a thousand times, and have looked upon them (as they say) on both sides, and yet to me they seem to say no such matter.

70. Not the first, for the church may err, and yet *the gates of hell not prevail against her.* It may err, and yet continue still a true church, and bring forth children unto God, and send souls to heaven. And therefore this can do you no service, without the plain begging of the point in question, viz. that every error is one of the gates of hell; which we absolutely deny, and therefore you are not to suppose, but prove it. Neither is our denial without reason; for seeing you do and must grant that a particular church may

hold some error, and yet be still a true member of the church, why may not the universal church hold the same error, and yet remain a true universal?

71. Not the second or third; for *the Spirit of truth may be with a man or a church for ever, and teach him all truth*, and yet he may fall into some error, if this *all* be not *simply all*, but all of some kind; which you confess to be so unquestioned and certain, that you are offended with Dr. Potter for offering to prove it. Secondly, he may fall into some error, even contrary to the truth which is taught him, if it be taught him "only sufficiently, and not irresistibly," so that he may learn it if he will, not so that he must and shall whether he will or no. Now who can ascertain me that the Spirit's teaching is not of this nature? or how can you possibly reconcile it with your doctrine of freewill in believing, if it be not of this nature? Besides, the word in the original is ὁδηγήσει, which signifies, to be a guide and director only, not to compel or necessitate. Who knows not that a guide may set you in the right way, and you may either negligently mistake, or willingly leave it? And to what purpose does God complain so often and so earnestly of some that *had eyes to see, and would not see; that stopped their ears, and closed their eyes, lest they should hear and see?* of others, *that would not understand, lest they should do good: that the light shined, and the darkness comprehended it not: that he came unto his own, and his own received him not: that light came into the world, and men loved darkness more than light;* to what purpose should he wonder so few *believed his report, and that to so few his arm was revealed; and that when he comes he should find no faith upon earth*, if his outward teaching were not of this nature, that it might be followed and might be resisted? And if it be, then God may teach, and the church not learn; God may lead, and the church be refractory and not follow. And, indeed, who can doubt, that hath not his eyes veiled with prejudice, that God hath taught the church of Rome plain enough in the Epistle to the Corinthians, that *all things in the church are to be done for edification?* and that in any public prayers or thanksgiving, or hymns, or lessons of instruction, to use a language which the assistants generally understand not, is not for edification? Though the church of Rome will not learn this for fear of confessing an error, and so overthrowing her authority, yet the time will come when it shall appear, that not only by Scripture they were taught this sufficiently, and commanded to believe it, but by reason and common sense. And so for the communion in both kinds, who can deny but they are taught it by our Saviour (John vi.) in these words, according to most of your own expositions: *Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you.* (If our Saviour speaks there of the sacrament, as to them he doth, because they conceive he doth so.) For though they may pretend, that receiving in one kind they receive the blood together with the body, yet they can with no face pretend that they drink it; and so obey not our Saviour's injunction according to the letter, which yet they "profess is literally always to be obeyed, unless some impiety or some absurdity forces us to the contrary:" and they are not yet arrived to that impudence to pretend, that either there is impiety or absurdity in receiving the communion in both kinds. This therefore they, if not others, are plainly taught by our Saviour in this place; but by St. Paul all, without exception, when he says, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread, and drink of this chalice*. This *a man* that is to examine himself, is every man that can do it; as is confessed on all hands. And therefore it is all one as if he had said, *Let every man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread, and drink of this cup*. They which acknowledge St. Paul's Epistles and St. John's Gospel to be the word of God, one would think should not deny but that they are taught these two doctrines plain enough; yet we see they neither do nor will learn them. I conclude, therefore, that the Spirit may very well teach the church, and yet the church fall into and continue in error, by not regarding what she is taught by the Spirit.

72. But all this I have spoken upon a supposition only, and showed unto you, that though these promises had been made unto the present church of every age (I might have said, though they had been to the church of Rome by name), yet no certainty of her universal infallibility could be built upon them. But the plain truth is, that these promises are vainly arrogated by you, and were never made to you, but

to the apostles only. I pray deal ingenuously, and tell me who were they of whom our Saviour says, *These things have I spoken unto you being present with you* (chap. xiv. 25). *But the Comforter shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have told you* (ver. 26). Who are they to whom he says, *I go away, and come again unto you; and, I have told you before it come to pass?* (ver 28, 29.) *You have been with me from the beginning* (chap. xv. 27). And again, *These things I have told you, that when the time shall come you may remember that I told you of them: and these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you* (chap. xvi. 4). And, *Because I said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts* (ver. 6). Lastly, who are they of whom he saith (ver. 12), *I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now?* Do not all these circumstances appropriate this whole discourse of our Saviour to his disciples that were then with him; and, consequently, restrain the promises of the Spirit of truth, which was to *lead them into all truth* to their persons only? And seeing it is so, is it not an impertinent arrogance and presumption for you to lay claim unto them in behalf of your church? Had Christ been present with your church? Did the Comforter bring these things to the remembrance of your church, which Christ had before taught, and she had forgotten? Was Christ then departing from your church? and did he tell of his departure before it came to pass? Was your church with him from the beginning? Was your church filled with sorrow upon the mentioning of Christ's departure? Or, lastly, did he, or could he have said to your church, which then was not extant, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now?* as he speaks in the 12th verse immediately before the words by you quoted. And then goes on, *Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth*. Is it not the same *you* he speaks to in the 13th verse and that he speaks to in the 14th? and is it not apparent to any one that hath but half an eye, that in the 13th verse he speaks only to them that then were with him? Besides, in the very text by you alleged, there are things promised which your church cannot with any modesty pretend to; for there it is said, the *Spirit of truth* not only *will guide you into all truth*, but also *will show you things to come*. Now your church (for aught I could ever understand) doth not so much as pretend to the Spirit of prophecy and knowledge of future events; and therefore hath as little cause to pretend to the former promise of being *led by the Spirit into all truth*. And this is the reason why both you in this place, and generally your writers of controversies, when they entreat of this argument, cite this text perpetually by halves; there being in the latter part of it a clear and convincing demonstration that you have nothing to do with the former. Unless you will say, which is most ridiculous, that when our Saviour said, *He will teach you*, &c., and *he will show you*, &c., he meant one *you* in the former clause, and another *you* in the latter.

73. *Obj*. But this is to confine God's Spirit to the apostles only, or to the disciples that then were present with him: which is directly contrary to many places of Scripture. *Answ*. I confess, that to confine the Spirit of God to those that were then present with Christ is against Scripture. But I hope it is easy to conceive a difference between confining the Spirit of God to them, and confining the promises made in this place to them. God may do many things which he doth not promise at all; much more, which he doth not promise in such or such a place.

74. *Obj*. But it is promised in the 14th chapter, *that this Spirit shall abide with them for ever:* now they in their persons were not to abide for ever, and therefore the Spirit could not abide with them in their persons for ever, seeing the coexistence of two things supposes of necessity the existence of either. Therefore the promise was not made to them only in their persons, but by them to the church, which was to abide for ever.—*Answ*. Your conclusion is, not to them only; but your reason concludes either nothing at all, or that this promise of abiding with them for ever was not made to their persons at all; or, if it were, that it was not performed; or, if you will not say (as I hope you will not) that it was not performed, nor that it was not made to their persons at all, then must you grant that the word *for ever* is here used in a sense restrained, and accommodated to the subject here entreated of; and that it signifies not *eternally*, without end of time, but *perpetually*, without interruption, for the time of their lives: so that the force and

sense of the words is, that they shall never want the Spirit's assistance in the performance of their functions; and that the Spirit would not, (as Christ was to do) stay with them for a time, and afterwards leave them, but would abide with them, if they kept their station, unto the very end of their lives, which is man's *for ever*. Neither is this use of the word *for ever* any thing strange, either in our ordinary speech, wherein we use to say, "This is mine for ever," "This shall be yours for ever," without ever dreaming of the eternity either of the thing or persons. And then in Scripture, it not only will bear, but requires this sense very frequently; as Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17, *His master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever:* Psa. lii. 9, *I will praise thee for ever:* Psa. lxi. 4, *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever:* Psa. cxix. lll, *Thy testimonies have I taken as mine heritage for ever:* and, lastly, in the Epistle to Philemon, *He therefore departed from thee for a time, that thou shouldst receive him for ever*.

75. And thus, I presume, I have showed sufficiently that this *for ever* hinders not but that the promise may be appropriated to the apostles, as by many other circumstances I have evinced it must be. But what now, if the place produced by you, as a main pillar of your church's infallibility, prove upon trial an engine to batter and overthrow it? at least (which is all one to my purpose), to take away all possibility of our assurance of it? This will seem strange news to you at first hearing, and not far from a prodigy. And I confess, as you here, in this place, and generally all your writers of controversy, by whom this text is urged, order the matter, it is very much disabled to do any service against you in this question: for with a bold sacrilege, and horrid impiety, somewhat like Procrustes' cruelty, you perpetually cut of the head and foot, the beginning and the end of it; and presenting your confidants (who usually read no more of the Bible than is alleged by you) only these words, *I will ask my Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth*, conceal, in the mean time, the words before and the words after; that so the promise of God's Spirit may seem to be absolute, whereas it is indeed most clearly and expressly conditional, being both, in the words before, restrained to those only that love God and keep his commandments, and, in the words after, flatly denied to all whom the Scripture styles by the name of *the world;* that is, as the very antithesis gives us plainly to understand, to all wicked and worldly men. Behold the place entire, as it is set down in your own Bible: *If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will ask my Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive.* Now from the place thus restored and vindicated from your mutilation, thus I argue against your pretence: We can have no certainty of the infallibility of your church, but upon this supposition, that your popes are infallible in confirming the decrees of general councils: we can have no certainty hereof, but upon this supposition, that *the Spirit of truth* is promised to them for their direction in this work: and of this again we can have no certainty but upon supposal, that they perform the condition whereunto the promise of the Spirit of truth is expressly limited, viz. that they *love God and keep his commandments:* and of this, finally, not knowing the pope's heart, we can have no certainty at all; therefore; from the first to the last, we can have no certainty at all of your church's infallibility. This is my first argument. From this place another follows, which will charge you as home as the former. If many of the Roman see were such men as could not receive the Spirit of truth, even men of the world, that is, worldly, wicked, carnal, diabolical men, then the Spirit of truth is not here promised, but flatly denied them; and consequently, we can have no certainty, neither of the decrees of councils, which the popes confirm, nor of the church's infallibility, which is guided by these decrees: but many of the Roman see, even by the confession of the most zealous defenders of it, were such men: therefore the Spirit of truth is not here promised, but denied them; and consequently, we can have no certainty, neither of the decrees which they confirm, nor of the church's infallibility, which guides herself by these decrees.

76. You may take as much time as you think fit to answer these arguments. In the mean while I proceed to the consideration of the next text alleged for this purpose by you, out of St. Paul, 1st Epistle to Timothy, where he saith, as you say, *the church is the pillar and ground of truth;* but the truth is, you are

somewhat too bold with St. Paul; for he saith not in formal terms what you make him say, *the church is the pillar and ground of truth;* neither is it certain that he means so; for it is neither impossible nor improbable, that these words, *the pillar and ground of truth*, may have reference, not to the church, but to Timothy, the sense of the place, *that thou mayest know how to behave thyself, as a pillar and ground of the truth, in the church of God, which is the house of the living God;* which exposition offers no violence at all to the words, but only supposes an ellipsis of the particle ὡς, in the Greek very ordinary. Neither wants it some likelihood, that St. Paul, comparing the church to a house, should here exhort Timothy to carry himself as a pillar in that house should do, according as he had given other principal men in the church the name of *pillars;* rather than having called the church *a house*, to call it presently *a pillar;* which may seem somewhat heterogeneous. Yet if you will needs have St. Paul refer this not to Timothy, but to the church, I will not contend about it any further, than to say, possibly it may be otherwise. But then, secondly, I am to put you in mind, that the church which St. Paul here speaks of, was that in which Timothy conversed, and that was a particular church, and not the Roman; and such you will not have to be universally infallible.

77. Thirdly, if we grant you, out of courtesy (for nothing can enforce us to it), that he both speaks of the universal church, and says this of it; then I am to remember you, that many attributes in Scripture are not notes of performance, but of duty, and teach us not what the thing or person is of necessity, but what it should be. *Ye are the salt of the earth*, saith our Saviour to his disciples; not that this quality was inseparable from their persons, but because it was their office to be so. For if they must have been so of necessity, and could not have been otherwise, in vain had he put them in fear of that which follows: *If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast forth, and to be trodden under foot.* So the church may be by duty *the pillar and ground;* that is, the teacher of truth, of all truth, not only necessary, but profitable to salvation; and yet she may neglect and violate this duty, and be in fact the teacher of some error.

78. Fourthly and lastly, if we deal most liberally with you, and grant that the apostle here speaks of the catholic church, calls it *the pillar and ground of truth*, and that not only because it should, but because it always shall and will be so, yet after all this you have done nothing; your bridge is too short to bring you to the bank where you would be, unless you can show, that by *truth* here is certainly meant, not only all necessary to salvation, but all that is profitable, absolutely and simply all. For that the true church always shall be the maintainer and teacher of all necessary truth, you know we grant, and must grant; for it is of the essence of the church to be so; and any company of men were no more a church without it, than any thing can be a man, and not be reasonable. But as a man may be still a man, though he want a hand or an eye, which yet are profitable parts; so the church may be still a church, though it be defective in some profitable truth. And as a man may be a man that hath some bile's and blotches on his body; so the church may be the church, though it have many corruptions both in doctrine and practice.

79. And thus you see we are at liberty from the former places; having showed that the sense of them either must or may be such as will do your cause no service. But the last you suppose will be a Gordian knot, and tie us fast enough: the words are, *He gave some apostles; and some, prophets*, &c., *to the consummation of saints, to the work of the ministry*, &c., *until we all meet in the unity of faith*, &c., *that we be not hereafter children, wavering, and carried up and down with every wind of doctrine*. Out of which words this is the only argument which you collect, or I can collect for you:

There is no means to conserve unity of faith against every wind of doctrine, unless it be a church universally infallible.

But it is impious to say there is no means to preserve unity of faith against every wind of doctrine;

Therefore there must be a church universally infallible.

Whereunto I answer, that your major is so far from being confirmed, that it is plainly confuted by the place alleged. For that tells us of another means for this purpose, to wit, *the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and doctors*, which Christ gave upon his ascension, and that their *consummating the saints, doing the work of the ministry, and edifying the body of Christ*, was the means to bring those (which are there spoken of, be they who they will) to *the unity of faith, and to perfection in Christ*, that they might not be *wavering, and carried about with every wind of false doctrine*. Now *the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors and doctors*, are not the present church; therefore the church is not the only means for this end, nor that which is here spoken of.

80. Peradventure by *he gave*, you conceive it to be understood, *he promised that he would give unto the world's end*. But what reason have you for this conceit? Can you show that the word δωχε hath this signification in other places, and that it must have it in this place? Or will not this interpretation drive you presently to this blasphemous absurdity, that God hath not performed his promise? Unless you will say, which for shame I think you will not, that you have now, and in all ages since Christ have had, *apostles, and prophets, and evangelists:* for as for *pastors and doctors alone* they will not serve the turn. For if God promised to give all these, then you must say he hath given all, or else that he hath broken his promise. Neither may you pretend, that the "*pastors and doctors* were the same with the *apostles, and prophets, and evangelists*, and therefore having *pastors and doctors* you have all." For it is apparent, that by these names are denoted several orders of men, clearly distinguished and diversified by the original texts; but much more plainly by your own translations, for so you read it; *some, apostles; and some prophets; and other some, evangelists; and other some, pastors and doctors:* and yet more plainly in the parallel place, 1 Cor. xii., to which we are referred by your vulgar translation, *God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers;* therefore this subterfuge is stopped against you. *Obj*. But how can they which died in the first age keep us in the unity, and guard us from error, that live now, perhaps in the last? This seems to be all one as if a man should say, that Alexander or Julius Cæsar should quiet a mutiny in the king of Spain's army. *Answ*. I hope you will grant, that Hippocrates, and Galen, and Euclid, and Aristotle, and Sallust, and Cæsar, and Livy, were dead many ages since; and yet that we are now preserved from error by them, in a great part of physic, of geometry, of logic, of the Roman story. But what if these men had writ by Divine inspiration, and writ complete bodies of the sciences they professed, and writ them plainly and perspicuously; you would then have granted, I believe, that their works had been sufficient to keep us from error and from dissension in these matters. And why then should it be incongruous to say, that the *apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and doctors*, which Christ gave upon his ascension, by their writings, which some of them writ, but all approved, are even now sufficient means to conserve us in unity of faith, and guard us from error? Especially seeing these writings are, by the confession of all parts, true and Divine, and as we pretend and are ready to prove, contain a plain and perfect rule of faith; and, as the chiefest of you acknowledge, "contain immediately all the principal and fundamental points of Christianity," referring us to the church and tradition only for some minute particularities. But tell me, I pray, the bishops that composed the decrees of the council of Trent, and the pope that confirmed them, are they means to conserve you in unity, and keep you from error, or are they not? Peradventure you will say, Their decrees are, but not their persons; but you will not deny, I hope, that you owe your unity and freedom from error to the persons that made these decrees; neither will you deny, that the writings which they have left behind them are sufficient for this purpose. And why may not then the apostles' writings be as fit for such purpose as the decrees of your doctors? Surely their intent in writing was to conserve us in unity of faith, and to keep us from error, and we are sure God spake in them. But your doctors, from whence they are we are not so certain. Was the Holy Ghost then unwilling or unable to direct them so, that their writing should be fit and sufficient to attain the end they aimed at in writing? for if he were both able and willing to do so, then certainly he did do so. And then

their writings may be very sufficient means, if we would use them as we should do, to preserve us in unity in all necessary points of faith, and to guard us from all pernicious error.

81. If yet you be not satisfied, but will still pretend, that "all these words by you cited seem clearly enough to prove that the church is universally infallible, without which unity of faith could not be conserved against every wind of doctrine;" I answer, that to you which will not understand that there can be any means to conserve the unity of faith, but only that which conserves your authority over the faithful, it is no marvel that these words seem to prove that the church, nay, that your church, is universally infallible. But we that have no such end, no such desires, but are willing to leave all men to their liberty, provided they will not improve it to a tyranny over others, we find it no difficulty to discern between *dedit* and *promisit*, *he gave at his ascension*, and *he promised to the world's end*. Besides, though you whom it concerns may haply flatter yourselves that you have not only *pastors and doctors*, but *prophets, and apostles, and evangelists*, and those distinct from the former, still in your church; yet we that are disinterested persons cannot but smile at these strange imaginations. Lastly, though you are apt to think yourselves such necessary instruments for all good purposes, and that nothing can be well done unless you do it; that no unity or constancy in religion can be maintained, but inevitably Christendom must fall to ruin and confusion, unless you support it; yet we that are indifferent and impartial, and well content that God should give us his own favours by means of his own appointment, not of our choosing, can easily collect out of these very words, that not the infallibility of yours or of any church, but the *apostles, and prophets, and evangelists*, &c., which Christ gave upon his ascension, were designed by him for the compassing all these excellent purposes, by their preaching while they lived, and by their writings for ever. And if they fail hereof, the reason is not any insufficiency or invalidity in the means, but the voluntary perverseness of the subjects they have to deal with; who, if they would be themselves, and be content that others should be, in the choice of their religion, the servants of God and not of men; if they would allow, that the way to heaven is not narrower now than Christ left it, his yoke no heavier than he made it; that the belief of no more difficulties is required now to salvation than was in the primitive church; that no error is in itself destructive and exclusive from salvation now, which was not then; if instead of being zealous papists, earnest Calvinists, rigid Lutherans, they would become themselves, and be content that others should be, plain and honest Christians; if all men would believe the Scripture, and freeing themselves from prejudice and passion, would sincerely endeavour to find the true sense of it, and live according to it, and require no more of others but to do so; nor denying their communion to any that do so, would so order their public service of God, that all which do so may without scruple, or hypocrisy, or protestation against any part of it, join with them in it: who doth not see, that seeing (as we suppose here, and shall prove hereafter) all necessary truths are plainly and evidently set down in Scripture, there would of necessity be among all men, in all things necessary unity of opinion? and, notwithstanding any other differences that are or could be, unity of communion, and charity, and mutual toleration? by which means all schism and heresy would be banished the world, and those wretched contentions which now rend and tear in pieces, not the coat, but the members and bowels of Christ, which mutual pride and tyranny, and cursing, and killing, and damning, would fain make immortal, should speedily receive a most blessed catastrophe. But of this hereafter, when we shall come to the question of schism, wherein I persuade myself that I shall plainly show, that the most vehement accusers are the greatest offenders, and that they are indeed, at this time, the greatest schismatics who make the way to heaven narrower, the yoke of Christ heavier, the differences of faith greater, the conditions of ecclesiastical communion harder and stricter, than they were made at the beginning by Christ and his apostles; they who talk of unity, but aim at tyranny, and will have peace with none but with their slaves and vassals. In the mean while, though I have showed how unity of faith, and unity of charity too, may be preserved without your church's infallibility, yet seeing you modestly conclude from hence, not that your church is, but only seems to be,

universally infallible, meaning to yourself, of which you are a better judge than I; therefore I willingly grant your conclusion, and proceed.

82. Whereas you say, that "Dr. Potter limits those promises and privileges to fundamental points," the truth is, with some of them he meddles not all, neither doth his adversary give him occasion; not with those out of the Epistle to Timothy, and to the Ephesians. To the rest he gives other answer besides this.

83. But the words of Scripture by you alleged "are universal, and mention no such restraint to fundamentals as Dr. Potter applies to them." I answer, that of the five texts which you allege, four are indefinite, and only one universal, and that, you confess, is to be restrained, and are offended with Dr. Potter for going about to prove it. And whereas you say they mention no restraint, intimating that therefore they are not to be restrained, I tell you this is no good consequence; for it may appear out of the matter and circumstances that they are to be understood in a restrained sense, notwithstanding no restraint be mentioned. That place quoted by St. Paul, and applied by him to our Saviour, *He hath put all things under his feet*, mentions no exception; yet St. Paul tells us, not only that it is true or certain, but *it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under him*.

84. But your interpretation is better than Dr. Potter's, because it is literal. I answer, his is literal as well as yours: and you are mistaken if you think a restrained sense may not be a literal sense; for to *restrained, literal* is not opposed, but *unlimited* or *absolute;* and to *literal* is not opposed *restrained*, but *figurative*.

85. Whereas you say, "Dr. Potter's brethren, rejecting his limitation, restrain the mentioned texts to the apostles," implying hereby a contrariety between them and him; I answer, so doth Dr. Potter restrain all of them, which he speaks of, in the pages by you quoted, to the apostles, in the direct and primary sense of the words; though he tells you there, the words in a more restrained sense are true, being understood of the church universal.

86. As for your pretence, that "to find the meaning of those places, you confer divers texts, you consult originals, you examine translations, and use all the means by protestants appointed;" I have told you before, that all this is vain and hypocritical, if (as your manner and your doctrine is) you give not yourselves liberty of judgment in the use of these means; if you make not yourselves judges of, but only advocates for, the doctrine of your church, refusing to see what these means show you, if it any way make against the doctrine of your church, though it be as clear as the light at noon. Remove prejudice, even the balance, and hold it even; make it indifferent to you which way you go to heaven, so you go the true; which religion be true, so you be of it; then use the means, and pray for God's assistance, and as sure as God is true, you shall be led into all necessary truth.

87. Whereas you say, "you neither do, nor have any possible means to agree, as long as you are left to yourselves;" the first is very true, that while you differ you do not agree. But for the second, that you have no possible means of agreement as long as you are left to yourselves, i. e. to your own reasons and judgment, this sure is very false, neither do you offer any proof of it, unless you intend this, that you *do not* agree, for a proof that you *cannot;* which sure is no good consequence, nor half so good as this which I oppose against it. Dr. Potter and I, by the use of these means by you mentioned, do agree, concerning the sense of these places, therefore there is a possible means of agreement; and therefore, you also, if you would use the same means, with the same minds, might agree so far as it is necessary, and it is not necessary that you should agree further. Or if there be no possible means to agree about the sense of these texts, whilst we are left to ourselves, then sure it is impossible that we should agree in your sense of them, which was, that the church is universally infallible. For if it were possible for us to agree in this sense of them, then it were possible for us to agree. And why then said you of the selfsame texts but in the page next before, "These words seem clearly enough to prove that the church is universally infallible." A strange forgetfulness, that the same man, almost in the same breath, should say of the same words, they

seem clearly enough to prove such a conclusion true, and yet that three indifferent men, all presumed to be lovers of truth, and industrious searchers of it, should have no possible means, while they follow their own reason, to agree in the truth of this conclusion.

88. Whereas you say, that "it were great impiety to imagine that God, the lover of souls, hath left no certain infallible means to decide both this and all other differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion," I desire you to take heed you commit not an impiety in making more impieties than God's commandments make. Certainly, God is no way obliged, either by his promise or his love, to give us all things that we may imagine would be convenient for us, as formerly I have proved at large. It is sufficient that he denies us nothing necessary to salvation. *Deus non deficit in necessariis, nec redundat in superfluis:* so Dr. Stapleton. But that the ending of all controversies, or having a certain means of ending them, is necessary to salvation, that you have often said and supposed, but never proved, though it be the main pillar of your whole discourse. So little care you take how slight your foundations are, so your building make a fair show; and as little care, how you commit those faults yourself which you condemn in others. For you here charge them with great impiety, who "imagine that God, the lover of souls, hath left no infallible means to determine all differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion;" and yet afterwards, being demanded by Dr. Potter, "why the questions between the Jesuits and Dominicans remain undetermined," you return him this cross interrogatory, "Who hath assured you that the point wherein these learned men differ is a revealed truth, or capable of definition; or is it not rather by plain Scripture indeterminable, or by any rule of faith?" So then when you say, "it were great impiety to imagine that God hath not left infallible means to decide all differences," I may answer, It seems you do not believe yourself. For in this controversy, which is of as high consequence as any can be, you seem to be doubtful whether there be any means to determine it. On the other side, when you ask Dr. Potter, "who assured him that there is any means to determine this controversy?" I answer for him, that you have, in calling it "a great impiety to imagine that there is not some infallible means to decide this and all other differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion." For what trick you can devise, to show that this difference between the Dominicans and Jesuits, which includes a difference about the sense of many texts of Scripture, and many other matters of moment, was not included under "this and all other differences," I cannot imagine. Yet if you can find out any, thus much at least we shall gain by it, "that general speeches are not always to be understood generally, but sometimes with exceptions and limitations."

89. But if there be any infallible means to decide all differences, I beseech you name them. You say, "it is to consult and hear God's visible church with submissive acknowledgment of her infallibility." But suppose the difference be (as here it is), whether your church be infallible, what shall decide that? If you would say (as you should do), Scripture and reason, then you foresee that you should be forced to grant, that these are fit means to decide this controversy, and therefore may be as fit to decide others. Therefore, to avoid this, you run into a most ridiculous absurdity, and tell us, that this difference also, whether the church be infallible, as well as others, must be agreed by "a submissive acknowledgment of the church's infallibility;" as if you should have said, "My brethren, I perceive this is a great contention among you, whether the Roman church be infallible? If you will follow my advice, I will show you a ready means to end it; you must first agree that the Roman church is infallible, and then your contention, whether the Roman church be infallible, will quickly be at an end." Verily, a most excellent advice, and most compendious way of ending all controversies, even without troubling the church to determine them! For why may not you say in all other differences as you have done in this? Agree that the pope is supreme head of the church; that the substance of the bread and wine in the sacrament is turned into the body and blood of Christ; that the communion is to be given to laymen but in one kind; that pictures may be worshipped; that saints are to be invocated; and so in the rest: and then your differences about the pope's

supremacy, transubstantiation, and all the rest, will speedily be ended. If you say, the advice is good in this, but not in other cases, I must request you not to expect always to be believed upon your word, but to show us some reason why any one thing, namely the church's infallibility, is fit to prove itself; and any other thing, by name the pope's supremacy, or transubstantiation, is not as fit? Or if for shame you will at length confess, that the church's infallibility is not fit to decide this difference, whether the church be infallible, then you must confess it is not fit to decide all; unless you will say it may be fit to decide all, and yet not fit to decide this, or pretend that this is not comprehended under all. Besides, if you grant that your church's infallibility cannot possibly be well grounded upon, or decided by itself, then having professed before, that "there is no possible means besides this for us to agree hereupon," I hope you will give me leave to conclude, that it is impossible upon good ground for us to agree that the Roman church is infallible. For certainly light itself is not more clear than the evidence of this syllogism:

If there be no other means to make men agree upon your church's infallibility, but only this, and this be no means; then it is simply impossible for men upon good grounds to agree that your church is infallible:

But there is (as you have granted) no other possible means to make men agree hereupon, but only a submissive acknowledgment of her infallibility; and this is apparently no means:

Therefore it is simply impossible for men upon good grounds to agree that your church is infallible.

90. Lastly, to the place of St. Austin "wherein we are advised to follow the way of catholic discipline, which from Christ himself by the apostles hath come down even to us, and from us shall descend to all posterity;" I answer, that the way which St. Austin speaks of, and the way which you commend, being diverse ways, and in many things clean contrary, we cannot possibly follow them both; and therefore, for you to apply the same words to them is a vain equivocation. Show us any way, and do not say, but prove it "to have come from Christ and his apostles down to us," and we are ready to follow it. Neither do we expect demonstration hereof, by such reasons as may make this more probable than the contrary. But if you bring in things into your now catholic discipline, which Christians in St. Austin's time held abominable (as the picturing of God), and which you must, and some of you do confess to have come unto the church seven hundred years after Christ; if you will bring in things, as you have done the half communion, with a *non obstante*, notwithstanding Christ's institution and the practice of the primitive church were to the contrary; if you will do such things as these, and yet would have us believe that your whole religion came from Christ and his apostles, this we conceive a request too unreasonable for modest men to make, or for wise men to grant.

CHAPTER IV.

To say that the Creed contains all points necessarily to be believed, is neither pertinent to the question in hand, nor in itself true.

"I SAY, neither *pertinent* nor *true*. Not *pertinent;* because our question is not what points are necessary to be explicitly believed, but what points may be lawfully disbelieved or rejected after sufficient proposition that they are Divine truths. You say, the Creed contains all points necessary to be believed: be it so: but doth it likewise contain all points not to be disbelieved? Certainly it doth not. For how many truths are there in Holy Scripture not contained in the Creed, which we are not obliged distinctly and particularly to know and believe, but are bound, under pain of damnation, not to reject, as soon as we come to know that they are found in Holy Scripture! and we having already showed that whatsoever is proposed by God's church as a point of faith is infallibly a truth revealed by God, it followeth, that whosoever denieth any such point opposeth God's sacred testimony, whether that point be contained in the Creed or no. In vain then was your care employed to prove, that all points of faith necessary to be explicitly believed are contained in the Creed. Neither was that the catalogue which Charity mistaken demanded. His demand was, (and it was most reasonable, that you would once give us a list of all fundamentals, the denial whereof destroys salvation; whereas the denial of other points not fundamental may stand with salvation, although both these kinds of points be equally proposed as revealed by God. For if they be not equally proposed, the difference will arise from diversity of the proposal, and not of the matter fundamental or not fundamental. This catalogue only can show how far protestants may disagree without breach of unity in faith; and upon this many other matters depend according to the ground of protestants. But you will never adventure to publish such a catalogue. I say more; you cannot assign any one point so great or fundamental, that the denial thereof will make a man a heretic, if it be not sufficiently propounded as a Divine truth. Nor can you assign any one point so small, that it can without heresy be rejected, if once it be sufficiently represented as revealed by God.

2. "Nay, this your instance in the Creed is not only impertinent, but directly against you. For all points in the Creed are not of their own nature fundamental, as I showed before; and yet it is damnable to deny any one point contained in the Creed. So that it is clear, that to make an error damnable it is not necessary that the matter be of itself fundamental.

3. "Moreover, you cannot ground any certainty upon the Creed itself, unless first you presuppose that the authority of the church is universally infallible, and consequently that it is damnable to oppose her declarations, whether they concern matters great or small, contained or not contained in the Creed. This is clear, because we must receive the Creed itself upon the credit of the church, without which we could not know that there was any such thing as that which we call *the Apostles' Creed*. And yet the arguments whereby you endeavour to prove that the Creed contains all fundamental points are grounded upon supposition, that the Creed was made 'either by the apostles themselves, or by the church of their times from them:' which thing we could not certainly know, if the succeeding and still continued church may err in her traditions; neither can we be assured, whether all fundamental articles which you say were, out of the Scriptures, 'summed and contracted into the Apostles' Creed,' were faithfully summed and contracted, and not one pretermitted, altered, or mistaken, unless we undoubtedly know that the apostles composed the Creed; and that they intended to contract all fundamental points of faith into it; or at least that 'the church of their times' (for it seemeth you doubt whether indeed it were composed by the apostles themselves) did understand the apostles aright; and that 'the church of their times' did intend that the Creed should contain all fundamental points. For if the church may err in points not fundamental, may

she not also err in the particulars which I have specified? Can you show it to be a fundamental point of faith, that the apostles intended to comprise all points of faith necessary to salvation in the Creed? Yourself say no more than that it is 'very probable;' which is far from reaching to a fundamental point of faith. Your probability is grounded upon 'the judgment of antiquity, and even of the Roman doctors,' as you say in the same place. But if the catholic church may err, what certainty can you expect from antiquity or doctors? Scripture is your total rule of faith. Cite therefore some text of Scripture to prove that the apostles, or 'the church of their times,' composed the Creed, and composed it with a purpose that it should contain all fundamental points of faith; which being impossible to be done, you must for the Creed itself rely upon the infallibility of the church.

4. "Moreover, the Creed consisteth not so much in the words, as in their sense and meaning. All such as pretend to the name of Christians recite the Creed, and yet many have erred fundamentally, as well against the articles of the Creed as other points of faith. It is then very frivolous to say, the Creed contains all fundamental points, without specifying both in what sense the articles of the Creed be true, and also in what true sense they be fundamental. For both these tasks you are to perform, who teach that all truth is not fundamental: and you do but delude the ignorant when you say, that the Creed, 'taken in a catholic sense' comprehendeth all points fundamental, because with you all 'catholic sense' is not fundamental; for so it were necessary to salvation that all Christians should know the whole Scripture, wherein every least point hath a catholic sense. Or if by 'catholic sense' you understand that sense which is so universally to be known and believed by all, that whosoever fails therein cannot be saved, you trifle, and say no more than this; 'all points of the Creed, in a sense necessary to salvation;' are necessary to salvation; or, 'all points fundamental are fundamental.' After this manner it were an easy thing to make many true prognostications, by saying, it will certainly rain when it raineth. You say the Creed was opened and explained 'in some parts' in the Creeds of Nice, &c. But how shall we understand the other 'parts,' not explained in those Creeds?

5. "For what article in the Creed is more fundamental, or may seem more clear, than that wherein we believe Jesus Christ to be the Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour of mankind, and the founder and foundation of a catholic church, expressed in the Creed? And yet about this article how many different doctrines are there, not only of old heretics, as Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, &c., but also of protestants, partly against catholics, and partly against one another' For the said main article of Christ's being the only Saviour of the world, &c., according to different senses of disagreeing sects, doth involve these and many other such questions: that faith in Jesus Christ doth justify alone—that sacraments have no efficiency in justification—that baptism doth not avail infants for salvation, unless they have an act of faith—that there is no sacerdotal absolution from sins—that good works proceeding from God's grace are not meritorious—that there can be no satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to sin, after the guilt or offence is pardoned—no purgatory—no prayers for the dead—no sacrifice of the mass—no invocation—no mediation or intercession of saints—no inherent justice—no supreme pastor—yea, no bishop by divine ordinance—no real presence—no transubstantiation; with divers others. And why? because, forsooth, these doctrines derogate from the titles of Mediator, Redeemer, Advocate, Foundation, &c.; yea, and are against the truth of our Saviour's human nature, if we believe divers protestants writing against transubstantiation. Let then any judicious man consider, whether Dr. Potter or others do really satisfy, when they send men to the Creed for a perfect catalogue, to distinguish points fundamental from those which they say are not fundamental. If he will speak indeed to some purpose, let him say, This article is understood in this sense, and in this sense it is fundamental; that other is to be understood in such a meaning; yet according to that meaning it is not so fundamental but that men may disagree, and deny it without damnation. But it were no policy for any protestant to deal so plainly.

6. “But to what end should we use many arguments? Even yourself are forced to limit your own doctrine, and come to say, that the Creed is a perfect catalogue of fundamental points, ‘taken as it was further opened and explained in some parts (by occasion of emergent heresies) in the other catholic Creeds of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and Athanasius.’ But this explication or restriction overthroweth your assertion. For as the Apostles’ Creed was not to us a sufficient catalogue till it was explained by the first council, nor then till it was declared by another, &c.; so now also, as new heresies may arise, it will need particular explanation against such emergent errors; and so it is not yet, nor ever will be, of itself alone, a particular catalogue, sufficient to distinguish betwixt fundamental and not fundamental points.

7. “I come to the second part, ‘That the Creed doth not contain all main and principal points of faith:’ and to the end we may not strive about things either granted by us both, or nothing concerning the point in question, I must premise these observations:

8. “First, that it cannot be denied but that the Creed is most full and complete, to that purpose for which the holy apostles, inspired by God, meant that it should serve, and in that manner as they did intend it; which was, not to comprehend all particular points of faith, but such general heads as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the faith of Christ to Jews and Gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered. And, therefore, in respect of Gentiles, the Creed doth mention God as Creator of all things; and for both Jews and Gentiles, the Trinity, the Messias and Saviour, his birth, life, death, resurrection, and glory, from whom they were to hope remission of sins, and life everlasting, and by whose sacred name they were to be distinguished from all other professions, by being called Christians: according to which purpose St. Thomas of Aquine doth distinguish all the articles of the Creed in these general heads: that some belong to the majesty of the Godhead, others to the mystery of our Saviour Christ’s human nature: which two general objects of faith the Holy Ghost doth express and conjoin, John xvii. *Hæc est vita æterna*, &c. *This is life everlasting, that they know thee, the true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ*. But it was not their meaning to give us, as it were, a course of divinity, or a catechism, or a particular expression of all points of faith, leaving those things to be performed, as occasion should require, by their own word or writing, for their time, and afterwards by their successors in the catholic church. Our question then is not, whether the Creed be perfect, as far as the end for which it was composed did require; for we believe and are ready to give our lives for this; but only we deny, that the apostles did intend to comprise therein all particular points of belief necessary to salvation, as even by Dr. Potter’s own confession it doth not comprehend *agenda*, or things belonging to practice; as sacraments, commandments, the acts of hope and duties of charity, which we are obliged not only to practise, but also to believe by Divine infallible faith. Will he therefore infer that the Creed is not perfect, because it contains not all those necessary and fundamental objects of faith? He will answer, No, because the apostles intended only to express *credenda*, things to be believed, not practised. Let him therefore give us leave to say, that the Creed is perfect, because it wanteth none of those objects of belief which were intended to be set down, as we explicated before.

9. “The second observation is, that to satisfy our question what points in particular be fundamental, it will not be sufficient to allege the Creed unless it contains all such points, either expressly and immediately, or else in such manner, that by evident and necessary consequence they may be deduced from articles both clearly and particularly contained therein. For if the deduction be doubtful, we shall not be sure that such conclusions be fundamental; or if the articles themselves, which are said to be fundamental, be not distinctly and particularly expressed, they will not serve us to know and distinguish all points fundamental, from those which they call not fundamental. We do not deny but that all points of faith, both fundamental and not fundamental, may be said to be contained in the Creed, in some sense; as for example, implicitly, generally, or in some such involved manner. For when we explicitly believe the

catholic church, we do implicitly believe whatsoever she proposeth as belonging to faith; or else by way of reduction, that is, when we are once instructed in the belief of particular points of faith, not expressed, nor by necessary consequence deducible from the Creed; we may afterwards, by some analogy, or proportion, and resemblance, reduce it to one or more of those articles which are explicitly contained in the symbol. Thus St. Thomas, the cherubim among divines, teacheth that the miraculous existence of our blessed Saviour's body in the eucharist, as likewise all his other miracles, are reduced to God's omnipotency, expressed in the Creed. And Dr. Potter saith, 'The eucharist being a seal of that holy union which we have with Christ our Head by his Spirit and faith, and with the saints his members by charity, is evidently included in the communion of saints.' But this reductive way is far from being sufficient to infer out of the articles of God's omnipotency, or of the communion of saints, that our Saviour's body is in the eucharist, and much less whether it be only in figure, or else in reality, by transubstantiation or consubstantiation, &c., and least of all, whether or no these points be fundamental. And you hyperbolize in saying, the eucharist is evidently included in the communion of saints, as if there could not have been, or was not a communion of saints before the blessed sacrament was instituted. Yet it is true, that after we know and believe there is such a sacrament, we may refer it to some of those heads expressed in the Creed, and yet to as St. Thomas refers it to one article and Dr. Potter to another; and in respect of different analogies or effects, it may be referred to several articles. The like I say of other points of faith, which may in some sort be reduced to the Creed, but nothing to Dr. Potter's purpose; but contrarily it showeth, that your affirming such and such points to be fundamental or not fundamental is merely arbitrary, to serve your turn, as necessity and your occasions may require. Which was an old custom amongst heretics, as we read in St. Austin, Pelagius, and Cœlestius, 'desiring fraudulently to avoid the hateful name of heresies, affirmed that the question of original sin may be disputed without danger of faith.' But this holy father affirms that it belongs to the foundation of faith. 'We may,' saith he, 'endure a disputant who errs in other questions not yet diligently examined, not yet diligently established by the whole authority of the church; their error may be borne with; but it must not pass so far as to attempt to shake the foundation of the church.' We see S. Augustin placeth the being of a point fundamental or not fundamental, in that it hath been examined and established by the church, although the points of which he speaketh, namely, original sin, be not contained in the Creed.

10. "Out of that which hath been said, I infer, that Dr. Potter's pains in alleging catholic doctors, the ancient fathers, and the council of Trent, to prove that the Creed contains all points of faith, was needless; since we grant it in manner aforesaid. But Dr. Potter cannot in his conscience believe that catholic divines, or the council of Trent, and the holy fathers, did intend that all points in particular which we are obliged to believe are contained explicitly in the Creed; he knowing well enough that all catholics hold themselves obliged to believe all those points which the said council defines to be believed under an anathema, and that all Christians believe the commandments, sacraments, &c., which are not expressed in the Creed.

11. "Neither must this seem strange. For who is ignorant that summaries, epitomes, and the like brief abstracts, are not intended to specify all particulars of that science or subject to which they belong? For as the Creed is said to contain all points of faith, so the Decalogue comprehends all articles (as I may term them) which concern charity and good life, and yet this cannot be so understood, as if we were disobliged from performance of any duty, or the eschewing of any vice, unless it be expressed in the Ten Commandments. For (to omit the precepts of receiving sacraments, which belong to practice or manners, and yet are not contained in the Decalogue) there are many sins, even against the law of nature, and light of reason, which are not contained in the Ten Commandments, except only by similitude, analogy, reduction, or some such way. For example, we find not expressed in the Decalogue, either divers sins, as gluttony, drunkenness, pride, sloth, covetousness in desiring things either superfluous or with too much

greediness, or divers of our chief obligations, as obedience to princes and all superiors, not only ecclesiastical, but also civil; whose laws Luther, Meiancthon, Calvin, and some other protestants, do dangerously affirm not to oblige in conscience, and yet these men think they know the Ten Commandments; as likewise divers protestants defend usury to be lawful; and the many treatises of civilians, canonists, and casuists are witnesses, that divers sins against the light of reason and law of nature are not distinctly expressed in the Ten Commandments; although when by other diligence they are found to be unlawful, they may be reduced to some of the commandments, and yet not so evidently and particularly but that divers do it divers manners.

12. "My third observation is, that our present question being whether or no the Creed contains so fully all fundamental points of faith, that whosoever do not agree in all and every one of those fundamental articles cannot have the same substance of faith, nor hope of salvation; if I can produce one or more points not contained in the Creed, in which if two do not agree, both of them cannot expect to be saved, I shall have performed as much as I intend; and Dr. Potter must seek out some other catalogue for points fundamental than the Creed. Neither is it material to the said purpose, whether such fundamental points rest only in knowledge and speculation, or belief, or else be further referred to work and practice. For the habit or virtue of faith which inclineth and enableth us to believe both speculative and practical verities, is of one and the self-same nature and essence. For example, by the same faith, whereby I speculatively believe there is a God, I likewise believe that he is to be adored, served, and loved; which belong to practice. The reason is, because the formal object or motive for which I yield assent to those different sorts of material objects is the same in both, to wit, the revelation or word of God. Where, by the way, I note, that if the unity or distinction and nature of faith were to be taken from the diversity of things revealed, by one faith I should believe speculative verities, and by another such as tend to practice, which I doubt whether Dr. Potter himself will admit.

13. "Hence it followeth, that whosoever denieth any one main practical revealed truth, is no less a heretic, than if he should deny a point resting in belief alone. So that when Dr. Potter (to avoid our argument that all fundamental points are not contained in the Creed, because in it there is no mention of the sacraments, which yet are points of so main importance, that protestants make the due administration of them to be necessary and essential to constitute a church) answereth, that the sacraments are to be reckoned rather among the *agenda* of the church than the *credenda*, they are rather Divine rites and ceremonies than doctrines; he either grants that we affirm, or in effect says, of two kinds of revealed truths which are necessary to be believed, the Creed contains one sort only; *ergo*, it contains all kinds of revealed truths necessary to be believed. Our question is not *de nomine*, but *re*, not what be called points of faith or of practice, but what points indeed be necessarily to be believed, whether they be termed *agenda* or *credenda;* especially, the chiefest part of Christian perfection consisting more in action than in barren speculation, in good works than bare belief, in doing than knowing. And there are no less contentions concerning practical than speculative truths; as sacraments—obtaining remission of sin—invocation of saints—prayers for the dead—adoration of Christ in the sacrament, and many other; all which do so much the more import, as on them, beside right belief, doth also depend our practice, and the ordering of our life. Though Dr. Potter could therefore give us (as he will never be able to do) a minute and exact catalogue of all truths to be believed, that would not make me able enough to know whether or no I have faith sufficient for salvation, till he also did bring in a particular list of all believed truths, which tend to practice, declaring which of them be fundamental, which not; that so every man might know, whether he be not in some damnable error, for some article of faith, which further might give influence into damnable works.

14. "These observations being premised, I come to prove that the Creed doth not contain all points of faith necessary to be known and believed. And to omit that in general it doth not tell us what points

be fundamental or not fundamental, which, in the way of protestants, is most necessary to be known; in particular, there is no mention of the greatest evils from which man's calamity proceeded; I mean, the sin of the angels, of Adam, and of original sin in us; nor of the greatest good, from which we expect all good, to wit, the necessity of grace for all works tending to piety. Nay, there is no mention of angels, good or bad. The meaning of that most general head (*Oportet accedentem, &c. It behoves him that comes to God, to believe that he is, and is a remunerator*) is questioned by the denial of merit, which makes God a giver, but not a rewarder. It is not expressed whether the article of remission of sins be understood by faith alone, or else may admit the efficiency of sacraments. There is no mention of ecclesiastical, apostolical, Divine traditions, one way or other; or of Holy Scriptures in general, and much less of every book in particular; nor of the name, nature, number, effects, matter, form, ministry, intention, necessity of sacraments; and yet the due administration of the sacraments is with protestants an essential note of the church. There is nothing for baptism of children, nor against re-baptization. There is no mention in favour or against the sacrifice of the mass, of power in the church to institute rites, holydays, &c., and to inflict excommunication, or other censures; of priesthood, bishops, and the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy, which are very fundamental points; of St. Peter's primacy, which to Calvin seemeth a fundamental error; nor of the possibility or impossibility to keep God's commandments; of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and Son; of purgatory, or prayer for the dead, in any sense. And yet Dr. Potter doth not deny but that Aerius was esteemed a heretic, for denying all sort of commemoration for the dead. Nothing of the Church's visibility or invisibility, fallibility or infallibility, nor of other points controverted betwixt protestants themselves, and between protestants and catholics, which to Dr. Potter seemed so heinous corruptions, that they cannot without damnation join with us in profession thereof. There is no mention of the cessation of the old law, which yet is a very main point of faith. And many other might be also added.

15. "But what need we labour to specify particulars? There are many important points of faith not expressed in the Creed, as, since the world's beginning, now, and for all future times, there have been, are, and may be, innumerable gross damnable heresies, whose contrary truths are not contained in the Creed. For every fundamental error must have a contrary fundamental Truth; because of two contradictory propositions in the same degree, if the one is false the other must be true. As for example, if it be a damnable error to deny the blessed Trinity or the Godhead of our Saviour, the belief of them must be a truth necessary to salvation; or rather, if we will speak properly, the error is damnable, because the opposite truth is necessary; as death is frightful, because life is sweet; and according to philosophy, the privation is measured by the form to which it is repugnant. If therefore the Creed contain in particular all fundamental points of faith, it must explicitly, or by clear consequence, comprehend all truths opposite to innumerable heresies of all ages past, present, and to come, which no man in his wits will affirm it to do.

16. "And here I cannot omit to signify how you applaud the saying of Dr. Usher, 'That in those propositions, which without all controversy are universally received in the whole Christian world, so much truth is contained, as being joined with holy obedience, may be sufficient to bring a man to everlasting salvation; neither have we cause to doubt, but that *as many as walk according to this rule* (neither overthrowing that which they have builded, by superinducing any damnable heresies thereupon, nor otherwise vitiating their holy faith with a lewd and wicked conversation) *peace shall be upon them, and upon the Israel of God*.' Now Dr. Potter knows that the mystery of the blessed Trinity is not universally received in the whole Christian world, as appears in very many heretics in Polony, Hungary, and Transylvania, and therefore according to this rule of Dr. Usher, approved by Dr. Potter, the denial of the blessed Trinity shall not exclude salvation.

17. “Let me note, by the way, that you might have easily espied a foul contradiction in the said words of Dr. Usher, by you cited, and so much applauded. For he supposeth that a man agrees with other churches in belief, which, joined with holy obedience, may bring him to everlasting salvation, and yet that he may superinduce damnable heresies. For how can he superinduce damnable heresies who is supposed to believe all truths necessary to salvation? Can there be any damnable heresy, unless it contradict some necessary truth, which cannot happen in one who is supposed to believe all necessary truths? Besides, if one believing all fundamental articles in the Creed may superinduce damnable heresies, it followeth, that the fundamental truths, contrary to those damnable heresies, are not contained in the Creed.

18. “According to this model of Dr. Potter’s foundation, consisting in the agreement of scarcely one point of faith, what a strange church would he make of men concurring in some or few articles of belief, who yet for the rest should be holding conceits plainly contradictory; so patching up a religion of men who agree only in the article, that Christ is our Saviour, but for the rest, are like to the parts of a chimera; having the head of a man, the neck of a horse, the shoulders of an ox, the foot of a lion, &c. I wrong them not herein. For in good philosophy there is greater repugnancy between assent and dissent, affirmation and negation, *est, est, non, non*, (especially when all these contradictories pretend to rely upon one and the selfsame motive—the infallible truth of Almighty God,) than between the integral parts, as head, neck, &c. of a man, horse, lion, &c. And thus protestants are far more bold to disagree, even in matters of faith, than catholic divines in questions merely philosophical, or not determined by the church. And while thus they stand only upon fundamental articles, they do by their own confession destroy the church, which is the house of God. For the foundation alone of a house is not a house, nor can they, in such an imaginary church, any more expect salvation, than the foundation alone of a house is fit to afford a man habitation.

19. “Moreover, it is most evident that protestants, by this chaos rather than church, do give unavoidable occasion of desperation to poor souls. Let some one who is desirous to save his soul repair to Dr. Potter, who maintains these grounds, to know upon whom he may rely in a matter of so great consequence: I suppose the Doctor’s answer will be, upon the truly catholic church. She cannot err damnably. What understand you by the catholic church? Cannot general councils, which are the church representative, err? Yes, ‘they may weakly or wilfully misapply, or misunderstand, or neglect Scripture, and so err damnably.’ To whom then shall I go for my particular instruction? I cannot confer with the united body of the whole church about my particular difficulties as yourself affirm, that the catholic church ‘cannot be told of private injuries.’ Must I then consult with every particular person of the catholic church? So it seems by what you write in these words; ‘The whole militant church (that is, all the members of it) cannot possibly err, either in the whole faith, or any necessary article of it.’ You say, M. Doctor, I cannot for my instruction acquaint the universal church with my particular scruples. You say the prelates of God’s church meeting in a lawful general council may err damnably: it remains then, for my necessary instruction, I must repair to every particular member of the universal church spread over the face of the earth: and yet you teach that the ‘promises which our Lord hath made unto his church for his assistance, are intended not to any particular persons or churches, but only to the church catholic,’ with which (as I said) it is impossible for me to confer. Alas! O most uncomfortable ghostly father, you drive me to desperation! How shall I confer with every Christian soul, man and woman, by sea and by land, close prisoner or at liberty? &c. Yet upon supposal of this miraculous pilgrimage for faith, before I have the faith of miracles, how shall I proceed at our meeting? or how shall I know the man on whom I may surely rely? Procure (will you say) to know whether he believe all fundamental points of faith; for if he do, his faith, for point of belief, is sufficient for salvation, though he err in a hundred things of less moment. But how shall I know whether he hold all fundamental points or no? For till you tell me this, I cannot know whether or no his belief be sound in all fundamental points. Can you say the Creed? Yes,

and so can many damnable heretics. But why do you ask me this question? Because the Creed contains all fundamental points of faith. Are you sure of that? Not sure: I hold it very probable. Shall I hazard my soul on probabilities, or even wagers? This yields a new cause of despair. But what? doth the Creed contain all points necessary to be believed, whether they rest in the understanding, or else do further extend to practice? No. It was composed to deliver *credenda*, not *agenda*, to us; faith, not practice. How then shall I know what points of belief, which direct my practice, be necessary to salvation? Still you chalk out new paths for desepration. Well, are all articles of the Creed, for their nature and matter, fundamental? I cannot say so, How then shall I know which in particular be and which be not fundamental? Read my answer to a late popish pamphlet, entitled Charity Mistaken, &c.; there you shall find that fundamental doctrines are such 'catholic verities as principally and essentially pertain to the faith, such as properly constitute a church, and are necessary (in ordinary course) to be distinctly believed by every Christian that will be saved. They are those grand and capital doctrines which make up our faith in Christ; that is that common faith which is alike precious in all, being one and the same in the highest apostle and the meanest believer, which the apostle elsewhere calls *the first principles of the oracles of God*, and *the form of sound words*.' But how shall I apply these general definitions or descriptions, or (to say the truth) these only varied words and phrases, for I understand the word *fundamental* as well as the words *principal, essential, grand, and capital doctrines*, &c.) to the particular articles of the Creed, in such sort, as that I may be able precisely, exactly, particularly, to distinguish fundamental articles points of less moment? You labour to tell us what fundamental points be, but not which they be; and yet unless you do this, your doctrine serves only either to make men despair, or else to have recourse to those whom you call papists, and who give one certain rule, that all points defined by Christ's visible church belong to the foundation of faith, in such sense, as that to deny any one cannot stand with salvation. And seeing yourself acknowledges that these men do not err in points fundamental, I cannot but hold it most safe for me to join with them, for the securing of my soul, and the avoiding of desperation, into which this your doctrine must cast all them who understand and believe it. For the whole discourse and inference which here I have made, are either your own direct assertions, or evident consequences clearly deduced from them.

20. "But now let us answer some few objections of Dr. Potter's against that which we have said before: to avoid argument, that the Scripture is not so much as mentioned in the Creed, he saith, 'the Creed is an abstract of such necessary doctrines as are delivered in Scripture,' or collected out of it; and therefore needs not express the authority of that which it supposes.

21. "This answer makes for us. For by giving a reason why it was needless that Scripture should be expressed in the Creed, you grant as much as we desire; namely, that the apostles judged it needless to express all necessary points of faith in their Creed. Neither doth the Creed suppose or depend on Scripture in such sort as that we can, by any probable consequence, infer from the articles of the Creed, that there is any canonical Scripture at all; and much less that such books in particular be canonical. Yea, the Creed might have been the same, although Holy Scripture had never been written; and, which is more, the Creed, even in priority of time, was before all the Scripture of the New Testament, except the Gospel of St. Matthew. And so, according to this reason of his, the Scripture should not mention articles contained in the Creed. And I note in a word, how little connexion Dr. Potter's arguments have while he tells us, that 'the Creed is an abstract of such necessary doctrines as are delivered in Scripture, or collected out of it, and therefore needs not express the authority of that which it supposes:' it doth not follow—the articles of the Creed are delivered in Scripture, therefore the Creed supposeth Scripture. For two distinct writings may well deliver the same truths, and yet one of them not suppose the other, unless Dr. Potter be of opinion that two doctors cannot at one time speak the same truth.

22. "And notwithstanding that Dr. Potter hath now told us, it was needless that the Creed should express Scripture, whose authority it supposes; he comes at length to say, that 'the Nicene fathers in their

Creed confessing that the Holy Ghost spake by the prophets, do thereby sufficiently avow the Divine authority of all canonical Scripture.' But I would ask him whether the Nicene Creed be not also an abstract of doctrines delivered in Scripture, as he said of the Apostles' Creed, and thence did infer, that it was needless to express Scripture, 'whose authority it supposes?' Besides, we do not only believe in general that canonical Scripture is of Divine authority, but we are also bound, under pain of damnation, to believe that such and such particular books, not mentioned in the Nicene Creed, are canonical. And, lastly, Dr. Potter in this answer grants as much as we desire; which is, that all points of faith are not contained in the Apostles' Creed, even as it is explained by other Creeds. For these words, 'who spake by the prophets, are no way contained in the Apostles' Creed, and therefore contain an addition, not an explanation thereof.

23. "But 'how can it be necessary,' with Dr. Potter, 'for any Christian to have more in his Creed than the apostles had, and the church of their times?' I answer, You trifle, not distinguishing between the apostles' belief, and that abridgment of some articles of faith which we call the Apostles' Creed; and withal you beg the question, by supposing the apostles believed no more than is contained in their Creed, which every unlearned person knows and believes; and I hope you will not deny but the apostles were endued with greater knowledge than ordinary persons.

24. "Your pretended proof out of the Acts, that the apostles revealed to the church *the whole counsel of God*, keeping back nothing, with your gloss, ('needful for our salvation,') is no proof, unless you still beg the question, and do suppose, that whatsoever the apostles revealed to the church is contained in the Creed. And I wonder you do not reflect that those words were by St. Paul particularly directed to pastors and governors of the church, as is clear by the other words, *he called the ancients of the church.* And afterward, *Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the church.* And yourself say, 'that more knowledge is necessary in bishops and priests, to whom is committed the government of the church, and care of souls, than in vulgar laics.' Do you think that the apostles taught Christians nothing but their Creed? said they nothing of the sacraments, commandments, duties of hope, charity, &c.?

25. "Upon the same affected ambiguity is grounded your other objections: 'to say, the whole faith of those times is not contained in the Apostles' Creed, but a part of it.' For the faith of the apostles is not all one with that which we commonly call their Creed. Did not, I pray you, St. Matthew and St. John, believe their writings to be canonical Scripture? And yet their writings are not mentioned in the Creed. It is therefore more than clear that the faith of the apostles is of larger extent than the Apostles' Creed.

26. "To your demand, why, amongst many things of equal 'necessity to be believed, the apostles should so distinctly set down some, and be altogether silent of others?' I answer, that you must answer your own demand. For in the Creed there be divers points in their nature not fundamental or necessary to be explicitly and distinctly believed, as above we showed; why are these points which are not fundamental expressed, rather than other of the same quality? Why our Saviour's decent to hell and burial expressed, and not his circumcision, his manifestation to the three kings, working of miracles, &c.? Why did they not express Scriptures, sacraments, and all fundamental points of faith tending to practice, as well as those which rest in belief? Their intention was particularly to deliver such articles as were fittest for those times, concerning the Deity, Trinity and Messias, (as heretofore I have declared,) leaving many things to be taught by the catholic church, which in the Creed we all profess to believe. Neither doth it follow, as you infer, 'that as well, nay better, they might have given no article but that, [of the church,] and sent us to the church for all the rest. For in setting down others besides that, and not all, they make us believe we have all, when we have not all.' For by this kind of arguing, what may not be deduced? One might, quite contrary to your inference, say, If the Apostles' Creed contain all points necessary to salvation, what need we any church to teach us? and consequently what need of the article concerning

the church? What need we the Creeds of Nice, Constantinople, &c.? Superfluous are your Catechisms, wherein, besides the articles of the Creed, you add divers other particulars. These would be poor consequences, and so is yours. But shall I tell you news? for so you are pleased to esteem it. We grant your inference thus far; that our Saviour Christ referred us to his church, by her to be taught, and by her alone. For she was before the Creed and Scripture; and she, to discharge this imposed office of instructing us, hath delivered us the Creed, but not it alone, as if nothing else were to be believed. We have, besides it, Holy Scripture; we have unwritten, Divine, apostolical, ecclesiastical traditions. It were a childish argument. The Creed contains not all things which are necessary to be believed; *ergo*, it is not profitable: or, The church alone is sufficient to teach us by some convenient means; *ergo*, she must teach us without all means, without creeds, without councils, without Scripture, &c. If the apostles had expressed no article but that of the catholic church, she must have taught us the other articles in particular, by creeds, or other means, as in fact we have even the Apostles' Creed from the tradition of the church. If you will 'believe you have all in the Creed, when you have not all,' it is not the apostles or the church that makes you so believe, but it is your own error, whereby you will needs believe that the Creed must contain all. For neither the apostles, nor the church, nor the Creed itself, tell you any such matter; and what necessity is there that one means of instruction must involve whatsoever is contained in all the rest? We are not to recite the Creed with anticipated persuasion, that it must contain what we imagine it ought, for better maintaining some opinions of our own; but we ought to say, and believe, that it contains what we find in it, of which one article is, to believe the catholic church, surely to be taught by her, which presupposeth that we need other instruction beside the Creed; and in particular we may learn of her what points be contained in the Creed, what otherwise; and so we shall not be deceived by believing we have all in the Creed, when we have not all; and you may in the same manner say, 'as well, nay better, the apostles might have given us no articles at all, as have left out articles tending to practice.' For in setting down one sort of articles and not the other, 'they make us believe we have all, when we have not all.'

27. "To our argument, that baptism is not contained in the Creed, Dr. Potter, besides his answer, That sacraments belong rather to practice that faith, (which I have already confuted, and which indeed maketh against himself, and serveth only to show that the apostles intended not to comprise all points in the Creed which we are bound to believe,) adds, that the Creed of Nice 'expressed baptism by name ['I confess one baptism for the remission of sins.'] Which answer is directly against himself, and manifestly proves that baptism is an article of faith, and yet is not contained in the Apostles' Creed, neither explicitly, nor by any necessary consequence from other articles expressed therein. If to make it an article of faith it be sufficient that it is contained in the Nicene council, he will find that protestants maintain many errors against faith, as being repugnant to definitions of general councils; as, in particular, that the very council of Nice (which, saith Mr. Whitgift, 'is of all wise and learned men reverenced, esteemed, and embraced, next unto the Scriptures themselves') decreed, that 'to those who were chosen to the ministry unmarried, it was not lawful to take any wife afterwards,' is affirmed by protestants. And your grand reformer Luther (*Lib. de Conciliis parte prima*) saith, that he understands not the Holy Ghost in that council. For in one canon it saith, that those who have gelded themselves are not fit to be made priests; in another, it forbids them to have wives. 'Hath,' saith he, 'the Holy Ghost nothing to do in councils, but to bind and load his ministers with impossible, dangerous, and unnecessary laws?' I forbear to show that this very article, 'I confess one baptism for the remission of sins,' will be understood by protestants in a far different sense from catholics; yea, protestants among themselves do not agree how baptism forgives sins, nor what grace it confers. Only concerning the unity of baptism against rebaptization of such as were once baptized, (which I noted as a point not contained in the Apostles' Creed,) I cannot omit an excellent place of St. Augustin, where, speaking of the Donatists, he hath these words: 'They are so bold as to rebaptize catholics, wherein they show themselves to be the greater heretics, since it hath pleased the

universal catholic church not to make baptism void even in the very heretics themselves.' In which few words this holy father delivereth against the Donatists these points, which do also make against protestants; that to make a heresy or a heretic known for such, it is sufficient to oppose the definition of God's church; that a proposition may be heretical, though it be not repugnant to any texts of Scripture. For St. Augustin teacheth that the doctrine of rebaptization is heretical, and yet acknowledgeth it cannot be convinced for such out of Scripture. And that neither the heresy of rebaptization of those who were baptized by heretics, nor the contrary catholic truth, being expressed in the Apostles' Creed, it followeth that it doth not contain all points of faith necessary to salvation. And so we must conclude, that to believe the Creed is not sufficient for unity of faith and spirit in the same church, unless there be also a total agreement both in belief of other points of faith, and in external profession and communion also; (whereof we are to speak in the next chapter;) according to the saying of St. Augustin: 'You are with us in baptism, and in the Creed; but in the spirit of unity and bond of peace, and, lastly, in the catholic church, you are not with us.'"

THE

ANSWER TO THE FOURTH CHAPTER:

Wherein is showed, that the Creed contains all necessary points of mere belief.

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1. AD. § 1-6. Concerning the Creeds containing the fundamentals of Christianity, this is Dr. Potter's assertion, delivered in the 207th page of his book: "The Creed of the apostles (as it is explained in the latter creeds of the catholic church) is esteemed a sufficient summary or catalogue of fundamentals by the best learned Romanists, and by antiquity."

2. By "fundamentals" he understands, not the fundamental rules of good life and action, (though every one of these is to be believed to come from God, and therefore virtually includes an article of the faith,) but the fundamental doctrines of faith, such as, though they have influence upon our lives, as every essential doctrine of Christianity hath, yet we are commanded to believe them, and not to do them. The assent of our understandings is required to them, but not obedience from our wills.

3. But these speculative doctrines again he distinguisheth out of Aquinas, Occham, and Canus, and others, into two kinds; of the first are those which are the "objects of faith, in and for themselves," which, by their own nature and God's prime intention, are essential parts of the gospel; such as the teachers in the church cannot without mortal sin omit to teach the learners; as such as are intrinsical to the covenant between God and man; and not only plainly revealed by God, and so certain truths, but also commanded to be preached to all men, and to be believed distinctly by all, and so necessary truths. Of the second sort are "accidental, circumstantial, occasional" objects of faith; millions whereof there are in Holy Scripture; such as are to be believed, not for themselves, but because they are joined with others that are necessary to be believed, and delivered by the same authority which delivered these. Such as we are not bound to know to be Divine revelations; (for without any fault we may be ignorant hereof, nay, believe the contrary;) such as we are not bound to examine, whether or no they be Divine revelations; such as pastors are not bound to teach their flock, nor their flock bound to know and remember; no, nor the pastors themselves to know them or believe them, or not to disbelieve them absolutely and always; but then only, when they do see and know them to be delivered in Scripture as Divine revelations.

4. I say when they do so, and not only when they may do for to lay an obligation upon us of believing or not disbelieving any verity, sufficient revelation on God's part is not sufficient; for then, seeing all the express verities of Scripture are either to all men, or at least to all learned men, sufficiently revealed by God, it should be a damnable sin in any learned man actually to disbelieve any one particular historical verity contained in Scripture, or to believe the contradiction of it, though he knew it not to be there contained. For though he did not, yet he might have known it; it being plainly revealed by God, and this revelation being extant in such a book, wherein he might have found it recorded, if with diligence he had perused it. To make, therefore, any points necessary to be believed, it is requisite that either we actually know them to be Divine revelations; and these though they be not articles of faith, nor necessary to be believed, in and for themselves, yet indirectly, and by accident, and by consequence they are so; the necessity of believing them being enforced upon us by a necessity of believing this essential and fundamental article of faith, "that all Divine revelations are true," which to disbelieve, or not to believe, is for any Christians not only impious, but impossible. Or else it is requisite that they be, first, actually revealed

by God; secondly, commanded, under pain of damnation, to be particularly known, (I mean known to be Divine revelations), and distinctly to be believed. And of this latter sort of speculative Divine verities Dr. Potter affirmed, "that the Apostles' Creed was a sufficient summary;" yet he affirmed it not as his own opinion, but as the doctrine of the "ancient fathers, and your own doctors." And besides, he affirmed it not as absolutely certain, but very probable.

5. In brief, all that he says is this: it is "very probable, that according to the judgment of the Roman doctors and the ancient fathers, the Apostles' Creed is to be esteemed a sufficient summary of all those doctrines which, being merely *credenda*, and not *agenda*, all men are ordinarily, under pain of damnation, bound particularly to believe."

6. "Now this assertion," you say, "is neither pertinent to the question in hand, nor in itself true." Your reasons to prove it "impertinent," put into form and divested of impertinences, are these: 1. "Because the question was not, What points were necessary to be explicitly believed? but, What points were necessary not to be disbelieved after sufficient proposal? And, therefore, to give a catalogue of points necessary to be explicitly believed is impertinent.

7. "Secondly, Because errors may be damnable, though the contrary truths be not of themselves fundamental; as, that Pontius Pilate was our Saviour's judge is not in itself a fundamental truth, yet to believe the contrary were a damnable error. And therefore to give a catalogue of truths, in themselves fundamental, is no pertinent satisfaction to this demand, what errors are damnable.

8. "Thirdly, Because if the church be not universally infallible, we cannot ground any certainty upon the Creed, which we must receive upon the credit of the church; and if the church be universally infallible, it is damnable to oppose her declaration in any thing, though not contained in the Creed.

9. "Fourthly, Because not to believe the articles of the Creed in the true sense is damnable, therefore it is frivolous to say the Creed contains all fundamentals, without specifying in what sense the articles of it are fundamental.

10. "Fifthly, Because the Apostles' Creed (as Dr. Potter himself confesseth) was not a sufficient catalogue, till it was explained by the first council; nor then until it was declared in the second, &c., by occasion of emergent heresies; therefore now also, as new heresies may arise, it will need particular explanation; and so is not yet, nor ever will be, a complete catalogue of fundamentals."

11. Now to the first of these objections, I say, first, that your distinction, between points necessary to be believed and necessary not to be disbelieved, is more subtle than sound; a distinction without a difference; there being no point necessary to be believed which is not necessary not to be disbelieved; nor no point to any man, at any time, in any circumstances, necessary not to be disbelieved, but it is to the same man, at the same time, in the same circumstances, necessary to be believed. Yet that which (I believe) you would have said, I acknowledge true; that many points which are not necessary to be believed absolutely, are yet necessary to be believed upon a supposition that they are known to be revealed by God; that is, become then necessary to be believed, when they are known to be Divine revelations. But then I must needs say, you do very strangely in saving, that the question was, "What points might lawfully be disbelieved, after sufficient proposition that they are Divine revelations?" You affirm, that none may; and so doth Dr. Potter, and with him all protestants and all Christians. And how then is this the question? Who ever said or thought, that of Divine revelations, known to be so, some might safely and lawfully be rejected and disbelieved, under pretence that they are not fundamental? Which of us ever taught, that it was not damnable either to deny or so much as doubt of the truth of any thing whereof we either know or believe that God hath revealed it? What protestant ever taught, that it was not damnable either to give God the lie, or to call his veracity into question. Yet, you say, "the demand of Charity Mistaken was, and it was most reasonable, that a list of fundamentals should be given,

the denial whereof destroys salvation, whereas the denial of other points may stand with salvation, although both kinds be equally proposed as revealed by God."

12. Let the reader peruse Charity Mistaken, and he will find that this qualification, "although both kinds of points be equally proposed as revealed by God," is your addition and no part of the demand. And if it had, it had been most unreasonable, seeing he and you know well enough, that though we do not presently, without examination, fall down and worship all your church's proposals as Divine Revelations, yet we make no such distinction of known Divine revelations, as if some only were necessary to be believed, and the rest might safely be rejected. So that to demand a particular minute catalogue of all points that may not be disbelieved after sufficient proposition, is indeed to demand a catalogue of all points that are or may be, inasmuch as none may be disbelieved after sufficient proposition that it is a Divine revelation. At least it is to desire us, first, to transcribe into this catalogue every text of the whole Bible. Secondly, to set down distinctly those innumerous millions of negative and positive consequences, which may be evidently deduced from it; for these, we say, God hath revealed. And, indeed, you are not ashamed in plain terms to require this of us. For having first told us, that "the demand was, what points were necessary not to be disbelieved after sufficient proposition that they are Divine truth," you come to say, "Certainly the Creed contains not all these." And this you prove by asking, "How many truths are there in Holy Scripture, not contained in the Creed, which we are not bound to know and believe, but are bound, under pain of damnation, not to reject, as soon as we come to know that they are found in Holy Scripture?" So that, in requiring a particular catalogue of all points not to be disbelieved after sufficient proposal, you require us to set you down all points contained in Scripture, or evidently deducible from it. And yet this you are pleased to call a *reasonable*, nay, a *most reasonable demand;* whereas having engaged yourself to give a catalogue of your fundamentals, you conceive your engagement very well satisfied by saying, "All is fundamental which the church proposeth," without going about to give us an endless inventory of her proposals. And therefore from us, instead of a perfect particular of Divine revelations of all sorts, (of which, with a less hyperbole than St. John useth, we might say, *if they were to be written, the world would not hold the books that must be written*,) methinks you should accept of this general, All Divine revelations are true, and to be believed; which yet I say, not as if I thought the belief of this general sufficient to salvation, but because I conceive it as sufficient as the belief of your general; and therefore I said not, Methinks all should accept of this general, but, Methinks you should accept of it.

13. The very truth is, the main question in this business is not, What Divine revelations are necessary to be believed, or not rejected when they are sufficiently proposed? for all, without exception, all without question are so; but, What revelations are simply and absolutely necessary to be proposed to the belief of Christians; so that that society which doth propose and indeed believe them, hath, for matter of faith, the essence of a true church, that which doth not, hath not? Now to this question, though not to yours, Dr. Potter's assertion (if it be true) is apparently very pertinent. And though not a full and total satisfaction to it, yet very effectual, and of great moment towards it. For the main question being, What points are necessary to salvation?—and points necessary to salvation being of two sorts, some of simple belief, some of practice and obedience—he that gives you a sufficient summary of the first sort of necessary points, hath brought you half way towards your journey's end. And therefore that which he doth is no more to be slighted as vain and impertinent, than an architect's work is to be thought impertinent towards the making of a house, because he doth it not all himself. Sure I am, if his assertion be true, as I believe it is, a corollary may presently be deduced from it, which, if it were embraced, cannot in all reason but do infinite service both to the truth of Christ and the peace of Christendom. For seeing falsehood and error could not long stand against the power of truth, were they not supported by tyranny and worldly advantage, he that could assert Christians to that liberty which Christ and his apostles left them, must

needs do truth a most heroical service. And seeing the overvaluing of the differences among Christians is one of the greatest maintainers of the schisms of Christendom, he that could demonstrate that only these points of belief are simply necessary to salvation wherein Christians generally agree, should he not lay a very fair and firm foundation of the peace of Christendom? Now the corollary which, I conceive, would produce these good effects, and which flows naturally from Dr. Potter's assertion, is this: That what man or church soever believes the Creed, and all the evident consequences of it, sincerely and heartily, cannot possibly (if also he believe the Scripture) be in any error of simple belief which is offensive to God: nor therefore deserve for any such error to be deprived of his life, or to be cut off from the church's communion and the hope of salvation. And the production of this again would be this (which highly concerns the Church of Rome to think of): That whatsoever man or church doth for any error of simple belief deprive any man so qualified as above, either of his temporal life, or livelihood, or liberty, or of the church's communion, and hope of salvation, is for the first, unjust, cruel, and tyrannous; schismatical, presumptuous, and uncharitable for the second.

Neither yet is this (as you pretend) to take away the necessity of believing those verities of Scripture which are not contained in the Creed, when once we come to know they are written in Scripture, but rather to lay a necessity upon men of believing all things written in Scripture, when once they know them to be there written; for he that believes not all known Divine revelations to be true, how doth he believe in God? unless you will say that the same man at the same time may not believe God, and yet believe in him. The greater difficulty is, how it will not take away the necessity of believing Scripture to be the word of God? But that it will not neither. For though the Creed be granted a sufficient summary of articles of mere faith, yet no man pretends that it contains the rules of obedience; but for them all men are referred to Scripture. Besides, he that pretends to believe in God, obligeth himself to believe it necessary to obey that which reason assures him to be the will of God. Now reason will assure him that believes the Creed, that it is the will of God he should believe the Scripture; even the very same reason which moves him to believe the Creed; universal and never-failing tradition having given this testimony both to Creed and Scripture, that they both by the works of God were sealed and testified to be the words of God. And thus much be spoken in answer to your first argument; the length whereof will be the more excusable, if I oblige myself to say but little to the rest.

14. I come then to your second; and, in answer to it, deny flatly, as a thing destructive of itself, that any error can be damnable, unless it be repugnant immediately or mediately, directly or indirectly, of itself or by accident, to some truth for the matter of it fundamental. And to your example of Pontius Pilate being judge of Christ, I say, the denial of it in him that knows it to be revealed by God is manifestly destructive of this fundamental truth—that all Divine revelations are true. Neither will you find any error so much as by accident damnable, but the rejecting of it will be necessarily laid upon us, by a real belief of all fundamentals and simply necessary truths. And I desire you would reconcile with this, that which you have said § 15. "Every fundamental error must have a contrary fundamental truth, because of two contradictory propositions, in the same degree, if the one is false, the other must be true," &c.

15. To the third I answer, That the certainty I have of the Creed, that it was from the apostles, and contains the principles of faith, I ground it not upon Scripture, and yet not upon the infallibility of any present, much less of your church, but upon the authority of the ancient church, and written tradition, which (as Dr. Potter hath proved) give this constant testimony unto it. Besides, I tell you, it is guilty of the same fault which Dr. Potter's assertion is here accused of; having, perhaps, some colour towards the proving it false, but none at all to show it impertinent.

16. To the fourth, I answer plainly thus, That you find fault with Dr. Potter for his virtues: you are offended with him for not usurping the authority which he hath not; in a word, for not playing the pope. Certainly, if protestants be faulty in this matter, it is for doing it too much, and not too little. This

presumptuous imposing of the senses of men upon the words of God, the special senses of men upon the general words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together, under the equal penalty of death and damnation; this vain conceit that we can speak of the things of God better than in the words of God; this deifying our own interpretations, and tyrannous enforcing them upon others; this restraining of the word of God from that latitude and generality, and the understandings of men from that liberty, wherein Christ and the apostles left them; is and hath been the only fountain of all the schisms of the church, and that which makes them immortal; the common incendiary of Christendom, and that which (as I said before) tears into pieces, not the coat, but the bowels and members of Christ: *Ridente Turca nec dolente Judæo*. Take away these walls of separation, and all will quickly be one. Take away this persecuting, burning, cursing, damning of men for not subscribing to the words of men as the words of God; require of Christians only to believe Christ, and to call no man master but him only; let those leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it, and let them that in their words disclaim it, disclaim it likewise in their actions. In a word, take away tyranny, which is the devil's instrument to support errors and superstitions and impieties in the several parts of the world, which could not otherwise long withstand the power of truth; I say, take away tyranny, and restore Christians to their just and full liberty of captivating their understanding to Scripture only; and as rivers, when they have a free passage, run all to the ocean, so it may well be hoped, by God's blessing, that universal liberty, thus moderated, may quickly reduce Christendom to truth and unity. These thoughts of peace (I am persuaded) may come from the God of peace, and to his blessing I commend them, and proceed.

18. Your fifth and last objection stands upon a false and dangerous supposition, that "new heresies may arise." For a hesesy being in itself nothing else but a doctrine repugnant to some article of the Christian faith, to say that new heresies may arise, is to say that new articles of faith may arise; and so some great ones among you stick not to profess in plain terms, who yet, at the same time, are not ashamed to pretend that your whole doctrine is catholic and apostolic: so Salmeron: *Non omnibus omnia dedit Deus, ut quælibet ætat suis gaudeat veritatibus, quas prior ætas ignoravit;* "God hath not given all things to all; so that every age hath its proper verities, which the former age was ignorant of," Dis. 57. in Epist. ad Rom. And again in the margin, *Habet unumquodque seculum peculiares revelationes Divinas:* "Every age hath its peculiar Divine revelations." Where that he speaks of such revelations as are or may by the church be made matters of faith, no man can doubt that reads him; an example whereof he gives us a little before in these words: *Unius Augustini doctrina assumptionis B. Deiparæ cultum in ecclesiam introduxit:* "The doctrine of Augustin only hath brought into the church the worship of the assumption of the mother of God," &c. Others again mince and palliate the matter with this pretence, that your church undertakes not to coin new articles of faith, but only to declare those that want sufficient declaration; but if sufficient declaration be necessary to make any doctrine an article of faith, then this doctrine, which before wanted it, was not before an article of faith; and your church, by giving it the essential form and last complement of an article of faith, makes it, though not a truth, yet certainly an article of faith. But I would fain know, whether Christ and his apostles knew this doctrine, which you pretend hath the matter, but wants the form, of an article of faith; that is, sufficient declaration, whether they knew it to be a necessary article of the faith or no? If they knew it not to be so, then either they taught what they knew not, which were very strange, or else they taught it not; and if not, I would gladly be informed, seeing you pretend to no new revelations, from whom you learned it? If they knew it, then either they concealed or declared it. To say, they concealed any necessary part of the gospel, is to charge them with far greater sacrilege than what was punished in Ananias and Sapphira. It is to charge these glorious stewards and dispensers of the mystery of Christ with want of the great virtue requisite in a steward, which is fidelity. It is to charge them with presumption for denouncing anathemas even to angels, in case they should teach any other doctrine than what they had received from them, which sure could not merit an anathema, if they left any necessary

part of the gospel untaught. It is, in a word, in plain terms to give them the lie, seeing they profess, plainly and frequently, that they taught Christians the whole doctrine of Christ. If they did know and declare it, then was it a full and formal article of faith; and the contrary a full and formal heresy, without any need of further declaration; and then their successors either continued the declaration of it, or discontinued it; if they did the latter, how are they such faithful depositories of apostolic doctrine as you pretend? or what assurance can you give us, that they might not bring in new and false articles, as well as suffer the old and true ones to be lost? If they did continue the declaration of it, and deliver it to their successors, and they to theirs, and so on perpetually; then continued it still a full and formal article of faith, and the repugnant doctrine a full and formal heresy, without and before the definition or declaration of a council. So that councils, as they cannot make that a truth or falsehood which before was not so; so neither can they make or declare that to be an article of faith, or a heresy, which before was not so. The supposition therefore on which this argument stands being false and ruinous, whatsoever is built upon it must together with it fall to the ground. This explication therefore, and restriction of this doctrine, (whereof you make your advantage,) was to my understanding unnecessary. The fathers of the church in after-times might have just cause to declare their judgment, touching the sense of some general articles of the Creed; but to oblige others to receive their declarations, under pain of damnation, what warrant they had, I know not. He that can show, either that the Church of all ages was to have this authority, or that it continued in the church for some ages, and then expired, he that can show either of these things, let him; for my part, I cannot. Yet I willingly confess the judgment of a council, though not infallible, is yet so far directive and obliging, that without apparent reason to the contrary it may be sin to reject it, at least not to afford it an outward submission for public peace sake.

19. Ad § 7, 8, 9. Were I not peradventure more fearful than I need to be of the imputation of tergiversation, I might very easily rid my hands of the remainder of this chapter; for in the question there discussed, you grant (for aught I see) as much as Dr. Potter desires; and Dr. Potter grants as much as you desire: and therefore that I should disease myself or my reader with a punctual examination of it may seem superfluous. First, that which you would have, and which your arguments wholly drive at, is this—that the Creed doth not contain all main and principal points of faith of all sorts, whether they be speculative or practical, whether they contain matter of simple belief, or whether they contain matter of practice and obedience, This Dr. Potter grants, p. 215, 235. And you grant that he grants it, § 8; where your words are, "Even by Dr. Potter's own confession, it" [the Creed] "doth not comprehend *agenda*, or things belonging to practice, as sacraments, commandments, the act of hope, and duties of charity." And if you will infer from hence, that therefore C. M. hath no reason to rest in the Apostles' Creed, as a perfect catalogue of fundamentals, and a full satisfaction to his demand, I have, without any offence of Dr. Potter, granted as much, if that would content you. But seeing you go on, and because his assertion is not (as neither is it pretended to be) a total satisfaction to the demand, cashier it as impertinent, and nothing towards it, here I have been bold to stop your proceeding, as unjust and unreasonable. For, as if you should request a friend to lend you, or demand of a debtor to pay you, a hundred pounds, and he could or should let you have but fifty, this were not fully to satisfy your demand, yet sure it were not to do nothing towards it; or, as this rejoinder of mine, though it be not an answer to all your book, but only to the first considerable part of it, and so much of the second as is material and falls into the first, yet I hope you will not deal so unkindly with me, as for this reason to condemn it of impertinence: so Dr. Potter being demanded a catalogue of fundamentals of faith, and finding them of two kinds, and those of one kind summed up to his hand in the Apostles' Creed, and this Creed consigned unto him for such a summary by very great authority; if upon these considerations he hath entreated his demander to accept of thus much, in part of payment, of the Apostles' Creed, as a sufficient summary of these articles of faith which are merely *credenda*, methinks he hath little reason to complain that he hath not been fairly and squarely dealt with.

Especially, seeing for full satisfaction, by Dr. Potter and all protestants, he is referred to Scripture, which we affirm contains evidently all necessary points of faith and rules of obedience; and seeing Dr. Potter in this very place hath subjoined, though not a catalogue of fundamentals, which (because to some more is fundamental, to others less, to others nothing at all) had been impossible, yet such a comprehension of them as may serve every one that will make a conscionable use of it instead of a catalogue. For thus he says, "It seems to be fundamental to the faith, and for the salvation of every member of the church, that he acknowledge and believe all such points of faith whereof he may be sufficiently convinced that they belong to the doctrine of Jesus Christ." This general rule if I should call a catalogue of fundamentals, I should have a precedent for it with you above exception, I mean yourself; for, chap. 3. § 19, just such another proposition you have called by this name. Yet because it were a strange figure of speech, I forbear it; only I will be bold to say, that this assertion is as good a catalogue of fundamentals as any you will bring of your church proposals, though you take as much time to do it as he that undertook to make an ass speak.

20. I come now to show that you also have requited Dr. Potter with a mutual courteous acknowledgment of his assertion, that the Creed is a sufficient summary of all the necessary articles of faith which are merely *credenda*.

21. First then, § 8, you have these words: "It cannot be denied that the Creed is most full and complete to that purpose for which the holy apostles, inspired by God, meant that it should serve, and in that manner as they did intend it; which was, not to comprehend all particular points of faith, but such general heads as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the faith of Christ to Jews and Gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered." These words, I say, being fairly examined, without putting them on the rack, will amount to a full acknowledgment of Dr. Potter's assertion. But before I put them to the question, I must crave thus much right of you, to grant me this most reasonable postulate, that the doctrine of *repentance from dead works*, which St. Paul saith was one of the two only things which he preached, and the doctrine of *charity, without which* (the same St. Paul assures us that) *the knowledge of all mysteries and all faith is nothing*, were doctrines more necessary and requisite, and therefore more fit to be preached to Jews and Gentiles, than these; "under what judge our Saviour suffered—that he was buried—and what time he rose again;" which you have taught us, cap. 3. § 2, "for their matter and nature in themselves not to be fundamental."

22. And upon this grant I will ask no leave to conclude, that whereas you say, "the Apostles' Creed was intended for a comprehension of such heads of faith as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the faith of Christ," &c.; you are now, for fear of too much debasing those high doctrines of repentance and charity, to restrain your assertion, as Dr. Potter doth his, and (though you speak indefinitely) to say you meant it only of those heads of faith which are merely *credenda*. And then the meaning of it (if it hath any) must be this: that the Creed is full for the apostles' intent, which was to comprehend all such general heads of faith, which, being points of simple belief, were most fit and requisite to be preached to Jews and Gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered. Neither I nor you, I believe, can make any other sense of your words than this: and upon this ground thus I subsume. But all the points of belief which were necessary, under pain of damnation, for the apostles to preach, and for those to whom the gospel was preached particularly to know and believe, were most fit and requisite, nay, more than so, necessary to be preached to all, both Jews and Gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered: therefore the apostles' intent, by your confession, was in this Creed to comprehend all such points. And you say, "the Creed is most full and complete for the purpose which they intended." The major of this syllogism is your own. The minor, I should think, needs no proof; yet, because all men may not be of my mind, I will prove it by its parts; and the first part thus:

There is the same necessity for the doing of these things, which are commanded to be done, by the same authority under the same penalty.

But the same authority, viz. Divine, under the same penalty, to wit, of damnation, commanded the apostles to preach all these doctrines which we speak of, and those to whom they were preached, particularly to know and believe them; for we speak of those only which were so commanded to be preached and believed.

Therefore all these points were alike necessary to be preached to all, both Jews and Gentiles.

Now that all these doctrines we speak of may be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered, he that remembers that we speak only of such doctrines as are necessary to be taught and learned, will require hereof no further demonstration. For (not to put you in mind of what the poet says, *Non sunt longa quibus nihil est quod demere possis*) who sees not, that seeing the greater part of men are of very mean capacities, that it is necessary that that may be learned easily which is to be learned of all? What then can hinder me from concluding thus:

All the articles of simple belief, which are fit and requisite to be preached and may easily be remembered, are by your confession comprised in the Creed:

But all the necessary articles of faith are requisite to be preached, and easy to be remembered;

Therefore they are all comprised in the Creed.

Secondly, from grounds granted by you I argue thus:

Points of belief in themselves fundamental are more requisite to be preached than those which are not so (this is evident).

But the apostles have put into their Creed some points that are not in themselves fundamental (so you confess, *ubi supra*):

Therefore if they have put in all most requisite to be preached, they have put in all that in themselves are fundamental.

Thirdly and lastly, From your own words, § 26, thus I conclude my purpose:

"The apostles' intention was particularly to deliver in the Creed such articles as were fittest for those times, concerning the Deity, Trinity, and Messias: (thus you:) now I subsume;

But all points simply necessary, by virtue of God's command, to be preached and believed in particular, were as fit for those times as these here mentioned;

Therefore their intention was to deliver in it particularly all the necessary points of belief.

23. And certainly, he that considers the matter advisedly, either must say that the apostles were not the authors of it, or that this was their design in composing it, or that they had none at all. For whereas you say, "their intent was to comprehend in it such general heads as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the faith;" and elsewhere, "particularly to deliver such articles as were fittest for those times;" every wise man may easily see that your desire here was to escape away in a cloud of indefinite terms. For otherwise, instead of such general heads and such articles, why did not you say plainly, all such, or some such? This had been plain dealing; but, I fear, cross to your design, which yet you have failed of. For that which you have spoken (though you are loath to speak out) either signifies nothing at all, or that which I and Dr. Potter affirm; viz. that the Apostles' Creed contains all those points of belief which were, by God's command, of necessity to be preached to all, and believed by all. Neither when I say so would I be so mistaken, as if I said, that all points in the Creed are thus necessary: for punies in logic know that universal affirmatives are not simply converted. And therefore it may be true, that all such necessary points are in the Creed; though it be not true, that all points in the Creed are thus necessary: which I

willingly grant of the points by you mentioned. But this rather confirms, than any way invalidates my assertion. For how could it stand with the apostles' wisdom, to put in any points circumstantial and not necessary, and at the same time to leave out any that were essential and necessary for that end, which, you say, they proposed to themselves in making the Creed; that is, "the preaching of the faith to Jews and Gentiles?"

24. Neither may you hope to avoid the pressure of these acknowledgments by pretending, as you do, § 10, that you do indeed acknowledge the Creed to contain all the necessary articles of faith; but yet so, that they are not either there expressed in it or deducible from it by evident consequence, but "only by way of implication or reduction." For, first, not to tell you that no proposition is implied in any other which is not deducible from it; nor, secondly, that the article of the catholic church, wherein you will have all implied, implies nothing to any purpose of yours, unless out of mere favour we will grant the sense of it to be, that the church is infallible, and that yours is the church. To pass by all this, and require no answer to it, this one thing I may not omit: that the apostle's intent was, (by your own confession,) particularly to deliver in the Creed such articles of belief as were fittest for those times (and all necessary articles I have proved were such): now to deliver particularly, and to deliver only implicitly; to be delivered particularly in the Creed, and only to be reducible to it; I suppose are repugnances hardly reconcileable. And therefore, though we desire you not to grant that the Creed contains all points of faith of all sorts, any other way than by implication or reduction, no, nor so neither; yet you have granted, and must grant, of the fundamental points of simple belief, those which the apostles were commanded in particular to teach all men, and all men in particular to know and believe, that these are delivered in the Creed after a more particular and punctual manner than implication or reduction comes to.

25. Ad § 10-15. It is vain for you to hope that the testimonies of the ancient and modern doctors, alleged to this purpose by Dr. Potter in great abundance, will be turned off with this general deceitful answer, that the allegation of them was needless to prove that the Creed contains all points of faith, under pretence that you grant it in manner aforesaid. For what if you grant it in manner aforesaid, yet if you grant it not (as indeed you do but inconstantly) in the sense which their testimonies require, then for all this their testimonies may be alleged to very good purpose. Now let any man read them with any tolerable indifference, and he shall find they say plainly, that all points of faith, necessary to be particularly believed, are explicitly contained in the Creed; and that your gloss of implication and reduction, had it been confronted with their sentences, would have been much out of countenance, as having no ground or colour of ground in them. For example, if Azorius had thought thus of it, how could he have called it "a brief comprehension of the faith, and a sum of all things to be believed, and, as it were, a sign or cognizance whereby Christians are to be differenced and distinguished from the impious and misbelievers, who profess either no faith, or not the right?" If Huntly had been of this mind, how could he have said of it, with any congruity, "that the rule of faith is expressly contained in it, and all the prime foundations of faith;" and, that "the apostles were not so forgetful as to omit any prime principal foundation of faith in that Creed which they delivered to be believed by all Christians?" The words of Filiucius are pregnant to the same purpose: "There cannot be a fitter rule from whence Christians may learn what they are explicitly to believe, than that which is contained in the Creed." Which words cannot be justified, if all points necessary to be believed explicitly be not comprised in it. "To this end," saith Putean, "was the Creed composed by the apostles, that Christians might have a form whereby they might profess themselves catholics." But certainly the apostles did this in vain, if a man might profess this, and yet for matter of faith be not a catholic.

26. The words of cardinal Richelieu exact this sense, and refuse your gloss as much as any of the former: "The Apostles' Creed is the summary and abridgment of that faith which is necessary for a Christian; these holy persons being by the commandment of Jesus Christ to disperse themselves over the

world, and in all parts by preaching the gospel to plant the faith, esteemed it very necessary to reduce into a short sum all that which Christians ought to know, to the end that being dispersed into divers parts of the world they might preach the same thing in a short form, that it might be the easier remembered. For this effect they called this abridgment a symbol, which signifies a mark, or sign, which might serve to distinguish true Christians which embraced it, from infidels which rejected it." Now I would fain know how the composition of the Creed could serve for this end, and secure the preachers of it, that they should preach the same thing, if there were other necessary articles not comprised in it? or how could it be a sign to distinguish true Christians from others, if a man might believe it all, and for want of believing something else, not to be a true Christian?

27. The words of the author of the Consideration of Four Heads propounded to King James require the same sense, and utterly renounce your qualification: "The symbol is a brief yet entire methodical sum of Christian doctrine, including all points of faith, either to be preached by the apostles, or to be believed by their disciples; delivered both for a direction unto them, what they were to preach, and others to believe, as also to discern and put a difference betwixt all faithful Christians and misbelieving infidels."

28. Lastly, Gregory of Valence affirms our assertion even in terms: "The articles of faith contained in the Creed are, as it were, the first principles of the Christian faith, in which is contained the sum of evangelical doctrine, which all men are bound explicitly to believe."

29. To these testimonials of your own doctors, I should have added the concurrent suffrages of the ancient fathers, but the full and free acknowledgment of the same Valentia, in the place above quoted, will make this labour unnecessary. "So judge," saith he, "the holy fathers, affirming that this symbol of faith was composed by the apostles, that all might have a short sum of those things which are to be believed, and are dispersedly contained in Scripture."

30. Neither is there any discord between this assertion of your doctors, and their holding themselves obliged to believe all the points which the council of Trent defines. For protestants and papists may both hold, that all points of belief necessary to be known and believed are summoned up in the Creed, and yet both the one and the other think themselves bound to believe whatsoever other points they either know or believe to be revealed by God. For the articles which are necessary to be known that they are revealed by God may be very few, and yet those which are necessary to be believed, when they are revealed and known to be so, may be very many.

31. But "summaries and abstracts are not intended to specify all the particulars of the science or subject to which they belong." Yes, if they be intended for perfect summaries, they must not omit any necessary doctrine of that science whereof they are summaries; though the illustration and reasons of it they may omit. If this were not so, a man might set down forty or fifty of the principal definitions and divisions and rules of logic, and call it a summary or abstract of logic. But sure this were no more a summary, than that were the picture of a man in little that wanted any of the parts of a man, or that a total sum wherein all the particulars were not cast up. Now the Apostles' Creed, you here intimate that it was intended for a summary; otherwise why talk you here of summaries, and tell us that they need not contain all the particulars of their science; and of what, I pray, may it be a summary, but of the fundamentals of Christian faith? Now you have already told us, "that it is most full and complete to that purpose for which it was intended." Lay all this together, and I believe the product will be, that the Apostles' Creed is a perfect summary of the fundamentals of the Christian faith; and what the duty of a perfect summary is, I have already told you.

32. Whereas therefore to disprove this assertion, in divers particles of this chapter, but especially the fourteenth, you muster up whole armies of doctrines, which you pretend are necessary and not contained in the Creed; I answer very briefly thus: that the doctrines you mention are either concerning matters of practice, and not simple belief; or else they are such doctrines wherein God hath not so plainly revealed

himself, but that honest and good men, true lovers of God and truth, those that desire above all things to know his will and do it, may err, and yet commit no sin at all, or only a sin of infirmity, and not destructive of salvation; or lastly, they are such doctrines which God hath plainly revealed, and so are necessary to be believed, when they are known to be Divine, but not necessary, to be known and believed; not necessary to be known for Divine, that they may be believed. Now all these sorts of doctrines are impertinent to the present question. For Dr. Potter never affirmed, either that the necessary duties of a Christian, or that all truths piously credible but not necessary to be believed, or that all truths necessary to be believed upon the supposal of Divine revelation, were specified in the Creed. For this he affirms only of such speculative Divine verities which God hath commanded particularly to be preached to all and believed by all. Now let the doctrines be objected by you be well considered, and let all those that are reducible to the three former heads be discarded; and then, of all these instances against Dr. Potter's assertion, there will not remain so much as one.

33. First, Questions touching the conditions to be performed by us to obtain remission of sins—the sacraments—the commandments, and the possibility of keeping them—the necessity of imploring the assistance of God's grace and Spirit for the keeping of them—how far obedience is due to the church—prayer for the dead—the cessation of the old law—are all about *agenda*, and so cut off upon the first consideration.

34. Secondly, The question touching fundamentals is profitable, but not fundamental. He that believes all fundamentals cannot be damned for any error in faith, though he believe more or less to be fundamental than is so. That also of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son—of purgatory—of the church's visibility—of the books of the New Testament, which were doubted of by a considerable part of the primitive church (until I see better reason for the contrary than the bare authority of men)—I shall esteem of the same condition.

35. Thirdly, These doctrines are: That Adam and the angels sinned: that there are angels, good and bad: that those books of Scripture which were never doubted of by any considerable part of the church are the word of God: that St. Peter had no such primacy as you pretend: that the Scripture is a perfect rule of faith, and consequently that no necessary doctrine is unwritten; that there is no one society or succession of Christians absolutely infallible. These, to my understanding, are truths plainly revealed by God, and necessary to be believed by them who know they are so. But not so necessary that every man and woman is bound, under pain of damnation, particularly to know them to be Divine revelations, and explicitly to believe them. And for this reason, these, with innumerable other points, are to be referred to the third sort of doctrines above mentioned, which were never pretended to have place in the Creed. There remains one only point of all that army you mustered together, reducible to none of these heads; and that is, *that God is, and is a remunerator*, which you say is questioned by the denial of merit: but if there were such a necessary indissoluble coherence between this point and the doctrine of merit, methinks with as much reason and more charity you might conclude that we hold merit because we hold this point, than that we deny this point because we deny merit. Besides, when protestants deny the doctrine of merits, you know right well, for so they have declared themselves a thousand times, that they mean nothing else but, with David, that their well-doing extendeth not, is not truly beneficial to God; with our Saviour, when they have done all which they are commanded, they have done their duty only, and no courtesy; and, lastly, with St. Paul, that all which they can suffer for God (and yet suffering is more than doing) *is not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed*. So that you must either misunderstand their meaning in denying merit, or you must discharge their doctrine of this odious consequence, or you must charge it on David and Paul, and Christ himself. Nay, you must either grant their denial of true merit just and reasonable, or you must say that our good actions are really profitable to God; that they are not debts already due to him, but voluntary and undeserved favours; and that they are equal unto and well worthy

of eternal glory which is prepared for them. As for the inconvenience which you so much fear, that the denial of merit makes God a giver only, and not a rewarder; I tell you, good sir, you fear where no fear is: and that it is both most true, on the one side, that you in holding good works meritorious of eternal glory, make God a rewarder only, and not a giver, contrary to plain Scripture, affirming that *the gift of God is eternal life;* and that it is most false, on the other side, that the doctrine of protestants makes God a giver only, and not a rewarder; inasmuch as their doctrine is, that God gives not heaven but to those which do something for it; and so his gift is also a reward; but withal, that whatsoever they do is due unto God beforehand, and worth nothing to God, and worth nothing in respect of heaven; and so man's work is no merit, and God's reward is still a gift.

36. Put the case, the pope, for a reward of your service done him in writing this book, had given you the honour and means of a cardinal, would you not, not only in humility, but in sincerity, have professed that you had not merited such a reward? And yet the pope is neither your creator, nor redeemer, nor preserver, nor perhaps your very great benefactor; sure I am, not so great as God Almighty; and therefore hath no such right and title to your service as God hath, in respect of precedent obligations. Besides, the work you have done him hath been really advantageous to him; and, lastly, not altogether unproportionable to the forementioned reward. And, therefore, if by the same work you will pretend that either you have, or hope to have, deserved immortal happiness, I beseech you consider well whether this be not to set a higher value upon a cardinal's cap than a crown of immortal glory, and with that cardinal to prefer a part in Paris before a part in Paradise.

37. In the next paragraph you beat the air again, and fight manfully with your own shadow. The point you should have spoken to was this: That there are some points of simple belief necessary to be explicitly believed, which yet are not contained in the Creed. Instead hereof you trouble yourself in vain to demonstrate, that many important points of faith are not contained in it, which yet Dr. Potter had freely granted, and you yourself take particular notice of his granting of it. All this pains therefore you have employed to no purpose; saving that to some negligent reader you may seem to have spoken to the very point, because that which you speak to, at the first hearing, sounds somewhat near it. But such a one I must entreat to remember, there be many more points of faith than there be articles of simple belief necessary to be explicitly believed; and that though all of the former sort are not contained in the Creed, yet all of the latter sort may be. As for your distinction between heresies that have been, and heresies that are, and heresies that may be, I have already proved it vain; and that whatsoever may be an heresy, that is so; and whatsoever is so, that always hath been so, ever since the publication of the gospel of Christ. The doctrine of your church may, like a snowball, increase with rolling, and again, if you please, melt away and decrease; but as Christ Jesus, so his gospel, is yesterday, and to-day, and for ever the same.

38. Our Saviour sending his apostles to preach, gave them no other commission than this: *Go teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* These are the bounds of their commission. If your church have any larger, or if she have a commission at large, to teach what she pleaseth, and call it the Gospel of Christ, let her produce her letters patents from heaven for it. But if this be all you have, then must you give me leave to esteem it both great sacrilege in you to forbid any thing, be it never so small or ceremonious, which Christ hath commanded; as the receiving of the communion in both kinds; and as high a degree of presumption, to enjoin men to believe that there are or can be any other fundamental articles of the gospel of Christ, than what Christ himself commanded his apostles to teach all men; or any damnable heresies, but such as are plainly repugnant to these prime verities.

39. Ad § 16, 17. The saying of the most learned prelate, and excellent man, the archbishop of Armagh, is only related by Dr. Potter, p. 155, and not applauded: though the truth is, both the man deserves as much applause as any man, and his saying as much as any saying; it being as great and as good

a truth, and as necessary for these miserable times, as possibly can be uttered. For this is most certain, and I believe you will easily grant it, that to reduce Christians to unity of communion, there are but two ways that may be conceived probable: the one, by taking away the diversity of opinions touching matters of religion; the other, by showing that the diversity of opinions which is among the several sects of Christians ought to be no hindrance to their unity in communion.

40. Now the former of these is not to be hoped for without a miracle, unless that could be done, which is impossible to be performed, though it be often pretended; that is, unless it could be made evident to all men, that God hath appointed some visible judge of controversies, to whose judgment all men are to submit themselves. What then remains, but that the other way must be taken, and Christians must be taught to set a higher value upon these high points of faith and obedience wherein they agree, than upon these matters of less moment wherein they differ; and understand that agreement in those ought to be more effectual to join them in one communion, than their difference in other things of less moment to divide them? When I say in one communion, I mean in a common profession of those articles of faith wherein all consent; a joint worship of God, after such a way as all esteem lawful; and a mutual performance of all those works of charity which Christians owe one to another. And to such a communion what better inducement could be thought of, than to demonstrate that what was universally believed of all Christians, if it were joined with a love of truth, and with holy obedience, was sufficient to bring men to heaven? For why should men be more rigid than God? Why should any error exclude any man from the church's communion, which will not deprive him of eternal salvation? Now that Christians do generally agree in all those points of doctrine which are necessary to salvation, it is apparent, because they agree with one accord in believing all those books of the Old and New Testament which in the church were never doubted of to be the undoubted word of God. And it is so certain that in all these books all necessary doctrines are evidently contained, that of all the four evangelists this is very probable, but of St. Luke most apparent, that in every one of their books they have comprehended the whole substance of the gospel of Christ. For what reason can be imagined, that any of them should leave out any thing which he knew to be necessary, and yet (as apparently all of them have done) put in many things which they knew to be only profitable, and not necessary? What wise and honest man that were now to write the gospel of Christ, would do so great a work of God after such a negligent fashion? Suppose Xaverius had been to write the gospel of Christ for the Indians, think you he would have left out any fundamental doctrine of it? If not, I must beseech you to conceive as well as of St. Matthew, and St. Mark, and St. Luke, and St. John, as you do of Xaverius. Besides, if every one of them have not in them all necessary doctrines, how have they complied with their own design, which was, as the titles of their books show, to write the gospel of Christ, and not a part of it? or how have they not deceived us, in giving them such titles? By the whole gospel of Christ I understand not the whole history of Christ, but all that makes up the covenant between God and man. Now if this be wholly contained in the Gospel of St. Mark and St. John, I believe every considering man will be inclinable to believe, that then without doubt it is contained, with the advantage of many other profitable things, in the larger Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. And that St. Mark's Gospel wants no necessary article of this covenant, I presume you will not deny, if you believe Irenæus, when he says, "Matthew, to the Hebrews in their tongue published the Scripture of the gospel: when Peter and Paul did preach the gospel, and found the church, or a church at Rome, or of Rome, and after their departure, Mark, the scholar of Peter, delivered to us in writing those things which had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the follower of Paul, compiled in a book the gospel which was preached by him: and afterwards John, residing in Asia, in the city of Ephesus, did himself also set forth a Gospel."

41. In which words of Irenæus, it is remarkable that they are spoken by him against some heretics that pretended (as you know who do now-a-days) that "some necessary doctrines of the gospel were

unwritten," and that "out of the Scriptures truth (he must mean sufficient truth) cannot be found by those which know not tradition." Against whom to say, that part of the gospel which was preached by Peter was written by St. Mark, and some other necessary points of it omitted, had been to speak impertinently, and rather to confirm than confute their error. It is plain, therefore, that he must mean, as I pretend, that all the necessary doctrine of the gospel, which was preached by St. Peter, was written by St. Mark. Now you will not deny, I presume, that St. Peter preached all; therefore you must not deny but St. Mark wrote all.

42. Our next inquiry let it be touching St. John's intent in writing his Gospel, whether it were to deliver so much truth, as being believed and obeyed would certainly bring men to eternal life, or only part of it, and to leave part unwritten? A great man there is, but much less than the apostle, who saith, that "writing last, he purposed to supply the defects of the other evangelists that had wrote before him;" which (if it were true) would sufficiently justify what I have undertaken, that at least all the four evangelists have in them all the necessary parts of the gospel of Christ. Neither will I deny, but St. John's secondary intent might be to supply the defects of the former three Gospels in some things very profitable. But he that pretends, that any necessary doctrine is in St. John which is in none of the other evangelists, hath not so considered them as he should do, before he pronounce sentence in so weighty a matter. And for his prime intent in writing his Gospel, what that was, certainly no father in the world understood it better than himself; therefore let us hear him speak: *Many other signs* (saith he) *also did Jesus in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name*. By *these are written*, may be understood, these things are written, or these signs are written. Take it which way you will, this conclusion will certainly follow; that either all that which St. John wrote in his Gospel, or less than all, and therefore all much more, was sufficient to make them believe that which, being believed with lively faith, would certainly bring them to eternal life.

43. This which hath been spoken (I hope) is enough to justify my undertaking to the full, that it is very probable that every one of the four evangelists hath in his book the whole substance, all the necessary parts of the gospel of Christ. But for St. Luke, that he hath written such a perfect Gospel, in my judgment it ought to be with them that believe him no manner of question. Consider first the introduction to his Gospel, where he declares what he intends to write in these words: *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed*. Add to this place the entrance to his history of the Acts of the Apostles: *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up*. Weigh well these two places, and then answer me freely and ingenuously to these demands: 1. Whether St. Luke doth not undertake the very same thing which he says *many had taken in hand?* 2. Whether this were not *to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed amongst Christians?* 3. Whether the whole gospel of Christ, and every necessary doctrine of it, were not surely believed among Christians? 4. Whether they which were *eye-witnesses and ministers of the word from the beginning*, delivered not the whole gospel of Christ? 5. Whether he doth not undertake *to write in order these things whereof he had perfect understanding from the first?* 6. Whether he had not perfect understanding of the whole gospel of Christ? 7. Whether he doth not undertake to write to Theophilus of all those things *wherein he had been instructed?* 8. And whether he had not been instructed in all the necessary parts of the gospel of Christ? 9. Whether in the other text, *All things which Jesus began to do and teach*, must not at least imply all the principal and necessary things? 10. Whether this be not the very interpretation of your Rhemish doctors,

in their annotation upon this place? 11. Whether all these articles of the Christian faith, without the belief whereof no man can be saved, be not the principal and most necessary things which Jesus taught? 12, and lastly, Whether many things which St. Luke hath wrote in his Gospel be not less principal and less necessary than all and every one of these? When you have well considered these proposals, I believe you will be very apt to think (if St. Luke be of credit with you) that all things necessary to salvation are certainly contained in his writings alone. And from hence you will not choose but conclude, that seeing all the Christians in the world agree in the belief of what St. Luke hath written, and not only so, but in all other books of canonical Scripture which were never doubted of in and by the church, the learned archbishop had very just and certain ground to say, "that in these propositions, which without controversy are universally received in the whole Christian world, so much truth is contained, as, being joined with holy obedience, may be sufficient to bring a man to everlasting salvation; and that we have no cause to doubt, but that as many as walk according to this rule, neither overthrowing that which they have builded, by superinducing any damnable heresy thereupon, nor otherwise vitiating their holy faith with a lewd and wicked conversation, *peace shall be upon them, and upon the Israel of God*."

44. Against this you object two things: the one, that by this rule, "seeing the doctrine of the Trinity is not received universally among Christians, the denial of it shall not exclude salvation:" the other, that "the bishop contradicts himself, in supposing a man may believe all necessary truths, and yet superinduce some damnable heresies."

45. To the first I answer, what I conceive he would whose words I here justify, that he hath declared plainly in this very place, that he meant, not an absolute, but a limited universality; and speaks not of propositions universally believed by all professions of Christianity that are, but only by all those several professions of Christianity that have any large spread in any part of the world. By which words he excludes from the universality here spoken of, the deniers of the doctrine of the Trinity, as being but a handful of men in respect of all, nay, in respect of any of these professions which maintain it. And therefore it was a great fault in you, either willingly to conceal these words which evacuate your objection, or else negligently to oversee them. Especially seeing your friend, to whom you are so much beholden, Paulus Veridicus, in his scurrilous and sophistical pamphlet against bishop Usher's sermon, hath so kindly offered to lead you by the hand to the observation of them in these words: "To consider of your *coinopista*, or *communiter credenda*, articles, as you call them, universally believed of all these several professions of Christianity, which have any large spread in the world: these articles, for example, may be the Unity of the Godhead, the Trinity of Persons, immortality of the soul," &c. Where you see that your friend, whom you so much magnify, hath plainly confessed, that notwithstanding the bishop's words, the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity may exclude salvation: and therefore in approving and applauding his answer to the bishop's sermon, you have unawares allowed this answer of mine to your own greatest objection.

46. Now for the foul contradiction, which you say the doctor might easily have espied in the bishop's saying, he desires your pardon for his oversight, for Paulus Veridicus's sake: who though he set himself to find fault with the bishop's sermon, yet it seems this he could not find, or else questionless we should have heard of it from him. And therefore, if Dr. Potter, being the bishop's friend, have not been more sharp-sighted than his enemies, this, he hopes, to indifferent judges, will seem an unpardonable offence. Yet this I say, not as if there were any contradiction at all, much less any foul contradiction, in the bishop's words: but as Antipheron's picture, which he thought he saw in the air before him, was not in the air, but in his disturbed fancy; so all the contradiction which here you descant upon, is not indeed in the bishop's saying, but in your imagination: for wherein, I pray, lies this foul contradiction? "In supposing," say you, "a man may believe all truths necessary to salvation, and superinduce a damnable heresy." I answer, it is not certain that his words do suppose this; neither, if they do, doth he contradict himself. I say, it is not certain that his words import any such matter; for ordinarily men used to speak and write so as here he

doth, when they intend not to limit or restrain, but only to repeat, and press, and illustrate what they have said before. And I wonder why, with your eagles' eyes, you did not espy another foul contradiction in his words as well as this, and say, that he supposes a man may walk according to the rule of holy obedience, and yet vitiate his holy faith with a lewd and wicked conversation. Certainly, a lewd conversation is altogether as contradictious to holy obedience, as a damnable heresy to necessary truth. What then was the reason that you espied not this foul contradiction in his words as well as that? Was it because, according to the spirit and genius of your church, your zeal is greater to that which you conceive true doctrine than holy obedience, and think simple error a more capital crime than sins committed against knowledge and conscience? Or was it because your reason told you, that herein he meant only to repeat and not to limit what he said before? And why then had you not so much candour to conceive that he might have the same meaning in the former part of the disjunction, and intend no more but this. Whosoever walks according to this rule of believing all necessary truths, and holy obedience, (neither poisoning his faith of those truths which he holds with the mixture of any damnable heresy, nor vitiating it with a wicked life,) peace shall be upon him? In which words what man of any ingenuity will not presently perceive that the words within the parenthesis are only a repetition of, and no exception from, those that are without? St. Anathasius, in his Creed, tells us, "The catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance;" and why now do you not tell him that he contradicts himself, and supposes that we may worship a trinity of persons, and one God in substance, and yet confound the persons, or divide the substance; which yet is impossible, because three remaining three cannot be confounded, and one remaining one cannot be divided? If a man should say unto you, he that keeps all the commandments of God, committing no sin, either against the love of God or the love of his neighbour, is a perfect man; or thus, he that will live in constant health had need be exact it his diet, neither eating too much nor too little; or thus, he that will come to London must go on straight forward in such a way, and neither turn to the right hand nor to the left; I verily believe you would not find any contradiction in his words, but confess them as coherent and consonant as any in your book. And certainly, if you would look upon this saying of the bishop with any indifference, you would easily perceive it to be of the very same kind, and capable of the very same construction. And therefore one of the grounds of your accusation is uncertain. Neither can you assure us that the bishop supposes any such matter as you pretend. Neither, if he did suppose this, (as perhaps he did,) were this to contradict himself: for though there can be no damnable heresy unless it contradict some necessary truth, yet there is no contradiction but the same man may at once believe this heresy and this truth; because there is no contradiction that the same man, at the same time, should believe contradictions. For first, whatsoever a man believes true, that he may and must believe; but there have been some who have believed and taught that contradictions might be true, against whom Aristotle disputes in the third of his Metaphysics; therefore it is not impossible that a man may believe contradictions. Secondly, they which believe there is no certainty in reason, must believe that contradictions may be true; for otherwise there will be no certainty in this reason: this contradicts truth, therefore it is false. But there be now divers in the world who believe there is no certainty in reason; (and whether you be of their mind or no I desire to be informed;) therefore there be divers in the world who believe contradictions may be true. Thirdly, they which do captivate their understandings to the belief of those things which to their understanding seem irreconcilable contradictions, may as well believe real contradictions: (for the difficulty of believing arises not from their being repugnant, but from their seeming to be so) but you do captivate your understandings to the belief of those things which seem to your understandings irreconcilable contradictions; therefore it is as possible and easy for you to believe those that indeed are so. Fourthly, some men may be confuted in their errors, and persuaded out of them: but no man's error can be confuted, who, together with his error, doth not believe and grant some true principle that

contradicts his error; for nothing can be proved to him who grants nothing, neither can there be (as all men know) any rational discourse but out of grounds agreed on by both parties. Therefore it is not impossible, but absolutely certain, that the same man at the same time may believe contradictions. Fifthly, it is evident, neither can you without extreme madness and uncharitableness deny, that we believe the Bible; those books, I mean, which we account canonical. Otherwise, why dispute you with us out of them, as out of a common principle? Either, therefore, you must retract your opinion, and acknowledge that the same man at the same time may believe contradictions; or else you will run into a greater inconvenience, and be forced to confess, that no part of our doctrine contradicts the Bible. Sixthly, I desire you to vindicate from contradiction these following assertions: that there should be length, and nothing long; breadth, and nothing broad; thickness, and nothing thick; whiteness, and nothing white; roundness, and nothing round; weight, and nothing heavy; sweetness, and nothing sweet; moisture, and nothing moist; fluidness, and nothing flowing; many actions, and no agent; many passions, and no patient; that is, that there should be a long, broad, thick, white, round, heavy, sweet, moist, flowing, active, passive nothing! That bread should be turned into the substance of Christ, and yet not any thing of the bread become any thing of Christ; neither the matter, nor the form, nor the accidents of bread, be made either the matter, or the form, or the accidents of Christ: that bread should be turned into nothing; and at the same time with the same action turned into Christ, and yet Christ should not be nothing: that the same thing at the same time should have its just dimensions, and just distance of its parts one from another, and at the same time not have it, but all its parts together in one and the selfsame point: that the body of Christ, which is much greater, should be contained wholly, and in its full dimensions, without any alteration, in that which is lesser; and that not once only, but as many times over as there are several points in the bread and wine: that the same thing at the same time should be wholly above itself, and wholly below itself, within itself, and without itself, on the right hand, and on the left hand, and round about itself: that the same thing at the same time should move to and from itself, and lie still; or, that it should be carried from one place to another, through the middle space, and yet not move: that it should be brought from heaven to earth, and yet not come out of heaven, nor be at all in any of the middle spaces between heaven and earth: that to be one, should be to undivided from itself, and yet that one and the same thing should be divided from itself: that a thing may be, and yet be nowhere: that a finite thing may be in all places at once: that a body may be in a place and have there its dimensions, and colour, and all other qualities, and yet that it is not in the power of God to make it visible and tangible there, nor capable of doing or suffering any thing: that there should be no certainty in our senses, and yet that we should know something certainly, and yet know nothing, but by our senses: that that which is, and was long ago, should now begin to be: that that is now to be made of nothing, which is not nothing, but something: that the same thing should be before and after itself: that it should be truly and really in a place, and yet without locality: nay, that he which is Omnipotent should not be able to give it locality in this place where it is, as some of you hold; or, if he can, as others say he can, that it should be possible that the same man, for example, you or I, may at the same time be awake at London, and not awake, but asleep, at Rome; there run or walk, here not run or walk, but stand still, sit, or lie along; there study or write, here do neither, but dine or sup; there speak, here be silent: that he may in one place freeze with cold, in another burn with heat: that he may be drunk in one place, and sober in another; valiant in one place, and a coward in another; a thief in one place, and honest in another; that he may be a papist, and go to mass in Rome; a protestant, and go to church in England; that he may die in Rome, and live in England; or, dying in both places, may go to hell from Rome, and to heaven from England: that the body and soul of Christ should cease to be where it was, and yet not go to another place, nor be destroyed:—all these, and many other of the like nature, are the unavoidable, and most of them the acknowledged consequences of your doctrine of transubstantiation, as it is explained one way or other

by your schoolmen. Now I beseech you, sir, to try your skill, and if you can, compose their repugnance, and make peace between them; certainly, none but you shall be catholic moderator. But if you cannot do it, and that after an intelligible manner, then you must give me leave to believe, that either you do not believe transubstantiation, or else that it is no contradiction that men should subjugate their understandings to the belief of contradictions.

47. Lastly, I pray tell me whether you have not so much charity in store for the bishop of Armagh and Dr. Potter, as to think that they themselves believe this saying, which the one preached and printed, the other reprinted, and, as you say, applauded? If you think they do, then certainly you have done unadvisedly, either in charging it with a foul contradiction, or in saying, it is impossible that any man should at once believe contradictions. Indeed, that men should not assent to contradictions, and that it is unreasonable to do so, I willingly grant; but to say it is impossible to be done, is against every man's experience, and almost as unreasonable as to do the thing which is said to be impossible: for though perhaps it may be very difficult for a man in his right wits to believe a contradiction expressed in terms, especially if he believe it to be a contradiction; yet for men, being cowed and awed by superstition, to persuade themselves upon slight and trivial grounds, that these or these, though they seem contradictions, yet indeed are not so, and so to believe them; or if the plain repugnance of them be veiled or disguised a little with some empty unintelligible nonsense distinction; or if it be not expressed but implied, not direct but by consequence, so that the parties to whose faith the propositions are offered are either innocently or perhaps affectedly ignorant of the contrariety of them; for men in such cases easily to swallow and digest contradictions, he that denies it possible must be a mere stranger in the world.

48. Ad § 18. This paragraph consists of two immodest untruths, obtruded upon us without show or shadow of reason; and an evident sophism, grounded upon an affected mistake of the sense of the word *fundamental*.

49. The first untruth is, that "Dr. Potter makes a church, of men agreeing scarcely in one point of faith; of men concurring in some one or few articles of belief; and in the rest holding conceits plainly contradictory; agreeing only in this one article, that Christ is our Saviour, but for the rest, like to the parts of a chimera," &c. Which, I say, is a shameless calumny, not only because Dr. Potter in this point delivers not his own judgment, but relates the opinion of others, Mr. Hooker and Mr. Morton; but especially, because even these men, (as they are related by Dr. Potter,) to the constituting the very essence of a church, in the lowest degree, require not only "faith in Christ Jesus the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world," but also "submission to his doctrine in mind and will." Now I beseech you, sir, tell me ingenuously, whether the doctrine of Christ may be called, without blasphemy, "scarcely one point of faith?" or whether it consists only "of some one or few articles of belief?" or whether there be nothing in it but only this article, "that Christ is our Saviour?" Is it not manifest to all the world, that Christians of all professions do agree with one consent in the belief of all those books of Scripture, which were not doubted of in the ancient church without danger of damnation? Nay, is it not apparent that no man at this time can without hypocrisy pretend to believe in Christ, but of necessity he must do so? seeing he can have no reason to believe in Christ, but he must have the same to believe the Scripture. I pray then read over the Scripture once more, or, if that be too much labour, the New Testament only; and then say, whether there be nothing there but "scarcely one point of faith? but some one or two articles of belief? nothing but this article only, that Christ is our Saviour?" Say, whether there be not there an infinite number of Divine verities, Divine precepts, Divine promises, and those so plainly and undoubtedly delivered, that if any one sees them not, it cannot be because he cannot, but because he will not? So plainly, that whosoever submits sincerely to the doctrine of Christ, in mind and will, cannot possibly but submit to these in act and performance. And in the rest, which it hath pleased God, for reasons best known to himself, to deliver obscurely or ambiguously, yet thus far at least they agree, that the sense of

them intended by God is certainly true, and that they are without passion or prejudice to endeavour to find it out; the difference only is, which is that true sense which God intended. Neither would this long continue, if the walls of separation, whereby the devil hopes to make their divisions eternal, were pulled down, and error were not supported against truth by human advantages. But for the present, God forbid the matter should be so ill as as you make it! For whereas you looking upon their points of difference and agreement, through I know not what strange glasses, have made the first innumerable, and the other scarce a number; the truth is clean contrary; that those Divine verities, speculative and practical, wherein they universally agree, (which you will have to be but a few, or but one, or scarcely one,) amount to many millions (if an exact account were taken of them); and on the other side, the points in variance are in comparison but few, and those not of such a quality but the error in them may well consist with the belief and obedience of the entire covenant ratified by Christ between God and man. Yet I would not be so mistaken, as if I thought the errors even of some protestants inconsiderable things, and matters of no moment. For the truth is, I am very fearful that some of their opinions, either as they are, or as they are apt to be mistaken, though not of themselves so damnable but that good and holy men may be saved with them, yet are too frequent occasions of our remissness and slackness in running the race of Christian perfection, of our deferring repentance and conversion to God, of our frequent relapses into sin, and not seldom of security in sinning; and consequently, though not certain causes, yet too frequent occasions of many men's damnation: and such I conceive all these doctrines which either directly or obliquely put men in hopes of eternal happiness by any other means, saving only the narrow way of sincere and universal obedience, grounded upon a true and lively faith. These errors, therefore, I do not elevate or extenuate; and, on condition the ruptures made by them might be composed, do heartily wish that the cement were made of my dearest blood, and only not to be an anathema from Christ: only this I say, that neither are their points of agreement so few, nor their differences so many, as you make them; nor so great as to exclude the opposite parties from being members of the church militant, and joint heirs of the glory of the church triumphant.

50. Your other palpable untruth is, that "protestants are far more bold to disagree, even in matters of faith, than catholic divines," (you mean your own,) "in questions merely philosophical, or not determined by the church." For neither do they differ at all "in matters of faith," if you take the word in the highest sense, and mean by "matters of faith" such doctrines as are absolutely necessary to salvation to be believed, or not to be disbelieved. And then, in those wherein they do differ, with what colour or shadow of argument can you make good, that "they are more bold to disagree than you are in questions merely philosophical, or not determined by the church?" For is there not as great repugnancy between your assent and dissent, your affirmation and negation, your *est est, non non*, as there is between theirs? You follow your reason in those things which are not determined by your church, and they theirs in things not plainly determined in Scripture. And wherein then consists their greater, "their far greater boldness?" And what if they in their contradictory opinions pretend both to rely upon the truth of God, doth this make their contradictions ever a whit the more repugnant? I had always thought that all contradictions had been equally contradictions and equally repugnant; because the least of them are as far assunder as *est* and *non est* can make them, and the greatest are no further. But then you in your differences, (by name, about predetermination, the immaculate conception, the pope's infallibility,) upon what other motive do you rely? Do not you cite Scripture or tradition, or both, on both sides? And do you not pretend that both these are the infallible truths of Almighty God?

51. You close up this section with a fallacy, proving, forsooth, that "we destroy by our confession, the church, which is the house of God, because we stand only upon fundamental articles, which cannot make up the whole fabric of the faith, no more than the foundation of a house alone can be a house."

52. But I hope, sir, that you will not be difficult in granting, that that is a house which hath all the necessary parts belonging to a house: now by fundamental articles, we mean all those which are necessary. And you yourself, in the very leaf after this, take notice that Dr. Potter doth so. Where to this question, How shall I know in particular which points be, and which be not fundamental? you scurrilously bring him in making this ridiculous answer, "Read my Answer to a late pamphlet, entitled, 'Charity Mistaken,' &c., there you shall find that fundamental doctrines are such catholic verities as principally and essentially pertain to the faith, such as properly constitute a church, and are necessary (in ordinary course) to be distinctly believed by every Christian that will be saved." All which words he used, not to tell you what points be fundamental, as you dishonestly impose upon him, but to explain what he meant by the word *fundamental*. May it please you therefore now at last to take notice, that *fundamental* we mean all and only that which is necessary; and then I hope you will grant, that we may safely expect salvation in a church which hath all things fundamental to salvation; unless you will say, that more is necessary than that which is necessary.

53. Ad § 19. This long discourse, so full of uningenuous dealing with your adversary, perhaps would have done reasonably well in a farce or a comedy, and I doubt not but you have made yourself and your courteous readers good sport with it. But if Dr. Potter or I had been by when you wrote it, we should have stopped your career at the first starting, and have put you in mind of these old school proverbs, *Ex falso supposito sequitur quodlibet*, and *Uno absurdo dato, sequuntur mille*. For whereas you suppose, first, that to a man desirous to save his soul, and requiring whose direction he might rely upon, the Doctor's answer would be, upon the true catholic church, I suppose upon better reason, because I know his mind, that he would advise him to *call no man master on earth*, but, according to Christ's command, to rely upon the direction of God himself. If he should inquire, where he should find this direction, he would answer him, in his word contained in Scripture. If he should inquire what assurance he might have that the Scripture is the word of God; he would answer him, that the doctrine itself is very fit and worthy to be thought to come from God, *nec vox hominem sonat;* and that they which wrote and delivered it, confirmed it to be the word of God, by doing such works as could not be done but by power from God himself. For assurance of the truth hereof, he would advise him to rely upon that which all wise men in all matters of belief rely upon; and that is, the consent of ancient records and universal tradition. And that he might not mistrust him as partial in this advice, he might further tell him, that a gentleman that would be nameless, that hath written a book against him, called Charity Maintained by Catholics, though in many things he differ from him, yet agrees with him in this; that "tradition is such a principle as may be rested in, and which requires no other proof." As indeed no wise man doubts but there was such a man as Julius Cæsar or Cicero, that there are such cities as Rome or Constantinople, though he have no other assurance for the one or the other but only the speech of people. This tradition, therefore, he would counsel him to rely upon, and to believe that the book which we call Scripture was confirmed abundantly by the works of God to be the word of God. Believing it the word of God, he must of necessity believe it true; and if he believe it true, he must believe it contains all necessary direction to eternal happiness, because it affirms itself to do so. Nay, he might tell him that so far is the whole book from wanting any necessary direction to his eternal salvation, that one only author, that hath writ two little books of it, St. Luke by name, in the beginning of his Gospel, and in the beginning of his story, shows plainly that he alone hath written at least so much as is necessary. And what they wrote they wrote by God's direction for the direction of the world, not only for the learned, but for all that would do their true endeavour to know the will of God and to do it; therefore you cannot but conceive that writing to all, and for all, they wrote so as that in things necessary they might be understood by all. Besides that, here he should find that God himself has engaged himself by promise, that if he would love him and keep his commandments, and pray earnestly for his Spirit, and be willing to be directed by it, he should undoubtedly receive it, even *the Spirit of truth,*

which shall lead him into all truth, that is, certainly at least into all necessary truth, and suffer him to fall into no pernicious error. The sum of his whole direction to him briefly would be this: Believe the Scripture to be the word of God; use your true endeavour to find the true sense of it, and to live according to it; and then you may rest securely that you are in the true way of eternal happiness. This is the substance of that answer which the Doctor would make to any man in this case; and this is a way so plain, that fools, unless they will, cannot err from it. Because, not knowing absolutely all truth, nay, not all profitable truth, and being free from error, is by this way made the only condition of salvation. As for your supposition, that he would advise such a man to rely upon the catholic church for finding out the doctrine of Christ, he utterly disclaims it; and truly very justly; there being no certain way to know that any company is a true church, but only by their professing the true doctrine of Christ. And therefore, as it is impossible that I should know that such a company of philosophers are Peripatetics and Stoics, unless I first know what was the doctrine of the Peripatetics and Stoics; so it is as impossible that I should certainly know any company to be the church of Christ, before I know what is the doctrine of Christ, the profession whereof constitutes the visible church, the belief and obedience the invisible. And therefore whereas you would have him directed by the catholic church to the doctrine of Christ, the contrary rather is most certain and necessary, that by the foreknowledge of the doctrine of Christ he must be directed to a certain assurance which is the catholic church, if he mean not to choose at a venture, but desire to have certain direction to it. This supposition, therefore, being the hinge whereon your whole discourse turns, is the Minerva of your own brain; and therefore, were it but for this, have we not great reason to accuse you of strange immodesty, in saying as you do, that "the whole discourse and inferences, which here you have made, are either Dr. Potter's own direct assertions, or evident consequences clearly deduced from them? especially seeing your proceeding in it is so consonant to this ill beginning, that it is in a manner wholly made up, not of Dr. Potter's assertions, but your own fictions obtruded on him.

54. To the next question, "Cannot general councils err?" you pretend he answers, "They may err damnably." Let the reader see the place, and he shall find *damnably* is your addition. To the third demand, "Must I consult" (about my difficulties) "with every particular person of the catholic church?" you answer for him, (that which is most false,) that "it seems so by his words; the whole militant church, that is, all the members of it, cannot possibly err either in the whole faith, or any necessary article of it;" which is very certain, for should it so do, it should be the church no longer. But what sense is there that you should collect out of these words, that every member of the militant church must be consulted with? By like reason, if he had said that all men in the world cannot err; if he said that God in his own person, or his angels, could not err in these matters; you might have gathered from thence, that he laid a necessity upon men in doubt to consult with angels, or with God in his own person, or with all men in the world. Is it not evident to all sober men, that to make any man or men fit to be consulted with, besides the understanding of the matter, it is absolutely requisite that they may be spoken with? and is it not apparently impossible that any man should speak with all the members of the militant church? or if he had spoken with them all, know that he had done so? Nay, does not Dr. Potter say as much in plain terms? Nay more, do not you take notice that he does so in the very next words before these, where you say, "he affirms that the catholic church cannot be told of private injuries;" unless you will persuade us there is a difference between "the catholic church" and "the whole militant church." For whereas you make him deny this of the catholic church united, and affirm it of the militant church dispersed into particulars; the truth is, he speaks neither of united nor dispersed, but affirms simply, (as appears to your shame, by your own quotations,) that "the catholic church cannot be told of private injuries?" and then, that "the whole militant church cannot err." But then besides, that the united church cannot be consulted, and the dispersed may, what a wild imagination is it; and what a strange injustice was it in you to father it upon him! I beseech you, sir, to consider seriously, how far blind zeal to your superstition hath transported you

beyond all bounds of honesty and discretion, and made you careless of speaking either truth or sense, so you speak against Dr. Potter.

55. Again you make him say, "the prelates of God's church meeting in a lawful council may err damnably:" and from this you collect, "it remains then, for your necessary instruction you must repair to every particular member of the universal church spread over the face of the earth." And this is also *Pergula pictoris, veri nihil, omniatficta*. The antecedent false, (not for the matter of it, but) that Dr. Potter says it; and the consequence far from it as Gades from Ganges and as coherent as a rope of sand. A general council may err; therefore you must travel all the world over, and consult with every particular Christian! As if there were nothing else to be consulted with; nay, as if, according to the doctrine of protestants, (for so you must say,) there were nothing to be consulted with, but only a general council, or all the world! Have you never heard that protestants say, that men for their direction must consult with Scripture? Nay, doth not Dr. Potter say it often in this very book which you are confuting? Nay more, in this very page out of which you take this piece of your cento, "a general council may err damnably," are there not these plain words; "In searches of truth" (he means Divine truth) "God ever directs us to the infallible rule of truth, the Scripture?" With what conscience then or modesty, can you impose upon him this unreasonable consequence, and yet pretend that your whole discourse is either his own direct assertions, or evident consequences clearly deduced from them? You add, that yet he teaches (as if he contradicted himself) that "the promises of God made to the church for his assistance are not intended to particular persons, but only to the catholic church:" which sure agrees very well with any thing said by Dr. Potter. If it be repugnant to what you said for him falsely, what is that to him?

56. Neither yet is this "to drive any man to desperation:" unless it be such an one as hath such a strong affection to this word *church*, that he will not go to heaven "unless he hath a church to lead him thither." For what though a council may err, and the whole church cannot be consulted with, yet this is not to send you on the fool's pilgrimage for faith, and bid you go and "confer with every Christian soul, man and woman, by sea and by land, close prisoner or at liberty," as you dilate the matter; but to tell you very briefly, that universal tradition directs you to the word of God, and the word of God directs you to heaven. And therefore here is no cause of desperation, no cause for you to be so vain and tragical, as here you would seem. "Yet upon supposal," you say, "of this miraculous pilgrimage for faith, before I have the faith of miracles, how shall I proceed at our meeting? or how shall I know the man on whom I may securely rely?" And hereunto you frame this answer for the Doctor, "Procure to know whether he believe all fundamental points of faith:" whereas, in all the Doctor's book, there is no such answer to any such question, or any like it. Neither do you, as your custom is, note any page where it may be found; which makes me suspect, that sure you have some private licence to use heretics (as you call them) at your pleasure, and make them answer any thing to any thing.

57. Wherein I am yet more confirmed by the answer you put in his mouth to your next demand, "How shall I know whether he hold all fundamental points or no?" For whereas hereunto Dr. Potter having given one answer fully satisfactory to it which is, "If he truly believe the undoubted books of canonical Scripture, he cannot but believe all fundamentals;" and another, which is but something towards a full satisfaction of it, that "the Creed contains all the fundamentals of simple belief;" you take no notice of the former, and pervert the latter, and make him say, "the Creed contains all fundamentals of faith." Whereas you know, and, within six or seven lines after this, confess that he never pretended it to contain all "simply," but "all of one sort," all "necessary points of simple belief." Which assertion because he modestly delivers as very probable, (being willing to conclude rather less than more than his reasons require,) hereupon you take occasion to ask, "Shall I hazard my soul on probabilities, or even wagers?" As if whatsoever is but probable, though in the highest degree of probability, were as likely to be false as true! Or because it is but morally, not mathematically certain, that there was such a woman as queen Elizabeth,

such a man as Henry VIII., that is, in the highest degree probable, therefore it were an even wager there were none such! By this reason, seeing the truth of your whole religion depends finally upon prudential motives, which you do but pretend to be very credible, it will be an even wager that your religion is false. And by the same reason, or rather infinitely greater, seeing it is impossible for any man (according to the grounds of your religion) to know himself, much less another, to be a true pope, or a true priest; nay, to have a moral certainty of it; because these things are obnoxious to innumerable secret and undiscernible nullities; it will be an even wager, nay, (if we proportion things indifferently,) a hundred to one, that every consecration and absolution of yours is void, and that whensoever you adore the host, you and your assistants commit idolatry; that there is a nullity in any decree that a pope shall make, or any decree of a council which he shall confirm; particularly, it will be at least an even wager, that all the decrees of the council of Trent are void, because it is at most but very probable that the pope which confirmed them was true pope. If you mislike these inferences, then confess you have injured Dr. Potter in this also, that you have confounded and made all one, probabilities and even wagers. Whereas every ordinary gamester can inform you, that though it be a thousand to one that such a thing will happen, yet it is not sure, but very probable.

58. To make the measure of your injustice yet fuller, you demand, "If the Creed contains only points of simple belief; how shall we know what points of belief are necessary which direct our practice?" Dr. Potter would have answered you in our Saviour's words, *Search the Scriptures*. But you have a great mind, it seems, to be desparing, and therefore, having proposed your questions, will not suffer him to give you an answer, but shut your ears and tell him, "still he chalks out new paths for desperation."

59. In the rest, of your interlude, I cannot but commend one thing in you, that you keep a decorum, and observe very well the rule given you by the great master of your art,

> ————————Servetur ad imum
> Qualis ab incepto processerat, et sibi constet:

one vein of scurrility and dishonesty runs clean through it, from the beginning to the end. Your next demand then is, "Are all the articles of the Creed for their nature and matter fundamental?" and the answer, "I cannot say so." Which answer (though it be true) Dr. Pottter no where gives it, neither hath he occasion, but you make it for him, to bring in another question, and that is, "How then shall I know, which in particular be, and which be not fundamental?" Dr. Potter would have answered, "It is a vain question: believe all, and you shall be sure to believe all that is fundamental."

60. But what says now his prevaricating proxy? what does he make him say? This which follows: Read my answer to a late popish pamphlet, entitled Charity Mistaken: there you shall find that fundamental doctrines are such catholic verities as principally and essentially pertain to the faith, such as properly constitute a church, and are necessary in ordinary course to be distinctly believed by every Christian that will be saved. They are those grand and capital doctrines which make up our faith, that is, the common faith, which is alike precious in all; being one and the same, in the highest apostle and the meanest believer, which the apostle elsewhere calls, *the first principles of the oracles of God*, and *the form of sound words*."

61. But in earnest, good sir, doth the Doctor, in these places by you quoted, make to this question this same sottish answer? or do you think that against an heretic nothing is unlawful? Certainly, if he doth answer thus, I will make bold to say he is a very fool. But if he does not, (as indeed he does not,) then—: but I forbear you, and beseech the reader to consult the places of Dr. Potter's book; and there he shall find, that in the former half of these (as you call them) varied words and phrases he declared only what he means by the word *fundamental*, which was needful to prevent mistakes and cavilling about the

meaning of the word, which is metaphorical, and therefore ambiguous; and that the latter half of them are several places of Scripture employed by Dr. Potter to show that his distinction of fundamental and not fundamental hath express ground in it. Now of these two places, very pertinent unto two very good purposes, you have exceeding fairly patched together a most ridiculous answer to a question that Dr. Potter never dreamed of. "But the words," you will say, "are in Dr. Potter's book, though in divers places, and to other purposes." Very true! And so the words of Ausonius's obscene Fescennie are taken out of Virgil, yet Virgil surely was not the author of this poem. Besides, in Dr. Potter's book there are these words, "Dread sovereign, amongst the many excellent virtues which have made your majesty's person so dear unto God," &c. and why now may you not say as well, that in these he made answer to your former question, what points of the Creed were, and what were not fundamentals?

62. But "unless this question maybe answered, his doctrine," you say, "serves only either to make men despair, or else to have recourse to these whom we call papists." It seems a little thing will make you despair, if you be so sullen as to do so, because men will not trouble themselves to satisfy your curious questions. And I pray be not offended with me for so esteeming it, because, as I before told you, if you will believe all the points of the Creed, you cannot choose but believe all the points of it that are fundamental, though you be ignorant which are so, and which are not so. Now, I believe, you desire to know which are fundamentals proceeds only from a desire to be assured that you do believe them; which seeing you may be assured of without knowing which they be, what can it be but curiosity to desire to know it? Neither may you think to mend yourself herein one whit by having recourse to them whom we call papists; for they are as far to seek as we in this point, which of the articles of the Creed are, for their nature and matter, fundamental, and which are not. Particularly you will scarce meet with any amongst their doctors so adventurous as to tell you for a certain, whether or no the conception of Christ by the Holy Ghost—his being born of a Virgin—his burial—his descent into hell—and the communion of saints, be points of their own nature and matter fundamental. Such I mean as without the distinct and explicit knowledge of them no man can be saved.

63. But you will say, "at least they give this certain rule, that all points defined by Christ's visible church belong to the foundation of faith in such sense, as to deny any such cannot stand with salvation." So also protestants give you this more certain rule, that whosoever believes heartily those books of Scripture which all the Christian churches in the world acknowledge to be canonical, and submits himself indeed to this, as to the rule of his belief, must of necessity believe all things fundamental; and if he live according to his faith, cannot fail of salvation: but besides, what certainty have you that the rule of papists is so certain? By the visible church it is plain they mean only their own; and why their own only should be the visible church, I do not understand; and as little why all points defined by this church should belong to the foundation of faith. These things you had need see well and substantially proved before you rely upon them, otherwise you expose yourself to danger of embracing damnable errors instead of fundamental truths. But you will say, "Dr. Potter himself acknowledges, that you do not err in fundamentals." If he did so, yet methinks you have no reason to rest upon his acknowledgment with any security, whom you condemn of error in many other matters. Perhaps excess of charity to your persons may make him censure your errors more favourably than he should do. But the truth is, and so I have often told you, though the Doctor hopes that your errors are not so unpardonably destructive, but that some men who ignorantly hold them may be saved, yet in themselves he professes and proclaims them damnable, and such as, he fears, will be certainly destructive to such as you are; that is, to all those *who have eyes to see, and will not see*.

64. Ad § 20-23. In the remainder of this chapter you promise to answer Dr. Potter's arguments against that which you said before. But presently forgetting yourself, instead of answering his arguments, you fall a confuting his answers to your own. The arguments objected by you, which here you vindicate,

were two: 1. "The Scripture is not so much as mentioned in the Creed, therefore the Creed contains not all things necessary to be believed. 2. Baptism is not contained in the Creed, therefore not all things necessary." To both which arguments my answer shortly is this, that they prove something, but it is that which no man here denies. For Dr. Potter (as you have also confessed) never said, nor undertook to show, that the apostles intended to comprise in the Creed all points absolutely which we are bound to believe, or, after sufficient proposal, not to disbelieve; which yet here and everywhere you are obtruding upon him: but only that they purposed to comprise in it all such doctrines purely speculative, all such matters of simple belief, as are in ordinary course necessary to be distinctly and explicitly believed by all men: now neither of these objections do any way infringe or impeach the truth of this assertion. Not the first, because according to your own doctrine all men are not bound to know explicitly what books of Scripture are canonical. Nor the second, because baptism is not a matter of faith, but practice; not so much to be believed, as to be given and received. And against these answers, whether you have brought any considerable new matter, let the indifferent reader judge. As for the other things, which Dr. Potter rather glanceth at than builds upon, in answering these objections; as the Creed's being collected out of Scripture; and supposing the authority of it which Gregory of Valentia, in the place above cited, seems to me to confess to have been the judgment of the ancient fathers; and the Nicene Creed's intimating the authority of canonical Scripture, and making mention of baptism; these things are said *ex abundanti*, and therefore I conceive it superfluous to examine your exceptions against them. Prove that Dr. Potter did affirm that the Creed contains all things necessary to be believed of all sorts, and then these objections will be pertinent, and deserve an answer. Or produce some point of simple belief, necessary to be explicitly believed, which is not contained either in terms or by consequence in the Creed, and then I will either answer your reasons or confess I cannot. But all this while you do but trifle, and are so far from hitting the mark, that you rove quite beside the butt.

65. Ad § 23, 24, 25. Dr. Potter demands, "How it can be necessary for any Christian to have more in his creed than the apostles had, and the Church of their times?" You answer, "That he trifled, not distinguishing between the apostles' belief, and that abridgment of some articles of faith, which we call the Apostles' Creed." I reply, that it is you which trifle, affectedly confounding (what Dr. Potter hath plainly distinguished) the apostles' belief of the whole religion of Christ, as it comprehends both what we are to do and what we are to believe, with their belief of that part of it which contains not duties of obedience, but only the necessary articles of simple faith. Now though the apostles' belief be in the former sense a larger thing than that which we call the Apostles' Creed; yet in the latter sense of the word, the Creed (I say) is a full comprehension of their belief, which you yourself have formerly confessed, though somewhat fearfully and inconstantly; and here again, unwillingness to speak the truth makes you speak that which is hardly sense, and call it "an abridgment of some articles of faith." For I demand, these "some articles" which you speak of, which are they?" Those that are out of the Creed, or those that are in it? Those that are in it, it comprehends at large, and therefore it is not an abridgment of them; those that are out of it, it comprehends not at all, and therefore it is not an abridgment of them. If you would call it now an abridgment of the faith, this would be sense, and signify thus much, that all the necessary articles of the Christian faith are comprised in it. For this is the proper duty of abridgments, to leave out nothing necessary, and to take in nothing unnecessary.

66. Moreover, in answer to this demand you tell us, that "the Doctor begs the question, supposing that the apostles believed no more than is contained in their Creed." I answer, he supposes no such matter; but only that they knew no more necessary articles of simple belief, than what are contained in their Creed. So that here you abuse Dr. Potter and your reader, by taking sophistically without limitation that which is delivered with limitation.

67. But this demand of Dr. Potter's was equivalent to a negation, and intended for one: "How can it be necessary for any Christian to have more in his Creed than the apostles had?" All one with this, "It cannot be necessary," &c. And this negation of his he forces with many arguments which he proposes by way of interrogation, thus; "May the church of after-ages make the narrow way to heaven narrower than our Saviour left it? Shall it be a fault to straiten and encumber the king's highway with public nuisances? And is it lawful, by adding new articles to the faith, to retrench any thing from the latitude of the King of heaven's highway to eternal happiness? The yoke of Christ, which he said was easy, may it be justly made heavier by the governors of the church in after-ages? The apostles profess they revealed to the church the whole counsel of God, keeping back nothing needful for our salvation; what tyranny, then, to impose any new unnecessary matters on the faith of Christians, especially (as the late popes have done) under the high commanding form, *Qui non crediderit, damnabitur!* If this may be done, why then did our Saviour reprehend the Pharisees so sharply, for binding heavy burdens, and laying them on men's shoulders? And why did he teach them, that in vain they worshipped God, teaching for doctrines men's traditions? And why did the apostles call it tempting of God, to lay those things upon the necks of Christians that were not necessary?

68. All which interrogations seem to me to contain so many plain and convincing arguments of the premised assertion; to all which, (one excepted,) according to the advice of the best masters of rhetoric in such cases, you have answered very discreetly by saying O. But when you write again, I pray take notice of them; and if you can devise no fair and satisfying answer to them, then be so ingenuous as to grant the conclusion, that no more can be necessary for Christians to believe now, than was in the apostles' time. A conclusion of great importance, for the decision of many controversies, and the disburdening of the faith of Christ from many encumbrances.

69. As for that one which you thought you could fasten upon, grounded on Acts xx. 27, let me tell you plainly, that by your answering this, you have showed plainly that it was wisely done of you to decline the rest. You tell Dr. Potter, that "needful for salvation" is his gloss, which, perhaps, you intended for a piece of an answer. But, good sir, consult the place, and you shall find that there St. Paul himself says, that he kept back αὐϐὲν τῶν συμφερόντων, *not any thing that was profitable;* and I hope you will make no difficulty to grant, that whatsoever is needed for salvation is very profitable.

70. But then you say, "this is no proof, unless he beg the question, and suppose that whatsoever the apostle revealed to the church is contained in the Creed." I answer, It is not Dr. Potter that begs the question, but you that mistake it; which is not here in this particular place, whether all points of simple belief necessary for the salvation of the primitive Christians were contained in the apostles' symbol? (for that and the proofs of it follow after, in the next §, p. 223, of Dr. Potter's book;) but, whether any thing can be necessary for Christians to believe now, which was not so from the beginning? Dr. Potter maintains the negative; and, to make good his opinion, thus he argues: St. Paul declared to the Ephesians the whole counsel of God touching their salvation; therefore that which St. Paul did not declare can be no part of the counsel of God, and therefore not necessary. And again, St. Paul kept back nothing from the Ephesians that was profitable; therefore he taught them all things necessary to salvation. Consider this, I pray, a little better, and then I hope you will acknowledge that here was no *petitio principii* in Dr. Potter, but rather *ignoratio elenchi* in you.

71. Neither is it material that these words were particularly directed by St. Paul to the pastors of the church; for (to say nothing that the point here issuable is not, whom he taught, whether priest or laymen; but how much he taught, and whether all things necessary) it appears plainly out of the text, and I wonder you should read it so negligently as not to observe it, that though he speaks now to the pastors, yet he speaks of what he taught, not only them, but also the laity as well as them: *I have kept back nothing* (says St. Paul) *that was profitable, but have showed, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying*

(I pray observe) *both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*. And a little after, *I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more: wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am innocent from the blood of all men; for I have kept nothing back, but have showed you all the counsel of God*. And again, *Remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears*. Certainly, though he did all things to the pastors among the rest, nay, above the rest, yet, without controversy they whom he taught publicly, and from house to house; the Jews and Greeks to whom he testified, (*i.e.*) preached faith and repentance; those *all*, among whom *he went preaching the kingdom of God;* those *every one*, whom for the three years together he warned; were not bishops and pastors only.

72. Neither is this to say, that the apostles taught Christians nothing but their Creed, nothing of the sacraments, commandments, &c., for that is not here the point to be proved; but only, that they taught them all things necessary, so that nothing can be necessary which they did not teach them. But how much of this they put into their Creed, whether "all the necessary points of simple belief," as we pretend, or only, as you say, "I know not what," is another question, and which comes now to be further examined. Dr. Potter in confirmation of it, besides the authorities which you formerly shifted off with so egregious tergiversation, urges five several arguments.

73. The sense of the first is this: "If all the necessary points of simple belief be not comprised in the Creed, it can no way deserve the name of the Apostles' Creed, as not being their Creed in any sense, but only a part of it." To this you answer, § 25, "Upon the same affected ambiguity," &c. *Ans*. It is very true that their whole faith was of a larger extent; but that was not the question: but whether all the points of simple belief which they taught as necessary to be explicitly believed, be not contained in it? And if thus much at least of Christian religion be not comprised in it, I again desire you to inform me, how it could be called the Apostles' Creed?

74. Four other reasons Dr. Potter urges to the same purpose, grounded upon the practice of the ancient church; the last whereof you answer in the second part of your book. But to the rest, drawn from the ancient church's appointing her infants to be instructed (for matter of simple belief) only in the creed—from her admitting catechumens unto baptism—and of strangers to her communion upon their only profession of the Creed, you have not, for aught I can perceive, thought fit to make any kind of answer.

75. The difficulties of the 27th and last § of this chapter have been satisfied, so that there remains unexamined only the 26th §, wherein you exceed yourself in sophistry; especially in that trick of cavillers, which is, to answer objections by other objections; an excellent way to make controversies endless! Dr. Potter desires to be resolved, "why, amongst many things of equal necessity to be believed, the apostles should distinctly set down some in the Creed, and be altogether silent of others?" Instead of resolving him in this difficulty, you put another to him, and that is, "Why are some points not fundamental expressed in it, rather than others of the same quality?" Which demand is so far from satisfying the former doubt, that it makes it more intricate. For upon this ground it may be demanded, how was it possible that the apostles should leave out any articles simply necessary, and put in others not necessary, especially if their intention were, (as you say it was,) to deliver in it such articles as were fittest for those times? Unless (which were wondrous strange) unnecessary articles were fitter for those times than necessary. But now to your question, the answer is obvious: these unnecessary things might be put in, because they were circumstances of the necessary; Pontius Pilate, of Christ's passion; the third day, of the resurrection. Neither doth the adding of them make the Creed ever a whit the less portable, the less fit to be understood and remembered. And for the contrary reasons, other unnecessary things might be left out. Besides, who sees not that the addition of some unnecessary circumstances is a thing that can hardly be

avoided without affectation? and therefore not so great a fault, nor deserving such a censure, as the omission of anything essential to the work undertaken, and necessary to the end proposed in it.

76. You demand again, (as it is no hard matter to multiply demands,) "why our Saviour's descent to hell, and burial, was expressed, and not his circumcision, his manifestation to the three kings, and working of miracles?" I answer, his resurrection, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of God, are very great miracles, and they are expressed. Besides, St. John assures us, *that the miracles which Christ did, were done and written not for themselves that they might be believed;* but for a further end, that *we might believe that Jesus was the Christ, and believing have eternal life*. He therefore that believes this may be saved, though he have no explicit and distinct faith of any miracle that our Saviour did. His circumcision and manifestations to the wise men, (for I know not upon what grounds you call them kings,) are neither things simply necessary to be known, nor have any near relation to those that are so. As for his descent into hell, it may (for aught you know) be put in as a thing necessary of itself to be known. If you ask, why more than his circumcision? I refer you to the apostles for an answer, who put that in, and left this out of their Creed; and yet sure were not so "forgetful, after the receiving of the Holy Ghost, as to leave out any prime and principal foundation of the faith," which are the very words of your own Gordonius Huntlæus, cont. 2. c. 10. n. 10. Likewise his burial was put in perhaps as necessary of itself to be known. But though it were not, yet hath it manifestly so near relation to these that are necessary, (his passion and resurrection; being the consequent of the one, and the antecedent of the other,) that it is no marvel if for their sakes it was put in. For though I verily believe that there is no necessary point of this nature but what is in the Creed, yet I do not affirm, because I cannot prove it, that there is nothing in the Creed but what is necessary. You demand thirdly, "Why did they not express Scriptures, sacraments, and all fundamental points of faith tending to practice, as well as those which rest in belief?" I answer, Because their purpose was to comprise in it only these necessary points which rest in belief; which appears, because of practical points there is not in it so much as one.

77. Dr. Potter subjoins to what is said above, "That as well, nay better, they might have given no article but that of the church, and sent us to the church for all the rest; for in setting down others besides that, and not all, they make us believe we have all, when we have not all." This consequence you deny; and neither give reason against it, nor satisfy his reason for it, which yet, in my judgment, is good and concluding. The proposition to be proved is this: that if your doctrine were true, this short Creed, "I believe the Roman church to be infallible," would have been better, that is, more effectual to keep the believers of it from heresy, and in the true faith, than this Creed which now we have. A proposition so evident, that I cannot see how either you, or any of your religion, or indeed any sensible man, can from his heart deny it. Yet because you make show of doing so, or else, which I rather hope, do not rightly apprehend the force of the reason, I will endeavour briefly to add some light and strength to it, by comparing the effects of these several supposed Creeds.

78. The former Creed therefore would certainly produce these effects in the believers of it: an impossibility of being in any formal heresy: a necessity of being prepared in mind to come out of all error in faith, or material heresy; which certainly you will not deny; or if you do, you pull down the only pillar of your church and religion, and deny that which is in effect the only thing you labour to prove through your whole book.

79. The latter Creed which now we have, is so ineffectual for these good purposes, that you yourself tell us of innumerable, gross, damnable heresies, that have been, are, and may be, whose contrary truths are neither explicitly nor by consequence comprehended in this Creed; so that no man, by the belief of this Creed without the former, can be possibly guarded from falling into them, and continuing obstinate in them. Nay, so far is this Creed from guarding them from these mischief's, that it is more likely to insnare them into them, by seeming and yet not being a full comprehension of all necessary points of faith; which

is apt (as experience shows) to misguide men into this (as you conceive it) pernicious error, that believing the Creed, they believe all necessary points of faith, whereas indeed, according to you, they do not so. Now upon these grounds I thus conclude: That Creed which hath great commodities and no danger, would certainly be better than that which hath great danger and wants many of these great commodities: but the former short Creed proposed by me, "I believe the Roman church to be infallible," (if your doctrine be true,) is of the former condition, and the latter, that is, the Apostles' Creed, is of the latter; therefore the former (if your doctrine be true) would without controversy be better than the latter.

80. But (say you) by this kind of arguing one might infer quite contrary. "If the Apostles' Creed contain all points necessary to salvation, what need have we of any church to teach us? and consequently, what need of the Article of the church?" To which I answer, that having compared your inference and Dr. Potter's together, I cannot discover any shadow of resemblance between them, nor any show of reason why the perfection of the Apostles' Creed should exclude a necessity of some body to deliver it. Much less why the whole Creed's containing all things necessary should make the belief of a part of it unnecessary. As well (for aught I understood) you might avouch this inference to be as good as Dr. Potter's: The Apostles' Creed contains all things necessary, therefore there is no need to believe in God. Neither doth it follow so well as Dr. Potter's argument follows, that if the Apostles' Creed contains all things necessary, that all other creeds and catechisms, wherein are added divers other particulars, are superfluous. For these other particulars may be the duties of obedience, they may be profitable points of doctrine, they may be good expositions of the Apostles' Creed, and so not superfluous; and yet for all this the Creed may still contain all points of belief that are simply necessary. These therefore are poor consequences, but no more like Dr. Potter's than an apple is like an oyster.

81. But this consequence, after you have sufficiently slighted and disgraced it, at length you promise "us news," and pretend to grant it. But what is that which you mean to grant? That the Apostles did put no article in their Creed but only that of the Church? or that, if they had done so, they had done better than now they have done? This is Dr. Potters inference out of your doctrine; and truly if you should grant this, this were news indeed! "Yes," say you, "I will grant it, but only thus far, that Christ hath referred us only to his Church." Yea, but this is clean another thing, and no news at all, that you should grant that which you would fain have granted to you. So that your dealing with us is just as if a man should proffer me a courtesy, and pretend that he would oblige himself by a note under his hand to give me twenty pounds; and, instead of it, write that I owe him forty, and desire me to subscribe to it, and be thankful. Of such favours as these it is very safe to be liberal.

82. You tell us afterward (but how it comes in I know not) that "it were a childish argument. The Creed contains not all things necessary; *ergo*, it is not profitable: or, the Church alone is sufficient to teach us by some convenient means; *ergo*, she must teach us without means." These indeed are childish arguments; but, for aught I see, you alone are the father of them; for in Dr. Potter's book I can neither meet with them nor any like them. He indeed tells you, that if (by an impossible supposition) your doctrine were true, another and a far shorter creed would have been more expedient, even this alone, "I believe the Roman Church to be infallible." But why you should conclude he makes this Creed which we have unprofitable, because he says another, that might be conceived upon this false supposition, would be more profitable; or that he lays a necessity upon the Church of teaching without means, or of not teaching this very Creed which now is taught; these things are so subtle that I cannot apprehend them. To my understanding, by those words, "and sent us to the Church for all the rest," he does rather manifestly imply that the rest might be very well not only profitable, but necessary, and that the Church was to teach this by creeds, or catechisms, or councils, or any other means which she should make choice of; for, being infallible, she could not choose amiss.

83. Whereas therefore you say, "If the Apostles had expressed no article but that of the Catholic Church, she must have taught us the other articles in particular by creeds or other means;" this is very true, but no way repugnant to the truth of this which follows, that the Apostles (if your doctrine be true) had done better service to the Church, though they had never made this Creed of theirs which now we have, if, instead thereof, they had commanded in plain terms, that for men's perpetual direction in the faith this short creed shall be taught all men, "I believe the Roman Church shall be for ever infallible." Yet you must not so mistake me as if I meant that they had done better not to have taught the Church the substance of Christian religion; for then the Church, not having learnt it of them, could not have taught it us. This, therefore, I do not say; but supposing they had written these Scriptures as they have written, wherein all the articles of their creed are plainly delivered, and preached that doctrine which they did preach, and done all other things as they have done, besides the composing their symbol; I say, if your doctrine were true, they had done a work infinitely more beneficial to the Church of Christ if they had never composed their symbol, which is but an imperfect comprehension of the necessary points of simple belief, and no distinctive mark (as a symbol should be) between those that are good Christians and those that are not so; but, instead thereof, had delivered this one proposition, which would have been certainly effectual for all the aforesaid good intents and purposes, "The Roman Church shall be for ever infallible in all things which she proposes as matters of faith."

84. Whereas you say, "If we will believe we have all in the Creed when we have not all, it is not the apostles' fault, but our own;" I tell you plainly, if it be a fault, I know not whose it should be but theirs. For sure it can be no fault in me to follow such guides whithersoever they lead me. Now, I say, they have led me into this persuasion, because they have given me great reason to believe it, and none to the contrary. The reason they have given me to believe it is, because it is apparent and confessed, they did propose to themselves in composing it some good end or ends; as, "that Christians might have a form by which" (for matter of faith) "they might profess themselves catholics;" so Putean out of Tho. Aquinas: "that the faithful might know what the Christian people is to believe explicitly;" so Vincent Filiucius: "that being separated into divers parts of the world, they might preach the same thing;" and "that they might serve as a mark to distinguish true Christians from infidels;" so Cardinal Richelieu. Now for all these and for any other good intent, it will be plainly uneffectual unless it contain, at least, all points of simple belief which are, in ordinary course, necessary to be explicitly known by all men. So that if it be a fault in me to believe this, it must be my fault to believe the apostles wise and good men; which I cannot do if I believe not this. And therefore, what Richardus de sancto Victore says of God himself, I make no scruple at all to apply to the apostles, and to say, *Si error est quod credo, a vobis deceptus sum*, "If it be an error which I believe, it is you and my reverend esteem of you and your actions, that hath led me into it." For as for your suspicion, "that we are led into this persuasion out of a hope that we may the better maintain by it some opinions of our own," it is plainly uncharitable. I know no opinion I have which I would not as willingly forsake as keep, if I could see sufficient reason to induce me to believe that it is the will of God I should forsake it. Neither do I know any opinion I hold against the Church of Rome, but I have more evident grounds than this whereupon to build it. For let but these truths be granted, that the authority of the Scripture is independent on your church, and dependent only in respect of us upon universal tradition; that Scripture is the only rule of faith; that all things necessary to salvation are plainly delivered in Scripture; let, I say, these most certain and divine truths be laid for foundation, and let our superstructions be consequent and coherent to them, and I am confident peace would be restored, and truth maintained against you, though the Apostles' Creed were not in the world.

CHAPTER V

That Luther, Calvin, their associates, and all who began or continue the separation from the external communion of the Roman church, are guilty of the proper and formal sin of schism.

"THE Searcher of all hearts is witness, with how unwilling minds catholics are drawn to fasten the denomination of schismatics or heretics on them for whose souls if they employed their best blood they judge that it could not be better spent! If we rejoice that they are contristated at such titles, our joy riseth not from their trouble or grief, but, as that of the apostle's did, from the fountain of charity, *because they are contristated to repentance;* that so, after unpartial examination, they, finding themselves to be what we say, may, by God's holy grace, begin to dislike what themselves are. For our part, we must remember that our obligation is to keep within the mean, betwixt uncharitable bitterness and pernicious flattery, not yielding to wordly respects, nor offending Christian modesty, but uttering the substance of truth in so charitable manner, that not so much we as truth and charity may seem to speak, according to the whole some advice of St. Gregory Nazianzen in these divine words: 'We do not affect peace with prejudice of the true doctrine, that so we may get a name of being gentle and mild; and yet we seek to conserve peace, fighting in a lawful manner, and containing ourselves within our compass and the rule of spirit. And of these things my judgment is, and for my part I prescribe the same law to all that deal with souls, and treat of true doctrine, that neither they exasperate men's minds by harshness, nor make them naughty or insolent by submission; but that in the cause of faith they behave themselves prudently and advisedly, and do not in either of these things exceed the mean.' With whom agreeth St. Leo, saying, 'It behoveth us in such causes to be most careful, that without noise of contentions, both charity be conserved and truth maintained.'

2. "For better method, we will handle these points in order. First, we will set down the nature and essence, or, as I may call it, the quality of schism. In the second place, the greatness and grievousness, or (so to term it) the quantity thereof. For the nature or quality will tell us who may without injury be judged schismatics; and by the greatness or quantity, such as find themselves guilty thereof will remain acquainted with the true state of their soul, and whether they may conceive any hope of salvation or no. And because schism will be found to be a division from the church, which could not happen unless there were always a visible church, we will, thirdly, prove, or rather take it as a point to be granted by all Christians, that in all ages there hath been such a visible congregation of faithful people. Fourthly, we will demonstrate that Luther, Calvin and the rest, did separate themselves from the communion of that always visible church of Christ, and therefore were guilty of schism. And fifthly, we will make it evident, that the visible true church of Christ, out of which Luther and his followers departed, was no other but the Roman church; and consequently that both they, and all others who persist in the same divisions, are schismatics, by reason of their separation from the church of Rome.

I. Point. *The nature of schism.*

3. "For the first point, touching the nature or quality of schism: as the natural perfection of man consists in his being the image of God his Creator, by the powers of his soul; so his supernatural perfection is placed in similitude with God, as his last end and felicity, and by having the said spiritual faculties, his understanding and will, linked to him. His understanding is united to God by faith, his will by charity; the former relies upon his infallible truth, the latter carrieth us to his infinite goodness. Faith hath a deadly opposite, heresy. Contrary to the union or unity of charity, is separation and division. Charity is twofold.

As it respects God, his opposite vice is hatred against God; as it uniteth us to our neighbour, his contrary is separation or division of affections and will from our neighbour. Our neighbour may be considered, either as one private person hath a single relation to another, or as all concur to make one company or congregation, which we call *the church;* and this is the most principal reference and union of one man with another; because the chiefest unity is that of the whole, to which the particular unity of parts is subordinate. This unity or oneness (if so I may call it) is effected by charity, uniting all the members of the church in one mystical body; contrary to which is schism, from the Greek word signifying *scissure*, or division. Wherefore upon the whole matter we find that schism, as the angelical doctor St. Thomas defines it, is 'a voluntary separation from the unity of that charity whereby all the members of the church are united.' From hence he deduceth, that schism is a special and particular vice, distinct from heresy, because they are opposite to two different virtues; heresy to faith, schism to charity. To which purpose he fitly allegeth St. Jerom upon these words, (Tit. iii.) *A man that is an heretic after the first anti second admonition avoid*, saying, 'I conceive that there is this difference betwixt schism and heresy, that heresy involves some perverse assertion; schism for episcopal dissension doth separate men from the church.' The same doctrine is delivered by St.Augustin in these words: 'Heretics and schismatics call their congregations churches; but heretics corrupt the faith by believing of God false things; but schismatics by wicked divisions break from fraternal charity, although they believe what we believe. Therefore the heretic belongs not to the church, because she loves God; nor the schismatic, because she loves her neighbour.' And in another place he saith, 'It is wont to be demanded how schismatics be distinguished from heretics; and this difference is found, that not a diverse faith, but the divided society of communion doth make schismatics.' It is then evident that schism is different from heresy. 'Nevertheless,' saith St. Thomas, 'as he who is deprived of faith must needs want charity, so every heretic is a schismatic, but not conversively every schismatic is an heretic;' though because want of charity disposes and makes way to the destruction of faith, (according to those words of the apostle, *which* [a good conscience] *some casting off, have suffered shipwreck in their faith*,) schism speedily degenerates to heresy. St. Hierom, after the rehearsed words, teacheth, saying, 'Though schism in the beginning may in some sort be understood different from heresy; yet there is no schism which doth not feign some heresy to itself, that so it may seem to have departed from the church upon good reason.' Nevertheless when schism proceeds originally from heresy, heresy, as being in that case the predominant quality in these two peccant humours, giveth the denomination of an heretic; as on the other side we are wont, especially in the beginning, or for a while, to call schismatics those men who first began with only schism, though in process of time they fell into some heresy, and by that means are indeed both schismatics and heretics.

4. "The reason why both heresy and schism are repugnant to the being of a good catholic, is, because the catholic or universal church signifies one congregation or company of faithful people, and therefore implies not only faith, to make them faithful believers, but also communion, or common union, to make them one in charity, which excludes separation and division; and therefore in the Apostles' Creed 'communion of saints' is immediately joined to the 'catholic church.'

5. "From this definition of schism may be inferred, that the guilt thereof is contracted, not only by division from the universal church, but also by a separation from a particular church or diocese which agrees with the universal. In this manner Meletius was a schismatic, but not an heretic, because, as we read in St. Epiphanius, he was 'of the right faith, for his faith was not altered at any time from the holy catholic church,' &c. 'He made a sect, but departed not from faith.' Yet because he made to himself a particular congregation against St. Peter, archbishop of Alexandria, his lawful superior, and by that means brought in a division in that particular church, he was a schismatic. And it is well worth the noting, that the Meletians building new churches put this title upon them, *The Church of Martyrs;* and upon the ancient churches of those who succeeded Peter was inscribed, *The Catholic Church*. For so it is. A new

sect must have a new name, which though it be never so gay and specious, as, *the Church of Martyrs, the reformed Church*, &c., yet the novelty showeth that it is not the catholic, nor a true church. And that schism may be committed by division from a particular church, we read in Optatus Milevitanus these remarkable words, (which do well declare who be schismatics,) brought by him to prove that not Cæcilianus but Parmenianus was a schismatic: for Cæcilianus 'went not out from Majorinus thy grandfather,' (he means his next predecessor but one in the bishopric,) 'but Majorinus from Cæcilianus; neither did Cæcilianus depart from the chair of Peter, or of Cyprian,' (who was but a particular bishop) 'but Majorinus, in whose chair thou sittest, which had no beginning before Majorinus himself. Seeing it is manifestly known that those things were so done, it evidently appeareth that you are heirs both of traditors,' (that is, of those who delivered up the holy Bible to be burned,) 'and of schismatics.' And it seemeth that this kind of schism must principally be admitted by protestants, who acknowledge no one visible head of the whole church, but hold that every particular diocese, church, or country is governed by itself, independently of any one person, or general council, to which all Christians have obligation to submit their judgments and wills.

II. Point. *The grievousness of schism.*

6. "As for the grievousness or quantity of schism, (which was the second point proposed,) St. Thomas teacheth, that amongst sins against our neighbour, schism is the most grievous; because it is against the spiritual good of the multitude or community. And therefore, as in a kingdom or commonwealth there is as great difference between the crime of rebellion or sedition and debates among private men, as there is inequality betwixt one man and a whole kingdom; so in the church, schism is as much more grievous than sedition in a kingdom, as the spiritual good of souls surpasseth the civil and political weal. And St. Thomas adds further, that they lose the spiritual power of jurisdiction; and if they go about to absolve from sin, or to excommunicate, their actions are invalid; which he proves out of the canon Novatianus, causa 7. quæst. 1. which saith, 'He that keepeth neither the unity of spirit nor the peace of agreement, and separates himself from the bond of the church and the college of priests, can neither have the power nor dignity of a bishop.' The power also of order (for example, to consecrate the eucharist, to ordain priests, &c.) they cannot lawfully exercise.

7. "In the judgment of the holy fathers, schism is a most grievous offence. St. Chrysostom compares these schismatical dividers of Christ's mystical body to those who sacrilegiously pierced his natural body, saying, 'Nothing doth so much incense God, as that the church should be divided. Although we should do innumerable good works, if we divide the full ecclesiastical congregation, we shall be punished no less than they who tore his [natural] body. For that was done to the gain of the whole world, although not with that intention; but this hath no profit at all, but there ariseth from it most great harm. These things are spoken, not only to those who bear office, but also to those who are governed by them.' Behold how neither a moral good life, (which conceit deceiveth many,) nor authority of magistrates, nor any necessity of obeying superiors, can excuse schism from being a most heinous offence. Optatus Milevitanus calls schism *ingens flagitium*, 'a huge crime.' And speaking to the Donatists, saith, 'that schism is evil in the highest degree, even you are not able to deny.' No less pathetical is St. Augustin upon this subject. He reckons schismatics amongst pagans, heretics, and Jews, saying, 'Religion is to be sought, neither in the confusion of pagans, nor in the filth of heretics, nor in the languishing of schismatics, nor in the age of the Jews, but amongst those alone who are called Christian catholics or orthodox, that is lovers of unity in the whole body, and followers of truth.' Nay, he esteems them worse than infidels and idolaters, saying, 'those whom the Donatists heal from the wound of infidelity and idolatry, they hurt more grievously with the wound of schism.' Let here those men who are pleased untruly to call us idolaters, reflect upon

themselves, and consider that this holy father judgeth schismatics (as they are) to be worse than idolaters, which they absurdly call us. And this he proveth by the example of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, and other rebellious schismatics of the Old Testament, who where conveyed alive down into hell, and punished more openly than idolaters. 'No doubt,' saith this holy father, 'but that was committed most wickedly, which was punished most severely.' In another place he yoketh schism with heresy, saying upon the eighth beatitude, 'many heretics, under the name of Christians, deceiving men's souls,' do suffer many such things; but therefore they are excluded from this reward, because it is not only said, *Happy are they who suffer persecution*, but there is added, *for justice*. But where there is not sound faith, there cannot be justice. Neither can schismatics promise to themselves, any part of this reward, because likewise where there is no charity there cannot be justice. And in another place, yet more effectually he saith, 'being out of the church, and divided from the heap of unity, and the bond of charity, thou shouldst be punished with eternal death, though thou shouldst be burned alive for the name of Chirst.' And in another place he hath these words, 'If he hear not the church, let him be to thee as an heathen or publican; which is more grievous than if he were smitten with the sword, consumed with flames, or cast to wild beasts.' And elsewhere, 'out of the catholic church,' saith he, 'one may have faith, sacraments, order, and, in sum, all things except salvation.' With St. Augustin, his countryman and second self in sympathy of spirit, St. Fulgentius, agreeth, saying, 'Believe this stedfastly without doubting, that every heretic or schismatic, baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, if before the end of his life he be not reconciled to the catholic church, what alms soever he give, yea, though he should shed his blood for the name of Christ, he cannot obtain salvation.' Mark again, how no moral honesty of life, no good deeds, no martyrdom, can without repentance avail any schismatic for salvation. Let us also add that Dr. Potter saith, 'schism is no less damnable than heresy.

8. "But O you holy, learned, zealous fathers and doctors of God's church, out of these premises, of the grievousness of schism, and of the certain damnation which it bringeth, (if unrepented,) what conclusion draw you for the instruction of Christians? St. Augustin maketh this wholesome inference: 'There is no dust necessity to divide unity.' St. Irenæus concludeth, 'They cannot make any so important reformation, as the evil of the schism is pernicious.' St. Dennis of Alexandria saith, 'Certainly, all things should rather be endured, than to consent to the division of the church of God; those martyrs being no less glorious that expose themselves to hinder the dismembering of the church, than those that suffer rather than they will offer sacrifice to idols.' Would to God all those who divided themselves from that visible church of Christ, which was upon earth when Luther appeared, would rightly consider of these things! And thus much of the second point.

III. Point. *Perpetual visibility of the church.*

9. "We have just and necessary occasion eternally to bless Almighty God, who has vouchsafed to make us members of the catholic Roman church, from which while men fall, they precipitate themselves into so vast absurdities, or rather sacrilegious blasphemies, as is implied in the doctrine of the total deficiency of the visible church, which yet is maintained by divers chief protestants, as may at large be seen in Brerely and others; out of whom I will here name Jewel, saying, 'The truth was unknown at the time, and unheard of, when Martin Luther and Ulderic Zwinglius first came unto the knowledge and preaching of the gospel.' Perkins saith, 'We say, that before the days of Luther for the space of many hundred years, an universal apostacy overspread the whole face of the earth, and that our (protestant) church was not then visible to the world.' Napier upon the Revelations teacheth, 'that from the year of Christ three hundred and sixteen, the antichristian and papistical reign hath begun, reigning universally, and without any debatable contradiction, one thousand two hundred sixty years;' (that is, till Luther's time;) and that 'from the year of Christ three hundred and sixteen, God hath withdrawn his visible

church from open assemblies, to the hearts of particular godly men, &c., during the space of one thousand two hundred three score years.' And that, 'the pope and clergy have possessed the outward visible church of Christians even one thousand two hundred and three-score years.' And that, 'the true church abode latent and invisible.' And Brocard upon the Revelations professeth to join in opinion with Napier. Fulk affirmeth, 'that in the time of Boniface the third,' which was the year six hundred and seven, 'the church was invisible, and fled into the wilderness, there to remain a long season.' Luther saith, *Primo solus eram:* 'At the first I was alone.' Jacob Hailbronnerus, one of the disputants for the protestant party, in the conference at Ratisbon, afirmeth, 'that the true church was interrupted by apostacy from the true faith.' Calvin saith, 'It is absurd in the very beginning to break one from another, after we have been forced to make a separation from the whole world.' It were over-long to allege the words of Joannes Regius, Daniel Chamierus, Beza, Ochinus, Castalio, and others to the same purpose. The reason which cast them upon this wicked doctrine was a desperate voluntary necessity: because they being resolved not to acknowledge the Roman church to be Christ's true church, and yet being convinced by all manner of evidence that for divers ages before Luther there was no other congregation of Christians, which could be the church of Christ, there was no remedy but to affirm, that upon earth Christ had no visible church; which they would never have avouched, if they had known how to avoid the aforesaid inconvenience, (as they apprehended it,) of submitting themselves to the Roman church.

10. "Against these exterminating spirits, Dr. Potter, and other more moderate protestants, profess, that Christ always had, and always will have, upon earth a visible church: otherwise, saith he, 'our Lord's promise of her stable edification should be of no value.' And in another place, having affirmed that protestants have not left the church of Rome, but her corruptions, and acknowledging her still to be a member of Christ's body, he seeketh to clear himself and others from schism, because, saith he, 'the property of schism is' (witness the Donatists and Luciferians) 'to cut off, from the body of Christ and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates. And if any zealots amongst us have proceeded to heavier censures, their zeal may be excused, but their charity and wisdom cannot be justified.' And elsewhere he acknowledgeth, that the Roman church hath 'those main and essential truths which give her the name and essence of a church.'

11. "It being therefore granted by Dr. Potter, and the chiefest and best learned English protestants, that Christ's visible church cannot perish, it will be needless for me on this occasion to prove it. St. Augustin doubted not to say, 'the prophets spake more obscurely of Christ than of the church: because, as I think, they did foresee in spirit that men were to make parties against the church, and that they were not to have so great strife concerning Christ: therefore that was more plainly foretold, and more openly prophesied, about which greater contentions were to rise, that it might turn to the condemnation of them who have seen it, and yet gone forth.' And in another place he saith, 'How do we confide to have received manifestly Christ himself from Holy Scriptures, if we have not also manifestly received the church from them?' And indeed to what congregation shall a man have recourse for the affairs of his soul, if upon earth there be no visible church of Christ? Beside, to imagine a company of men believing one thing in their heart, and with their mouth professing the contrary, (as they must be supposed to do; for if they had professed what they believed, they would have become visible,) is to dream of a damned crew of dissembling sycophants, but not to conceive a right notion of the church of Christ our Lord. And therefore St. Augustin saith, 'We cannot be saved, unless labouring also for the salvation of others, we profess with our mouths the same faith which we bear in our hearts.' And if any man hold it lawful to dissemble, and deny matters of faith, we cannot be assured but that they actually dissemble, and hide Anabaptism, Arianism, yea Turcism, and even Atheism, or any other false belief, under the outward profession of Calvinism. Do not protestants teach that preaching of the word, and administration of sacraments, (which cannot but make a church visible,) are inseparable notes of the true church? And

therefore they must either grant a visible church, or none at all. No wonder, then, if St. Augustin account this heresy so gross, that he saith against those who in his time defended the like error, 'But this church which hath been of all nations is no more, she hath perished; so say they that are not in her. O impudent speech! And afterward, 'this voice, so abominable, so detestable, so full of presumption and falsehood, which is sustained with no truth, enlightened with no wisdom, seasoned with no salt, vain, rash, heady, pernicious, the Holy Ghost foresaw,' &c. And peradventure some one may say, there are other sheep, I know not where, with which I am not acquainted, yet God hath care of them. But he is too absurd in human sense that can imagine such things.' And these men do not consider, that while they deny the perpetuity of a visible church, they destroy their own present church, according to the argument which St. Augustin urged against the Donatists in these words, 'If the church were lost in Cyprian's (we may say in Gregory's) 'time, from whence did Donatus' (Luther) 'appear? From what earth did he spring? From what sea is he come? From what heaven did he drop?' And in another place. 'How can they vaunt to have any church, if she hath ceased ever since those times?' And all divines, by defining *schism* to be a division from the true church, supposed that there must be a known church from which it is possible for men to depart. But enough of this in these few words.

IV. Point. *Luther and all that follow him are schismatics.*

12. "Let us now come to the fourth and chiefest point, which was, to examine whether Luther, Calvin, and the rest, did not depart from the external communion of Christ's visible church, and by that separation became guilty of schism. And that they are properly schismatics clearly followeth from the grounds which we have laid concerning the nature of schism, which consists in leaving the external communion of the visible church of Christ our Lord: and it is clear, by evidence of fact, that Luther and his followers forsook the communion of that ancient church.

"For they did not so much as to pretend to join with any congregation which had a being before their time; for they would needs conceive that no visible company was free from errors in doctrine, and corruption in practice: and therefore they opposed the doctrine; they withdrew their obedience from the prelates; they left participation in sacraments; they changed the liturgy of public service of whatsoever church then extant. And these things they pretended to do out of a persuasion, that they were bound (forsooth) in conscience so to do, unless they would participate with errors, corruptions, and superstitions.

We dare not,' saith Dr. Potter, 'communicate with Rome, either in her public liturgy, which is manifestly polluted with gross superstition, &c., or in those corrupt and ungrounded opinions which she hath added to the faith of catholics.' But now let Dr. Potter tell me with what visible church extant before Luther he would have adventured to communicate in her public liturgy and doctrine, since he durst not communicate with Rome? He will not be able to assign any, even with any little colour of common sense. If then they departed from all visible communities professing Christ, it followeth that they also left the communion of the true visible church, whichsoever it was, whether that of Rome or any other; of which point I do not for the present dispute. Yea, this the Lutherans do not only acknowledge, but prove and brag of. If (saith a learned Lutheran) 'there had been right believers which went before Luther in his office, there had then been no need of a Lutheran reformation.' Another affirmed it to be ridiculous, to think that 'in the time before Luther any had the purity of doctrine; and that Luther should receive it from them, and not they from Luther.' Another speaketh roundly, and saith, 'It is impudency to say, that many learned men in Germany, before Luther, did hold the doctrine of the gospel.' And I add, that far greater impudency it were to affirm, that Germany did not agree with the rest of Europe, and other Christian catholic nations, and consequently that it is the greatest impudency to deny, that he departed from the communion of the visible catholic church spread over the whole world. We have heard Calvin

saying of protestants in general, 'we were even forced to make a separation from the whole world.' And Luther of himself in particular: 'In the beginning I was alone,' *ergo*, (say I, by your good leave,) you were at least a schismatic, divided from the ancient church, and a member of no new church. For no sole man can constitute a church; and though he could, yet such a church could not be that glorious company, of whose number, greatness, and amplitude so much hath been spoken, both in the Old Testament and in the New.

13. "Dr. Potter endeavours to avoid this evident argument by divers evasions: but by the confutation thereof I will (with God's holy assistance) take occasion, even out of his own answers and grounds, to bring unanswerable reasons to convince them of schism.

14. "His chief answer is, that they have not left the church, but her corruptions.

15. "I reply. This answer may be given either by those furious people, who teach that those abuses and corruptions in the church were so enormous, that they could not stand with the nature or being of a true church of Christ; or else by those other more calm protestants, who affirm that those errors did not destroy the being, but only deform the beauty of the church. Against both these sorts of men, I may fitly use that unanswerable dilemma which St. Augustin brings against the Donatists in these concluding words: 'Tell me whether the church at that time, when you say she entertained those who were guilty of all crimes, by the contagion of those sinful persons, perished or perished not? Answer, whether the church perished, or perished not? Make choice of what you think. If then she perished, what church brought forth Donatus? (we may say Luther.) But if she could not perish, because so many were incorporated into her, without baptism' (that is, without a second baptism, or rebaptization, and, I may say, without Luther's reformation,) 'answer me, I pray you, what madness did move the sect of Donatus to separate themselves from her upon the pretence to avoid the communion of bad men?' I beseech the reader to ponder every one of St. Augustin's words, and to consider, whether any thing could have been spoken more directly against Luther and his followers, of what sort soever.

16. "And now to answer more in particular; I say to those who teach that the visible church of Christ perished for many ages, that I can easily afford them the courtesy to free them from mere schism; but all men touched with any spark of zeal, to vindicate the wisdom and goodness of our Saviour from blasphemous injury, cannot choose but believe and proclaim them to be superlative archheretics. Nevertheless, if they will needs have the honour, singularity, and desire to be both formal heretics and properly schismatics, I will tell them, that while they dream of an invisible church of men, which agreed with them in faith, they will upon due reflection find themselves to be schismatics from those corporeal angels, or invisible men, because they held external communion with the visible church of those times, the outward communion of which visible church these modern Hot-spurs forsaking were thereby divided from the outward communion of their hidden brethren, and so are separatists from the external communion of them, with whom they agree in faith; which is schism in the most formal and proper signification thereof. Moreover, according to Dr. Potter, those boisterous creatures are properly schismatics. For the reason why he thinks himself, and such as he is, to be cleared from schism, notwithstanding their division from the Roman church, is, (because, according to his divinity,) the property of 'schism is (witness the Donatists and Luciferians) to cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates:' but those protestants of whom we now speak, 'cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation,' the church from which they separated themselves; and they do it directly as the Donatists (in whom you exemplify) did, by affirming that the true church had perished; and therefore they cannot be cleared from schism, if you may be their judge. Consider, I pray you, how many prime protestants, both domestical and foreign, you have at one blow struck off from hope of salvation, and condemned to the lowest pit, for the grievous sin of schism. And withal it imports you to consider, that you also involve yourself, and other moderate protestants, in the selfsame crime and punishment, while

you communicate with those, who, according to your own principles, are properly and formally schismatics. For if you held yourself obliged, under pain of damnation, to forsake the communion of the Roman church, by reason of their errors and corruptions, which yet you confess were not fundamental; shall it not be much more damnable for you to live in communion and confraternity with those who defend an error of the failing of the church; which in the Donatists you confess to have been 'properly heretical against the article of our Creed, *I believe the church?* And I desire the reader here to apply an authority of St. Cyprian, (Epist. 76.) which he shall find alleged in the next number. And this may suffice for confutation of the aforesaid answer, as it might have relation to the rigid Calvinists.

17. "For confutation of those protestants who hold that the church of Christ had always a being, and cannot err in points fundamental, and yet teach that she may err in matters of less moment, wherein, if they forsake her, they would be accounted not to leave the church, but only her corruptions; I must say that they change the state of our present question, not distinguishing between internal faith and external communion, nor between schism and heresy. This I demonstrate out of Dr. Potter himself, who in express words teacheth, that the promises which 'our Lord hath made unto his church for his assistance, are intended not to any particular persons or churches, but only to the church catholic. And they are to be extended not to every parcel or particularity of truth, but only to points of faith or fundamentals.' And afterwards, speaking of the universal church, he saith, 'It is comfort enough for the church, that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all capital dangers, and conserve her on earth against all enemies; but she may not hope to triumph over all sin and error till she be in heaven.' Out of which words I observe, that, according to Dr. Potter, the selfsame church, which is the universal church, remaining the universal true church of Christ, may fall into errors and corruptions; from whence it clearly followeth, that it is impossible to leave the external communion of the church so corrupted, and retain external communion with the catholic church; since the church catholic, and the church so corrupted, is the selfsame one church, or company of men. And the contrary imagination talks in a dream, as if the errors and infections of the catholic church were not inherent in her, but were separate from her, like to accidents without any subject, or rather indeed as if they were not accidents, but hypostases, or persons subsisting by themselves; for men cannot be said to live in or out of the communion of any dead creature, but with persons endued with life and reason; and much less can man be said to live in the communion of accidents, as errors and corruptions are; and therefore it is an absurd thing to affirm, that protestants divided themselves from the corruptions of the church, but not from the church herself, seeing the corruptions of the church were inherent in the church. All this is made more clear, if we consider that when Luther appeared, there were not two distinct visible true catholic churches, holding contrary doctrines, and divided in external communion; one of the which two churches did 'triumph over all error' and corruption in doctrine and practice, but the other was stained with both. For to feign this diversity of two churches cannot stand with record of histories, which are silent of any such matter, it is against Dr. Potter's own grounds, that the church may err in points not fundamental, which were not true, if you will image a certain visible catholic church free from error even in points not fundamental. It contradicteth the words in which he said, the church may 'not hope to triumph over all error till she be in heaven.' It evacuateth the brag of protestants, that Luther reformed the whole church; and, lastly, it maketh Luther a schismatic, for leaving the commission of all visible churches, seeing (upon this supposition) there was a visible church of Christ free from all corruption, which, therefore, could not be forsaken without just imputation of schism. We must therefore truly affirm, that since there was but one visible church of Christ, which was truly catholic, and yet was (according to protestants) stained with corruption; when Luther left the external communion of the corrupted church, he could not remain in the communion of the catholic church, no more than it is possible to keep company with Dr. Christopher Potter, and not to keep company with the provost of Queen's college in Oxford, if Dr. Potter and the provost be one and the selfsame man; for so one should

be and not be with him at the same time. This very argument, drawn from the unity of God's church, St. Cyprian urgeth to convince, that Novatianus was cut off from the church, in these words: 'The church is one, which being one, cannot be both within and without. If she be with Novatianus, she was not with Cornelius; but it she were with Cornelius, who succeeded Fabianus by lawful ordination, Novatianus is not in the church.' I purposely here speak only of external communion with the catholic church. For in this point there is great difference between internal acts of our understanding and will, and of external deeds. Our understanding and will are faculties (as philosophers speak) abstractive, and able to distinguish, and, as it were, to part things, though in themselves they be really conjoined. But real external deeds do take things in gross as they find them, not separating things which in reality are joined together. Thus one may consider and love a sinner as he is a man, friend, benefactor, or the like; and at the same time not consider him, nor love him as he is a sinner; because these are acts of our understanding and will, which may respect their objects under some one formality or consideration, without reference to other things contained in the selfsame objects. But if one should strike or kill a sinful man, he will not be excused by alleging that he killed him, not as a man, but as a sinner; because the selfsame person being a man and the sinner, the external act of murder fell jointly upon the man and the sinner. And for the same reason one cannot avoid the company of a sinner, and at the same time be really present with that man who is a sinner. And this is our case; and in this our adversaries are egregiously, and many of them affectedly mistaken: for one may in some points believe as the church believeth, and disagree from her in other. One may love the truth which she holds, and detest her (pretended) corruptions. But it is impossible that a man should really separate himself from her external communion as she is corrupted, and be really within the same external communion as she is sound; because she is the selfsame church which is supposed to be sound in some things, and to err in others. Now our question for the present doth concern only this point of external communion; because schism, as it is distinguished from heresy, is committed when one divides himself from the external communion of that church with which he agrees in faith: whereas heresy doth necessarily imply a difference in matter of faith and belief; and therefore to say that they left not the visible church, but her errors, can only excuse them from heresy, (which shall be tried in the next chapter) but not from schism, as long as they are really divided from the external communion of the selfsame visible church; which, notwithstanding those errors wherein they do in judgment dissent from her, doth still remain the true catholic church of Christ; and therefore while they forsake the corrupted church, they forsake the catholic church. Thus then it remaineth clear, that their chiefest answer changeth the very state of the question; confoundeth internal acts of the understanding with the external deeds; doth not distinguish between schism and heresy, and leaves this demonstrated against them, that they divided themselves from the communion of the visible catholic church, because they conceived that she needed reformation. But whether this pretence of reformation will acquit them of schism, I refer to the unpartial judges heretofore alleged; as to St. Irenæus, who plainly saith, 'they cannot make any so important reformation, as the evil of schism is pernicious.' To St. Dennis of Alexandria, saying 'Certainly all things should be endured rather than to consent to the division of the church of God; those martyrs being no less glorious that expose themselves to hinder the dismembering of the church, than those that suffer rather than they will offer sacrifice to idols.' To St. Augustin, who tells us, that not to hear the church 'is a more grievous thing than if he were stricken with the sword, consumed with flames, exposed to wild beasts.' And to conclude all in few words, he giveth this general prescription, 'There is no just necessity to divide unity;' and Doctor Potter may remember his own words, 'There neither was nor can be any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself.' But I have showed that Luther and the rest departed from the church of Christ (if Christ had any church upon earth); therefore there could be no just cause (of reformation, or what else soever) to do as they did; and therefore they must be contented to be held for schismatics.

18. “Moreover, I demand whether those corruptions which moved them to forsake the communion of the visible church were in manners or doctrine? Corruption in manners yields no sufficient cause to leave the church, otherwise men must go not only out of the church, but out of the world, as the apostle saith. Our blessed Saviour foretold that there would be in the church tares with choice corn, and sinners with just men. If then Protestants wax zealous with the servants, to pluck up the weeds, let them first hearken to the wisdom of the Master, *let both grow up*. And they ought to imitate them who, as St. Augustin saith ‘tolerate for the good of unity, that which they detest for the good of equity.’ And to whom the more frequent and foul such scandals are, by so much the more is the merit of their perseverance in the communion of the church, and the martyrdom of their patience, as the same saint calls it. If they were offended with the life of some ecclesiastical persons, must they therefore deny obedience to their pastors, and finally break with God’s church? The Pastor of pastors teaches us another lesson. *Upon the chair of Moses have sitten the scribes and Pharisees. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe ye, and do ye: but according to their works do ye not*. Must people except against laws, and revolt from magistrates, because some are negligent or corrupt in the execution of the same laws and performance of their office? If they intended reformation of manners, they used a strange means for the achieving of such an end, by denying the necessity of confession, laughing at austerity of penance, condemning the vows of chastity, poverty, obedience, breaking fasts, &c. And no less unfit were the men than the means. I love not recrimination. But it is well known to how great crimes Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Beza, and others of the prime reformers, were notoriously obnoxious; as might be easily demonstrated by only the transcribing of what others have delivered upon that subject: whereby it would appear, that they were very far from being any such apostolical men as God is wont to use in so great a work. And whereas they were wont, especially in the beginning of their revolt, maliciously to exaggerate the faults of some clergymen, Erasmus said well, (*Ep. ad fratres inferioris Germanæ*,) ‘Let the riot, lust, ambition, avarice of priests, and whatsoever other crimes be gathered together, heresy alone doth exceed all this filthy lake of vices.’ Besides, nothing at all was omitted by the sacred council of Trent which might tend to reformation of manners. And finally, the vices of others are not hurtful to any but such as imitate and consent to them; according to the saying of St. Augustin, ‘we conserve innocency, not by knowing the ill deeds of men, but by not yielding consent to such as we know, and by not judging rashly of such faults as we know not.’ If you answer, that not corruption in manners, but the approbation of them, doth yield sufficient cause to leave the church; I reply with St. Augustin, that the church doth (as the pretended reformers ought to have done) tolerate or bear with scandals and corruptions, but neither doth nor can approve them. ‘The church,’ saith he, ‘being placed betwixt much chaff and cockle, doth bear with many things; but doth not approve, nor dissemble, nor act those things which are against faith and good like.’ But because to approve, corruption in manners as lawful were an error against faith, it belongs to corruption in doctrine, which was the second part of my demand.

19. “Now then that corruptions in doctrine (I still speak upon the untrue supposition of our adversaries) could not afford any sufficient cause or colourable necessity to depart from that visible church, which was extant when Luther rose, I demonstrate out of Dr. Potter’s own confession, that the catholic church neither hath nor can err in points fundamental, as we showed out of his own express words, which he also of set purpose delivereth in divers other places, and all they are obliged to maintain the same, who teach that Christ had always a visible church upon earth; because any one fundamental error overthrows the being of a true church. Now (as schoolmen speak) it is *implicatio in terminis* (a contradiction so plain that one word destroyeth the other, as if one should say, a living dead man) to affirm that the church doth not err in points necessary to salvation, and damnable; and yet that it is damnable to remain in her communion, because she teacheth errors which are confessed not to be damnably. For if the error be not damnable, nor against any fundamental article of faith, the belief thereof

cannot be damnable. But Dr. Potter teacheth, that the catholic church cannot, and that the Roman church hath not, erred against any fundamental article of faith: therefore it cannot be damnable to remain in her communion; and so the pretended corruptions in her doctrines could not induce any obligation to depart from her communion, nor could excuse them from schism who upon pretence of necessity in point of conscience forsook her. And Dr. Potter will never be able to salve a manifest contradiction in these his words: 'To depart from the church of Rome in some doctrines and practices there might be necessary cause, though she wanted nothing necessary to salvation.' For if, notwithstanding these doctrines and practices, 'she wanted nothing necessary to salvation,' how could it be 'necessary to salvation' to forsake her? And therefore we must still conclude, that to forsake her was properly an act of schism.

20. "From the selfsame ground of the infallibility of the church in all fundamental points, I argue after this manner: The visible church cannot be forsaken without damnation, upon pretence that it is damnable to remain in her communion by reason of corruption in doctrine; as long as, for the truth of her faith and belief, she performeth the duty which she oweth to God and her neighbour; as long as she performeth what our Saviour exacts at her hands; as long as she doth as much as lies in her power to do. But (even according to Dr. Potter's assertion) the church performeth all these things as long as she erreth not in points fundamental, although she were supposed to err in other points not fundamental; therefore the communion of the visible church cannot be forsaken without damnation, upon pretence that it is damnable to remain in her communion, by reason of corruption in doctrine. The major, or first proposition, of itself is evident. The minor, or second proposition, doth necessarily follow out of Dr. Potter's own doctrine above rehearsed, that the 'promises of our Lord made to his church for his assistance are to be extended only to points of faith, or fundamental;' (let me note here by the way, that by his *or* he seems to exclude from faith all points which are not fundamental, and so we may deny innumerable texts of Scripture;) that 'it is comfort enough for the church, that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all capital dangers, &c., but she may not hope to triumph over all sin and error till she be in heaven.' For it is evident that the church (for as much as concerns the truth of her doctrines and belief) owes no more duty to God and her neighbour, neither doth our Saviour exact more at her hands, nor is it in her power to do more, than God doth assist her to do; which assistance is promised only for points fundamental; and consequently, as long as she teacheth no fundamental error, her communion cannot without damnation be forsaken. And we may fitly apply against Dr. Potter a Conciontory declamation which he makes against us, where he saith, 'May the church of after-ages make the narrow way to heaven narrower than our Saviour left it!' &c., since he himself obligeth men, under pain of damnation, to forsake the church, by reason of errors; against which our Saviour thought it needless to promise his assistance, and for which he neither denieth his grace in this life, or glory in the next. Will Dr. Potter oblige the church to do more than she may even hope for, or to perform on earth that which is proper to heaven alone?

21. 'And as from your own doctrine concerning the infallibility of the church in fundamental points, we have proved that it was a grievous sin to forsake her; so do we take a strong argument from the fallibility of any who dare pretend to reform the church, which any man in his wits will believe to be endued with at least as much infallibility as private men can challenge; and Dr. Potter expressly affirmeth, that Christ's promises of his assistance 'are not intended to any particular persons or churches:' and therefore to leave the church by reason of errors, was at the best hand but to flit from one erring company to another, without any new hope of triumphing over errors, and without necessity or utility to forsake that communion of which St. Augustin saith, 'There is no just necessity to divide unity.' Which will appear to be much more evident, if we consider that though the church hath maintained some false doctrines, yet to leave her communion to remedy the old, were but to add a new increase of errors arising from the innumerable disagreements of sectaries, which must needs bring with it a mighty mass of

falsehoods, because the truth is but one, and indivisible. And this reason is yet stronger, if we still remember, that even according to Dr. Potter the visible church hath a blessing not to err in points fundamental, in which any private reformer may fail; and therefore they could not pretend any necessity to forsake that church, out of whose communion they were exposed to danger of falling into many more, and even into damnable errors. Remember, I pray you, what yourself affirm, where speaking of our church and yours, you say, 'All the difference is from the weeds which remain there, and here are taken away; yet neither here perfectly nor every where alike.' Behold a fair confession of corruption still remaining in your church, which you can only excuse by saying they are not fundamental, as likewise those in the Roman church are confessed to be not fundamental. What man of judgment will be a protestant, since that church is confessedly a corrupt one?

22. "I still proceed to impugn you expressly upon your own grounds. You say, 'that it is comfort enough for the church, that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all capital dangers; but she may not hope to triumph over all sin and error till she be in heaven.' Now if it be comfort 'enough' to be secured from all capital dangers, which can arise only from error in fundamental points, why were not your first reformers content with 'enough,' but would needs dismember the church, out of a pernicious greediness of more than enough? for this 'enough, which according to you is attained by not erring in points fundamental, was enjoyed before Luther's reformation, unless you will now against yourself affirm, that long before Luther there was no church free from error in fundamental points: moreover, if (as you say) no church may hope 'to triumph over all error till she be in heaven,' you must either grant that errors not fundamental cannot yield sufficient cause to forsake the church, or else you must affirm that all communities may and ought to be forsaken; and so there will be no end of schisms; or rather indeed there can be no such thing as schism; because, according to you, all communities are subject to errors not fundamental, for which if they may be lawfully forsaken, it followeth clearly that it is not schism to forsake them. Lastly, since it is not lawful to leave the communion of the church for abuses in life and manners, because such miseries cannot be avoided in this world of temptation; and since, according to your assertion, 'no church may hope to triumph over all sin and error;' you must grant, that as she ought not to be left by reason of sin, so neither by reason of errors not fundamental; because both sin and error are (according to you) impossible to be avoided till she be in heaven,

23. "Furthermore, I ask, whether it be the quantity or number, or quality and greatness, of doctrinal errors that may yield sufficient cause to relinquish the church's communion? I prove that neither. Not the quality, which is supposed to be beneath the degree of points fundamental, or necessary to salvation. Nor the quantity or number, for the foundation is strong enough to support all such 'unnecessary additions,' as you term them. And if they once weighed so heavy as to overthrow the foundation, they should grow to fundamental errors, into which yourself teach the church cannot fall. 'Hay and stubble,' say you, 'and such unprofitable stuff, laid on the roof, destroys not the house, while the main pillars are standing on the foundation.' And tell us, I pray you, the precise number of errors which cannot be tolerated? I know you cannot do it; and therefore being uncertain whether or no you have cause to leave the church, you are certainly obliged not to forsake her. Our blessed Saviour hath declared his will, that we forgive a private offender seventy-seven times, that is, without limitation of quantity of time, or quality of trespasses; and why then dare you allege his command, that you must not pardon his church for errors acknowledged to be not fundamental? What excuse can you feign to yourselves, who for points not necessary to salvation have been occasions, causes, and authors of so many mischiefs, as could not but unavoidably accompany so huge a breach in kingdoms, in commonwealths, in private persons, in public magistrates, in body, in soul, in goods, in life, in church, in the state, by schisms, by rebellions, by war, by famine, by plague, by bloodshed, by all sorts of imaginable calamities upon the whole face of the earth, wherein as in a map of desolation the heaviness of your crime appears, under which the world doth pant?

24. "To say for your excuse that you left not the church, but her errors, doth not extenuate, but aggravate your sin. For by this device you sow seeds of endless schisms, and put into the mouth of all separatists a ready answer how to avoid the note of schism from your protestant church of England, or from any other church whatsoever. They will, I say, answer as you do prompt, that your church may be forsaken if she fall into errors, though they be not fundamental; and further, that no church must hope to be free from such errors; which two grounds being once laid, it will not be hard to infer the consequence that the may be forsaken.

25. "From some other words of Dr. Potter I likewise prove, that for errors not fundamental the church ought not to be forsaken, 'there neither was,' saith he, 'nor can be any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself. To depart from a particular church, and, namely, from the church of Rome, in some doctrines and practices, there might be just and necessary cause, though the church of Rome wanted nothing necessary to salvation.' Mark his doctrine, that there 'can be no just cause to depart from the church of Christ;' and yet he teacheth, that the church of Christ may err in points not fundamental; therefore (say I) we cannot forsake the Roman church for points not fundamental; for then we might also forsake the church of Christ, which yourself deny: and I pray you consider, whether you do not plainly contradict yourself, while, in the words above recited, you say there can be no 'just cause to forsake' the catholic church; and yet, that there may be necessary cause to depart from the church of Rome, since you grant that the church of Christ may err in points not fundamental; and that the Roman church hath erred only in such points, as by and by we shall see more in particular. And thus much be said to disprove their chiefest answer, that they left not the church, but her corruptions.

26. "Another evasion Dr. Potter bringeth to avoid the imputation of schism, and it is, because they still acknowledge the church of Rome to be a 'member of the body of Christ,' and not 'cut off from the hope of salvation. And this,' saith he, 'clears us from the imputation of schism, whose property it is to cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates.'

27. "This is an answer which perhaps you may get some one to approve, if first you can put him out of his wits. For what prodigious doctrines are these? Those protestants who believe that the church erred in points necessary to salvation, and for that cause left her, cannot be excused from damnable schism; but others, who believed that she had no damnable errors, did very well, yea, were obliged to forsake her; and (which is more miraculous, or rather monstrous) they did well to forsake her formally and precisely, 'because they judged that she retained' all means necessary to salvation. I say, because they so judged. For the very reason for which he acquitteth himself, and condemneth those others as schismatics, is, because he holdeth that the church, which both of them forsook, is not cut off from the 'body of Christ, and the hope of salvation;' whereas those other zealots deny her to be a member of Christ's body, or capable of salvation, wherein alone they disagree from Dr. Potter; for in the effect of separation they agree, only they do it upon a different motive or reason. Were it not a strange excuse, if a man would think to cloak his rebellion by alleging that he held the person against whom he rebelleth to be his lawful sovereign? And yet Dr. Potter thinks himself free from schism, because he forsook the church of Rome; but yet so, as that still he held her to be the true church, and to have all necessary means to salvation. But I will no further urge this most solemn foppery, and do much more willingly put all catholics in mind what an unspeakable comfort it is that our adversaries are forced to confess, that they cannot clear themselves from schism otherwise than by acknowledging that they do not, nor cannot, 'cut off from the hope of salvation' our church. Which is as much as if they should in plain terms, say, they must be damned, unless we may be saved. Moreover, this evasion doth indeed condemn your zealous brethren of heresy, for denying the church perpetuity, but doth not clear yourself from schism, which consists in being divided from that true church, with which a man agreeth in all points of faith, as you must profess yourself to agree with the church of Rome in all fundamental articles. For otherwise you should cut her off from the hope of

salvation, and so condemn yourself of schism. And, lastly, even according to this your own definition of schism, you cannot clear yourself from that crime, unless you be content to acknowledge a manifest contradiction in your own assertions. For if you do not cut us off 'from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation,' how come you to say in another place, that you judge a 'reconciliation with us 'to be damnable?' that to depart 'from the church of Rome, there might be just and necessary cause?' that 'they that have the understanding and means to discover their error, and neglect to use them, we dare not flatter them,' say you, 'with so easy a censure,' of hope of salvation? If then it be (as you say) a property of schism to cut off from the hope of salvation the church from which it separates, how will you clear yourself from schism, who dare not flatter us with so easy a censure? and who affirm that a reconciliation with us is damnable? But the truth is, there is no constancy in your assertions, by reason of difficulties which press you on all sides. For you are loth to affirm clearly that we may be saved, lest such a grant might be occasion (as in all reason it ought to be) of the conversion of protestants to the Roman church: and on the other side, if you affirm that our church erred in points fundamental, or necessary to salvation, you know not how, nor where, nor among what company of men, to find a perpetual visible church of Christ before Luther; and therefore your best shift is to say and unsay, as your occasions command. I do not examine your assertion, that it is the property of schism 'to cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates;' wherein you are mightily mistaken, as appears by your own example of the Donatists, who were most formal and proper heretics, and not schismatics, as schism is a vice distinct from heresy. Besides, although the Donatists and Luciferians (whom you also allege) had been mere schismatics, yet it were against all good logic, from a particular to infer a general rule, to determine what is the property of schism.

28. "A third device I find in Dr. Potter to clear his brethren from schism: 'there is,' saith he, 'great difference between a schism from them, and a reformation of ourselves.'

29. "This, I confess, is a quaint subtilty, by which all schism and sin may be as well excused. For what devil incarnate could merely pretend a separation, and not rather some other motive of virtue, truth, profit, or pleasure? But now since their pretended reformation consisted, as they gave out, in forsaking the corruptions of the church, the reformation of themselves, and their division from us, falls out to be one and the selfsame thing. Nay, we see that although they infinitely disagree in the particulars of their reformation, yet they symbolize and consent in the general point of forsaking our pretended corruptions; an evident sign that the thing upon which their thoughts first pitched was not any particular model or idea of religion, but a settled resolution to forsake the church of Rome. Wherefore this metaphysical speculation, that they intended only to reform themselves, cannot possibly excuse them from schism, unless first they be able to prove that they were obliged to depart from us. Yet, for as much as concerns the fact itself, it is clear that Luther's revolt did not proceed from any zeal of reformation. The motives which put him upon so wretched and unfortunate a work were covetousness, ambition, lust, pride, envy, and grudging that the promulgation of indulgences was not committed to himself, or such as he desired. He himself taketh God to witness, that he 'fell into these troubles casually, and against his will,' not upon any intention of reformation, not so much as 'dreaming or suspecting any change which might happen.' And he 'began to preach' (against indulgences) 'when he knew not what the matter meant., 'For,' saith he, 'I scarcely understood then what the name of indulgences meant.' Insomuch as afterwards Luther did much mislike of his own undertaken course, oftentimes, saith he, 'wishing that I had never begun that business.' And Fox saith, 'It is apparent that Luther promised cardinal Cajetan to keep silence, provided also his adversaries would do the like.' Mr. Cowper reporteth further, that 'Luther by his letter submitted himself to the pope, so that he might not be compelled to recant,' with much more, which may be seen in Brerely. But this is sufficient to show, that Luther was far enough from intending any reformation. And if he judged a reformation to be necessary, what a huge wickedness was it in him to promise 'silence, if his

adversaries would do the like!' or, to submit 'himself to the pope, so that he might not be compelled to recant!' or if the reformation were not indeed intended by him, nor judged to be necessary, how can he be excused from damnable schism? And this is the true manner of Luther's revolt, taken from his own acknowledgments, and the words of the more ancient protestants themselves, whereby Dr. Potter's faltering and mincing the matter is clearly discovered and confuted. Upon what motives our country was divided from the Roman church by king Henry the Eighth, and how the schism was continued by queen Elizabeth, I have no heart to rip up. The world knoweth it was not upon any zeal of reformation.

30. "But you will prove your former evasion by a couple of similitudes: 'If a monastery should reform itself, and should reduce into practice ancient good discipline, when others would not; in this case could it in reason be charged with schism from others, or with apostacy from its rule and order? Or as in a society of men universally infected with some disease, they that should free themselves from the common disease could not be therefore said to separate from the society; so neither can the reformed churches be truly accused for making a schism from the church, seeing all they did was to reform themselves.'

31. "I was very glad to find you in a monastery, but sorry when I perceived that you were inventing ways how to forsake your vocation, and to maintain the lawfulness of schism from the church, and apostacy from a religious order. Yet before you make your final resolution, hear a word of advice. Put case, that a monastery did confessedly observe their substantial vows and all principal statutes or constitutions of the order, though with some neglect of lesser monastical observances; and that a reformation were undertaken, not by authority of lawful superiors, but by some one, or very few in comparison of the rest; and those few known to be led, not by any spirit of reformation, but by some other sinister intention; and that the statutes of the house were even by those busy fellows confessed to have been time out of mind understood, and practised as now they were; and further, that the pretended reformers acknowledge, that themselves, as soon as they were gone out of their monastery, must not hope to be free from those of the like errors and corruptions, for which they left their brethren; and (which is more) that they might fall into more enormous crimes than they did, or could do in their monastery, which we suppose to be secured from all substantial corruptions, for the avoiding of which they have an infallible assistance: but (I say) together all these my *ands*, and then come with your *ifs*, 'If a monastry should reform itself,' &c., and tell me if you could excuse such reformers from schism, sedition, rebellion, apostacy, &c. What would you say of such reformers in your college? or tumultuous persons in a kingdom? Remember now your own tenets, and then reflect how fit a similitude you have picked out to prove yourself a schismatic. You teach, that the church may err in points not fundamental, but that for all fundamental points she is secured from error. You teach, that no particular person or church hath any promise of assistance in points fundamental: you and the whole world can witness, that when Luther began, he being but only *one*, opposed himself to *all*, as well subjects as superiors; and that even then when he himself confessed that he had no intention of reformation: you cannot be ignorant but that many chief learned protestants are forced to confess the antiquity of our doctrine and practice, and do in several and many controversies acknowledge that the ancient fathers stood on our side: consider, I say, these points, and see whether your similitude do not condemn your progenitors of schism from God's visible church, yea, and of apostacy also from their religious orders, if they were vowed regulars, as Luther and divers of them were.

32. "From the monastery you are fled into an hospital 'of persons universally infected with some disease,' where you find to be true what I supposed, that after your departure from your brethren you might fall into greater inconveniences and more infectious diseases than those for which you left them. But you are also upon the point to abandon these miserable needy persons, in whose behalf, for charity's sake, let me set before you these considerations. If the disease neither were nor could be mortal, because in that company of men God had placed a tree of life; if going thence, the sick man might by curious tasting the tree of knowledge eat poison under pretence of bettering his health; if he could not hope

thereby to avoid other diseases like those for which he had quitted the company of the first infected men; if by his departure innumerable mischiefs were to ensue; could such a man without senselessness be excused by saying, that he sought 'to free himself from the common disease,' but not, forsooth, 'to separate from the society?' Now yourself compare the church to a man deformed with 'superfluous fingers and toes,' but yet who hath not lost any vital part: you acknowledge that out of her society no man is secured from damnable error, and the world can bear witness what unspeakable mischiefs and calamities ensued Luther's revolt from the church. Pronounce then concerning them the same sentence which even now I have showed them to deserve, who in the manner aforesaid should separate from persons universally infected with some disease.

33. "But, alas! to what pass hath heresy brought men who term themselves Christians, and yet blush not to compare the beloved spouse of our Lord the one dove, the purchase of our Saviour's most precious blood, the holy catholic church, I mean that visible church of Christ which Luther found spread over the whole world, to a monastery so disordered that it must be forsaken; to the giant in Gath, 'much deformed with superfluous fingers and toes:' to a 'society of men universally infected with some disease!' And yet all these comparisons, and much worse, are neither injurious nor undeserved, if once it be granted, or can be proved, that the visible church of Christ may err in any one point of faith, although not fundamental.

34. "Before I part from these similitudes, one thing I must observe against the evasion of Dr. Potter, that they left not the church, but her corruptions. For as those reformers of the monastery, or those other who left the company of men universally infected with some disease, would deny themselves to be schismatics, or anyway blameworthy, but could not deny but that they left the said communities; so Luther and the rest cannot so much as pretend not to have left the visible church, which according to them was infected with many diseases, but can only pretend that they did not sin in leaving her. And you speak very strangely when you say, 'in a society of men universally infected with some disease, they that should free themselves from the common disease could not be therefore said to separate from the society.' For if they do not separate themselves from the society of the infected persons, how do they free themselves and depart from the common disease? Do they at the same time remain 'in the company,' and yet depart from those infected creatures? We must then say, that they separate themselves from the persons, though it be by occasion of the disease? Or if you say, they free their own persons from the common disease, yet so that they remain still in the company infected, subject to the superiors and governors thereof, eating, and drinking, and keeping public assemblies with them; you cannot but know Luther and your reformers, the first pretended free persons from the supposed common infection of the Roman church, did not so: for they endeavoured to force the society, whereof they were parts, to be healed and reformed as they were; and if it refused, they did, when they had forces, drive them away, even their superiors both spiritual and temporal, as is notorious. Or if they had not power to expel that supposed infected community or church of that place, they departed from them corporally whom mentally they had forsaken before. So that you cannot deny but Luther forsook the external communion and company of the catholic church, for which, as yourself confess, 'there neither was nor can be any just cause, no more than to depart from Christ himself.' We do therefore infer, that Luther and the rest who forsook that visible church which they found upon earth, were truly and properly schismatics.

35. "Moreover, it is evident that there was a division between Luther and that church which was visible when he arose: but that church cannot be said to have divided herself from him, before whose time she was, and in comparison of whom she was a whole, and he but a part; therefore we must say, that he divided himself and went out of her, which is to be a schismatic or heretic, or both. By this argument, Optatus Melevitanus proveth, that not Cæcilianus, but Parmenianus was a schismatic, saying, 'For Cæcilianus went not out from Majorinus, thy grandfather, but Majorinus from Cæcilianus; neither did Cæcilianus depart from the chair of Peter or Cyprian, but Majorinus in whose chair thou sittest, which

had no beginning before Majorinus. Since it manifestly appeareth that these things were acted in this manner, it is clear that you are heirs both of the deliverers up,' (of the holy Bible to be burned,) 'and also of schismatics.' The whole argument of this holy father makes directly both against Luther and all those who continue the division which he began; and proves, that 'going out,' convinceth those who go out to be schismatics; but not those from whom they depart: that to forsake the chair of Peter is schism; yea, that it is schism to erect a chair which had no origin, or, as it were, predecessor before itself: that to continue in a division begun by others is to be heirs of schismatics: and lastly, that to depart from the communion of a particular church (as that of St. Cyprian was) is sufficient to make a man incur the guilt of schism; and consequently, that although protestants, who deny the pope to be supreme head of the church, do think by that heresy to clear Luther from schism, in disobeying the pope; yet that will not serve to free him from schism, as it importeth a division from the obedience or communion of the particular bishop, diocese, church, and country where he lived.

36. "But it is not the heresy of protestants, or any other sectaries, that can deprive St. Peter and his successors of the authority which Christ our Lord conferred upon them over his whole militant church; which is a point confessed by learned protestants to be of great antiquity, and for which the judgment of divers most ancient holy fathers is reproved by them, as may be seen at large in Brerely, exactly citing the places of such chief protestants. And we must say with St. Cyprian, 'Heresies have sprung, and schisms been bred, from no other cause than for that the priest of God is not obeyed, nor one priest and judge is considered to be for the time in the church of God:' which words do plainly condemn Luther, whether he will understand them as spoken of the universal or of every particular church; for he withdrew himself both from the obedience of the pope, and of all particular bishops and churches. And no less clear is the said Optatus Melevitanus, saying, 'Thou canst not deny but that thou knowest, that in the city of Rome there was first an episcopal chair placed for Peter, wherein Peter, the head of all the apostles, sat; wherefore also he was called Cephas; in which one chair unity was to be kept by all, lest the other apostles might attribute to themselves each one his particular chair; and that he should be a schismatic and a sinner, who against that one single chair should erect another.' Many other authorities of fathers might be alleged to this purpose, which I omit; my intention being not to handle particular controversies.

37. "Now the arguments which hitherto I have brought, prove that Luther and his followers were schismatics, without examining (for as much as belongs to this point) whether or no the church can err in any one thing great or small, because it is universally true, that there can be no just cause to forsake the communion of the visible church of Christ, according to St. Augustin, saying, 'It is not possible that any may have just cause to separate their communion from the communion of the whole world, and call themselves the church of Christ, as if they had separated themselves from the communion of all nations upon just cause.' But since indeed the church cannot err in any one point of doctrine, nor can approve any corruption in manners, they cannot with any colour avoid the just imputation of eminent schism, according to the verdict of the same holy father in these words: 'The most manifest sacrilege of schism is eminent, when there was no cause of separation.'

38. "Lastly, I prove that protestants cannot avoid the note of schism, at least by reason of their mutual separation from one another; for most certain it is, that there is very great difference, for the outward face of a church, and profession of different faith, between the Lutherans, the rigid Calvinists, and the protestants of England. So that if Luther were in the right, those other protestants who invented doctrines far different from his, and divided themselves from him, must be reputed schismatics: and the like argument may proportionably be applied to their further divisions and subdivisions. Which reason I yet urge more strongly out of Dr. Potter, who affirms, that to him and to such as are convicted in conscience of the errors of the Roman church, a reconciliation is impossible and damnable. And yet he teacheth that their difference from the Roman church is not in fundamental points. Now, since among protestants

there is such diversity of belief, that one denieth what the other affirmeth, they must be convicted in conscience that one part is in error, (at least not fundamental,) and if Dr. Potter will speak consequently, that a reconciliation between them is impossible and damnable: and what greater division or schism can there be, than when one part must judge a reconciliation with the other to be impossible and damnable?

39. "Out of all which premises this conclusion follows: that Luther and his followers were schismatics; from the universal visible church; from the pope, Christ's vicar on earth and successor to St. Peter; from the particular diocese in which they received baptism; from the country or nation to which they belonged; from the bishop under whom they lived; many of them from the religious order in which they were professed; from one another; and lastly, from a man's self, (as much as is possible,) because the selfsame protestant to-day is convicted in conscience, that his yesterday's opinion was an error, (as Dr. Potter knows a man in the world who from a puritan was turned to a moderate protestant,) with whom therefore a reconciliation, according to Dr. Potter's grounds, is both impossible and damnable.

40. "It seems Dr. Potter's last refuge, to excuse himself and his brethren from schism, is, because they proceeded according to their conscience, dictating an obligation, under damnation, to forsake the errors maintained by the church of Rome. His words are, 'Although we confess the church of Rome to be (in some sense) a true church, and her errors to some men not damnable; yet for us who are convinced in conscience that she errs in many things, a necessity lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in these errors.'

41. "I answer, It is very strange that you judge us extremely uncharitable in saying protestants cannot be saved, while yourself avouch the same of all learned catholics, whom ignorance cannot excuse. If this your pretence of conscience may serve, what schismatic in the church, what popular seditious brain in a kingdom, may not allege the dictamen of conscience, to free themselves from schism or sedition? No man wishes them to do any thing against their conscience, but we say that they may and ought to rectify and depose such a conscience, which is easy for them to do, even according to your own affirmation, that we catholics want no means necessary to salvation. Easy to do? Nay, not to do so to any man in his right wits must seem impossible. For how can these two apprehensions stand together: In the Roman church I enjoy all means necessary to salvation, and yet I cannot hope to be saved in that church? or, who can conjoin in one brain (not cracked) these assertions: After due examination I adjudge the Roman errors not to be in themselves fundamental or damnable; and yet I judge, that according to true reason it is damnable to hold them? I say, 'according to true reason.' For if you grant your conscience to be erroneous, in judging that you cannot be saved in the Roman church by reason of her errors, there is no other remedy, but that you must rectify your erring conscience by your other judgment, that her errors are not fundamental nor damnable. And this is no more charity than you daily afford to such other protestants as you term brethren, whom you cannot deny to be in some errors, (unless you will hold, that of contradictory propositions both may be true,) and yet you do not judge it damnable to live in their communion, because you hold their errors not to be fundamental. You ought to know, that according to the doctrine of all divines there is great difference between a speculative persuasion and a practical dictamen of conscience; and therefore, although they had in speculation conceived the visible church to err in some doctrines, of themselves not damnable, yet with that speculative judgment they might and ought to have entertained this practical dictamen, that for points not substantial to faith they neither were bound nor lawfully could break the bond of charity, by breaking unity in God's church. You say, that 'hay and stubble, and such unprofitable stuff,' (as are corruptions in points not fundamental,) 'laid on the roof, destroys not the house, whilst the main pillars are standing on the foundation.' And you would think him a madman, who, to be rid of such stuff, would set his house on fire, that so he might walk in the light, as you teach that Luther was obliged to forsake the house of God, for an unnecessary light, not without a combustion formidable to the whole Christian world, rather than bear with some errors which did not destroy the

foundation of faith. And as for others who entered in at the breach first made by Luther, they might and ought to have guided their consciences by that most reasonable rule of Vincentius Lyrinensis, delivered in these words, 'Indeed it is a matter of great moment, and both most profitable to be learned, and necessary to be remembered, and which we ought again and again to illustrate, and inculcate with weighty heaps of examples, that almost all catholics may know that they ought to receive the doctors with the church, and not to forsake the faith of the church with the doctors:' and much less should they forsake the faith of the church to follow Luther, Calvin, and such other novelists. Moreover, though your first reformers had conceived their own opinions to be true, yet they might and ought to have doubted whether they were certain; because yourself affirm, that infallibility was not promised to any particular persons or churches. And since in cases of uncertainties we are not to leave our superior, nor can cast off his obedience, or publicly oppose his decrees, your reformers might easily have found a safe way to satisfy their zealous conscience, without a public breach; especially if with this their uncertainty we call to mind the peaceable possession and prescription, which, by the confession of your own brethren, the church and pope of Rome did for many ages enjoy. I wish you would examine the works of your brethren by the words yourself set down to free St. Cyprian from schism; every syllable of which words convinceth Luther and his co-partners to be guilty of that crime, and showeth in what manner they might with great ease and quietness have rectified their consciences about the pretended errors of the church. St. Cyprian (say you) 'was a peaceable and modest man, dissented from others in his judgment, but without any breach of charity condemned no man (much less any church) for the contrary opinion. He believed his own opinion to be true, but believed not that it was necessary, and therefore did not proceed rashly and peremptorily to censure others, but left them to their liberty.' Did your reformers imitate this manner of proceeding? Did they 'censure no man; much less any church?' 'St. Cyprian believed his own opinion to be true, but believed not that it was necessary, and THEREFORE did not proceed rashly and peremptorily to censure others.' You believe the points wherein Luther differs from us not to be fundamental or necessary; and why do you not thence infer the like THEREFORE, he should not have 'proceeded to censure others?' In a word, since their disagreement from us concerned only points which were not fundamental, they should have believed that they might have been deceived, as well as the whole visible church, which you say may err in such points; and therefore their doctrines, being not certainly true, and certainly not necessary, they could not give sufficient cause to depart from the communion of the church.

42. "In other places you write so much as may serve us to prove that Luther and his followers ought to have deposed and rectified their consciences: as for example, when you say, 'When the church hath declared herself in any matter of opinion or of rites, her declaration obliges all her children to peace and external obedience. Nor is it fit or lawful for any private man to oppose his judgment to the public (as Luther and his fellows did). He may offer his opinion to be considered of, so he do it with evidence, or great probability of Scripture or reason, and very modestly, still containing himself within the dutiful respect which he oweth; but if he will factiously advance his own conceits,' (What! do you mean that they are his own conceits, and yet grounded upon evidence of Scripture?) 'and despise the church so far as to cut off her communion, he may be justly branded and condemned for a schismatic, yea, a heretic also in some degree, and *in foro exteriori*, though his opinion were true, and much more if it be false.' Could any man, even for a fee, have spoken more home to condemn your predecessors of schism or heresy? Could they have stronger motives to oppose the doctrine of the church, and leave her communion, than evidence of Scripture? And yet, according to your own words, they should have answered, and rectified their conscience, by your doctrine, that though their opinion were true, and grounded upon evidence of Scripture or reason, yet it was not lawful for any 'private man to oppose his judgment to the public, which obligeth all Christians to peace and external obedience:' and if they cast off the communion of the church for maintaining their own 'conceits, they may be branded for schismatics and heretics, in some degree, *et*

in foro exteriori,' that is, all other Christians ought to esteem of them, (and why then are we accounted uncharitable for judging so of you?) and they also are obliged to behave themselves 'in the face of all Christian churches,' as if indeed they were not reformers, but schismatics and heretics, or as pagans and publicans. I thank you for your ingenuous confession; in recompence whereof I will do a deed of charity, in putting you in mind into what labyrinths you are brought, by teaching that the church may err in some points of faith, and yet that it is not lawful for any man to oppose his judgment, or leave her communion, though he have evidence of Scripture against her. Will you have such a man dissemble against his conscience, or externally deny a truth known to be contained in Holy Scripture? How much more coherently do catholics proceed, who believe the universal infallibility of the church, and from thence are assured that there can be no evidence of Scripture or reason against her definitions, nor any just cause to forsake her communion! Mr. Hooker, esteemed by many protestants an incomparable man, yields as much as we have alleged out of you; 'The will of God is,' saith he, 'to have them do whatsoever the sentence of judicial and final decision shall determine, yea, though it seem in their private opinion to swerve utterly from that which is right.' Doth not this man tell Luther what the will of God was, which he transgressing must of necessity be guilty of schism? And must not Mr. Hooker either acknowledge the universal infallibility of the church, or else drive men into the perplexities and labyrinths of dissembling against their conscience, whereof now I speak? Not unlike to this is your doctrine delivered elsewhere; 'Before the Nicene council,' say you, 'many good catholic bishops were of the same opinion with the Donatists, that the baptism of heretics was ineffectual; and with the Novatians, that the church ought not to absolve some grievous sinners. These errors therefore (if they had gone no further) were not in themselves heretical, especially in the groper and most heavy or bitter sense of that word; neither was it in the church's intention (or in her power) to make them such by her declaration. Her intention was to silence all disputes, and to settle peace and unity in her government, to which all wise and peaceable men submitted, whatsoever their opinion was. And those factious people, for their unreasonable and uncharitable opposition, were very justly branded for schismatics. For us, the mistake will never prove that we oppose any declaration of the catholic church, &c., and therefore he doth unjustly charge us either with schism or heresy.' These words manifestly condemn your reformers, who opposed the visible church in many of her declarations, doctrines, and commands imposed upon them, for silencing all disputes, and 'settling peace and unity in her government;' and therefore they still remaining obstinately disobedient, are justly 'charged with schism and heresy.' And it is to be observed, that you grant the Donatists to have been 'very justly branded for schismaties,' although their opposition against the church did concern (as you hold) a point not fundamental to the faith, and which according to St. Augustin cannot be proved out of Scripture alone; and therefore either doth evidently convince that the church is universally infallible, even in points not fundamental, or else that it is schism to oppose her declarations in those very things wherein she may err; and consequently that Luther and his fellows were schismatics, by opposing the visible church for points not fundamental, though it were (untruly) supposed that she erred in such points. But, by the way, how come you on the sudden to hold the determination of a general council (of Nice) to be the declaration of the catholic church, seeing you teach that general councils may err even fundamentally? And do you now say, with us, that to oppose the declaration of the church is sufficient that one may be branded with heresy, which is a point so often impugned by you?

43. "It is therefore most evident, that no pretended scruple of conscience could excuse Luther; which he might and ought to have rectified by means enough, if pride, ambition, obstinacy, &c., had given him leave. I grant he was touched with scruple of conscience, but it was because he had forsaken the visible church of Christ; and I beseech all protestants, for the love they bear to that sacred ransom of their souls, the blood of our blessed Saviour, attentively to ponder, and unpartially to apply to their own conscience, what this man spoke concerning the feelings and remorse of his. 'How often,' saith he, 'did my trembling

heart beat within me, and, reprehending me, object against me that most strong argument, Art thou only wise? Do so many worlds err? Were so many ages ignorant? What if thou errest, and drawest so many into hell to be damned eternally with thee!' And in another place he saith, 'Dost thou who art but one, and of no account, take upon thee so great matters? What if thou, being but one, offendest? If God permit such, so many, and all to err, why may he not permit thee to err? To this belong those arguments, the church, the church, the fathers, the fathers, the councils, the customs, the multitudes and greatness of wise men: whom do not these mountains of arguments, these clouds, yea, these seas of examples overthrow?' And these thoughts wrought so deep in his soul, that he 'often wished and desired that he had never begun this business; wishing yet further that 'his writings were burned and buried in eternal oblivion.' Behold what remorse Luther felt, and how he wanted no strength of malice to cross his own conscience; and therefore it was no scruple, or conceived obligation of conscience, but some other motives which induced him to oppose the church. And if yet you doubt of his courage to encounter and strength to master all reluctations of conscience, hear an example or two for that purpose. Of communion under both kinds thus he saith: 'If the council should in any case decree this, least of all would we then use both kinds; yea, rather, in despite of the council and that decree, we would use either but one kind only, or neither, and in no case both.' Was not Luther persuaded in conscience, that to use neither kind was against our Saviour's command? Is this only 'to offer his opinion to be considered of,' as you said all men ought to do? And that you may be sure that he spoke from his heart, and if occasion had been offered would have been as good as his word, mark what he saith of the elevation of the sacrament: 'I did know the elevation of the sacrament to be idolatrical; yet nevertheless I did retain it in the church at Wittemberg, to the end that I might vex the devil Carolostadius: Was not this a conscience large and capacious enough, that could swallow idolatry? Why would he not tolerate idolatry in the church of Rome, (as these men are wont to blaspheme,) if he could retain it in his own church at Wittemberg? It Carolostadius, Luther's offspring, was the devil, who but himself must be his dam? Is Almighty God wont to send such furies to preach the gospel? And yet further, (which makes most directly to the point in hand,) Luther, in his book of abrogating the private mass, exhorts the Augustine friars of Wittemberg, who first abrogated the mass, that, even against their conscience accusing them, they should persist in what they had begun, acknowledging that in some things he himself had done the like. And Joannes Mathesius, a Lutheran preacher, saith, 'Antonius Musa, the parish priest of Rocklitz, recounted to me, that on a time he heartily moaned himself to the doctor, (he means Luther,) that he himself could not believe what he preached to others; and that Dr. Luther answered, Praise and thanks be to God that this happens also to others, for I had thought it happened only to me.' Are not these conscionable and fit reformers? And can they be excused from schism, under pretence that they held themselves obliged to forsake the Roman church? If then it be damnable to proceed against one's conscience, what will become of Luther, who against his conscience persisted in his division from the Roman church?

44. "Some are said to flatter themselves with another pernicious conceit, that they, forsooth, are not guilty of sin, because they were not the first authors, but only are the continuers of the schism which was already begun.

45. "But it is hard to believe that any man of judgment can think this excuse will subsist, when he shall come to give up his final account. For according to this reason no schism will be damnable, but only to the beginners; whereas contrarily, the longer it continues the worse it grows to be, and at length degenerates to heresy; as wine by long keeping grows to be vinegar, but not by continuance returns again to its former nature of wine. Thus St. Augustin saith, that 'heresy is schism inveterate.' And in another place, 'We object to you only the crime of schism; which you have also made to become heresy, by evil persevering therein.' And St. Hierom saith, 'Though schism in the beginning may be in some sort understood to be different from heresy, yet there is no schism which doth not feign to itself some heresy,

that it may seem to have departed from the church upon just cause.' And so indeed it falleth out. For men may begin upon passion, but afterward, by instinct of corrupt nature seeking to maintain their schism as lawful, they fall into some heresy, without which their separation could not be justified with any colour; as in our present case, the very affirming that it is lawful to continue a schism unlawfully begun, is an error against the main principle of Christianity, that it is not lawful for any Christian to live out of God's church, within which alone salvation can be had; or, that it is not damnable to disobey her decrees, according to the words of our Saviour; '*If he shall not hear the church, let him be to thee as a pagan or publican;* and, *He that despiseth you despiseth me*. We heard above, Optatus Melevitanus saying to Parmenianus, that both he and all those other who continued in the schism, begun by Majorinus did inherit their forefathers' schism; and yet Parmenianus was the third bishop after Majorinus in his see, and did not begin, but only continue the schism. 'For,' saith this holy father, 'Cæcilianus went not out of Majorinus thy grandfather, but Majorinus from Cæcilianus; neither did Cæcilianus depart from the chair of Peter or Cyprian, but Majorinus, in whose chair thou sittest, which before Majorinus (Luther) had no beginning. Seeing it is evident that these things passed in this manner,' (that, for example, Luther departed from the church, and not the church from Luther,) 'it is clear that you be HEIRS both of the givers up of the Bible to be burned, and of SCHISMATICS.' And the regal power or example of Henry the Eighth could not excuse his subjects from schism, according to what we have heard out of St. Chrysostom, saying, 'Nothing doth so much provoke the wrath of Almighty God, as that the church should be divided. Although we should do innumerable good deeds, if we divide the full ecclesiastical congregation, we shall be punished, no less than they who did rend his (natural) body: for that was done to the gain of the whole world, though not with that intention; but this hath no good in it at all, but the greatest hurt riseth from it. These things are spoken not only to those who bear office, but to such also as are governed by them.' Behold, therefore, how liable both subjects and superiors are to the sin of schism, if they break the unity of God's church. The words of St. Paul can in no occasion be verified more than in this of which we speak: *They who do such things are worthy of death; and not only they that do them, but they also that consent with the doers*. In these things, which are indifferent of their own nature, custom may be occasion, that some act, not well begun, may in time come to be lawfully continued. But no length of time, no quality of persons, no circumstance of necessity, can legitimate actions which are of their own nature unlawful; and therefore division from Christ's mystical body being of the number of those actions which divines teach to be *intrinsece malas*, 'evil of their own nature and essence,' no difference of persons or time can ever make it lawful. Dr. Potter saith, 'There neither was nor can be any cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself.' And who dares say that it is not damnable to continue a separation from Christ? Prescription cannot in conscience run, when the first beginner and his successors are conscious that the thing to be prescribed, for example, goods or lands, were unjustly possessed at the first. Christians are not like strays, that, after a certain time of wandering from their right home, fall from their owner to the lord of the soil; but as long as they retain the indelible character of baptism, and live upon earth, they are obliged to acknowledge subjection to God's church. Human laws may come to nothing by discontinuance of time; but the law of God, commanding us to conserve unity in his church, doth still remain. The continued disobedience of children cannot deprive parents of their paternal right, nor can the grandchild be undutiful to his grandfather, because his father was unnatural to his own parent. The longer God's church is disobeyed, the profession of her doctrine denied, her sacraments neglected, her liturgy condemned, her unity violated, the more grievous the fault grows to be; as the longer a man withholds a due debt, or retains his neighbour's goods, the greater injustice he commits. Constancy in evil doth not extenuate, but aggravate the same, which by extension of time receiveth increase of strength, and addition of greater malice. If these men's conceits were true, the church might come to be wholly divided by wicked schisms, and yet after some space of time none could be accused of schism, nor be obliged to return to the visible

church of Christ; and so there should remain no one true visible church. Let therefore these men who pretend to honour, reverence, and believe the doctrine and practice of the visible church, and to condemn their forefathers who forsook her and say, they would not have done so if they had lived in the days of their fathers, and yet follow their example in remaining divided from her communion, consider how truly these words of our Saviour fall upon them: *Woe be to you, because you build the prophets' sepulchres, and garnish the monuments of just men, and say, If we had been in our fathers' days, we had not been their fellows in the blood of the prophets. Therefore you are a testimony to your own selves, that you are the sons of them that killed the prophets, and fill up the measure of your fathers.*

46. "And thus having demonstrated that Luther, his associates, and all that continue in the schism by them begun, are guilty of schism by departing from the visible true church of Christ, it remaineth that we examine what in particular was that visible true church from which they departed, that so they may know to what church in particular they ought to return; and then we shall have performed what was proposed to be handled in the fifth point.

V. Point. *Luther and the rest departed from the Roman church.*

47. "That the Roman church, (I speak not for the present of the particular diocese of Rome, but of all visible churches dispersed throughout the whole world, agreeing in faith with the chair of Peter, whether that see were supposed to be in the city of Rome or any other place,) that, I say, the church of Rome, in this sense, was the visible catholic church, out of which Luther departed, is proved by your own confession, who assign for notes of the church the true preaching of God's word, and due administration of sacraments; both which, for the substance, you cannot deny to the Roman church, since you confess that she wanted nothing fundamental, or necessary to salvation and for that very cause you think to clear yourself from schism, 'whose property,' as you say, 'is to cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates.' Now that Luther and his fellows were born and baptized in the Roman church, and that she was the church out of which they departed, is notoriously known; and therefore you cannot cut her off 'from the body of Christ and hope of salvation,' unless you will acknowledge yourself to deserve the just imputation of schism. Neither can you deny her to be truly catholic by reason of (pretended) corruptions not fundamental. For yourself avouch, and endeavour to prove, that the true catholic church may err in such points. Moreover, I hope you will not so much as go about to prove, that when Luther arose there was any other true visible church disagreeing from the Roman, and agreeing with protestants in their particular doctrines; and you cannot deny, but that England in those days agreed with Rome, and other nations with England; and therefore either Christ had no visible church upon earth, or else you must grant that it was the church of Rome. A truth so manifest, that those Protestants who affirm the Roman church to have lost the nature and being of a true church, do by inevitable consequence grant, that for divers ages Christ had no visible church on earth; from which error because Dr. Potter disclaimeth, he must of necessity maintain, that the Roman church is free from fundamental and damnable error, and that 'she is not cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation.' 'And if,' saith he, 'any zealots among us have proceeded to heavier censures, their zeal may be excused, but their charity and wisdom cannot be justified.'

48. "And to touch particulars, which perhaps some may object, no man is ignorant that the Grecians, even the schismatical Grecians, do in most points agree with the Roman catholics, and disagree from the protestant reformation. They teach transubstantiation (which point Dr. Potter also confesseth); invocation of saints and angels; veneration of relics and images; auricular confession; enjoined satisfaction; confirmation with chrism; extreme unction; all the seven sacraments, prayer, sacrifice, alms for the dead; monachism, that priests may not marry after their ordination. In which points that the Grecians agree

with the Roman church appeareth by a treatise published by the protestant divines of Wittemberg, entitled, *Acta Theologorum Wittembergensium, et Jeremiæ Patriarchæ Constantinop. de Augustana Confessione*, &c. *Wittembergæ anno* 1584, by the protestant Crispinus, and by Sir Edwin Sands in the relation of the state of the religion of the west. And I wonder with what colour of truth (to say no worse) Dr. Potter could affirm, that the doctrines 'debated between the protestants and Rome are only the partial and particular fancies of the Roman church; unless happily the opinion of transubstantiation may be expected, wherein the latter Grecians seem to agree with the Romanists.' Beside the protestant authors already cited, Petrus Arcudius, a Grecian, and a learned catholic writer, hath published a large volume, the argument and title whereof is, 'Of the agreement of the Roman and Greek church in the seven sacraments.' As for the heresy of the Grecians, that the Holy Ghost proceeds not from the Son, I suppose that protestants disavow them in that error as we do.

49. "Dr. Potter will not (I think) so much wrong his reputation as to tell us that the Waldenses, Wickliff, Huss, or the like, were protestants, because in some things they disagreed from catholics; for he well knows that the example of such men is subject to these manifest exceptions, they were not of all ages, nor in all countries, but confined to certain places, and were interrupted in time against the notion and nature of the word *catholic*. They had no ecclesiastical hierarchy, nor succession of bishops, priests, and pastors. They differed among themselves, and from protestants also. They agreed in divers things with us against protestants. They held doctrines manifestly absurd and damnable heresies.

50. "The Waldenses began not before the year 1218; so far were they from universality of all ages. For their doctrine, first they denied all judgments which extended to the drawing of blood and the sabbath, for which cause they were called In-sabbatists. Secondly, they taught that laymen and women might consecrate the sacrament, and preach (no doubt but by this means to make their master Waldo, a mere layman, capable of such functions.) Thirdly, that clergymen ought to have no possessions or properties. Fourthly, that, there should be no division of parishes nor churches; for a walled church they reputed as a barn. Fifthly, that men ought not to take an oath in any case. Sixthly, that those persons sinned mortally, who accompanied without hope of issue. Seventhly, they held all things done above the girdle, by kissing, touching, words, compression of the breasts, &c. to be done in charity, and not against continency. Eighthly, that neither priest nor civil magistrate, being guilty of mortal sin, did enjoy their dignity, or were to be obeyed. Ninthly, they condemned princes and judges. Tenthly, they affirmed singing in the church to be a hellish clamour. Eleventhly, they taught that men might dissemble their religion; and so accordingly they went to catholic churches, dissembling their faith, and made offertories, confessions, and communions, after a dissembling manner. Waldo was so unlearned, (saith Fox,) he gave rewards to certain learned men to translate the Holy Scripture for him, and being thus holpen did (as the same Fox there reporteth) 'confer the form of religion in his time to the infallible word of God.' A goodly example, for such as must needs have the Scripture in English to be read by every simple body, with such fruit of godly doctrine as we have seen in the foresaid gross heresies of Waldo. The followers of Waldo were like their master, so unlearned, that 'some of them (saith Fox) expounded the words, Joan. I. *Sui eum non receperunt*, 'Swine did not receive him.' And to conclude, they agreed in divers things with catholics against protestants, as may be seen in Brerely.

51. "Neither can it be pretended that these are slanders forged by catholics. For, besides that the same things are testified by protestant writers, as Illyricus, Cowper, and others, our authors cannot be suspected of partiality in disfavour of protestants, unless you would say perhaps that they were prophets, and some hundred years ago did both foresee that there were to be protestants in the world, and that such protestants were to be like the Waldenses. Besides, from whence but from our historians are protestants come to know that there were any such men as the Waldenses? and that in some points they agreed with

the protestants, and disagreed from them in others? And upon what ground can they believe our author for that part wherein the Waldenses were like to protestants, and imagine they lied in the rest?

52. "Neither could Wickliff continue a church never interrupted from the time of the Waldenses, after whom he lived more than one hundred and fifty years; to wit, in the year 1371. He agreed with catholics about the worshipping of relics and images; and about the intercession of our blessed Lady, the ever immaculate mother of God, he went so far as to say, 'It seems to me impossible that we should be rewarded without the intercession of the Virgin Mary.' He held seven sacraments, purgatory, and other points. And against both catholics and protestants he maintained sundry damnable doctrines, as divers protestant writers relate. As first, if a bishop or priest be in deadly sin, he doth not indeed either give orders, consecrate, or baptize. Secondly, that ecclesiastical ministers ought not to have any temporal possessions, nor property in any thing, but should beg; and yet he himself brake into heresy, because he had been deprived by the archbishop of Canterbury of a certain benefice; as all schisms and heresies begin upon passion, which they seek to cover with the cloak of reformation. Thirdly, he condemned lawful oaths, like the Anabaptists. Fourthly, he taught that all things came to pass by absolute necessity. Fifthly, he defended human merits as the wicked Pelagians did, namely, as proceeding from natural forces, without the necessary help of God's grace. Sixthly, that no man is a civil magistrate while he is in mortal sin, and that people may at their pleasure correct princes when they offend; by which doctrine he proves himself both an heretic and a traitor.

53. "As for Huss, his chiefest doctrines were, that lay-people must receive in both kinds; and that civil lords, prelates, and bishops lose all right and authority while they are in mortal sin. For other things he wholly agreed with catholics against protestants; and the Bohemians his followers being demanded in what points they disagreed from the church of Rome, propounded only these: 'the necessity of communion under both kinds; that 'all civil dominion was forbidden to the clergy;' that 'preaching of the word was free for all men,' and in all 'places;' that 'open crimes were in no wise to be permitted for avoiding of greater evil:' by these particulars, it is apparent that Huss agreed with protestants, against us in one only point of both kinds, which according to Luther is a thing indifferent; because he teacheth, that 'Christ in this matter commanded nothing as necessary.' And he saith further, 'If thou come to a place where one only kind is administered, use one kind only as others do.' Melanethon likewise holds it a thing indifferent; and the same is the opinion of some other protestants. All which considered, it is clear that protestants cannot challenge the Waldenses, Wickliff, and Huss, for members of their church; and although they could, yet that would advantage them little towards the finding out a perpetual visible church of theirs, for the reasons above specified.

54. "If Dr. Potter would go so far off as to fetch the Muscovites, Armenians, Georgians, Æthiopians, or Abyssines into his church, they would prove over dear bought; for they either hold the damnable heresy of Eutyches, or use circumcision, or agree with the Greek or Roman church. And it is most certain that they have nothing to do with the doctrine of protestants.

55. "It being therefore granted that Christ had a visible church in all ages, and that there can be none assigned but the church of Rome; if follows that she is the true catholic church, and that those pretended corruptions for which they forsook her are indeed Divine truths, delivered by the visible catholic church of Christ. And that Luther and his followers departed from her, and consequently are guilty of schism, by dividing themselves from the communion of the Roman church. Which is clearly convinced out of Dr. Potter himself, although the Roman church were but a particular church. For he saith, 'whosoever professes himself to forsake the communion of any one number of the body of Christ, must confess himself consequently to forsake the whole.' Since therefore in the same place he expressly acknowledges the 'church of Rome to be a member of the body of Christ,' and that it is clear they have forsaken her; it evidently follows, that they have forsaken the whole, and therefore are most properly schismatics.

56. “And lastly, since the crime of schism is so grievous, that according to the doctrine of holy fathers rehearsed above, no multitude of good works, no moral honesty of life, no cruel death endured even for the profession of some article of faith, can excuse any one who is guilty of that sin from damnation; I leave it to be considered, whether it be not true charity to speak as we believe, and to believe as all antiquity hath taught us, that whosoever either begins or continues a division from the Roman church, which we have proved to be Christ’s true militant church on earth, cannot without effectual repentance hope to be a member of his triumphant church in heaven. And so I conclude with these words of blessed St. Augustin: ‘It is common to all heretics to be unable to see that thing which in the world is most manifest, and placed in the light of all nations; out of whose unity whatsoever they work, though they seem to do it with great care and diligence, can no more avail them against the wrath of God, than the spider’s web against the extremity of cold.’ But now it is high time that we treat of the other sort of division from the church, which is by heresy.

THE

ANSWER TO THE FIFTH CHAPTER:

The separation of protestants from the Roman church, being upon just and necessary causes, is not any way guilty of schism.

1. AD § 1-7. In the seven first sections of this chapter there be many things said, and many things supposed by you, which are untrue, and deserve a censure. As,

2. First, "That schism could not be a division from the church, or that a division from the church could not happen, unless there always had been and should be a visible church." Which assertions is a manifest falsehood; for although there never had been any church visible or invisible before this age, nor should be ever after, yet this could not hinder but that a schism might now be, and be a division from the present visible church. As though in France there never had been until now a lawful monarch, nor after him ever should be; yet this hinders not but that now there might be a rebellion, and that rebellion might be an insurrection against sovereign authority.

3. "That it is a point to be granted by all Christians, that in all ages there hath been a visible congregation of faithful people." Which proposition howsoever you understand it, is not absolutely certain. But if you mean by *faithful*, (as it is plain you do,) free from all error in faith, then you know all protestants with one consent affirm it to be false; and therefore, without proof to take if for granted, is to beg the question.

4. "That supposing Luther, and they which did first separate from the Roman church, were guilty of schism, it is certainly consequent that all who persist in this division must be so likewise:" which is not so certain as you pretend. For they which alter without necessary cause the present government of any state, civil or ecclesiastical, do commit a great fault; whereof notwithstanding they may be innocent who continue this alteration, and to the utmost of their power oppose a change, though to the former state when continuance of time hath once settled the present. Thus have I known some of your own church condemn the Low-countrymen, who first revolted from the king of Spain, of the sin of rebellion; yet absolve them from it, who, now being of your religion there, are yet faithful maintainers of the common liberty against the pretences of the king of Spain.

5. Fourthly, "That all those which a Christian is to esteem neighbours do concur to make one company, which is the church." Which is false; for a Christian is to esteem those his neighbours who are not members of the true church.

6. Fifthly, "That all the members of the visible church are by charity united into one mystical body." Which is manifestily untrue; for many of them have no charity.

7. Sixthly, "That the catholic church signifies one company of faithful people." Which is repugnant to your own grounds; for you require not true faith, but only the profession of it, to make men members of the visible church.

8. Seventhly, "That every heretic is a schismatic." Which you must acknowledge false in those who, though they deny or doubt of some point professed by your church, and so are heretics, yet continue still in the communion of the church.

9. Eighthly, "That all the members of the catholic church must of necessity be united in external communion." Which, though it were much to be desired it were so, yet certainly cannot be perpetually true. For a man unjustly excommunicated is not in the church's communion, yet he is still a member of the church. And divers times it hath happened, as in the case of Chrysostom and Epiphanius, that particular men and particular churches have upon an overvalued difference either renounced commu-

nion mutually, or one of them separated from the other, and yet both have continued members of the catholic church. These things are in those seven sections either said or supposed by you untruly, without all show or pretence of proof. The rest is impertinent commonplace, wherein protestants and the cause in hand are absolutely unconcerned. And therefore I pass to the eighth section.

10. Ad § 8. Wherein you obtrude upon us a double fallacy: one, in supposing and taking for granted that whatsoever is affirmed by three fathers must be true; whereas yourselves make no scruple of condemning many things of falsehood which yet are maintained by more than thrice three fathers. Another in pretending their words to be spoken absolutely, which by them are limited and restrained to some particular cases. For whereas you say St. Austin, c. 62. 1. 2. cont. Parm. infers out of the former premises, "that there is no necessity to divide unity:" to let pass your want of diligence, in quoting the 62nd chapter of that book, which hath but 23 in it; to pass by also, that these words, which are indeed in the 11th chapter, are not inferred out of any such premises as you pretend: this, I say, is evident, that he says not absolutely that there never is or can be any necessity to divide unity, (which only were for your purpose,) but only in such a special case as he there sets down; that is, "When good men tolerate bad men, which can do them no spiritual hurt, to the intent they may not be separated from those who are spiritually good, then," saith he, "there is no necessity to divide unity." Which very words do clearly give us to understand, that it may fall out (as it doth in our case) that we cannot keep unity with bad men without spiritual hurt, *i. e.*, without partaking with them in their impieties, and that then there is a necessity to divide unity from them; I mean, to break off conjunction with them in their impieties. Which that it was St. Austin's mind, it is most evident out of the 21st chapter of the same book; whereto Parmenian demanding, "How can a man remain pure, being joined with those that are corrupted?" he answers, "Very true, this is not possible, if he be joined with them; that is, if he commit any evil with them, or favour them which do commit it. But if he do neither of these, he is not joined with them." And presently after, "These two things retained, will keep such men pure and uncorrupted; that is, neither doing ill nor approving it." And therefore seeing you impose upon all men of your communion a necessity of "doing," or at least "approving," many things unlawful, certainly there lies upon us an unavoidable necessity of dividing unity, either with you or with God; and whether of these is rather to be done, be ye judges.

11. Irenæus also says not simply, (which only would do you service,) there cannot possibly be any so important reformation as to justify a separation from them who will not reform; but only, "they cannot make any corruption so great as is the perniciousness of a schism." Now "they" here is a relative, and hath an antecedent expressed in Irenæus, which if you had been pleased to take notice of, you would easily have seen that what Irenæus says falls heavy upon the church of Rome, but toucheth protestants nothing at all. For the men he speaks of are such as *propter modicas et quaslibet causas*, "for trifling or small causes divide the body of Christ; such as speak of peace, and make war; such as strain at gnats, and swallow camels. And these," saith he, "can make no reformation of any such importance as to countervail the danger of a division." Now seeing the causes of our separation from the church of Rome are (as we pretend, and are ready to justify) because we will not be partakers with her in superstition, idolatry, impiety, and most cruel tyranny, both upon the bodies and souls of men, who can say that the causes of our separation may be justly esteemed *modicæ et quælibet causæ?* On the other side, seeing the bishop of Rome, who was contemporary to Irenæus, did (as much as in him lay) cut off from the church's unity many great churches, for not conforming to him in an indifferent matter upon a difference, *non de catholico dogmate, sed de ritu, vel ritus potius tempore*, "not about any catholic doctrine, but only a ceremony, or rather about the time of observing it;" so Petavius values it; which was just all one, as if the church of France should excommunicate those of their own religion in England for not keeping Christmas upon the same day with them: and seeing he was reprehended sharply and bitterly for it by most of the bishops of

the world, as Eusebius testifies, and (as Cardinal Perron, though mincing the matter, yet confesseth) by this very Irenæus himself in particular admonished, that for so small a cause (*propter tam modicam causam*) he should not have cut off so many provinces from the body of the church; and lastly, seeing the ecclesiastical story of those times mentions no other notable example of any such schismatical presumption but this of Victor; certainly we have great inducement to imagine that Irenæus, in this place by you quoted, had a special aim at the bishop and church of Rome. Once, this I am sure of, that the place fits him, and many of his successors, as well as if it had been made purposely for them. And this also, that he which finds fault with them "who separate upon small causes," implies clearly that he conceived there might be such causes as were great and sufficient; and that then a reformation was to be made, notwithstanding any danger of division that might ensue upon it.

12. Lastly, St. Dennis of Alexandria says indeed, and very well, "that all things should be rather endured, than we should consent to the division of the church:" I would add, rather than consent to the continuation of the division, if it might be remedied. But then I am to tell you, that he says not, All things should rather be done, but only, All things should rather be endured or suffered: wherein he speaks not of the evil of sin, but of pain and misery; not of tolerating either error or sin in others, (though that may be lawful,) much less of joining with others for quietness' sake, (which only were to your purpose,) in the profession of error and practice of sin, but of suffering any affliction, nay, even martyrdom in our own persons, rather than consent to the division of the church. *Omnia incommoda*, so your own Christopherson, enforced by the circumstances of the place, translates Dionysius's words, all "miseries should rather be endured, than we should consent to the church's division."

13. Ad § 9. In the next paragraph you affirm two things, but prove neither, unless a vehement asseveration may pass for a weak proof. You tell us first, "that the doctrine of the total deficiency of the visible church, which is maintained by divers chief protestants, implies in it vast absurdity, or rather sacrilegious blasphemy." But neither do the protestants alleged by you maintain the deficiency of the visible church, but only of the church's visibility, or of the church as it is visible, which so acute a man as you, now that you are minded of it, I hope will easily distinguish: neither do they hold that the visible church hath failed totally and from its essence, but only from its purity; and that it fell into many corruptions, but yet not to nothing. And yet if they had held, that there was not only no pure visible church, but none at all, surely they had said more than they could justify; but yet you do not show, neither can I discover, any such "vast absurdity or sacrilegious blasphemy" in this assertion. You say, secondly, that the "reason which cast them upon this wicked doctrine was a desperate voluntary necessity because they were resolved not to acknowledge the Roman to be the true church, and were convinced by all manner of evidence, that for divers ages before Luther there was no other." But this is not to dispute, but to divine, and take upon you the property of God, which is to know the hearts of men. For why, I pray, might not the reason hereof rather be, because they were convinced by all manner of evidence, as Scripture, reason, antiquity, that all the visible churches in the world, but, above all, the Roman, had degenerated from the purity of the gospel of Christ, and thereupon did conclude there was no visible church, meaning by "no church," none free from corruption, and conformable in all things to the doctrine of Christ.

14. Ad § 10. Neither is there any repugnance (but in words only) between these, as you are pleased to style them, "exterminating spirits," and those other, whom out of courtesy you entitle in your 10th § "more moderate protestants." For these, affirming the perpetual visibility of the church, yet neither deny nor doubt of her being subject to manifold and grievous corruptions, and those of such a nature, as, were they not mitigated by invincible, or at least a very probable ignorance, none subject to them could be saved. And they, on the other side, denying the church's visibility, yet plainly affirm, that they conceive very good hope of the salvation of many of their ignorant and honest forefathers. Thus declaring plainly,

though in words they denied the visibility of the true church, yet their meaning was not to deny the perpetuity, but the perpetual purity and incorruption of the visible church.

15. Ad § 11. Let us proceed therefore to your 11th section, where though Dr. Potter and other protestants granting the church's perpetual visibility, make it needless for you to prove it, yet you will needs be doing that which is needless. But you do it so coldly and negligently, that it is very happy for you that Dr. Potter did grant it.

16. For "what if the prophets speak more obscurely of Christ than of the church? what if they had foreseen that greater contentions would arise about the church than Christ?" which yet he that is not a mere stranger in the story of the church must needs know to be untrue, and therefore not to be foreseen by the prophets: what "if we have manifestly received the church from the Scriptures?" does it follow from any or all these things that the church of Christ must always be visible?

17. Besides, what protestant ever granted, (that which you presume upon so confidently,) "that every man for all the affairs of his soul must have recourse to some congregation?" If some one Christian lived alone among pagans in some country remote from Christendom, shall we conceive it impossible for this man to be saved, because he cannot have recourse to any congregation for the affairs of his soul? Will it not be sufficient, for such an one's salvation, to know the doctrine of Christ, and live according to it? Such fancies as these you do very wisely to take for granted, because you know well it is hard to prove them.

18. Let it "be as unlawful as you please to deny and dissemble matters of faith. Let them that do so not be a church, but a damned crew of sycophants:" what is this to the visibility of the church? May not the church be invisible, and yet these that are of it profess their faith? No, say you; their profession will make them visible. Very true, visible in the places where and in the times when they live, and to those persons unto whom they have necessary occasion to make their profession, but not visible to all, or any great or considerable part of the world while they live, much less conspicuous to all ages after them. Now it is a church thus illustriously and conspicuously visible that you require; by whose splendour all men may be directed and drawn to repair to her, for the affairs of their souls: neither is it the visibility of the church absolutely, but this degree of it, which the most rigid protestants deny: which is plain enough out of the places of Napier cited by you in the ninth part of this chapter; where his words are, "God hath withdrawn his visible church from open assembles to the hearts of particular godly men." And this church which hath not open assemblies, he calls "the latent and invisible church." Now, I hope, papists in England will be very apt to grant men may be so far latent and invisible, as not to profess their faith in open assemblies, nor to proclaim it to all the world, and yet not deny nor dissemble it; nor deserve to be esteemed "a damned crew of dissembling sycophants.

19. But "preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments, cannot but make a church visible; and these are inseparable notes of the church." I answer, they are far inseparable, that whereso-ever they are, there a church is; but not so but that in some cases there may be a church where these notes are not. Again, these notes will make the church visible: but to whom? Certainly not to all men, nor to most men, but to them only to whom the word is preached, and the sacraments administered. They make the church visible to whom themselves are visible, but not to others. As where your sacraments are administered, and your doctrine preached, it is visible that there is a popish church. But this may perhaps be visible to them only who are present at these performances, and to others as secret as if they had never been performed.

20. But St. Austin saith, "it is an impudent, abominable, detestable speech, &c, to say, the church hath perished." I answer, 1. All that St. Austin says is not true. 2. Though this were true, it were nothing to your purpose, unless you will conceive it all one, not to be, and not to be conspicuously visible. 3. This very speech, that the church perished, might be false and impudent in the Donatists, and yet not so in

the protestants. For there is no incongruity, that what hath lived 500 years may perish in 1600. But St. Austin denied not only the actual perishing, but the possibility of it; and not only of its falling to nothing, but of its falling into corruption. I answer, though no such thing appears out of those places, yet I believe heat of disputation against the Donatists, and a desire to over-confute them, transported him so far, as to urge against them more than was necessary, and perhaps more than was true. But were he now revived, and did but confront the doctrine of after-ages with that, his own experience would enforce him to change his opinion. As concerning the last speech of St. Austin, I cannot but wonder very much why he should think it absurd for any man to say, "there are sheep which he knows not, but God knows;" and no less at you, for obtruding this sentence upon us, as pertinent proof of the church's visibility.

21. Neither do I see "how the truth of any present church depends upon the perpetual visibility, nay, nor upon the perpetuity" of that which is past or future; for what sense is there that it should not be in the power of God Almighty to restore to a flourishing estate a church which oppression had made invisible; to repair that which is ruined; to reform that which was corrupted; or to revive that which was dead? Nay, what reason is there, but that by ordinary means this may be done, so long as the Scriptures by Divine Providence are preserved in their integrity and authority? as a commonwealth, though never so far collapsed and overrun with disorders, is yet in possibility of being reduced into its original state, so long as the ancient laws and fundamental constitutions are extant, and remain inviolate, from whence men may be directed how to make such a reformation. But St. Austin "urges this very argument against the Donatists," and therefore it is good. I answer, that I doubt much of the consequence; and my reason is, because you yourselves acknowledge that even general councils, (and therefore much more particular doctors,) though infallible in their determinations, are yet in their reasons and arguments, whereupon they ground them, subject to like passions and errors with other men.

22. Lastly, whereas you say, "that all divines define schism, a division from the true church," and from thence collect, that "there must be a known church from which it is possible for men to depart;" I might very justly question your antecedent, and desire you to consider, whether schism be not rather, or at least be not as well, a division of the church as from it; a separation, not of a part from the whole, but of some parts from the other. And if you liked not this definition, I might desire you to inform me in those many schisms which have happened in the church of Rome, which of the parts was the church, and which was divided from it. But to let this pass, certainly your consequence is most unreasonable. For though whensoever there is a schism it must necessarily suppose a church existent there, yet sure we may define a schism, that is declare what the word signifies, (for defining is no more,) though at this present there was neither schism nor church in the world. Unless you will say that we cannot tell what a rose is, or what the word *rose* signifies, but only in the summer when we have roses; or that in the world to come, when men shall not marry, it is impossible to know what it is to marry; or that the plague is not a disease, but only when somebody is infected; or that adultery is not a sin, unless there be adulterers; or that before Adam had a child, he knew not, and God could not have told him, what it was to be a father. Certainly, sir, you have forgot your metaphysics, which you so much glory in, if you know not that the connexions of essential predicates with their subjects are eternal, and depend not at all upon the actual existence of the thing defined. This definition therefore of schism concludes not the existence of a church, even when it is defined; much less the perpetual continuance of it; and least of all the continuance of it in perpetual visibility and purity; which is the only thing that we deny, and you are to prove. By this time you perceive, I hope, that I had reason to say, that it was well for you that Dr. Potter granted the church's perpetual visibility; for, for aught I can perceive, this concession of his is the best stake in your hedge, the best pillar upon which this conclusion stands, which yet is the only groundwork of your whole accusation.

23. Ad § 12, 47-55. The remainder of this chapter, to convince Luther and all that follow him to be schismatics, affords us arguments of two sorts: the first, drawn from the nature of the thing; the second,

from Dr. Potter's words and acknowledgments. So that the former, if they be good, must be good against all protestants; the latter, only against Dr. Potter. I will examine them all, and do not doubt to make it appear, even to yourself, if you have any indifference, that there is not any sound and concluding reason amongst them, but that they are all poor and miserable sophisms.

24. First, then, to prove us schismatics, you urge from the nature of schism this only argument:

Whosoever leave the external communion of the visible church are schismatics; but Luther and his followers left the external communion of the visible church of Christ: therefore they are schismatics.

The major of this syllogism you leave naked without proof; and conceive it, as it should seem, able enough to shift for itself. The minor, or second proposition of this argument, you prove by two other. The first is this:

They which forsook the external communion of all visible churches most needs forsake the external communion of the true visible church of Christ: but Luther and his followers forsook the external communion of all visible churches; therefore they forsook the external communion of the true visible church.

The major of this syllogism you take for granted (as you have reason); the minor you prosecute with great pomp of words, and prove with plenty of reasons, built upon the confessions of Dr. Potter, Luther, Calvin, and other protestants; and this you do in the 12th section of this chapter.

The second argument, to prove the assumption of your first syllogism, stands thus:

The Roman church, when Luther and his followers made the separation, was the true visible church of Christ; but Luther and his followers forsook the external communion of the Roman church: therefore they forsook the external communion of the true visible church of Christ.

The assumption of this syllogism needs no proof: the proposition, which needs it very much, you endeavour to confirm by these reasons:

1. The Roman church had the notes of the church assigned by protestants; i. e. the true preaching of the world, and due administration of the sacraments: therefore she was the true church.

The antecedent is proved; because Dr. Potter confesses she wanted nothing fundamental or necessary to salvation: therefore, for the substance of the matter, she had these notes:

2. Either the Roman church was the true visible church, or protestants can name and prove some other, disagreeing from the Roman and agreeing with protestants in their particular doctrines; or else they must say, there was no visible church: but they will not say there was no church. They cannot name and prove any other disagreeing from the Roman and agreeing with protestants in their particular doctrines; because this cannot be the Greek church, nor that of the Waldenses, Wickliffites, Hussites, nor that of the Muscovites, Armenians, Georgians, Æthiopians; which you confirm by several arguments: therefore they must grant that the Roman church was the true visible church.

And this is the business of your 47-55 sections of this chapter.

25. Now to all this I answer very briefly thus: that you have played the unwise builder, and erected a stately structure upon a false foundation. For whereas you take for granted as an undoubted truth, "that whosoever leave the external communion of the visible church are schismatical," I tell you, sir, you presume too much upon us, and would have us grant that which is the main point in question. For either you suppose the external communion of the church corrupted, and that there was a necessity for them that would communicate with this church to communicate in her corruptions, or you suppose her communion uncorrupted. If the former, and yet will take for granted that all are schismatics that leave her communion, though it be corrupted, you beg the question in your proposition: if the latter, you beg the question in your supposition; for protestants, you know, are peremptory and unanimous in the denial of both these things: both that the communion of the visible church was then uncorrupted; and that they are truly schismatics who leave the communion of the visible church, if corrupted; especially if the case be so, (and Luther's was so,) that they must either leave her communion, or of necessity communicate

with her in her corruptions. You will say, perhaps, "that you have already proved it impossible that the church or her communion should be corrupted;" and therefore that they are schismatics who leave the external communion of the visible church, because she cannot be corrupted; and that "hereafter you will prove that corruptions in the church's communion, though the belief and profession of them be made the condition of her communion, cannot justify a separation from it;" and therefore that they are schismatics who leave the church's communion, though corrupted. I answer, that I have examined your proofs of the former, and found that a vein of sophistry runs clean through them; and for the latter, it is so plain and palpable a falsehood, that I cannot but be confident whatsoever you bring in proof of it will, like the apples of Sodom, fall to ashes upon the first touch. And this is my first and main exception against your former discourse: that accusing protestants of a very great and horrible crime, you have proved your accusation only with a fallacy.

26. Another is, that although it were granted schism to leave the external communion of the visible church, in what state or case so ever it be, and that Luther and his followers were schismatics for leaving the external communion of all visible churches; yet you fail exceedingly of clearing the other necessary point undertaken by you, "that the Roman church was then the visible church." For neither do protestants (as you mistake) "make the true preaching of the word, and due administration of the sacraments, the notes of the visible church," but only of a visible church: now these, you know, are very different things; the former signifying the church catholic, or the whole church; the latter, a particular church, or a part of the catholic. And therefore, suppose out of courtesy we should grant, what by argument you can never evince, that your church has these notes, yet would it by no means follow, that your church were the visible church, but only a visible church; not the whole catholic, but only a part of it. But then, besides, where doth Dr. Potter acknowledge any such matter as you pretend? where doth he say, that you had for the substance "the true preaching of the word, or due administration of the sacraments?" or where does he say, that (from which you collect this) "you wanted nothing fundamental, or necessary to salvation?" He says indeed, that though your "errors were in themselves damnable, and full of great impiety, yet he hopes that those amongst you that were invincibly ignorant of the truth, might by God's great mercy have their errors pardoned and their souls saved:" and this is all he says; and this you confess to be all he says, in divers places of your book: which is no more than yourself do and must affirm of protestants: and yet I believe you will not suffer us to infer from hence, that you grant protestants to have, for the substance, the true preaching of the word and due administration of the sacraments, and want nothing fundamental or necessary to salvation. And if we should draw this consequence from your concession, certainly we should do you injury, in regard many things may, in themselves and in ordinary course, be necessary to salvation, to those that have means to attain them, as your church generally hath; which yet, by accident, to these which were, by some impregnable impediment, debarred in these means, may by God's mercy be made unnecessary.

27. Lastly, whereas you say, "that protestants must either grant that your church then was the visible church, or name some other, disagreeing from yours, and agreeing with protestants in their particular doctrine, or acknowledge there was no visible church;" it is all one, as if (to use St. Paul's similitude) the head should say to the foot, Either you must grant that I am the whole body, or name some other member that is so, or confess that there is no body. To which the foot may answer, I acknowledge there is a body; and yet, that no member beside you is this body; nor yet that you are it, but only a part of it. And in like manner say we, We acknowledge a church there was, corrupted indeed universally, but yet such a one as we hope by God's gracious acceptance was still a church. We pretend not to name any one society that was this church; and yet we see no reason that can enforce us to confess that yours was the church, but only a part of it, and that one of the worst then extant in the world. In vain therefore have you troubled yourself in proving that we "cannot pretend, that either the Greeks, Waldenses, Wickliffites, Hussites,

Muscovites, Armenians, Georgians, Abyssines, were then the visible church." For all this discourse proceeds upon a false and vain supposition, and begs another point in question between us, which is that some church of one denomination and one communion (as the Roman, the Greek, &c.) must be always, exclusively to all other communions, the whole visible church. And though, perhaps, some weak protestant, having the false principle settled in him, that there was to be always some visible church of one denomination pure from all error in doctrine, might be wrought upon and prevailed with by it to forsake the church of protestants; yet why it should induce him to go to yours, rather than the Greek church, or any other pretenders to perpetual succession, as well as yours, that I do not understand; unless it be for the reason which Æneas Sylvius gave, why more held the pore above a council, than a council above the pope; which was because popes did give bishoprics and archbishoprics, but councils gave none; and therefore suing *in forma pauperis* were not like to have their cause very well maintained. For put the case I should grant of mere favour, that there must be always some church of one denomination or communion free from all errors in doctrine, and that protestants had not always such a church; it would follow indeed from hence that I must not be a protestant; but that I must be a papist; certainly it would follow by no better consequence than this, If you will leave England, you must of necessity go to Rome. And yet with this wretched fallacy have I been sometimes abused myself, and known many other poor souls seduced, not only from their own church and religion, but unto yours: I beseech God to open the eyes of all that love the truth, that they may not always be held captive under such miserable delusions.

28. We see, then, how successful you have been in making good your accusation, with reasons drawn from the nature of the thing, and which may be urged in common against all protestants. Let us come now to the arguments of the other kind, which you build upon Dr. Potter's own words, out of which you promise unanswerable reasons to convince protestants of schism.

29. But let the understanding reader take with him three or or four short remembrances, and I dare say he will find them upon examination, not only answerable, but already answered. The memorandums I would commend to him are these:

30. 1. That not every separation, but only a causeless separation from the external communion of any church, is the sin of schism.

31. 2. That imposing upon men, under pain of excommunication, a necessity of professing known errors, and practising known corruptions, is a sufficient and necessary cause of separation; and that this is the cause which protestants allege to justify their separation from the church of Rome.

32. 3. That to leave the church, and to leave the external communion of a church, at least as Dr. Potter understands the word, is not the same thing: that being done by ceasing to be a member of it, by ceasing to have those requisites which constitute a man a member of it, as faith and obedience; this, by refusing to communicate with any church in her liturgies and public worship of God. This little armour, if it be rightly placed, I am persuaded will repel all those batteries which you threaten shall be so furious.

33. Ad § 13-15. The first is a sentence of St. Austin against Donatus, applied to Luther thus; "If the church perished, what church brought forth Donatus?" (you say Luther?) "If she could not perish, what madness moved the sect of Donatus to separate, upon pretence to avoid the communion of bad men?" Whereunto one fair answer (to let pass many others) is obvious out of the second observation; That this sentence, though it were gospel, as it is not, is impertinently applied to Luther and Lutherians, whose pretence of separation (be it true or be it false) was not (as that of the Donatists) only to avoid the communion of bad men, but to free themselves from the necessity (which but by separating was unavoidable) of joining with bad men in their impieties. And your not substituting Luther instead of Donatus, in the latter part of the dilemma, as well as in the former, would make a suspicious man conjecture that you yourself took notice of this exception of disparity between Donatus and Luther.

34. Ad § 16. Your second onset drives only at those protestants who "hold the true church was invisible for many ages." Which doctrine (if by the true church be understood the pure church, as you do understand it) is a certain truth; and it is easier for you to declaim (as you do) than to dispute against it. But "these men," you say, "must be heretics, because they separate from the communion of the visible church; and therefore also from the communion of that which they say was invisible; inasmuch as the invisible church communicated with the visible."

35. *Ans*. I might very justly desire some proof of that which so confidently you take for granted that there were no persecuted and oppressed maintainers of the truth in the days of our forefathers, but only such as dissembled their opinions, and lived in your communion. And truly if I should say there were many of this condition, I suppose I could make my affirmative much more probable than you can make your negative. We read in Scripture, that Elias conceived *there was none left beside himself, in the whole kingdom of Israel*, who had not revolted from God; and yet God himself assures us that he was deceived. And if such a man, a prophet, and one of the greatest, erred in his judgment touching his own time and his own country, why may not you, who are certainly but a man, and subject to the same passions as Elias was, mistake in thinking that in former ages, in some country or other, there were not always some good Christians, which did not so much as externally bow their knees to your Baal? But this answer I am content you shall take no notice of, and think it sufficient to tell you, that if it be true, that this supposed invisible church did hypocritically communicate with the visible church in her corruptions, then protestants had cause, nay necessity, to forsake their communion also; for otherwise they must have joined with them in the practice of impieties; and seeing they had such cause to separate, they presume their separation cannot be schismatical.

36. Yes, you reply, "to forsake the external communion of them with whom they agree in faith is the most formal and proper sin of schism." *Ans*. Very true; but I would fain know wherein. I would gladly be informed, whether I be bound, for fear of schism, to communicate with those that believe as I do, only in lawful things, or absolutely in every thing; whether I am to join with them in superstition and idolatry, and not only in a common profession of the faith wherein we agree, but in a common dissimulation or abjuration of it. This is that which you would have them to do, or else, forsooth, they must be schismatics. But hereafter, I pray you, remember, that there is no necessity of communicating even with true believers in wicked actions. Nay, that there is a necessity herein to separate from them. And then I dare say, even you being their judge, the reasonableness of their cause to separate shall, according to my first observation, justify their separation from being schismatical.

37. *Arg*. "But the property of schism, according to Dr. Potter, is to cut off from the hope of salvation the church from which it separates; and these protestants have this property: therefore they are schismatics."

38. *Ans*. I deny the syllogism; it is no better than this:

> One symptom of the plague is a fever:
> But such a man hath a fever;
> Therefore he hath the plague.

The true conclusion which issues out of these premises should be this, Therefore he hath one symptom of the plague. And so likewise in the former, Therefore they have one property or one quality of schismatics. And as in the former instance, the man that hath one sign of the plague may, by reason of the absence of other requisites, not have the plague; so these protestants may have something of schismatics, and yet not be schismatics. A tyrant sentencing a man to death for his pleasure, and a just judge that condemns a malefactor, do both sentence a man to death, and so for the matter do both the same thing; yet the one does wickedly, the other justly. What is the reason? Because the one hath cause,

the other hath not. In like manner schismatics either always or genarally denounce damnation to them from whom they separate. The same do these protestants, and yet are not schismatics. The reason; because schismatics do it and do it without a cause, and protestants have cause for what they do: the impieties of your church being, generally speaking, damnable: unless where they are excused by ignorance, and expiated at least by a general repentance. In fine, though perhaps it may be true that all schimatics do so, yet universal affirmatives are not converted, and therefore it follows not by any good logic that all that do so, when there is a just cause for it, must be schismatics. The cause in this matter of separation is all in all, and that, for aught I see, you never think of. But "if these rigid protestants have just cause to cut off your church from the hope of salvation, how can the milder sort allow hope of salvation to the members of the church?" *Ans*. Distinguish the quality of the persons censured, and this seeming repugnance of their censures will vanish into nothing. For your church may be considered either in regard of those in whom either negligence, or pride, or worldly fear, or hopes, or some other voluntary sin, is the cause of their ignorance; which I fear is the case of the generality of men amongst you: or in regard of those who owe their errors from truth to want of capacity or default of instruction; either in respect of those that might know the truth, and will not; or of those who would know the truth, but (all things considered) cannot: in respect of those that have eyes to see, and will not; or those that would gladly see, but want eyes or light. Consider the former sort of men, (which your more rigid censures seem especially to reflect upon,) and the heaviest sentence will not be too heavy. Consider the latter, and the mildest will not be too mild. So that here is no difference but in words only; neither are you flattered by the one, nor uncharitably censured by the other.

39. Your next blow is directed against the milder sort of protestants, "who," you say, "involve themselves in the sin of schism, by communicating with those," as you call them, "exterminating spirits, whom you conceive yourself to have proved schismatics;" and now load them further with the crime of heresy. For, say you, "if you held yourselves obliged, under pain of damnation, to forsake the communion of the Roman church by reason of her errors, which yet you confess were not fundamental; shall it not be much more damnable to live in confraternity with these, who defend an error of the failing of the church, which in the Donatists you confess to have been properly heretical?"

40. *Ans*. You mistake, in thinking that protestants hold themselves obliged not to communicate with you, only or principally by reason of your errors and corruption. For the true reason, according to my third observation, is not so much because you maintain errors and corruptions, as because you impose them, and will allow your communion to none but to those that will hold them with you; and have so ordered your communion, that either we must communicate with you in these things, or nothing. And for this very reason, though it were granted that these protestants held this doctrine which you impute to them; and though this error were as damnable and as much against the Creed as you pretend; yet, after all this, this disparity between you and them might make it more lawful for us to communicate with them than you, because what they hold they hold to themselves, and refuse not (as you do) to communicate with them that hold the contrary.

41. Thus we may answer your argument, though both your former suppositions were granted. But then for a second answer, I am to tell you, that there is no necessity of granting either of them. For neither do these protestants hold the failing of the church from its being, but only from its visibility; which if you conceive all one, then must you conceive that the stars fail every day, and the sun every night. Neither is it certain that the doctrine of the church's failing is repugnant to the Creed. For as the truth of the article of the remission of sins depends not upon the actual remission of any man's sins, but upon God's readiness and resolution to forgive the sins of all that believe and repent; so that although unbelief or unpenitence should be universal, and *the faithful should* absolutely *fail from the children of men*, and *the Son of man should find no faith on the earth;* yet should the article still continue true, that God would forgive

the sins of all that repent: in like manner, it is not certain that the truth of the article of the catholic church depends upon the actual existence of the catholic church; but rather upon the right that the church of Christ, or rather (to speak properly) the gospel of Christ, hath to be universally believed. And therefore the article may be true, though there were no church in the world. In regard, this notwithstanding, it remains still true, that there ought to be a church, and this church ought to be catholic. For as, of these two propositions, There is a church in America, and, There should be a church in America, the truth of the latter depends not upon the truth of the former; so neither does it in these two; There is a church diffused all the world over, and, There should be a church diffused all the world over.

42. Thirdly, if you understand by errors not fundamental such as are not damnable, it is not true, as I have often told you, that we confess your errors not fundamental.

43. Lastly, for your desire that I should here apply an authority of St. Cyprian, alleged in your next number, I would have done so very willingly, but indeed I know not how to do it; for in my apprehension it hath no more to do with your present business of proving it unlawful to communicate with these men, who hold the church was not always visible, than *In nova fert animus.* Besides, I am here again to remember you, that St. Cyprian's words, were they never so pertinent, yet are by neither of the parties litigant esteemed any rule of faith. And therefore the urging of them, and such like authorities, serves only to make books great, and controversies endless.

44. Ad § 17. The next section in three long leaves delivers us this short sense, "that those protestants which say they have not left the church's external communion, but only her corruptions, pretend to do that which is impossible; because these corruptions were inherent in the church's external communion; and therefore he that forsakes them cannot but forsake this."

45. *Ans*. But who are they that pretend they forsook the church's corruptions, and not her external communion? Some there be that say they have not left the church, that is, not ceased to be members of the church, but only left her corruptions: some, that they have not left the communion, but the corruptions of it; meaning the internal communion of it, and conjunction with it, by faith and obedience: which disagree from the former only in the manner of speaking; for he that is in the church is in this kind of communion with it, and he that is not in this internal communion is not in the church. Some, perhaps, that they left not your external communion in all things; meaning, that they left it not voluntarily, being not *fugitivi*, but *fugati*, as being willing to join with you in any act of piety; but were by you necessitated and constrained to do so, because you would not suffer them to do well with you, unless they would do ill with you. Now to do ill that you may do well, is against the will of God, which to every good man is a high degree of necessity. But for such protestants as pretend, that *de facto*, they forsook your corruptions only, and not your external communion, that is, such as pretend to communicate with you in your confessions and liturgies, and participation of sacraments; I cannot but doubt very much, that neither you nor I have ever met with any of this condition. And if perhaps you were led into error, by thinking that to leave the church, and to leave the external communion of it, was all one in sense and signification, I hope by this time you are disabused, and begin to understand, that as a man may leave any fashion or custom of a college, and yet remain still a member of the college; so a man may possibly leave some opinion or practice of a church, formerly common to himself and others, and continue still a member of that church; provided that what he forsakes be not one of those things wherein the essence of the church consists. Whereas peradventure this practice may be so involved with the external communion of this church, that it may be simply impossible for him to leave this practice, and not to leave the church's external communion.

46. You will reply, perhaps, "that the difficulty lies as well against those who pretend to forsake the church's corruptions and not the church, as against those who say they forsook the church's corruptions and not her external communion. And that the reason is still the same; because these supposed

corruptions were inherent in the whole church, and therefore, by like reason with the former, could not be forsaken, but if the whole church were foresaken."

47. *Ans.* A pretty sophism, and very fit to persuade men that it is impossible for them to forsake any error they hold, or any vice they are subject to, either peculiar to themselves, or in common with others; because, forsooth, they cannot forsake themselves; and vices and errors are things inherent in themselves. The deceit lies in not distinguishing between a local and a moral forsaking of any thing. For as it were an absurdity, fit for the maintainers of transubstantiation to defend, that a man may locally and properly depart from the accidents of a subject, and not from the subject itself; so is it also against reason to deny that a man may (by an usual phrase of speech) forsake any custom or quality, good or bad, either proper to himself, or common to himself with any company, and yet never truly or properly forsake either his company or himself. Thus if all the Jesuits in the society were given to write sophistically, yet you might leave this ill custom, and yet not leave your society. If all the citizens of a city were addicted to any vanity, they might, either all or some of them, forsake it, and yet not forsake the city. If all the parts of a man's body were dirty or filthy, nothing hinders but that all or some of them might cleanse themselves, and yet continue parts of the body. And what reason then in the world is there, if the whole visible church were overrun with tares and weeds of superstitions and corruptions, but that some members of it might reform themselves, and yet remain still true members of the body of the church, and not be made no members but the better by their reformation? Certainly it is so obvious and sensible a truth, that this thing is possible, that no man in his wits will be persuaded out of it, with all the quirks and metaphysics in the world. Neither is this to say, that a man may keep company with Christopher Potter, and not keep company with the provost of Queen's college: nor that a man can avoid the company of a sinner, and at the same time be really present with the man who is the sinner: which we leave to those protestants of your invention, who are so foolish as to pretend that a man may really separate himself from the church's external communion, as she is corrupted, and yet continue in that church's external communion, which in this external communion is corrupted. But we, that say only, the whole church being corrupted, some parts of it might and did reform themselves, and yet might and did continue parts of the church, though separated from the external communion of the other parts, which would not reform, need not trouble ourselves to reconcile any such repugnance. For the case put by you, of keeping Dr. Potter's company, and leaving the company of the provost of Queen's college; and of leaving a sinner's company, and not the man's; are nothing at all like ours. But if you would speak to the point, you must show that Dr. Potter cannot leave being provost of Queen's college without ceasing to be himself; or that a sinner cannot leave his sin, without ceasing to be a man; or that he that is part of any society, cannot renounce any vice of that society, but he must relinquish the society. If you would show any of these things, then indeed (I dare promise) you should find us apt enough to believe, that the particular parts of the visible church could not reform themselves, but they must of necessity become no parts of it. But until we see this done, you must pardon us, if we choose to believe sense rather than sophistry.

48. In this paragraph you bring in the sentence of St. Cyprian, whereto you referred us in the former: but why, in a controversy of faith, do you cite any thing which is confessed on all hands not to be a rule of faith? Besides, in my apprehension, this sentence of St. Cyprian's is, in this place, and to this purpose, merely impertinent. St. Cyprian's words are, "The church" (he speaks of the particular church or diocese of Rome) "being one, cannot be within and without: if she be with Novatianus, she was not with Cornelius; but if she were with Cornelius, who succeeded Fabianus by lawful ordination, Novatianus is not in the church" And now, having related the words, I am only to remember the reader, that your business was to prove it "impossible for a man to forsake the church's corruptions, and not the church;" and to request him to tell me, whether, as I said, *In nova fert animus* had not been as much to the purpose?

49. Towards the conclusion of this section, you number up your victories, and tell us, "that out of your discourse it remaineth clear, that this our chiefest answer changeth the very state of the question; confoundeth internal acts of the understanding with external deeds; doth not distinguish between schism and heresy; and leaves this demonstrated against us, that they (protestants) divided themselves from the communion of the visible catholic church, because they conceived that she needed reformation." To which triumphs, if any reply be needful, then briefly thus: We do not change the state of the question, but you mistake it. For the question was not, whether they might forsake the corruption of the church, and continue in her external communion, which we confess impossible, because the corruptions were in her communion; but the question was, whether they might forsake the corruptions of the church, and not the church, but continue still the members of it. And to this question there is not in your whole discourse one pertinent syllable.

50. We "do not confound internal acts of understanding with external deeds, but "acknowledge (as you would have us) that "we cannot" (as matters now stand) separate from your corruptions but we must depart from your external communion." For you have so ordered things, that whosoever will communicate with you at all must communicate with you in your corruptions. But it is you that will not perceive the difference between being a part of the church, and being in external communion of all the other parts of it; taking for granted, that which is certainly false, that no two men or churches, divided in external communion, can be both true parts of the catholic church.

51. We are not "to learn the difference between schism and heresy;" for heresy we conceive an obstinate defence of any error against any necessary article of the Christian faith; and schism, a causeless separation of one part of the church from another. But this we say, that if we convince you of errors and corruptions, professed and practised in your communion, then we cannot be schismatics, for refusing to join with you in the profession of these errors, and the practice of these corruptions. And therefore you must free either us from schism or yourselves from error; at least from requiring the profession of it as a condition of your communion.

52. Lastly, whereas you say, "that you have demonstrated against us, that protestants divided themselves from the external communion of the visible church;" add, "which external communion was corrupted," and we shall confess the accusation, and glory in it. But this is not that *quad erat demonslrandum*, but that we divided ourselves from the church, that is, made ourselves outlaws from it, and no members of it. And moreover, in the reason of our separation from the external communion of your church you are mistaken; for it was not so much because she, your church, as because your church's external communion was corrupted, and needed reformation.

53. "That a pretence of reformation will acquit no man from schism," we grant very willingly, and therefore say, that it concerns every man who separates from any church's communion, even as much as his salvation is worth, to look most carefully to it, that the cause of his separation be just and necessary; for unless it be necessary, it can very hardly be sufficient. But whether a true reformation of ourselves from errors, superstititions, and impieties, will not justify our separation in these things; our separation, I say, from them who will not reform themselves, and, as much as in them lies, hinder others from doing so; this is the point you should have spoken to, but have not. As for the sentences of the Fathers to which you refer us for the determination of this question, I suppose by what I have said above, the reader understands, by alleging them you have gained little credit to your cause or person; and that, if they were competent judges of this controversy, their sentence is against you much rather than for you.

54. Lastly, Whereas you desire Dr. Potter to remember his own words, "There neither was nor can be any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself, and pretend that you have showed that Luther did so;" the doctor remembers his words very well, and hath no reason to be ashamed of them: only he desires you to remember, that hereafter you do not confound, as hitherto

you have done, departing from the church (i. e. ceasing to be a member of it) with departing from the church's external communion; and then he is persuaded it will appear to you, that against Luther and his followers you have said many things, but showed nothing.

55. But "the church universal remaining the church universal, according to Dr. Potter, may fall into error; and from hence it clearly follows, that it is impossible to leave the external communion of the church so corrupted, and retain external communion with the catholic church." *Ans*. The reason of this consequence, which you say is so clear, truly I cannot possibly discern; but the conclusion inferred, methinks, is evident of itself, and therefore without proof I grant it. I mean, that it is impossible to leave the external communion of the catholic church corrupted, and to retain external communion with the catholic church. But what use you can make of it I do not understand; unless you will pretend, that to say a man may forsake the church's corruption, and not the church, is all one as to say, he may forsake the church's external communion, and not forsake it. If you mean so, sure you mistake the meaning of protestants when they say, they forsook not the church, but her corruptions. For in saying so, they neither affirm nor deny that they forsook the external communion of the church, nor speak at all of it; but they mean only, that they ceased not to be still members of the church, though they ceased to believe and practice some things which the whole church formerly did believe and practice. And as for the external communion of the visible church; we have without scruple formerly granted, that protestants did forsake it; that is, renounce the practice of some observance, in which the whole visible church before them did communicate. But this, we say, they did without schism, because they had cause to do so, and no man can have cause to be a schismatic.

56. But your argument, you conceive, will be more convincing, "if we consider, that when Luther appeared there were not two distinct visible true churches, one pure, the other corrupted, but one church only." *Ans*. The ground of this is no way certain, nor here sufficiently proved. For whereas you say, histories are silent on any such matter; I answer, there is no necessity that you or I should have read all histories that may be extant of these matters; nor that all should be extant that were written, much less extant uncorrupted; especially considering your church, which had lately all the power in her hands, hath been so perniciously industrious in corrupting the monuments of antiquity that made against her; nor that all records should remain which were written; nor that all should be recorded which was done. Neither, secondly, to suppose a visible church before Luther, which did not err, is to contradict this ground of Dr. Potter's, that the church may err: unless you will have us believe, that *may be* and *must be* is all one, and that all which may be true is true: which rule if it were true, then sure all men would be honest, because all men may be so; and you would not make so bad arguments, unless you will pretend you cannot make better. Nor, thirdly, is it to contradict these words, "the church may not hope to triumph over all error till she be in heaven;" for to triumph over error is to be secure from it, to be out of danger of it, not to be obnoxious to it. Now a church may be free from error, and yet not secure from it, and consequently in this sense not triumph over it. Fourthly, whereas you say, it "evacuateth the brag of protestants, that Luther reformed the whole church;" perhaps (though I know not who they be that say so) by a frequent synecdoche, they may mean by the whole the greatest and most illustrious part of it, the lustre whereof did much obscure the other, though it were not wholly invisible. Besides, if their brag be evacuated, (as you call it,) let it be so, I see no harm will come of it. Lastly, whereas you say, that supposing a visible pure church, Luther must be a schismatic, who separated from all visible churches: I tell you, if you will suppose a visible church extant before, and when Luther arose, conformable to him in all points of doctrine, necessary and profitable, then Luther separated not from this church, but adjoined himself to it: not indeed in place, which was not necessary; not in external communion, which was impossible; but by the union of faith and charity. Upon these grounds, I say, that the ground of this argument is no way made certain; yet because it is not manifestly false, I am content to let it pass. And, for aught I see, it is

very safe for me to do so; for you build nothing upon it which I may not fairly grant. For what do you conclude from hence, but that, seeing there was no visible church but corrupted, Luther forsaking the external communion of the corrupted church, could not but forsake the external communion of the catholic church? Well, let this also be granted, what will come of it? What! that Luther must be a schismatic? By no means; for not every separation, but only a causeless separation from the communion of the church, we maintain to be schismatical. Hereunto may be added, that though the whole church were corrupted, yet, properly speaking, it is not true that Luther and his followers forsook the whole corrupted church, or the external communion of it; but only that he forsook that part of it which was corrupted, and still would be so, and forsook not, but only reformed another part, which part they themselves were; and, I suppose, you will not go about to persuade us that they forsook themselves or their communion. And if you urge, that they joined themselves to no other part, therefore they separated from the whole; I say, it follows not, inasmuch as themselves were a part of it, and still continued so; and therefore could no more separate from the whole than from themselves. Thus though there were no part of the people of Rome to whom the plebeians joined themselves, when they made their secession into the Aventine hill; yet they divided themselves from the patricians only, and not from the whole people, because themselves were a part of this people, and they divided not from themselves.

57. Ad § 18. In the 18th section, you prove that which no man denies, that "corruption in manners yields no sufficient cause to leave the church:" yet sure it yields sufficient cause to cast them out of the church, that are, after the church's public admonition, obstinate in notorious impieties. Neither doth the cutting off such men from the church lay any necessity upon us, either to go out of the world, or out of the church, but rather puts these men out of the church into the world, where we may converse with them freely, without scandal to the church. "Our blessed Saviour foretold," you say, "that there should be in the church tares with choice corn." Look again, I pray, and you shall see that the field he speaks of is not the church, but *the world;* and therefore neither do you obey our Saviour's command, *Let both grow up till the harvest*, who teach it to be lawful to root these tares (such are heretics) out of the world; neither do protestants disobey it, if they eject manifest heretics and notorious sinners out of the church.

58. Ad § 19. In the 19th you are so courteous as to suppose "corruptions in your doctrine," and yet undertake to prove that "neither could they afford us any sufficient cause or colourable necessity to depart from them." Your reason is, "because damnable errors there were none in your church, by Dr. Potter's confession, neither can it be damnable, in respect of error, to remain in any church's communion whose errors are not damnable; for if the error be not damnable, the belief thereof cannot." *Ans*. Dr. Potter confesseth no such matter, but only that he "hopes that your errors, though in themselves sufficiently damnable, yet by accident did not damn all that held them;" such, he means and says, as were excusably ignorant of the truth, and amongst the number of their unknown sins repented daily of their unknown errors. The truth is, he thinks as ill of your errors and their desert as you do of ours; only he is not so peremptory and presumptuous in judging your persons as you are in judging ours, but leaves them to stand or fall to their own Master, who is infinitely merciful, and therefore will not damn them for mere errors who desire to find the truth and cannot; and withal infinitely just, and therefore (it is to be feared) will not pardon them, who might easily have come to the knowledge of the truth, and either through pride, or obstinacy, or negligence would not.

59. To your minor also, I answer almost in your own words, sect. 42. of this chapter, "I thank you for your courteous" supposal, that your church may err, and "in recompence thereof will do you a charity, by putting you in mind into what labyrinths you cast yourself," by supposing that the church may err in some of her proposals, and yet denying it lawful for any man, though he know this, which you suppose, to oppose her judgment, or leave her communion. "Will you have such a man dissemble against his conscience, or externally deny that which he knows true?" No, that you will not; for them that do so, you

yourself have pronounced "a damned crew of dissembling sycophants." Or would you have him continue in your communion, and yet profess your church to err? This you yourselves have made to him impossible. Or would you have him believe those things true, which together with him you have supposed to be errors? This, in such an one as is assured or persuaded of that which you here suppose, that your church doth err, (and such only, we say, are obliged to forsake your communion,) is, as schoolmen speak, *implicatio in terrninis*, which is "a contradiction so plain, that one word destroyeth another; as if one should say, a living dead man." For it is to require that they which believe some part of your doctrine false, should withal believe it all true. Seeing, therefore, for any man to believe your church in error, and profess the contrary, is damnable hypocrisy; to believe it and not believe it, a manifest repugnancy; and thirdly, to profess it and to continue in your communion, (as matters now stand,) a plain impossibly; what remains, but that whosoever is supposed to have just reason to disbelieve any doctrine of your church must of necessity forsake her communion; unless you would remit so far from your present rigour, as to allow them your church's communion who publicly profess that they do not believe every article of her established doctrine. Indeed, if you would do so, you might with some coherence suppose your church in error, and yet find fault with men for abandoning her communion, because they might continue in it, and suppose her in error. But to suppose your church in error, and to excommunicate all those that believe your own supposition, and then to complain that they continue not in your communion, is the most ridiculous incongruity that can be imagined. And therefore, though your corruptions in doctrine in themselves (which yet is false) did not, yet your obliging us to profess your doctrine uncorrupted against knowledge and conscience may, induce an obligation to depart from your communion. As, if there were any society of Christians that held there were no antipodes; notwithstanding this error, I might communicate with them: but if I could not do so without professing myself of their belief in this matter, then I suppose I should be excused from schism, if I should forsake their communion, rather than profess myself to believe that which I do not believe. Neither is there any contradiction, or shadow of contradiction, that it may be necessary for my salvation to depart from the church's communion; and that this church (though erring in this manner) wants nothing necessary to salvation. And yet this is that manifest contradiction, which Dr. Potter (you say) will never be able to solve, viz. "that there might be necessary cause to depart from the church of Rome in some doctrines and practices, though she wanted nothing necessary to salvation."

60. And your reason, wherewith you prove that there is in these words such a plain contradiction is very notable. "For," say you, "if she wanted nothing necessary to salvation, how could it be necessary to salvation to forsake her?" Truly, sir, if this be a good manner of proving, it is a very ready way to prove any thing; for what is there that may not be proved, if it be proof enough to ask, how can it be otherwise? Methinks if you would convince Dr. Potter's words of manifest contradiction, you should show that he affirms and denies the same of the same. From which fault methinks he should be very innocent, who says only, that that may be damnable to one, which is not so to another; and that may be necessary for one, which is not necessary for another. And this is all that Dr. Potter says here, viz. that the profession of a falsehood to him that believes it may be not damnable, and yet damnable to him that believes the contrary: or that not to profess a falsehood, in him that knows it to be so, is necessary to salvation; and yet not so in him that by error conceives it to be a truth. The words by you cited, and charged with unsalvable contradiction, are in the 75th page; but in the progress of the same particular discourse, in the next page but one, he gives such evident reason of them, (which can hardly be done to prove implicancy true), that whereas you say: "he will never be able to salve them from contradiction," I believe any indifferent reader, having considered the place, will be very apt to think that you (whatsoever you pretend) were very able to have done this courtesy for him, if your will had been answerable to your ability. I will set down the words, and leave the reader to condemn or absolve them: "To forsake the errors

of that church, and not join with her in those practices which we account erroneous, we are enforced by necessity. For though in the issue they are not damnable to them which believe as they profess, yet for us to profess and avow by oath (as the church of Rome enjoins) what we believe not, were, without question, damnable. And they with their errors, by the grace of God, might go to heaven, when we, for our hypocrisy and dissimulation," (he might have added, and perjury,) "should certainly be condemned to hell."

61. Ad § 10. "But a church not erring in fundamentals, though erring in other matters, doth what our Saviour exacts at her hands, doth as much as lies in her power to do; therefore the communion of such a church is not upon pretence of error to be forsaken." The consequence is manifest. The antecedent is proved, because God, by Dr. Potter's confession, "hath promised his assistance no further, nor is it in her power to do more than God doth assist her to do." *Ans*. The promise of Divine assistance is twofold, absolute or conditional. That there shall be by Divine Providence preserved in the world, to the world's end, such a company of Christians, who hold all things precisely and indispensably necessary to salvation, and nothing inevitably destructive of it; this, and no more, the Doctor affirms that God hath promised absolutely. Yet he neither doubts nor denies but that a further assistance is conditionally promised us, even such an assistance as shall lead us, if we be not wanting to it and ourselves, into all, not only necessary, but very profitable truth, and guard us from all, not only destructive, but also hurtful errors. This, I say, he neither denies nor questions. And should he have done so, he might have been confuted by evident and express texts of Scripture. When therefore you say, "that a church not erring in fundamentals doth as much as by God's assistance lies in her power to do," this is manifestly untrue; for God's assistance is always ready to promote her further. It is ready, I say, but on condition the church does implore it; on condition, that when it is offered in the Divine directions of Scripture and reason, the church be not negligent to follow it. If therefore there be any church, which, retaining the foundation, builds hay and stubble upon it; which, believing what is precisely necessary, errs shamefully and dangerously in other things very profitable; this by no means argues defect of Divine assistance in God, but neglect of this assistance in the church. Neither is there any reason why such a church should please herself too much for retaining fundamental truths, while she remain so regardless of others. For though the simple defect of some truths profitable only, and not simply necessary, may consist with salvation; yet who is there that can give her sufficient assurances, that the neglect of such truths is not damnable? Besides, who is there that can put her in sufficient caution, that these errors about profitable matters may not, according to the usual fecundity of error, bring forth others of a higher quality, such as are pernicious and pestilent, and undermine by secret consequences the very foundations of religion and piety? Lastly, who can say that she hath sufficiently discharged her duty to God and man, by avoiding only fundamental heresies, if in the mean time she be negligent of others, which though they do not plainly destroy salvation, yet obscure and hinder, and only not block up the way to it? Which though of themselves and immediately they damn no man, yet are causes and occasions that many men run the rare of Christian piety more remissly than they should, many defer their repentance, many go on securely in their sins, and so at length are damned by means and occasion of these errors, though not for them. Such errors as these, (though those of the Roman church be much worse, even in themselves damnable, and by accident only pardonable,) yet, I say, such errors as these, if any church should tolerate, dissemble, and suffer them to reign, and neglect to reform them, and not permit them to be freely, yet peaceably opposed and impugned; will any wise man say, that she hath sufficiently discharged her duty to God and man? that she hath with due fidelity dispensed the gospel of Christ? that she hath done what she could, and what she ought? What shall we say then if these errors be taught by her, and commanded to be taught? what if she thunder out her curses against those that will not believe them? what if she rave and rage against them, and persecute them with fire and sword, and all kinds of most exquisite torments? Truly I do much fear,

that from such a church (though it hold no error absolutely inconsistent with salvation) the candlestick of God either is already removed, or will be very shortly; and because she is negligent of profitable truths, that she will lose those that are necessary; and because she will not be led into all truths, that in a short time she shall be led into none. And although this should not happen, yet what mortal man can secure us, that not only a probable unaffected ignorance, not only a mere neglect of profitable truths but also a wretchless, supine negligence, manifest contempt, dissimulation, opposition, oppression of them, may consist with salvation? I truly, for my part, though I hope very well of all such as, seeking all truth, find that which is necessary; who, endeavouring to free themselves from all errors any way contrary to the purity of Christianity, yet fail of performance, and remain in some; yet if I did not find in myself a love and desire of all profitable truth; if I did not put away idleness, and prejudice, and worldly affections, and so examine to the bottom all my opinions of Divine matters, being prepared in mind to follow God, and God only, which way soever he shall lead me; if I did not hope that I either do or endeavour to do these things, certainly I should have little hope of obtaining salvation.

62. "But to oblige any man, under pain of damnation, to forsake a church by reason of such errors, against which Christ, thought it superfluous to promise his assistance; and for which he neither denies his grace here, nor his glory hereafter; what is it but to make the narrow way to heaven narrower than Christ left it? *Ans*. It is not; for Christ himself hath obliged us hereunto. He hath forbid us, under pain of damnation, to profess what we believe not, and consequently, under the same penalty, to leave that communion in which we cannot remain without this hypocritical profession of those things which we are convinced to be erroneous. But then besides, it is here falsely supposed (as hath been showed already) that Christ hath not promised assistance to those that seek it, but only in matters simply necessary. Neither is there any reason why any church, even in this world, should despair of victory over all errors pernicious or noxious, provided she humbly and earnestly implore Divine assistance, depend wholly upon it, and be not wanting to it. Though a "triumph over all sin and error," that is, security that she neither doth nor can err, be rather to be desired than hoped for on earth, being a felicity reserved for heaven.

63. Ad § 21. "But at least the Roman church is as infallible as protestants, and protestants as fallible as the Roman church; therefore to forsake the Roman church for errors, what is it but to flit from one erring society to another?" *Ans*. The inconsequence of this argument is too apparent: protestants may err as well as the church of Rome, therefore they did so! Boys in the schools know, that *a posse ad esse*, the argument follows not. He is equally fallible who believes twice two to be four, as he that believes them to be twenty; yet in this he is not equally deceived, and he may be certain that he is not so. One architect is no more infallible than another, and yet he is more secure that his work is right and straight who hath made it by the level, than he which hath made it by guess and by chance. So he that forsakes the errors of the church of Rome, and therefore renounceth her communion, that he may renounce the profession of her errors, though he knows himself fallible, as well as those whom he hath forsaken, yet he may be certain (as certain as the nature of the thing will bear) that he is not herein deceived; because he may see the doctrine forsaken by him repugnant to Scripture, and the doctrine embraced by him consonant to it. At least this he may know, that the doctrine which he hath chosen to him seems true, and the contrary, which he hath forsaken, seems false; and therefore without remorse of conscience he may profess that, but this he cannot.

64. But "we are to remember, that, according to Dr. Potter, the visible church hath a blessing not to err in fundamentals, in which any private reformer may fail; therefore there was no necessity of forsaking the church, out of whose communion they were exposed to danger of falling into many more, and even into damnable errors." *Ans*. The visible church is free indeed from all errors absolutely destructive and unpardonable, but not from all error which in itself is damnable; nor from all which will actually bring damnation upon them that keep themselves in them, by their own voluntary and avoidable fault. From

such errors which are thus damnable Dr. Potter doth no where say, that the visible church hath any privilege or exemption. Nay, you yourself teach, that he plainly teacheth the contrary, and thereupon will allow him to be no more charitable than papists are to protestants; and yet upon this affected mistake your discourse is founded in almost forty places of your book. Besides, any private man who truly believes the Scriptures, and seriously endeavours to know the will of God, and to do it, is as secure as the visible church, more secure than your church, from the danger of erring in fundamentals; for it is impossible that any man so qualified should fall into any error which to him will prove damnable; for God requires no more of any man to his salvation, but his true endeavour to be saved. Lastly, abiding in your church's communion is so far from securing me or any man from damnable error, that if I should abide in it, I am certain I could not be saved: for abide in it I cannot, without professing to believe your entire doctrine true: profess this I cannot, but I must lie perpetually, and exulcerate my conscience. And though our errors were not in themselves damnable, yet to resist the known truth, and to contrive in the possession of known errors and falsehood, is certainly a capital sin, and of great affinity with the sin, which shall never be forgiven.

65. But "neither is the church of protestants perfectly free from errors and corruptions: so the Doctor confesses, p. 69; which he can only excuse by saying, they are not fundamental; as likewise those in the Roman church are confessed not to be fundamental. And what man of judgment will be a protestant, since that church is confessedly a corrupted one?" *Ans*. And yet you yourself make large discourses in this very chapter, to persuade protestants to continue in the church of Rome, though supposed to have some corruptions. And why, I pray, may not a man of judgment continue in the communion of a church confessedly corrupted, as well as a church supposed to be corrupted; especially when this church, supposed to be corrupted, requires the belief and profession of her supposed corruptions, as the condition of her communion; which this church, confessedly corrupted, doth not? What man of judgment will think it any disparagement to his judgment to prefer the better, though not simply the best, before that which is stark naught? to prefer indifferent good health, before a diseased and corrupted state of body? to prefer a field not perfectly weeded, before a field that is quite overrun with weeds and thorns? And therefore though protestants have some errors, yet seeing they are neither so great as yours, nor imposed with such tyranny, nor maintained with such obstinacy, he that conceives it any disparagement to his judgment to change your communion for theirs though confessed to have some corruptions, it may well be presumed that he hath but little judgment. For as for your pretence that yours are confessed not to be fundamental, it is an affected mistake, as already I have often told you.

66. Ad § 22. But Dr. Potter says, "It is comfort enough for the church, that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all capital dangers; but she may not hope to triumph over all sin and error till she be in heaven. Now if it be comfort enough to be secured from all capital dangers, which can arise only from error in fundamental points, why were not our first reformers content with enough, but would needs dismember the church out of a pernicious greediness of more than enough?" *Ans*. I have already showed you sufficiently how capital danger may arise from errors, though not fundamental. I add now, that what may be enough to men in ignorance may be to knowing men not enough; according to that of the gospel, *to whom much is given, of him much shall be required:* that the same error may be not capital to those who want means of finding the truth, and capital to others who have means, and neglect to use them: that to continue in the profession of error, discovered to be so, may be damnable, though the error be not so. These, I presume, are reasons enough, and enough why the first reformers might think, and justly, that not enough for themselves, which yet to some of their predecessors they hope might be enough. This very argument was objected to St. Cyprian upon another occasion, and also by the British Quartodecimans to the maintainers of the doctrine of your church; and by both this very answer was returned; and therefore I cannot but hope that for their sakes you will approve it.

67. But "if," as the Doctor says, "no church may hope to triumph over all error till she be in heaven, then we must either grant, that errors not fundamental cannot yield sufficient cause to forsake the church, or you must affirm, that all communities may and ought to be forsaken." *Ans*. The Doctor does not say, that no church may hope to be free from all error, either pernicious or any way noxious, but that "no church may hope to be secure from all error simply," for this were indeed truly to triumph over all. But then we say not, that the communion of any church is to be forsaken for errors unfundamental, unless it exact withal either a dissimulation of them being noxious, or a profession of them against the dictates of conscience, if they be mere errors. This if the church does, (as certainly yours doth,) then her communion is to be forsaken, rather than the sin of hypocrisy to be committed. Whereas to forsake the churches of protestants for such errors there is no necessity, because they err to themselves, and do not, under pain of excommunication, exact the profession of their errors.

68. But "the church may not be left by reason of sin, therefore neither by reason of errors not fundamental; inasmuch as both sin and error are impossible to be avoided till she be in heaven." *Ans*. The reason of the consequence does not appear to me; but I answer to the antecedent: neither for sin nor errors ought a church to be forsaken, if she does not impose and enjoin them; but if she do, (as the Roman does,) then we must forsake men rather than God, leave the church's communion rather than commit sin, or profess known errors to be Divine truths. For the prophet Ezekiel hath assured us, that to say, *The Lord hath said so, when the Lord hath not said so*, is a great sin, and a high presumption, be a matter never so small.

69. Ad § 23. "But neither the quality nor the number of your church's errors could warrant our forsaking it. Not the quality, because we suppose them not fundamental. Not the number, because the foundation is strong enough to support them." *Ans*. Here again you vainly suppose that we conceive your errors in themselves not damnable; though we hope they are not absolutely unpardonable: but to say they are pardonable is indeed to suppose them damnable. Secondly, though the errors of your church did not warrant our departure, yet your tyrannous imposition of them would be our sufficient justification. For this lays a necessity on us either to forsake your company, or to profess what we know to be false.

70. Our "blessed Saviour hath declared his will, that we forgive a private offender seventy-seven times, that is, without limitation of quantity of time, or quality of trespasses; and then how dare we allege his command, that we must not pardon his church for errors acknowledged to be not fundamental?" *Ans*. He that commands us to pardon our brother sinning against us so often, will not allow us for his sake to sin with him so much as once; he will have us do any thing but sin, rather than offend any man. But his will is also, that we offend all the world, rather than sin in the least matter. And therefore though his will were, and it were in our power, (which is yet false,) to pardon the errors of an erring church; yet certainly it is not his will that we should err with the church, or if we do not, that we should against conscience profess the errors of it.

1. Ad § 24. But "schismatics from the church of England, or any other church, with this very answer, that they forsake not the church, but the errors of it, may cast off from themselves the imputation of schism." *Ans*. True, they may make the same answer and the same defence as we do; as a murderer can cry Not guilty as well as an innocent person, but not so truly nor so justly. The question is, not what may be pretended, but what can be proved by schismatics. They may object errors to other churches as well as we do to yours; but that they prove their accusation so strongly as we can, that appears not. To the priests and elders of the Jews, imposing that sacred silence mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter and St. John answered, *They must obey God rather than men*. The three children to the king of Babylon gave in effect the same answer, Give me now any factious hypocrite, who makes religion the pretence and cloak of his rebellion, and who sees not that such an one may answer for himself in those very formal words which the holy apostles and martyrs made use of? And yet, I presume, no Christian will

deny but this answer was good in the mouth of the apostles and martyrs, though it were obnoxious to be abused by traitors and rebels. Certainly therefore it is no good consequence to say, Schismatics may make use of this answer; therefore all that do make use of it are schismatics. But moreover, it is to be observed that the chief part of our defence, that you deny your communion to all that deny or doubt of any part of your doctrine, cannot with any colour be employed against protestants; who grant their communion to all who hold with them, not all things, but things necessary, that is, such as are in Scripture plainly delivered.

72. "But the forsaking the Roman church opens a way to innumerable sects and schisms, and therefore it must not be forsaken." *Ans*. We must not do evil to avoid evil; neither are all courses presently lawful, by which inconveniences may be avoided. If all men would submit themselves to the chief mufti of the Turks, it is apparent there would be no divisions; yet unity is not to be purchased at so dear a rate. It were a thing much to be desired, that there were no divisions; yet difference of opinions touching points controverted is rather to be chosen than unanimous concord in damned errors: as it is better for men to go to heaven by divers ways, or rather by divers paths of the same way, than in the same path to go on peaceably to hell: *Amica pax, magis amica veritas!*

73. "But there can be no just cause to forsake the church, so the Doctor grants; who notwithstanding teacheth that the church may err in points not fundamental; therefore neither is the Roman church to be forsaken for such errors." *Ans*. There can be no just cause to forsake the church absolutely and simply in all things, that is, to cease being a member of the church: this I grant, if it will do you any service. But that there can be no just cause to forsake the church in some things, or (to speak more properly) to forsake some opinions and practices which some true church detains and defends; this I deny, and you mistake the Doctor, if you think he affirms it.

74. Ad § 26, 27. What "prodigious doctrines," say you, "are these? Those protestants who believe that your church erred in points necessary to salvation, and for that cause left her, cannot be excused from damnable schism. But others," &c. Prodigious doctrines indeed! But who, I pray, are they that teach them? Where does Dr. Potter accuse those protestants of "damnable schism" who left your church because they hold it erroneous in necessary points? What protestant is there that holds not that you taught things contrary to the plain precepts of Christ; both ceremonial, in mutilating the communion, and moral, in points of superstition and idolatry, and most bloody tyranny; which is without question to err in necessary matters. Neither does Dr. Potter accuse any man of schism for holding so; if he should, he should call himself a schismatic. Only he says, such (if there be any such) as affirm, that ignorant souls among you, who had no means to know the truth, cannot possibly be saved, that their wisdom and charity cannot be justified. Now you yourself have plainly affirmed, that "ignorant protestants dying with contrition may be saved;" and yet would be unwilling to be thought to say, that protestants err in no points necessary to salvation. For that may be in itself, and in ordinary course, where there are means of knowledge, necessary, which to a man invincibly ignorant will prove not necessary. Again, where doth Dr. Potter suppose (as you make him) that there were other protestants who believed that your church had no errors? or where does he say they did well to forsake her upon this ridiculous reason, because they judged that she retained all means necessary to salvation? Do you think us so stupid, as that we cannot distinguish between that which Dr. Potter says, and that which you make him say? He vindicates protestants from schism two ways: the one is, because they had just and great and necessary cause to separate, which schismatics never have; because they that have it are no schismatics; for schism is always a causeless separation. The other is, because they did not join with their separation an uncharitable damning of all those from whom they did divide themselves, as the manner of schismatics is. Now that which he intends for a circumstance of our separation, you make him make the cause of it, and the motive to it. And whereas he says, "Though we separate from you in some things, yet we acknowledge your

church a member of the body of Christ, and therefore are not schmismatics;" you make him say most absurdly, "We did well to forsake you, because we judged you a member of the body of Christ." Just as if a brother should leave his brother's company in some ill courses, and should say to him, "Herein I forsake you, yet I leave you not absolutely, for I acknowledge you still to be my brother, and shall use you as a brother;" and you, perverting his speech, should pretend that he had said, "I leave your company in these ill courses, and I do well to do so, because you are my brother:" so making that the cause of leaving him, which indeed is the cause that he left him no further.

75. "But you say, "The very reason for which he acquitteth himself from schism is, because he holds that the church which they forsook is not cut off from the body of Christ." *Ans*. This is true: but can you not perceive a difference between justifying his separation from schism by this reason, and making this the reason of his separation? If a man denying obedience in some unlawful matter to his lawful sovereign, should say to him, "Herein I disobey you, but yet I am no rebel, because I acknowledge you my sovereign lord, and am ready to obey you in all things lawful;" should not he be an egregious sychophant, that should accuse him as if he had said, "I do well to disobey you, because I acknowledge you my lawful sovereign?" Certainly, he that joins this acknowledgment with his necessitated obedience, does well; but he that makes this consideration the reason of disobedience, doth ill. Urge therefore this (as you call it) most solemn foppery as far as you please; for every understanding reader will easily perceive that this is no foppery of Dr. Potter's, but a calumny of yours, from which he is as far as he is from holding yours to be the true church: whereas it is a sign of a great deal of charity in him, that he allows you to be a part of it.

76. And "whereas you pretend to find such unspeakable comfort herein, that we cannot clear ourselves from schism, otherwise than by acknowledging that they do not nor cannot cut off your church from the hope of salvation;" I beseech you to take care that this false comfort cost you not too dear. For why this good opinion of God Almighty, that he will not damn men for error who were without their own fault ignorant of the truth, should be any consolation to them who, having the key of knowledge, will neither use it themselves, nor permit others to use it; who have eyes to see, and will not see, who have ears to hear, and will not hear; this, I assure you, passeth my capacity to apprehend. Neither "is this to make our salvation depend on yours," but only ours and yours not desperately inconsistent; nor to say, "we must be damned, unless you may be saved;" but that we assure ourselves, if our lives be answerable, we shall be saved by our knowledge. And that we hope, (and I tell you again, *spes est rei incertæ nomen*,) that some of you may possibly be saved by occasion of their unaffected ignorance.

77. For our brethren, whom you say "we condemn of heresy for denying the church's perpetuity," we know none that do so unless you conceive a corrupted church to be none at all; and if you do, then, for aught I know, in your account we must be all heretics; for all of us acknowledge that the church might be corrupted even with errors in themselves damnable, and not only might, but hath been.

78. "But schism consists in being divided from that true church with which a man agreeth in all points of faith: now we must profess, you say, that we agree with the church of Rome in all fundamental articles; therefore we are schismatics." *Ans*. Either in your major, "by all points of faith," you mean all fundamental points only, or all simply and absolutely. If the former, I deny your major; for I may without all schism divide from that church which errs in any point of faith fundamental, or otherwise, if she require the profession of this error among the conditions of her communion. Now this is our case. If the latter, I deny the syllogism, as having manifestly four terms, and being cousin-german to this:

> He that obeys God in all things is innocent:
> Titius obeys God in some things;
> Therefore he is innocent.

79. “But they who judge a reconciliation with the church of Rome to be damnable; they that say, there might be just and necessary cause to depart from it, and that they of that church which have understanding and means to discover their errors, and neglect to use them, are not to be flattered with hope of salvation; they do cut off that church from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, and so are schismatics; but Dr. Potter doth the former; therefore he is a schismatic.” *Ans*. No, he doth not; nor cut off that whole church from the hope of salvation, not those members of it who were invincibly or excusably ignorant of the truth; but those only, who having understanding and means to discover their error, neglect to use them. Now these are not the whole church; and therefore he that, supposing their impenitence, cuts these off from hopes of salvation, cannot be justly said to cut off that whole church from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation.

80. Ad§ 28, 29. Whereas Dr. Potter says, “There is a great difference between a schism from them, and a reformation of ourselves; this,” you say, “is a quaint subtilty, by which all schism and sin may be as well excused.” It seems then in your judgment, that thieves, and adulterers, and murderers, and traitors, may say with as much probability as protestants, that they did no hurt to others, but only reform themselves, But then methinks it is very strange, that all protestants should agree with one consent in this defence of themselves from the imputation of schism; and that to this day, never any thief or murderer should have been heard of, to make use of this apology! And then for schismatics, I would know whether Victor bishop of Rome, who excommunicated the churches of Asia for not conforming to his church in keeping Easter; whether Novatian, that divided from Cornelius, upon pretence that himself was elected bishop of Rome, when indeed he was not; whether Felicissimus and his crew, that went out of the church of Carthage, and set up altar against altar, because having fallen in persecution they might not be restored to the peace of the church presently, upon the intercession of the confessors; whether the Donatists, who divided from and damned all the world, because all the world would not excommunicate them who were accused only, and not convicted, to have been traditors of the sacred books; whether they which for the slips and infirmities of others, which they might and ought to tolerate, or upon some difference in matters of order and ceremony, or for some error in doctrine, neither pernicious nor hurtful to faith or piety, separate themselves from others, or others from themselves; or lastly, whether they that put themselves out of the church’s unity and obedience, because their opinions are not approved there, but reprehended and confuted, or because being of impious conversation, they are impatient of their church’s censure: I would know, I say, whether all or any of these may with any face, or without extreme impudency put in this plea of protestants, and pretend with as much likelihood as they, that they did not separate from others, but only reformed themselves? But suppose they were so impudent as to say so in their own defence falsely, doth it follow by any good logic, that therefore this apology is not to be employed by protestants, who may say so truly? “We make,” say they, “no schism from you, but only a reformation of ourselves: This,” you reply, “is no good justification, because it may be pretended by any schismatic.” Very true, any schismatic that can speak may say the same words; (as any rebel that makes conscience the cloak of his impious disobedience, may say with St. Peter and St. John, *We must obey God rather than men;)* but then the question is, whether any schismatic may say so truly? And to this question you say just nothing; but conclude, because this defence may be abused by some, it must be used by none. As if you should have said, St. Peter and St. John did ill to make such an answer as they made, because impious hypocrites might make use of the same to palliate their disobedience and rebellion against the lawful commands of lawful authority.

81. “But seeing their pretended reformation consisted in forsaking the church’s corruptions, their reformation of themselves, and their division from you, falls out to be one and the same thing.” Just as if two men having been a long while companions in drunkenness, one of them should turn sober; this reformation of himself, and desertion of his companion, in this ill custom, would be one and the same

thing, and yet there is no necessity that he should leave his love to him at all, or his society in other things. So protestants forsaking their own former corruptions, which were common to them with you, could not choose but withal forsake you in the practice of these corruptions; yet this they might and would have done without breach of charity towards you, and without a renunciation of your company in any act of piety and devotion confessedly lawful. And therefore though both these were by accident joined together, yet this hinders not but that the end they aimed at was not a separation from you, but a reformation of themselves.

82. Neither "doth their disagreement, in the particulars of the reformation," (which yet when you measure it without partiality, you will find to be far short of infinite,) nor "their symbolizing in the general of forsaking your corruptions," prove any thing to the contrary, or any way advantage your design, or make for your purpose. For it is not any sign at all, much less an evident sign, that they had no settled design, but only to forsake the church of Rome; for nothing but malice can deny, that their intent at least was to reduce religion to that original purity from which it was fallen. The declination from which some conceiving to have begun (though secretly) in the apostles' times (*the mystery of iniquity being then in work*,) and after their departure to have showed itself more openly; others again believing, that the church continued pure for some ages after the apostles, and then declined: and consequently some aiming at an exact conformity with the apostolic times; others thinking they should do God and men good service, could they reduce the church to the condition of the fourth and fifth ages; some taking their direction in this work of reformation only from Scripture; other, from the writings of Fathers, and the decrees of councils of the first five ages; certainly it is no great marvel, that there was, as you say, disagreement between them in the particulars of their reformation; nay, morally speaking, it was impossible it should be otherwise. Yet let me tell you, the difference between them (especially in comparison of your church and religion) is not the difference between good and bad, but between good and better; and they did best that followed Scripture interpreted by catholic written tradition; which rule the reformers of the church of England proposed to themselves to follow.

83. Ad § 30-32. To this effect Dr. Potter, p. 81, 82, of his book speaks thus: "If a monastery should reform itself, and should reduce into practice ancient good discipline, when others would not; in this case could it be charged with schism from others, or with apostacy from its rule and order? So in a society of men universally infected with the same disease, they that should free themselves from it, could they be therefore said to separate from the society?" He presumes they could not, and from hence concludes, "that neither can the reformed churches be truly accused for making a schism, (that is, separating from the church and making themselves no members of it,) if all they did was (as indeed it was) to reform themselves." Which cases, I believe, any understanding man will plainly see to have in them an exact parity of reason, and that therefore the argument drawn from them is pressing and unanswerable. And it may well be suspected that you were partly of this mind, otherwise you would not have so presumed upon the simplicity of your reader, as, pretending to answer it, to put another of your own making in place of it, and then to answer that.

84. This you do, § 31, 32, of this chapter, in these words: "I was very glad to find you in a monastery," &c. Where I beseech the reader to observe these things, to detect the cunning of your tergiversation; first, that you have no reason to say, "that you found Dr. Potter in a monastery;" and as little, "that you find him inventing ways how to forsake his vocation, and to maintain the lawfulness of schism from the church, and apostacy from a religious order." Certainly the innocent case put by the Doctor, of a monastery reforming itself, hath not deserved such grievous accusations; unless reformation with you be all one with apostacy, and to forsake sin and disorder be to forsake one's vocations: and surely, if it be so, your vocations are not very lawful, and your religious orders not very religious. Secondly, that you quite pervert and change Dr. Potter's cases, and instead of the case of a "whole monastery reforming itself,

when other monasteries of their order would not;" and of "some men freeing themselves from the common disease of their society, when others would not: you substitute two others, which you think you can better deal with, of "some particular monks, upon pretence of the neglect of lesser monastical observances, going out of their monastery, which monastery yet did confessedly observe their substantial votes, and all principal statutes: and of a diseased person, quitting the company of those that were infected with the same disease, though in their company there was no danger from his disease, it being impossible that should be mortal, and out of it no hope of escaping others like that for which he forsook the first infected company." I appeal now to any indifferent judge, whether these cases be the same or near the same with Dr. Potter's? whether this be fair and ingenuous dealing, instead of his two instances, which plainly showed it possible in other societies, and consequently in that of the church, to leave the faults of a society, and not leave being of it, to foist in two others clean cross to the Doctor's purpose, of men under colour of faults, abandoning the society wherein they lived? I know not what others may think of this dealing, but, to me, this declining Dr. Potter's cases, and conveying others into their place, is a great assurance, that, as they were put by him, you could say nothing to them.

85. But that no suspicion of tergiversation may be fastened upon me, I am content to deal with you a little at your own weapons. Put the case then, though not just as you would have it, yet with as much favour to you as in reason you can expect, that a monastery did observe her substantial vows, and all principal statutes, but yet did generally practise and also enjoin the violation of some lesser, yet obliging observances and had done so time out of mind; and that some inferior monks, more conscientious than the rest, discovering this abuse, should first with all earnestness solicit their superiors for a general and orderly reformation of these, though small and venial corruptions, yet corruptions; but finding they hoped and laboured in vain to effect this, should reform these faults in themselves, and refuse to join in the practice of them with the rest of their confraternity, and persisting resolutely in such a refusal, should by their superiors be cast out of their monastery, and being not to be re-admitted without a promise of remitting from their stiffness in these things, and of condescending to others in the practice of these small faults, should choose rather to continue exiles, than to re-enter upon such conditions; I would know whether you would condemn such men of apostacy from the order? Without doubt, if you should, you would find the stream of your casuists against you; and besides, involve St. Paul in the same condemnation, who plainly tells us, that *we may not do the least evil, that we may do the greatest good*. Put case again, you should be part of a society universally infected with some disease, and discovering a certain remedy for this disease, should persuade the whole company to make use of it, but find the greatest part of them so far in love with their disease, they were resolved, to keep it; nay, so fond of it, that they should make a decree, that whosoever would leave it should leave their company. Suppose now that you yourself, and some few others, should notwithstanding their injunction to the contrary, free yourselves from this disease, and thereupon they should absolutely forsake and reject you: I would know in this case who deserves to be condemned, whether you of uncharitable desertion of your company, or they of a tyrannical peevishness? And if in these cases you will (as I verily believe you will) acquit the inferiors, and condemn the superiors, absolve the minor part, and condemn the major, then can you with no reason condemn protestants, for choosing rather to be ejected from the communion of the Roman church, than with her to persist (as of necessity they were to do, if they would continue in her communion) in the profession of errors, though not destructive of salvation, yet hindering edification; and in the practice, or at least approbation of many (suppose not mortal) but venial corruptions.

80. Thirdly, the reader may be pleased to be advertised that you censure too partially the corrupt estate of your "church in comparing it to a monastery, which did confessedly observe their substantial vows, and all principal statutes of their order, and moreover was secured by an infallible assistance, for the avoiding of all substantial corruptions;" for of your church we confess no such matter, but say plainly,

that she not only might fall into substantial corruptions, but did so; that she did not only generally violate, but of all the members of her communion, either in act or approbation, require and exact the violation of many substantial laws of Christ, both ceremonial and moral, which though we hope it was pardonable in them who had not means to know their error, yet, of its own nature, and to them who did or might have known their error, was certainly damnable. And that it was not *the tithing of mint, and anise, and cummin*, the neglect whereof we impute unto you, but *the neglect of judgment, justice and the weightier matters of the law*.

87. Fourthly, I am to represent unto you that you use protestants very strangely, in comparing them to a company who all were "known to be led to their pretended reformation, not with an intent of reformation, but with some other sinister intention;" which is impossible to be known of you, and therefore to judge so, is against Christian charity and common equity; and to such a "company as acknowledge that themselves, as soon as they were gone out from the monastery that refused to reform, must not hope to be free from those or the like errors and corruptions for which they left their brethren;" seeing this very hope, and nothing else, moved them to leave your communion: and this speech of yours, so far as it concerns the same errors, plainly destroys itself. For how can they possibly fall into the same errors by forsaking your communion, which that they may forsake they do forsake your communion? And then, for other errors of the like nature and quality, or more enormous than yours, though they deny it not possible but by their negligence and wickedness they may fall into them, yet they are so far from acknowledging that they have no hope to avoid this mischief, that they proclaim to all the world, that it is most prone and easy to do so, to all those that fear God and love the truth; and hardly possible for them to do otherwise, without supine negligence and extreme impiety.

88. To fit the reddition of your perverted simile to the propositon of it, you tell us "that we teach, that for all fundamental points the church is secured from error." I answer, fundamental errors may signify, either such as are repugnant to God's command, and so in their own nature damnable, though to those which out of invincible ignorance practise them not unpardonable; or such as are not only meritoriously, but remedilessly pernicious and destructive of salvation. We hope that yours, and the Greek, and other churches before the reformation, had not so far apostated from Christ, as to be guilty of errors of the latter sort. We say, that not only the catholic church, but every particular true church, so long as it continues a church, is secured from fundamental errors of this kind; but secured not absolutely by any promise of Divine assistance, which being not ordinarily irresistible, but tempered to the nature of the receivers, may be neglected, and therefore withdrawn; but by the repugnance of any error in this sense fundamental to the essence and nature of a church. So that, to speak properly, not any set known company of men is secured, that, though they neglect the means of avoiding error, yet certainly they shall not err in fundamentals, which were necessary for the constitution of an infallible guide of faith: but rather they which know what is meant by a church, are secured, or rather certain, that a church remaining a church cannot fall into fundamental errors; because when it does so, it is no longer a church. As they are certain men cannot become unreasonable creatures, because when they do so, they are no longer men. But for fundamental errors of the former sort, which yet, I hope, will warrant our departure from any communion infected with them, and requiring the profession of them; from such fundamental errors, we do not teach so much as the church catholic, much less (which only were for your purpose) that your church had not any protection or security, but know for a certain, that many errors of this nature had prevailed against you; and that a vain presumption of an absolute Divine assistance (which yet is promised but upon conditions) made both your present errors incurable, and exposed you to the imminent danger of more and greater. This therefore is either to abuse what we say, or to impose falsely upon us what we say not. And to this you presently add another manifest falsehood, viz. that we say, "that no particular person or church hath any promise of assistance in points fundamental." Whereas, cross to this in diameter, there

is no protestant but holds, and must hold, that there is no particular church, no, nor person, but hath promise of Divine assistance to lead them into all necessary truth, if they seek it as they should, by the means which God hath appointed. And should we say otherwise, we should contradict plain Scripture, which assures us plainly, that *every one that seeketh findeth, and every one that asketh receiveth:* and that, *if we being evil, can give good gifts to our children, much more shall our heavenly Father give his Spirit to them that ask it:* and that, *if any man want wisdom*, (especially spiritual wisdom,) *he is to ask of God, who giveth to all men, and upbraideth not*.

89. You obtrude upon us, thirdly, "that when Luther began, he being but one, opposed himself to all, as well subjects as superiors. *Ans*. If he did so in the cause of God, it was heroically done of him. This had been without hyperbolizing, *Mundus contra Athanasium*, and *Athanasius contra mundum:* neither is it impossible that *the whole world should so far lie in wickedness*, (as St. John speaks,) that it may be lawful and noble for one man to oppose the world. But yet, were we put to our oaths, we should surely not testify any such thing for you; for how can we say properly and without straining, that "he opposed himself to all," unless we could say also, that all opposed themselves to him? And how can we say so, seeing the world can witness that so many thousands, nay millions, followed his standard as soon as it was advanced?

90. But "none that lived immediately before him thought or spake as he did." This is, first, nothing to the purpose. The church was then corrupted, and sure it was no dishonour to him to begin the reformation. In the Christian warfare, every man ought to strive to be foremost. Secondly, It is more than you can justify: for though no man before him lifted up his voice like a trumpet, as Luther did; yet who can assure us, but that many before him both thought and spake, in the lower voice of petitions and remonstrances, in many points, as he did.

91. Fourthly and lastly, whereas you say, that "many chief learned protestants are forced to confess the antiquity of your doctrine and practice;" I answer, of many doctrines and practices of yours this is not true, nor pretended to be true by those that have dealt in this argument. Search your storehouse, Mr. Brerely, who hath travelled as far in this north-west discovery as it was possible for human industry, and when you have done so, I pray inform me, what confessions of protestants have you for the antiquity of the doctrine of the communion in one kind: the lawfulness and expedience of the Latin service: for the present use of indulgences: for the pope's power in temporalities over princes: for the picturing of the Trinity: for the lawfulness of the worship of pictures: for your beads, and rosary, and Lady's Psalter; and in a word, for your whole worship of the blessed Virgin: for your oblations by way of consumption, and therefore in the quality of sacrifices to the Virgin Mary and other saints: for your saying of *Pater-nosters* and creeds to the honour of saints, and of *Ave-Maries* to the honour of other saints besides the blessed Virgin: for infallibility of the bishop or church of Rome: for your prohibiting the Scriptures to be read publicly in the church, in such languages as all may understand: for your doctrine of the blessed Virgin's immunity from a actual sin; and for your doctrine and worship of her immaculate conception: for the necessity of auricular confession: for the necessity of the priest's intention to obtain benefit by any of your sacraments: and lastly (not to trouble myself with finding more,) for this very doctrine of licentiousness, that though a man live and die without the practice of Christian virtues, and with the habits of many damnable sins unmortified, yet if he in the last moment of life have any sorrow for his sins, and join confession with it, certainly he shall be saved. Secondly, they that confess some of your doctrines to have been the doctrine of the Fathers may be mistaken, being abused by many words and phrases of the Fathers, which have the Roman sound, when they are far from the sense. Some of them I am sure are so: I will name Goulartius, who in his Commentaries on St. Cyprian's 35th Ep. grants that the sentence "Heresies have sprung," &c. quoted by you, sect. 36. of this chapter, was meant of Cornelius; whereas it will be very plain to any attentive reader that St. Cyprian speaks there of himself. Thirdly, though some protestants confess some of your doctrine to be ancient, yet this is nothing, so long as it is evident, even

by the confession of all sides, that many errors, I instance in that of the millenaries, and the communicating of infants, were more ancient. Not any antiquity therefore, unless it be absolute and primitive, is a certain sign of true doctrine. For if the church were obnoxious to corruption, (as we pretend it was,) who can possibly warrant us, that part of this corruption might not get in and prevail in the fifth, or fourth, or third, or second age? Especially seeing the apostles assure us, *that the mystery of iniquity was working*, though more secretly, even in their times. If any man ask, How could it become universal in so short a time? let him tell me how the error of the millenaries, and the communicating of infants, became so soon universal; and then he shall acknowledge, what was done in some, was possible in others. Lastly, to cry quittance with you, as there are protestants who confess the antiquity, but always postnate to apostolic, of some points of your doctrine; so there want not papists who acknowledge as freely the novelty of many of them, and the antiquity of ours: a collection of whose testimonies we have (without thanks to you) in your *Indices Expurgatorii;* the Divine Providence blessedly abusing for the readier manifestation of the truth this engine intended by you for the subversion and suppression of it. Here is no place to stand upon particulars; only one general ingenuous confession of that great Erasmus may not be passed over in silence. *Non desunt magni theologi qui non verentur affirmare, nihil esse in Luthero quin per probates authores defendi possit:* "There want not great divines, which stick not to affirm, that there is nothing in Luther which may not be defended by good and allowed authors." Whereas therefore you close up this simile with, "Consider these points, and see whether your similitude do not condemn your progenitors of schism from God's visible church;" I assure you, I have well considered them, and do plainly see that this is not Dr. Potter's similitude, but your own; and besides, that it is wholly made up of mistakes and falsehood, and is it at no hand a sufficient proof of this great accusation.

92. Let us now come to the second similitude of your making; in the entrance a hereunto you tell us, that from the "monastery Dr. Potter is fled to an hospital of persons universally infected with some disease, where he finds to be true what you supposed, that after his departure from his brethren he might fall into greater inconveniences and more infectious diseases than those for which he left them." Thus you. But to deal truly with you I find nothing of all this, nor how it is consequent from any thing said by you, or done by Dr. Potter. But this I find, that you have composed this your similitude as you did the former, of a heap of vain suspicions, pretended to be grounded on our confessions. As, first, that your "diseases which we forsook neither were nor could be mortal:" whereas we assure ourselves, and are ready to justify, that they are and were mortal in themselves, and would have been so to us, if when *light came to us, we had loved darkness more than light*. And Dr. Potter, though he hoped your church wanted no necessary vital part, that is, that some in your church by ignorance might be saved: yet he nothing doubts but that it is full of ulcers without, and diseases within, and is far from so extenuating your errors as to make them only like the superfluous fingers of the giant of Gath. Secondly, "that we had no hope to avoid other diseases like those for which we forsook your company, nor to be secure out of it from damnable errors:" whereas the hope hereof was the only motive of our departure; and we assure ourselves that the means to be secured from damnable error, is, not to be secure, as you are, but carefully to use those means of avoiding it, to which God hath promised, and will never fail to give a blessing. Thirdly, that "those innumerable mischiefs which follow upon the departure of protestants were caused by it as by a proper cause:" whereas their doctrine was no otherwise the occasion of them, than the gospel of Christ of the division of the world. The only fountain of all these mischiefs being indeed no other than your pouring out a flood of persecutions against protestants, only because they would not sin and be damned with you for company. Unless we may add, the impatience of some protestants, who, not enduring to be torn in pieces, like sheep by a company of wolves without resistance, chose rather to die like soldiers than martyrs.

93. But you proceed, and falling into a fit of admiration, cry out and say thus, "To what pass hath heresy brought men, who blush not to compare the beloved spouse of the Lord, the only dove," &c. "to

a monastery that must be forsaken, to the giant in Gath with superfluous fingers!" But this "spouse of Christ," this only "dove," this "purchase of our Saviour's blood," this "catholic church," which you thus almost deify, what is it but a society of men, whereof every particular, and by consequence the whole company, is or may be guilty of many sins daily committed against knowledge and conscience? Now I would fain understand why one error in faith, especially if not fundamental, should not consist with the holiness of this spouse, this dove, this church, as well as many and great sins committed against knowledge and conscience? If this be not to strain at gnats and swallow camels, I would fain understand what it is. And here, by the way, I desire you to consider whether, as it were with one stroke of a sponge, you do not wipe out all that you have said, to prove protestants schismatics for separating from your church, though supposed to be in some errors not fundamental. "For if any such error may make her deserve to be compared to a monastery so disordered that it must be forsaken;" then if you suppose (as here you do) your church in such errors, your church is so disordered that it must, and therefore without question may be forsaken; I mean in those her disorders and corruptions, and no further.

94. And yet you have not done with those similitudes, "but must observe," you say, "one thing, and that is, that as these reformers of the monastery, and others who left the diseased company, could not deny but that they left the said communities; so Luther and and rest cannot pretend not to have left the visible church. And that Dr. Potter speaks very strangely when he says, in a society of men universally infected with some disease, they that should free themselves from the common disease could not be therefore said to separate from the society. For if they do not separate themselves from the society of the infected persons, how do they free themselves from the common disease?" To which I answer, that indeed if you speak of the reformers of a monastery, and of the deserters of the diseased company, as you put the cases, that is, of those which left these communities then it is as true as gospel, that they cannot deny but that they left the said communities. But it appears not to me, how it will ensue hereupon, that Luther and the rest cannot pretend not to have left the visible church. For, to my apprehension, this argument is very weak:

> They which left some communities cannot truly deny but that they left them; therefore Luther and his followers cannot deny but that they left the visible church.

Where, methinks, you prove little, but take for granted that which is one of the greatest questions amongst us, that is, that the company which Luther left was the whole visible church: whereas you know we say, it was but a part of it, and that corrupted, and obstinate in her corruptions. Indeed that Luther and his followers left off the practice of those corruptions wherein the whole visible church did communicate formerly, (which I meant when I acknowledged above, that they forsook the external communion of the visible church,) or that they left that part of the visible church in her corruptions which would not be reformed; these things, if you desire, I shall be willing to grant; and that by a synecdoche of the whole for the part, he might be said to forsake the visible church, that is, a part of it, and the greater part. But that, properly speaking, he forsook the whole visible church, I hope you will excuse me if I grant not this, until you bring better proof of it than your former similitude. And my reason is this, because he and his followers were a part of this church, and ceased not to be so by their reformation. Now he and his followers certainly forsook not themselves; therefore not every part of the church, therefore not the whole church. But then if you speak of Dr. Potter's cases, according as he put them, and answer not your own arguments, when you make show of answering his; methinks it should not be so unreasonable as you make it, for the persons he speaks of to deny that they left the communities whereof they were members. For example, that the monks of St. Bennet's order make one body, whereof their several monasteries are several members, I presume it will be easily granted. Suppose now, that all these monasteries being quite out of order, some twenty or thirty of them should reform themselves, the rest persisting still in their

irregular courses; were it such a monstrous impudence as you make it, for these monasteries, which we suppose reformed, to deny that they forsook their order, or the community whereof they were parts? In my opinion it is no such matter. Let the world judge. Again, whereas the Doctor says, "that in a society of men universally infected with some disease, they that should free themselves from the common disease could not therefore be said to separate from the society;" it is very strange to me that you should say, he speaks very strangely. Truly, sir, I am extremely deceived if his words be not plain English and plain sense, and contain such a manifest truth as cannot be denied with modesty, nor gone about to be proved without vanity. For whatsoever is proved must be proved by something more evident. Now what can be more evident than this, that if some whole family were taken with agues, if the father of this family should free himself from his, that he should not therefore deservedly be thought to abandon and desert his family? But (say you) if they do not separate themselves from the society of the wicked persons, how do they free themselves from the common disease? Do they at the same time remain in the company, and yet depart from those infected creatures? Methinks a writer of controversies should not be ignorant how this may be done without any such difficulty. But if you do not know, I will tell you; There is no necessity they should leave the company of these infected persons at all, much less that they should at once depart from it and remain with it, which I confess were very difficult. But if they will free themselves from their disease, let them stay where they are, and take physic. Or if you would be better informed how this strange thing may be done, learn from yourself, "they may free their own persons from the common disease, yet so that they remain still in the company infected, eating and drinking with them," &c.: which are your own words within four or five lines after this: plainly showing, that your mistaking Dr. Potter's meaning, and your wondering at his words as at some strange monsters, was all this while affected, and that you are conscious to yourself of perverting his argument, that you may seem to say something, when indeed you say nothing. Whereas therefore you add, "we must then say that they separate themselves from the persons, though it be by occasion of the disease;" I assure you good sir, you must not do so at any hand; for then you alter and spoil Dr. Potter's case quite, and fight not with his reason, but your own shadow. For the instance of "a man freeing himself from the disease of his company, and not leaving his company," is very fit to prove, by the parity of reason, that it is very possible a man may leave the corruptions of a church, and not leave the church, that is, not cease to be a member of it: but yours "of a man leaving his company by occasion of their disease," hath no analogy at all with this business.

95. But "Luther and his followers did not continue in the company of those from whose diseases they pretended to free themselves." Very true; neither was it said they did so. There is no necessity that that which is compared to another thing should agree with it in all things; it is sufficient if it agree in that wherein it is compared. A man freeing himself from the common disease of a society, and yet continuing a part of it, is here compared to Luther and his followers freeing themselves from the corruptions of the visible church, and continuing a part of the church. As for accompanying the other parts of it in all things, it was neither necessary, nor, without destroying our supposition of their forsaking the corruptions of the church, possible: not necessary, for they may be parts of the church which do not join with other parts of it in all observances; nor possible, for had he accompanied them in all things, he had not freed himself from the common corruptions.

96. But "they endeavoured to force the society whereof they were parts, to be healed and reformed as they were; and if it refused, they did, when they had power, drive them away, even their superiors, both spiritual and temporal, as is notorious." The proofs hereof are wanting, and therefore I might defer my answer until they were produced: yet take this beforehand: if they did so, then herein, in my opinion, they did amiss; for I have learnt from the ancient Fathers of the church, that "nothing is more against religion than to force religion;" and of St. Paul, *the weapons of the Christian warfare are not carnal*. And great reason; for human violence may make men counterfeit, but cannot make them believe, and is therefore

fit for nothing, but to breed form without, and atheism within. Besides, if this means of bringing men to embrace any religion were generally used (as if it may be justly used in any place by those that have power, and think they have truth, certainly they cannot with reason deny but that it may be used in every place by those that have power as well as they, and think they have truth as well as they,) what could follow but the maintenance perhaps of truth, but perhaps only of the profession of it in one place, and the oppression of it in a hundred? What will follow from it, but the preservation peradventure of unity, but peradventure only of uniformity, in particular states and churches; but the immortalizing the greater and more lamentable divisions of Christendom and the world? And therefore, what can follow from it, but perhaps, in the judgment of carnal policy, the temporal benefit and tranquillity of temporal states and kingdoms, but the infinite prejudice, if not the desolation, of the kingdom of Christ? And therefore it well becomes them who have their portions in this life, who serve no higher state than that England, or Spain, or France, nor this neither, any further than they may serve themselves by it; who think of no other happiness but the preservation of their own fortunes and tranquillity in this world; who think of no other means to preserve states, but human power and Machiavelian policy, and believe no other creed but this, *Regi aut citntati imperium habenti nihil injustum quod utile;* such men as these it may become to maintain by worldly power and violence their state instrument, religion. For if all be vain and false, (as in their judgment it is,) the present whatsoever is better than any, because it is already settled; and alteration of it may draw with it change of states, and the change of state the subversion of their fortune. But they that are indeed servants and lovers of Christ, of truth, of the church, and of mankind, ought with all courage to oppose themselves against it, as a common enemy of all these. They that know there is a King of kings and Lord of lords, by whose will and pleasure kings and kingdoms stand and fall; they know that to no king or state any thing can be profitable which is unjust; and that nothing can be more evidently unjust, than to force weak men, by the profession of a religion which they believe not, to lose their own eternal happiness, out of a vain and needless fear, lest they may possibly disturb their temporal quietness. There is no danger to any state from any man's opinion; unless it be such an opinion by which disobedience to authority, or impiety, is taught or licensed; which sort, I confess, may justly be punished as well as other faults; or, unless this sanguinary doctrine be joined with it, that it is lawful for him by human violence to enforce others to it. Therefore if protestants did offer violence to other men's consciences, and compel them to embrace their reformation, I excuse them not; much less if they did so to the sacred persons of kings, and those that were in authority over them, who ought to be so secured from violence, that even their unjust and tyrannous violence, though it may be avoided, (according to that of our Saviour, *When they persecute you in one city, flee into another,)* yet may it not be resisted by opposing violence against it. Protestants therefore that were guilty of this crime, are not to be excused; and blessed had they been, had they chosen rather to be martyrs than murderers, and to die for their religion rather than to fight for it. But of all the men in the world, you are the most unfit to accuse them hereof, against whom the souls of the martyrs from under the altar cry much louder than against all their other persecutors together: who for these many ages together have daily sacrificed hecatombs of innocent Christians, under the name of heretics, to your blind zeal and furious superstition: who teach plainly, that you may propagate your religion, whensoever you have power by deposing of kings, and invasion of kingdoms; and think, when you kill the adversaries of it, you *do God good service*. But for their departing corporally from them whom mentally they had forsaken; for their forsaking the external communion and company of the unreformed part of the church in their superstitions and impieties; thus much of your accusation we embrace, and glory in it; and say, though some protestants might offend in the manner or degree of their separation, yet certainly their separation itself was not schismatical, but innocent; and not only so, but just and necessary. And as for your obtruding upon Dr. Potter, that he should say, "there neither was nor could be just cause to do so, no more than to depart from Christ himself," I have showed divers times already,

that you deal very injuriously with him, confounding together "departing from the church," and "departing from some general opinions and practices," which did not constitute, but vitiate, not make the church, but mar it. For though he says that which is most true, that "there can be no just cause to depart from the church," that is, to cease being a member of the church, "no more than to depart from Christ himself," inasmuch as these are not divers, but the same thing; yet he no where denies but there might be just and necessary cause to depart from some opinions and practices of your church, nay, of the catholic church. And therefore you do vainly infer, that "Luther and his followers for so doing were schismatics."

97. Ad § 35. I answer in a word, that neither are Optatus's sayings rules of faith, and therefore not fit to determine controversies of faith: and then, that Majorinus might well be a schismatic for departing from Cæcilianus, and the chair of Cyprian and Peter, without cause; and yet Luther and his followers, who departed from the communion of the bishop of Rome, and the bishop of their own diocsse, be none, because they had just and necessary cause of their departure. For otherwise they must have continued in the profession of known errors, and the practice of manifest corruptions.

98. Ad § 36. In the next section you tell us, that "Christ our Lord gave St. Peter and his successors authority over his whole militant church." And for proof hereof, "you first refer us Brerely, citing exactly the places of such chief protestants as have confessed the antiquity of this point." Where first you fall into the fallacy which is called *ignoratio elenchi*, or mistaking the question; for being to prove this point true, you only prove it ancient: which to what purpose is it, when both the parties litigant are agreed that many errors were held by many of the ancient doctors, much more ancient than any of those who are pretended to be confessed by protestants to have held you in this matter; and when those whom you have to do with, and whom it is vain to dispute against, but out of principles received by them, are all peremptory, that no novelty be a certain note of falsehood, yet no antiquity less than apostolical is a certain note of truth? Yet this I say not as if I did acknowledge what you pretend, that protestants did confess the Fathers against them in this point. For the point here issuable is not, whether St. Peter were head of the church? nor, whether the bishop of Rome had any priority in the church? nor, whether he had authority over it given him by the church? but, whether by Divine right, and by Christ's appointment, he were head of the catholic church? Now, having perused Brerely, I cannot find any one protestant confessing any one Father to have concurred in opinion with you in this point. And the reader hath reason to suspect, that you also out of all the Fathers could not find any one authority pertinent to this purpose; for otherwise you were much to blame, citing so few, to make choice of such as are impertinent. For let the understanding reader peruse the 55th Epist. of St. Cyprian, with an ordinary intention, out of which you take your first place, and I am confident that he shall find that he means nothing else by the words quoted by you, but that in one particular church, at one time, there ought to be but one bishop, and that he should be obeyed in all things lawful; the non-performance whereof was one of the most ordinary causes of heresies against the faith, and schism from the communion of the church universal. He shall find, secondly, and that by many convincing arguments, that though he write to Cornelius bishop of Rome, yet he speaks not of him, but of himself then bishop of Carthage, against whom a faction of schismatics had then set up another. And therefore here your ingenuity is to be commended above many of your side: for whereas they ordinarily abuse this place to prove, that in the whole church there ought to be but one priest and one judge; you seem somewhat diffident hereof, and thereupon say, "That the words plainly condemn Luther, whether he will understand them as spoken of the universal, or of every particular church." But whether they condemn Luther, is another question. The question here is, whether they plainly prove the pope's supremacy over all other bishops? Which certainly they are as far from proving, as from proving the supremacy of any other bishop; seeing it is evident they were intended, not of one bishop over the whole catholic church, but of one bishop in one particular church.

99. And no less impertinent in your saying out of Optatus, if it be well looked into, though at the first sight it may seem otherwise; because Optatus's scene happened to be Rome, whereas St. Cyprian's was Carthage. The truth is, the Donatists had set up at Rome a bishop of their faction; not with intent to make him bishop of the whole church, but of that church in particular. Now Optatus, going upon St. Cyprian's above-mentioned ground of "one bishop in one church," proves them schismatics for so doing, and he proves it by this argument: St. Peter was first bishop of Rome, neither did the apostles attribute to themselves each one his particular chair; (understand, in that city; for in other places others, I hope, had chairs beside St. Peter;) and therefore he is a schismatic, who against that one single chair erects another, (understand, as before, in that place,) making another bishop of that diocese besides him who was lawfully elected to it.

100. But "yet by the way he styles St. Peter head of the apostles, and says, that from thence he was called Cephas." *Ans*. Perhaps he was abused into this opinion, by thinking Cephas derived from the Greek word χεφαλὴ, *a head:* whereas it is a Syriac word, and signifies a *stone*. Besides, St. Peter might be head of the apostles, that is, first in order and honour among them, and not have supreme authority over them. And indeed that St. Peter should have authority over all the apostles, and yet exercise no one act of authority over any one of them, and that they should show to him no sign of subjection, methinks is as strange as that a king of England for twenty-five years together should do no act of regality, nor receive any one acknowledgment of it. As strange methinks it is, that you, so many ages after, should know this so certainly, as you pretend to do, and that the apostles (after that those words were spoken in their hearing, by virtue whereof St. Peter is pretended to have been made their head) should still be so ignorant of it as to question *which of them should be the greatest?* Yet more strange, that our Saviour should not bring them out of their error, by telling them St. Peter was the man, but rather confirm it by saying, *The kings of the Gentiles exercise authority over them, but it should not be so among them*. No less a wonder was it, that St. Paul should so far forget St. Peter and himself, as that, first, mentioning of him often, he should do it without any title of honour; secondly, speaking of the several degrees of men in the church, he should not give St. Peter the highest, but place him in equipage with the rest of the apostles, and say, *God hath appointed* (not, first Peter, then the rest of the apostles, but) *first apostles, secondly prophets*. Certainly, if the apostles were all first, to me it is very probable that no one of them was before the rest. For by first, all men understand either that which is before all, or that before which is nothing. Now in the former sense, the apostles could not be all first, for then every one of them must have been before every one of the rest. And therefore they must be first in the other sense. And therefore no man, and therefore not St. Peter, must be before any of them. Thirdly and lastly, that speaking of himself in particular, and perhaps comparing himself with St. Peter in particular, rather than any other, he should say in plain terms, *I am in nothing inferior to the very chiefest apostles*. But besides all this, though we should grant against all those probabilities, and many more, that Optatus meant that St. Peter was head of the apostles, not in our, but in your sense, and St. Peter indeed was so; yet still you are very far from showing, that in the judgment of Optatus the bishop of Rome was to be at all, much less by Divine right, successor to St. Peter in this his headship and authority. For what incongruity is there, if we say, that he might succeed St. Peter in that part of his care, the government of that particular church, (as sure he did even while St. Peter was living,) and yet that neither he nor any man was to succeed him in his apostleship, nor in his government of the church universal? especially seeing St. Peter and the rest of the apostles, by laying the foundations of the church, were to be the *foundations of it*, and accordingly are so called in Scripture. And therefore as in a building it is incongruous that foundations should succeed foundations; so it may be in the church, that any other apostles should succeed the first.

101. Ad § 37. The next paragraph I might well pass over, as having no argument in it. For there is nothing in it but two sayings of St. Austin, which I have great reason to esteem no argument, until you

will promise me to grant whatsoever I shall prove by two sayings of St. Austin. But moreover, the second of these sentences seems to me to imply the contradiction of the first. For to say, "that the sacrilege of schism is eminent, when there is no cause of separation," implies, to my understanding, that there may be a cause of separation. Now in the first, he says plainly, "that this is impossible." Neither doth any reconciliation of his words occur to me, but only this, that in the former he speaks upon supposition, that the public service of God, wherein men are to communicate, is unpolluted, and no unlawful thing practised in their communion; which was so true of their communion, that the Donatists, who separated, did not deny it. And to make this answer no improbable evasion, it is observable out of St. Austin and Optatus, that though the Donatists, at the beginning of their separation, pretended no cause for it, but only that the men from whom they separated were defiled with the contagion of Traditors; yet afterwards, to make the continuance of it more justifiable, they did invent and spread abroad this calumny against catholics, that they set pictures upon their altars; which when St. Austin comes to answer, he does not deny the possibility of the thing, for that had been to deny the catholic church to be made up of men, all which had free will to do evil, and therefore might possibly agree in doing it; and had he denied this, the action of after-ages had been his refutation: neither does he say, (as you would have done,) that it was true, they placed pictures there, and moreover worshipped them; but yet not for their own sakes, but for theirs who were represented by them: neither does he say, (as you do in this chapter,) that though this were granted a corruption, yet were they not to separate for it. What then does he? Certainly nothing else but abhor the thing, and deny the imputation. Which way of answering does not, I confess, plainly show, but yet it somewhat intimates, that he had nothing else to answer; and that if he could not have denied this, he could not have denied the Donatists' separation from them to have been just. If this answer to this little argument seem not sufficient, I add moreover, that if it be applied to Luther's separation, it hath the common fault of all your allegations out of Fathers—impertinence. For it is one thing to separate from the communion of the whole world, another to separate from all the communions in the world; one thing to divide from them who are united among themselves, another to divide from them who are divided among themselves. Now the Donatists separated from the whole world of Christians, united in one communion, professing the same faith, serving God after the same manner, which was a very great argument that they could not have just cause to leave them; according to that of Tertullian, *Variasse debuerat error ecclesiarum; quod autem apud multos unum est, non est erratum, sed traditum*. But Luther and his followers did not so. The world, I mean of Christians and catholics, was divided and subdivided long before he divided from it; and by their divisions had much weakened their own authority, and taken away from you this plea of St. Austin, which stands upon no other foundation but the unity of the whole world's communion.

102. Ad § 38. If "Luther were in the right, most certain those protestants that differed from him were in the wrong" but that either he or they were schismatics, it follows not. Or if it does, then either the Jesuits are schismatics from the Dominicans, or they from the Jesuits; the canonists from the Jesuits; or the Jesuits from the canonists; the Scotists from the Thomists, or they from the Scotists; the Franciscans from the Dominicans, or the Dominicans from the Franciscans: for between all these the world knows that in point of doctrine there is a plain and irreconcilable contradiction; and therefore one part must be in error, at least not fundamental. Thus your argument returns upon yourself, and, if it be good, proves the Roman church in a manner to be made up of schismatics. But the answer to it is, that it begs this very false and vain supposition, that whosoever errs in any point of doctrine is a schismatic.

103. Ad § 39. In the next place you number up your victories, and tell us, "that out of those premises this conclusion follows, that Luther and his followers were schismatics from the visible church, the pope, the diocese wherein they were baptized, from the bishop under whom they lived, from the country to which they belonged, from their religious order, wherein they were professed, from one another, and lastly

from a man's self; because the selfsame protestant is convicted to-day that his yesterday's opinion was an error." To which I answer, that Luther and his followers separated from many of these in some opinions and practices: but that they did it without cause, which only can make them schismatics, that was the only thing you should have proved; and to that you have not urged one reason of any moment. All of them, for weight and strength, were cousin-germans to this pretty device, wherewith you will prove them schismatics from themselves, "because the selfsame protestant to-day is convicted in conscience, that his yesterday's opinion was an error." It seems, then, that they that hold errors must hold them fast, and take special care of being convicted in conscience, that they are in error, for fear of being schismatics! Protestants must continue protestants, and puritans puritans, and papists papists, nay, Jews and Turks and Pagans must remain Jews and Turks and Pagans, and go on constantly to the devil, or else, forsooth, they must be schismatics, and that from themselves. And this perhaps is the cause that makes papists so obstinate, not only in their common superstition, but also in adhering to the proper fancies of their several sects; so that it is a miracle to hear of any Jesuit that hath forsaken the opinion of the Jesuits, or any Dominican that hath changed his for the Jesuits. Without question, this gentleman my adversary knows none such, or else methinks he should not have objected it to Dr. Potter, "that he knew a man in the world, who from a puritan was turned to a moderate protestant;" which is likely to be true. But sure, if this be all his fault, he hath no reason to be ashamed of his acquaintance: for possibly it may be a fault to be in error, because many times it proceeds from a fault; but sure the forsaking of error cannot be a sin, unless to be in error be a virtue. And therefore to do as you do, to damn men for false opinions, to call them schismatics for leaving them; to make pertinacy in error, that is, an unwillingness to be convicted, or a resolution not to be convicted, the form of heresy, and to find fault with men for being convicted in conscience that they are in error; is the most incoherent and contradictions injustice that ever was heard of. But, sir, if this be a strange matter to you, that which I shall tell you will be much stranger: I know a man that of a moderate protestant turned a papist, and the day that he did so (as all things that are done are perfected some day or other) was convicted in conscience that his yesterday's opinion was an error, and yet thinks he was no schismatic for doing so, and desires to be informed by you, whether or not he was mistaken? The same man afterwards, upon better consideration, became a doubting papist, and of a doubting papist a confirmed protestant. And yet this man thinks himself no more to blame for all these changes, than a traveller, who using all diligence to find the right way to some remote city, where he had never been, (as the party I speak of had never been in heaven,) did yet mistake it, and after find his error, and amend it. Nay, he stands upon his justification so far, as to maintain, that his alterations, not only to you, but also from you by God's mercy, were the most satisfactory actions to himself that ever he did, and the greatest victories that ever he obtained over himself and his affections to those things which in this world are most precious; as wherein, for God's sake, and (as he was verily persuaded) out of love to the truth, he went, upon a certain expectation of those inconveniences, which to ingenious natures are of all most terrible: so that though there were much weakness in some of these alterations, yet certainly there was no wickedness. Neither does he yield his weakness altogether without apology, seeing his deductions were rational, and out of some principles commonly received by protestants as well as papists, and which by his education had got possession of his understanding.

104. Ad § 40, 41. Dr. Potter, p. 81, of his book, to prove our separation from you not only lawful, but necessary, hath these words: "Although we confess the church of Rome" (in some sense) "to be a true church, and her error" (to some men) "not damnable; yet for us, who are convinced in conscience that she errs in many things, a necessity lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors." He means not, in the belief of those errors, for that is presupposed to be done already; for whosoever is convinced in conscience that she errs, hath for matter of belief forsaken, that is, ceased to believe, those errors. This therefore he meant not, nor could not mean; but that whosoever is convinced

in conscience that the church of Rome errs, cannot with a good conscience but forsake her in the profession and practice of these errors: and the reason hereof is manifest, because otherwise he must profess what he believes not, and practise what he approves not. Which is no more than yourself in *thesi* have divers times affirmed: for in one place you say, "it is unlawful to speak any the least untruth." Now he that professeth your religion, and believes it not, what else doth he but live in a perpetual lie? Again, in another, you have called them that profess one thing, and believe another, "a damned crew of dissembling sycophants;" and therefore in inveighing against protestants for forsaking the profession of these errors, the belief whereof they had already forsaken, what do you but rail at them for not being "a damned crew of dissembling sycophants?" And lastly, sect. 42, of this chapter, within three leaves after this, whereas "Dr. Potter grants but only a necessity of peaceable external obedience to the declaration of the church, though perhaps erroneous, (provided it be in matter not of faith, but of opinions or rites,)" condemning those men, who, by occasion of errors of this quality, disturb the church's peace, and cast off her communion: upon this occasion you come upon him with this bitter sarcasm; "I thank you for your ingenuous confession, in recompence whereof I will do a deed of charity, by putting you in mind into what labyrinths you are brought, by teaching that the church may err in some points of faith, and yet that it is not lawful for any man to oppose his judgment, or leave her communion, though he have evidence of Scripture against her! Will you have such a man dissemble against his conscience, or externally deny truth known to be contained in Holy Scripture?" I answer for him, No, it is not he, but you, that would have men do so: not he, who says plainly, that "whosoever is convinced in conscience that any church errs, is bound, under pain of damnation, to forsake her in her profession and practice of these errors;" but you, who find fault with him, and make long discourses against him for thus affirming: not he, who can easily wind himself out of your imaginary labyrinth, by telling you, that he no where denies it lawful for any man to oppose any church erring in matter of faith; for that he speaks not of matters of faith at all, but only of rites and opinions. And in such matters, he says indeed at first, "it is not lawful for any man to oppose his judgment to the public:" but he presently explains himself by saying, not only that he "may hold an opinion contrary to the public resolution, but besides that he may offer it to be considered of," (so far is he from requiring any sinful dissimulation,) "provided he do it with great probability of reason, very modestly and respectfully, and without separation from the church's communion. It is not therefore, in this case, opposing a man's private judgment to the public simply, which the Doctor finds fault with; but the degree only and malice of this opposition, "opposing it factiously;" and not holding a man's own conceit, different from the church absolutely, which here he censures; but a factious advancing it, and despising the church, so far as to cast off her communion," because, forsooth, she errs in some opinion, or useth some inconvenient, though not impious, rites and ceremonies. Little reason therefore have you to accuse him there, as if he required "that men should dissemble against their conscience, or externally deny a truth known to be contained in Holy Scripture." But certainly a great deal less to quarrel with him for saying, (which is all that here he says,) that "men, under pain of damnation, are not to dissemble; but if they be convinced in conscience, that your, or any other church" (for the reason is alike for all) "errs in many things, are of necessity to forsake that church in the profession and practice of those errors."

105. But to consider your exception to this speech of the Doctor's somewhat more particularly, I say, your whole discourse against it is compounded of "falsehoods" and "impertinences." The first falsehood is, that he in these words avoucheth, "that no learned catholics can be saved." Unless you will suppose, that all learned catholics are convinced in conscience that your church errs in many things. It may well be feared, that many are so convinced, and yet profess what they believe not. Many more have been, and have stifled their consciences, by thinking it an act of humility to do so. Many more would have been, had they with liberty and indifference of judgment examined the grounds of the religion which they profess. But to think that all the learned of your side are actually convinced of errors in your church, and

yet will not forsake the profession of them, this is so great an uncharitableness, that I verily believe Dr. Potter abhors it. Your next falsehood is, "that the Doctor affirms that you catholics want no means of salvation; and that he judges "the Roman errors not to be in themselves fundamental or damnable." Which calumny I have very often confuted; and in this very place it is confuted by Dr. Potter, and confessed by yourself. For in the beginning of this answer you tell us, that the "Doctor avouches of all catholtcs whom ignorance cannot excuse, that they cannot be saved." Certainly then he must needs esteem them to want something necessary to salvation. And then in the Doctor's saying, it is remarkable that he confesses "your errors to some men not damnable;" which clearly imports, that according to his judgment, they were damnable in themselves, though by accident, to them who lived and died in invincible ignorance, and with repentance, they might prove not damnable. A third is, that these assertions, "The Roman errors are in themselves not damnable, and yet it is damnable for me (who know them to be errors) to hold and confess them, are absolutely inconsistent:" which is false; for be the matter what it will, yet for a man to tell a lie, especially in matters of religion, cannot but be damnable: how much more, then, to go on in a course of lying, by professing to believe these things Divine truths which he verily believes to be falsehoods and fables! A fourth is, that "if we erred in thinking that your church holds error, this error, or erroneous conscience, might be rectified and deposed by judging those errors not damnable." For what repugnance is there between these two suppositions, that you do hold some errors, and that they are not damnable? And if there be no repugnance between them, how can the belief of the latter remove or destroy, or, if it be erroneous, rectify the belief of the former? Nay, seeing there is a manifest consent between them, how can it be avoided, but the belief of the latter will maintain and preserve the belief of the former? For who can conjoin in one brain, not cracked, (pardon me, if I speak to you in your own words,) these assertions: In the Roman church there are no errors not damnable; and, in the Roman church there are no errors at all? Or what sober understanding would ever think this a good collection: I esteem the errors of the Roman church not damnable; therefore I do amiss to think that she errs at all? If therefore you would have us alter our judgment, that your church is erroneous, your only way is to show your doctrine consonant, at least not evidently repugnant, to Scripture and reason. For as for this device, this short cut of persuading ourselves that you hold no errors, because we believe your errors not damnable, assure yourself it will never hold.

106. A fifth falsehood is, "that we daily do this favour for protestants," you must mean, (if you speak consequently,) to judge they have no errors, because we judge they have none damnable. Which the world knows to be most untrue. And for our continuing in their communion, notwithstanding their errors, the justification hereof is not so much, that their errors are not damnable, as that they required not the belief and profession of these errors among the conditions of their communion. Which puts a main difference between them and you; because we may continue in their communion without professing to believe their opinions, but in yours we cannot. A sixth is, that according to the "doctrine of all divines, there is not any difference between a speculative persuasion of conscience, of the unlawfulness of any thing, and a practical dictamen, that the same thing is unlawful." For these are but divers words signifying the same thing; neither is such persuasion wholly speculative, but tending to practice; nor such a dictamen wholly practical, but grounded upon speculation. A seventh is, "That protestants did only conceive in speculation, that the church of Rome erred in some doctrines," and had not also a practical dictamen, that it was damnable for them to continue in the profession of these errors. An eighth is, that "it is not lawful to separate from any church's communion, for errors not appertaining to the substance of faith;" which is not universally true, but with this exception, unless that church requires the belief and profession of them. The ninth is, that Dr. Potter teacheth, "that Luther was bound to forsake the house of God for an unnecessary light," confuted manifestly by Dr. Potter in this very place; for by "the house of God" you mean the Roman church, and of her the Doctor says, "that a necessity did lie upon him, even

under pain of damnation, to forsake the church of Rome in her errors." This sure is not to say, that he "was obliged to forsake her for an unnecessary light." The tenth is covertly vented in your intimation, "that Luther and his followers were the proper cause of the Christian world's combustion: whereas indeed the true cause of this lamentable effect was your violent persecution of them for serving God according to their conscience; which if it be done to you, you condemn of horrible impiety, and therefore may not hope to be excused if you do it to others.

107. The eleventh is, that our "first reformers ought to have doubted whether their opinions were certain." Which is to say, that they ought to have doubted of the certainty of Scripture; which, in formal and express terms, contains many of these opinions. And the reason of this assertion is very vain; "for though they had not an absolute infallibility promised unto them," yet may they be of some things infallibly certain. As Euclid sure was not infallible; yet was he certain enough, that "twice two were four," and "that every whole was greater than a part of that whole." And so, though Calvin and Melancthon were not infallible in all things, yet they might and did know well enough, that your Latin service was condemned by St. Paul, and that the communion in both kinds was taught by our Saviour. The twelfth and last is this, that "your church was in peaceable possession," (you must mean of her doctrine, and the professors of it,) "and enjoyed prescription for many ages." For, besides that doctrine is not a thing that may be possessed; and the professors of it were the church itself, and in nature of possessors, (if we speak improperly,) rather than the thing possessed, with whom no man hath reason to be offended, if they think fit to quit their own possession; I say that the possession, which the governors of your church held for some ages of the party governed, was not peaceable, but got by fraud, and held by violence.

108. These are the "falsehoods" which in this answer offered themselves to any attentive reader, and that which remains is mere "impertinence." As, first, that "a pretence of conscience will not serve to justify separation from being schismatical." Which is true, but little to the purpose, seeing it was not an erroneous persuasion, much less an hypocritical pretence, but a true and well grounded conviction of conscience, which Dr. Potter alleged to justify protestants from being schismatical. And therefore, though seditious men in church and state may pretend conscience for a cloak of their rebellion, yet this, I hope, hinders not, but that an honest man ought to obey his rightly informed conscience, rather than the unjust commands of his tyrannous superiors: otherwise, with what colour can you defend either your own refusing the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, or the ancient martys and apostles and prophets, who oftentimes disobeyed the commands of men in authority, and for their disobedience made no other but this apology, *We must obey God rather than men?* It is therefore most apparent, that this answer must be merely impertinent; seeing it will serve against the martyrs, and apostles, and prophets, and even against yourselves, as well as against protestants. To as little purpose is your rule out of Lyrinensis against them that followed Luther, seeing they pretend and are ready to justify, that they forsook not, with the Doctor, the faith, but only the corruption of the church. As vain altogether is that which follows; that "in cases of uncertainty we are not to leave our superior, nor cast off his disobedience, nor publicly oppose his decrees." From whence it will follow very evidently, that seeing it is not a matter of faith, but a disputed question amongst you, whether the oath of allegiance be lawful, that either you acknowledge not the king your superior, or do against conscience, in opposing his and the kingdom's decree, requiring the taking of this oath. This good use, I say, may very fairly be made of it, and is by men of your religion. But then it is so far from being a confutation, that it is rather a confirmation of Dr. Potter's assertion. For he that useth these words, doth he not plainly import, (and such was the case of protestants,) that we are to leave our superiors, cast off obedience to them, and publicly to oppose their decrees, when we are certain (as protestants were) that what they command God doth countermand? Lastly, St. Cyprian's example is against protestants impertinently and even ridiculously alleged. "For what if St. Cyprian, holding his opinion true, but not necessary, condemned no man (much less any church) for holding the contrary?"

Yet, methinks this should lay no obligation upon Luther to do likewise; seeing he held his own opinions not only true, but also necessary; and the doctrine of the Roman church not only false, but damnable. And therefore seeing the condition and state of the parties censured by St. Cyprian and Luther was so different, no marvel though their censures also were different according to the supposed merit of the parties delinquent. For as for your obtruding again upon us, "that we believe the points of difference not fundamental or necessary," you have been often told that it is a calumny. We hold your errors as damnable in themselves as you do ours; only by accident, through invincible ignorance, we hope they are not unpardonable: and you also profess to think the same of ours.

109. Ad § 42. The former part of this discourse, grounded on Dr. Potter's words, p. 105, I have already in passing examined and confuted: I add in this place, 1. That though the Doctor say, "It is not fit for any private man to oppose his judgment to the public;" that is, his own judgment, and bare authority; yet he denies not but occasions may happen, wherein it may be warrantable to oppose his reason, or the authority of Scripture, against it; and is not then to be esteemed to oppose his own judgment to the public, but the judgment of God to the judgment of men. Which his following words seem to import: "he may offer his opinion to be considered of, so he do it with evidence, or great probability of Scripture or reason," Secondly, I am to tell you, that you have no ground from him to interline his words with that interrogatory, "his own conceits, and yet grounded upon evidence of Scripture?" For these things are in his words opposed, and not confounded; and the latter not intended for a repetition, (as you mistake it,) but for an antithesis of the former. "He may offer," saith he, "his opinion to be considered of, so he do it with evidence of Scripture. But if he will factiously advance his own conceits," (that is, say I, clear contrary to your gloss,) "such as have not evident nor very probable ground in Scripture," (for these conceits are properly his own,) "he may justly be branded," &c. Now that this of the two is the better gloss, it is proved by your own interrogation. For that imputes absurdity to Dr. Potter, for calling them a man's "own conceits," which were "grounded upon evidence of Scripture." And therefore you have showed little candour or equity in fastening upon them this absurd construction; they not only bearing, but even requiring, another more fair and more sensible. Every man ought to be presumed to speak sense, rather than nonsense; coherently, rather than contradictiously; if his words be fairly capable of a better construction. For Mr. Hooker, if writing against puritans, he had said something unawares that might give advantage to papists, it were not inexcusable; seeing it is a matter of such extreme difficulty, to hold such a temper in opposing one extreme opinion, as not to seem to favour the other. Yet if his words be rightly considered, there is nothing in them that will do you any service. For though he says that "men are bound to do whatsover the sentence of final decision shall determine," as it is plain men are bound to yield such an obedience to all courts of civil judicature; yet he says not, they "are bound to think" that determination lawful, and that sentence just. Nay, it is plain, he says, that "they must do according to the judge's sentence, though in their private opinion it seem unjust." As if I be cast wrongfully in a suit at law, and sentenced to pay an hundred pounds, I am bound to pay the money; yet I know no law of God or man that binds me in conscience to acquit the judge of error in his sentence. The question therefore being only what men ought to think, it is vain for you to tell us what Mr. Hooker says at all; for Mr. Hooker, though an excellent man, was but a man; and much more vain, to tell us out of him what men ought to do, for point of external obedience; when in the very same place he supposeth and alloweth, that in their private opinion they may think this sentence, to which they yield a passive obedience, to swerve utterly from that which is right. If you will draw his words to such a construction, as if he had said, "They must think the sentence of judicial and final decision just and right, though it seem in their private opinion to swerve utterly from what is right;" it is manifest you make him contradict himself, and make him say in effect, they must think thus, though at the same time they think the contrary. Neither is there any "necessity, that he must either acknowledge the universal infallibility of the church, or drive men into dissembling

against their conscience," seeing nothing hinders but I may obey the sentence of a judge, paying the money he awards me to pay, or forgoing the house or land which he hath judged from me, and yet withal plainly profess, that in my conscience I conceive his judgment erroneous. To which purpose, they have a saying in France, that "whosoever is cast in any cause, hath liberty, for ten days after, to rail at his judges."

110. This answer to this place the words themselves offered me, even as they are alleged by you: but upon perusal of the place in the author himself, I find that here, as elsewhere, you and Mr. Brerely wrong him extremely. For mutilating his words, you make him say that absolutely which he there expressly limits to some certain cases. "In litigious and controverted causes of such a quality," saith he, "the will of God is, to have them do whatsoever the sentence of judicial and final decision shall determine. Observe, I pray, he says not absolutely and in all causes this is the will of God; but only "in litigious causes," of the quality of those whereof he there entreats. In such matters, as have plain Scripture or reason neither for them nor against them, and wherein men are persuaded this or that way, "upon their own only probable collection;" in such cases, "this persuasion," saith he, "ought to be fully settled in men's hearts, that the will of God is, that they should not disobey the certain commands of their lawful superiors upon uncertain grounds, but do that which the sentence of judicial and final decision shall determine." For the purpose, a question there is, whether a surplice may be worn in Divine service? The authority of superiors enjoins this ceremony, and neither Scripture nor reason plainly forbids it. Sempronius, notwithstanding, is, by some inducements, which he confesses to be only probable, led to this persuasion, that the thing is unlawful. The query is, whether he ought for matter of practice to follow the injunction of authority, or his own private and only probable persuasion, Mr. Hooker resolves for the former, upon this ground, that "the certain commands of the church we live in are to be obeyed in all things not certainly unlawful." Which rule is your own, and by you extended to the commands of all superiors, in the very next section before this, in these words: "In cases of uncertainty we are not to leave our superior, nor cast off his obedience, or publicly oppose his decrees." And yet, if a man should conclude upon you, that either you make all superiors universally infallible, or else drive men into perplexities and laybrinths of doing against conscience, I presume you would not think yourself fairly dealt with; but allege, that your words are not extended to all cases, but limited to "cases of uncertainty." As little therefore ought you to make this deduction from Mr. Hooker's words, which are apparently also restrained to "cases of uncertainty." For as for requiring a blind and unlimited obedience to ecclesiastical decisions universally and in all cases, even when plain texts or reason seems to control them, Mr. Hooker is as far from making such an idol of ecclesiastical authority, as the puritans whom he writes against: "I grant," saith he, "that proof derived from the authority of man's judgment is not able to work that assurance which doth grow by a stronger proof; and therefore although ten thousand general councils would set down one and the same definitive sentence concerning any point of religion whatsoever, yet one demonstrative reason alleged, or one manifest testimony cited from the mouth of God himself to the contrary, could not choose but overweigh them all; inasmuch as for them to have been deceived it is not impossible; it is, that demonstrative reason or testimony Divine should deceive." And again, "Whereas it is thought, that especially with 'the church, and those that are called and persuaded of the authority of the word of God, man's authority' with them especially 'should not prevail;' it must and doth prevail even with them, yea, with them especially, as far as equity requireth; and further we maintain it not. For men to be tied and led by authority, as it were with a kind of captivity of judgment, and though there be reason to the contrary not to listen unto it, but to follow like beasts the first in the herd, they know not nor care not whither, this were brutish. Again, that authority of men should prevail with men either against or above reason, is no part of our belief. 'Companies of learned men,' be they never so great and reverend, are to yield unto reason; the weight whereof is no whit prejudiced by the simplicity of his person which doth allege it, but being found to be sound and good, the bare opinion of men to the contrary must of necessity stoop and give place." Thus

Mr. Hooker in his 7th §, book 2, which place because it is far distant from that which is alleged by you, the oversight of it might be excusable, did you not impute it to Dr. Potter as a fault, that he cites some clauses of some books without reading the whole. But besides, in that very section out of which you take this corrupted sentence, he hath very pregnant words to the same effect; "As for the orders established, sith equity and reason favour that which is in being, till orderly judgment of decision be given against it, it is but justice to exact of you, and perverseness in you it would be to deny thereunto your willing obedience. Not that I judge it a thing allowable, for men to observe those laws which in their hearts they are steadfastly persuaded to be against the law of God: but your persuasion in this case ye are all bound for the time to suspend; and in otherwise doing, ye offend against God, by troubling his church without just and necessary cause. Be it that there are some reasons inducing you to think hardly of our laws; are those reasons demonstrative, are they necessary, or but mere probabilities only? An argument necessary and demonstrative is such, as, being proposed to any man, and understood, the mind cannot choose but inwardly assent. Any one such reason dischargeth, I grant, the conscience, and setteth it at full liberty. For the public approbation given by the body of this whole church unto those things which are established, doth make it but probable that they are good. And therefore unto a necessary proof, that they are not good, it must give place." This plain declaration of his judgment in this matter, this express limitation of his former resolution, he makes in the very same section which affords your former quotation; and therefore what apology can be made for you, and your storehouse Mr. Brerely, for dissembling of it, I cannot possibly imagine.

111. Dr Potter, p. 131, says, "that the errors of the Donatists and Novatians were not in themselves heresies, nor could be made so by the church's determination: but that the church's intention was only to silence disputes, and to settle peace and unity in her government; which because they factiously opposed, they were justly esteemed schismatics. From hence you conclude, that the same condemnation must pass against the first reformers, seeing they also opposed the commands of the church, imposed on them, for silencing all disputes, and settling peace and unity in government." But this collection is deceitful; and the reason is, because, though the first reformers, as well as the Donatists and Novatians, opposed herein the commands of the visible church, that is, of a great part of it; yet the reformers had reason, nay, necessity to do so, the church being then corrupted with damnable errors; which was not true of the church when it was opposed by the Novatians and Donatists. And therefore though they and the reformers did the same action, yet doing it upon different grounds, it might in these merit applause, and in them condemnation.

112. Ad § 43. The next section hath in it some objections against Luther's person, and none against his cause, which alone I have undertaken to justify, and therefore I pass it over. Yet this I promise, that when you, or any of your side, shall publish a good defence of all that your popes have said and done, especially of them whom Bellarmine believes, in such a long train, "to have gone to the devil," then you shall receive an ample apology for all the actions and words of Luther. In the mean time, I hope, all reasonable and equitable judges will esteem it not unpardonable in the great and heroical spirit of Luther, if, being opposed and perpetually baited with a world of furies, he was transported sometimes, and made somewhat furious. As for you, I desire you to be quiet, and to demand no more, "whether God be wont to send such furies to preach the gospel?" unless you desire to hear of your killing of kings, massacring of people, blowing up of parliaments; and have a mind to be asked, "Whether it be probable, that that should be God's cause, which needs to be maintained by such devilish means?"

113. Ad § 44, 45. In the two next particles, which are all of this chapter that remain unspoken to, you spend a great deal of reading, and wit, and reason against some men, who pretending to honour and believe the doctrine and practice of the visible church, (you mean your own,) and condemning their forefathers, who forsook her, say they would not have done so, yet remain divided from her communion.

Which men, in my judgment cannot be defended; for if they believe the doctrine of your church, then must they believe this doctrine, that they are to return to your communion. And therefore if they do not so, it cannot be avoided but they must be αὐτοκατάκριτοι, and so I leave them; only I am to remember you, that these men cannot pretend to be protestants, because they pretend to believe your doctrine, which is opposite in diameter unto the doctrine of protestants; and therefore, in a work which you profess to have written merely against protestants, all this might have been spared.

CHAPTER VI.

That Luther and the rest of protestants have added heresy unto schism.

1. "BECAUSE vice is best known by the contrary virtue, we cannot well determine what heresy is, nor who be heretics, but by the opposite virtue of faith, whose nature being once understood, as far as belongs to our present purpose, we shall pass on with ease to the definition of heresy, and so be able to discern who be heretics. And this I intend to do, not by entering into such particular questions as are controverted between catholics and protestants, but only by applying some general grounds, either already proved, or else yielded to on all sides.

2. "Almighty God having ordained man to a supernatural end of beatitude by supernatural means, it was requisite that his understanding should be enabled to apprehend that end and means by a supernatural knowledge. And because if such a knowledge were no more than probable it could not be able sufficiently to overbear our will, and encounter with human probabilities, being backed with the strength of flesh and blood; it was further necessary, that this supernatural knowledge should be most certain and infallible; and that faith should believe nothing more certainly than that itself is a most certain belief, and so be able to beat down all gay probabilities of human opinion. And because the aforesaid means and end of beatifical vision do far exceed the reach of natural wit, the certainty of faith could not always be joined with such evidence of reason as is wont to be found in the principles or conclusions of human natural sciences, that so all flesh might not glory in the arm of flesh, but he *who glories should glory in the Lord*. Moreover, it was expedient that our belief or assent to Divine truths should not only be unknown or inevident by any human discourse, but that absolutely also it should be obscure in itself, and (ordinarily speaking) be void even of supernatural evidence, that so we might have occasion to actuate and testify the obedience which we owe to our God, not only by submitting our will to his will and commands, but by subjecting also our understanding to his wisdom and words, captivating (as the apostle speaks) the same understanding to the obedience of faith: which occasion had been wanting, if Almighty God had made clear to us the truths which now are certainly, but not evidently, presented to our minds. For where truth doth manifestly open itself, not obedience, but necessity, commands our assent. For this reason divines teach, that the objects of faith being not evident to human reason, it is in man's power, not only to abstain from believing, by suspending our judgment, or exercising no act one way or other; but also to disbelieve, that is, to believe the contrary of that which faith proposeth; as the examples of innumerable archheretic? can bear witness. This obscurity of faith we learn from Holy Scripture, according to those words of the apostle, *Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the argument of things not appearing:* and, *We see now by a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face;* and accordingly St. Peter saith, *Which you do well attending unto, as to a candle shining in a dark place*.

3. "Faith being then obscure, (whereby it differeth from natural sciences,) and yet being most certain and infallible, (wherein it surpasseth human opinion,) it must rely upon some motive and ground, which may be able to give it certainty, and yet not release it from obscurity. For if this motive, ground, or formal object of faith, were anything evidently presented to our understanding, and if also we did evidently know, that it had a necessary connexion with the articles which we believe, our assent to such articles could not be obscure, but evident; which, as we said, is against the nature of our faith. If likewise the motive or ground of our faith were obscurely propounded to us, but were not in itself infallible, it would leave our assent in obscurity, but could not endue it with certainty. We must therefore, for the ground of our faith, find out a motive obscure to us, but most certain in itself, that the act of faith may remain both obscure and certain. Such a motive as this can be no other but the Divine authority of Almighty God,

revealing or speaking those truths which our faith believes. For it is manifest that God's infallible testimony may transfuse certainty to our faith, and yet not draw it out of obscurity; because no human discourse or demonstration can evince that God revealeth any supernatural truth, since God had been no less perfect than he is, although he had never revealed any of those objects which we now believe.

4. "Nevertheless, because Almighty God, out of his infinite wisdom and sweetness, doth concur with his creatures in such sort as may befit the temper and exigence of their natures, and because man is a creature endued with reason, God doth not exact of his will or understanding any other than, as the apostle saith, *rationabile obsequium*, an obedience sweetened with good reason, which could not so appear, if our understanding were summoned to believe with certainty things no way represented as infallible and certain. And therefore Almighty God, obliging us, under pain of eternal damnation, to believe with greatest certainty divers verities, not known by the light of natural reason, cannot fail to furnish our understanding with such inducements, motives, and arguments, as may sufficiently persuade any mind, which is not partial or passionate, that the objects which we believe proceed from an authority so wise, that it cannot be deceived, and so good, that it cannot deceive; according to the words of David, *Thy testimonies are made credible exceedingly*. These inducements are by divines called *argumenta credibilitatis*, 'arguments of credibility,' which though they cannot make us evidently see what we believe, yet they evidently convince, that in true wisdom and prudence the objects of faith deserve credit, and ought to be accepted as things revealed by God. For without such reasons and inducements, our judgment of faith could not be conceived prudent, Holy Scripture telling us, that *he who soon believes is light of heart*. By these arguments and inducements our understanding is both satisfied with evidence of credibility, and the objects of faith retain their obscurity; because it is a different thing to be evidently credible, and evidently true; as those who were present at the miracles wrought by our blessed Saviour and his apostles did not evidently see their doctrine to be true, (for then it had not been faith, but science, and all had been necessitated to believe; which we see fell out otherwise,) but they were evidently convinced that the things confirmed by such miracles were most credible, and worthy to be embraced as truths revealed by God.

5. "These evident arguments of credibility are in great abundance found in the visible church of Christ perpetually existing on earth. For that there hath been a company of men professing such and such doctrines, we have from our next predecessors, and these from theirs upwards till we come to the apostles and our blessed Saviour; which gradation is known by evidence of sense, by reading books, or hearing what one man delivers to another. And it is evident, that there was neither cause nor possibility, that men so distant in place, so different in temper, so repugnant in private ends, did or could agree to tell one and the selfsame thing, if it had been but a fiction invented by themselves, as ancient Tertullian well saith, 'How is it likely, that so many and so great churches should err in one faith? Among many events there is not one issue; the error of the churches must needs have varied. But that which among many is found to be one, is not mistaken, but delivered. Dare then any body say, that they erred who delivered it? With this never-interrupted existence of the church are joined the many and great miracles wrought by men of that congregation or church; the sanctity of the persons; the renowned victories over so many persecutions, both of all sorts of men, and of the infernal spirits; and lastly, the perpetual existence of so holy a church. Being brought up to the apostles themselves, she comes to partake of the same assurance of truth, which they, by so many powerful ways, did communicate to their doctrine, and to the church of their times, together with the Divine certainty which they received from our blessed Saviour himself, revealing to mankind what he heard from his Father; and so we conclude with Tertullian, 'We receive it from the churches, the churches from the apostles, the apostles from Christ, Christ from his Father:' and if we once interrupt this line of succession, most certainly made known by means of holy tradition, we cannot conjoin the present church and doctrine with the church and doctrine of the apostles, but must invent

some new means and arguments, sufficient of themselves to find out and prove a true church and faith, independently of the preaching and writing of the apostles; neither of which can be known but by tradition; as is truly observed by Tertullian, saying, 'I will prescribe, that there is no means to prove what the apostles preached, but by the same churches which they founded.'

6. "Thus then we are to proceed: by evidence of manifest and incorrupt tradition, I know that there hath always been a never-interrupted succession of men from the apostles' time, believing, professing, and practising such and such doctrines: by evident arguments of credibility, as miracles, sanctity, unity, &c., and by all those ways whereby the apostles and our blessed Saviour himself confirmed their doctrine, we are assured that what the said never-interrupted church proposeth, doth deserve to be accepted and acknowledged as a Divine truth; by evidence of sense, we see that the same church proposeth such and such doctrines as Divine truths; that is, as revealed and testified by Almighty God. By this Divine testimony we are infallibly assured of what we believe: and so the last period, ground, motive, and formal object of our faith, is the infallible testimony of that supreme verity, which neither can deceive nor be deceived.

7. "By this orderly deduction our faith cometh to be endued with those qualities which we said were requisite thereto, namely, certainty, obscurity, and prudence. Certainty proceeds from the infallible testimony of God, propounded and conveyed to our understanding by such a mean as is infallible in itself, and to us is evidently known, that it proposeth this point or that, and which can manifestly declare in what sense it proposeth them; which means we have proved to be only the visible church of Christ. Obscurity, from the manner in which God speaks to mankind, which ordinarily is such, that it doth not manifestly show the person who speaks, nor the truth of the thing spoken. Prudence is not wanting, because our faith is accompanied with so many arguments of credibility, that every well-disposed understanding may and ought to judge, that the doctrines so confirmed deserve to be believed, as proceeding from Divine authority.

8. "And thus, from what hath been said, we may easily gather the particular nature or definition of faith. For 'it is a voluntary, or free, infallible, obscure assent to some truth, because it is testified by God, and is sufficiently propounded to us for such;' which proposal is ordinarily made by the visible church of Christ. I say, 'sufficiently proposed by the church;' not that I purpose to dispute, whether the proposal of the church enter into the formal object or motive of faith; or whether an error be an heresy, formally and precisely, because it is against the proposition of the church, as if such proposal were the formal object of faith which Dr. Potter to no purpose at all, labours so very hard to disprove: but I only affirm, that when the church propounds any truth, as revealed by God, we are assured that it is such indeed; and so it instantly grows to be a fit object for Christian faith, which inclines and enables us to believe whatsoever is duly presented as a thing revealed by Almighty God. And in the same manner we are sure, that whosoever opposeth any doctrine proposed by the church doth thereby contradict a truth which is testified by God: as when any lawful superior notifies his will, by the means, and, as it were, proposal of some faithful messenger, the subject of such a superior, in performing or neglecting what is delivered by the messenger, is said to obey or disobey his own lawful superior. And therefore, because the testimony of God is notified by the church, we may, and we do most truly say, that not to believe what the church proposeth is to deny God's holy word or testimony signified to us by the church, according to that saying of St. Irenæus, 'We need not go to any other to seek the truth, which we may easily receive from the church.'"

9. "From this definition of faith we may also know what heresy is, by taking the contrary terms, as heresy is contrary to faith, and saying, 'Heresy is a voluntary error against that which God hath revealed, and the church hath proposed for such.' Neither doth it import, whether the error concern points in themselves great or small, fundamental or not fundamental. For more being required to an act of virtue

than of vice, if any truth, though never so small, must be believed by faith, as soon as we know it to be testified by Divine revelation: much more will it be a formal heresy to deny any the least point sufficiently propounded as a thing witnessed by God.

10. "This Divine faith is divided into actual and habitual. Actual faith, or faith actuated, is when we are in act of consideration and belief of some mystery of faith; for example, that our Saviour Christ is true God and man, &c. Habitual faith is that from which we are denominated *faithful*, or *believers*, as by actual faith they are styled *believing*. This habit of faith is a quality enabling us most firmly to believe objects above human discourse, and it remaineth permanently in our soul, even when we are sleeping, or not thinking of any mystery of faith. This is the first among the three theological virtues. For charity unites us to God, as he is infinitely good in himself: hope ties us to him, as he is unspeakably good to us: faith joins us to him, as he is the supreme immovable verity. Charity relies on his goodness; hope on his power; faith on his Divine wisdom. From hence it followeth, that faith being one of the virtues which Divines term *infused*, (that is, which cannot be acquired by human wit or industry, but are in their nature and essence supernatural,) it hath this property; that it is not destroyed by little and little, (contrarily to the habits called *acquisiti*, that is, 'gotten by human endeavour;' which, as they are successively produced, so also are they lost successively, or by little and little,) but it must either be conserved entire, or wholly destroyed: and since it cannot stand entire with any one act which is directly contrary, it must be totally overthrown, and, as it were, demolished and razed, by every such act. Wherefore, as charity, or the love of God, is expelled from our soul by any one act of hatred, or any other mortal sin against his Divine majesty; and as hope is destroyed by any one act of voluntary desperation; so faith must perish by any one act of heresy, because every such act is directly and formally opposite thereunto. I know that some sins, which (as divines speak) are *ex genere suo*, in their kind, grievous and mortal, may be much lessened, and fall to be venial, ob levitatem materiæ, because they may happen to be exercised in a matter of small consideration: as, for example, to steal a penny is venial, although theft in its kind be a deadly sin. But it is likewise true, that this rule is not general for all sorts of sins; there being some so inexcusably wicked of their own nature, that no smallness of matter nor paucity in number can defend them from being deadly sins. For, to give an instance, what blasphemy against God, or voluntarily false oath, is not a deadly sin? Certainly none at all, although the salvation of the whole world should depend upon swearing such a falsehood. The like happeneth in our present case of heresy, the iniquity whereof, redounding to the injury of God's supreme wisdom and goodness, is always great and enormous. They were no precious stones which David picked out of the water to encounter Goliath; and yet if a man take from the number but one, and say there were but four, against the Scripture's affirming them to have been five, he is instantly guilty of a damnable sin. Why? Because by this subtraction of one, he doth deprive God's word and testimony of all credit and infallibility. For if ever he could deceive or be deceived in any one thing, it were but wisdom to suspect him in all. And seeing every heresy opposeth some truth revealed by God, it is no wonder that no one can be excused from deadly and damnable sin; for if voluntary blasphemy and perjury, which are opposite only to the infused moral virtue of religion, can never be excused from mortal sin, much less can heresy be excused, which opposeth the theological virtue of faith.

11. "If any object, that schism may seem to be a greater sin than heresy, because the virtue of charity (to which this schism is opposite) is greater than faith; according to the apostle, saying, *Nom there remain faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is charity:* St. Thomas answers in these words: 'Charity hath two objects, one principal, to wit, the Divine goodness; and another secondary, namely, the good of our neighbour: but schism, and other sins, which are committed against our neighbour, are opposite to charity in respect of this secondary good, which is less than the object of faith, which is God, as he is the prime verity on which faith doth rely; and therefore these sins are less than infidelity." He takes infidelity after a general manner, as it comprehends heresy, and other vices against faith.

12. “Having therefore sufficiently declared wherein heresy consists, let us come to prove that which we proposed in this chapter: where I desire it to be still remembered, that the visible catholic church cannot err damnably, as Dr. Potter confesseth; and that when Luther appeared, there was no other visible true church of Christ, disagreeing from the Roman, as we have demonstrated in the next precedent chapter.

13. “Now, that Luther and his followers cannot be excused from formal heresy, I prove by these reasons: to oppose any truth propounded by the visible true church, as revealed by God, is formal heresy, as we have showed out of the definition of heresy; but Luther, Calvin, and the rest, did oppose divers truths propounded by the visible church as revealed by God; yea, they did therefore oppose her, because she propounded as Divine revealed truths things which they judged either to be false or human inventions; therefore they committed formal heresy.

14. “Moreover, every error against any doctrine revealed by God is damnable heresy, whether the matter in itself be great or small, as I proved before; and therefore either the protestants or the Roman church must be guilty of formal heresy, because one of them must err against the word and testimony of God; but you grant, (perforce,) that the Roman church doth not err damnably; and I add, that she cannot err damnably, because she is the truly catholic church, which you confess cannot err damnably; therefore protestants must be guilty of formal heresy.

15. “Besides, we have showed that the visible church is judge of controversies, and therefore must be infallible in all her proposals; which being once supposed, it manifestly followeth, that to oppose what she delivereth as revealed by God, is not so much to oppose her as God himself; and therefore cannot be excused from grievous heresy.

16. “Again, if Luther were an heretic for those points wherein he disagreed from the Roman church, all they who agree with him in those very points must likewise be heretics. Now that Luther was a formal heretic, I demonstrate in this manner: to say that God’s visible true church is not universal, but confined to one only place or corner of the world, is, according to your own express words, ‘properly heresy against that article of the Creed wherein we profess to believe the holy catholic church:’ and you brand Donatus with heresy, because he limited the universal church to Africa. But it is manifest, and acknowledged by Luther himself, and other chief protestants, that Luther’s reformation, when it first began, (and much more for divers ages before,) was not universal, nor spread over the world, but was confined to that compass of ground which did contain Luther’s body. Therefore his reformation cannot be excused from formal heresy. If St. Augustin in those times said to the Donatists, ‘There are innumerable testimonies of Holy Scripture, in which it appeareth that the church of Christ is not only in Africa, as these men with most impudent vanity do rave, but that she is spread over the whole earth;’ much more may it be said; It appeareth by innumerable testimonies of Holy Scripture, that the church of Christ cannot be confined to the city of Wittemberg, or to the place where Luther’s feet stood, but must be spread over the whole world. It is therefore most impudent vanity and dotage to limit her to Luther’s reformation. In another place also this holy Father writes no less effectually against Luther than against the Donatists. For having out of those words, *In thy seed all nations shall be blessed*, proved that God’s church must be universal, he saith, ‘Why do you super-add, by saying that Christ remains heir in no part of the earth, except where he may have Donatus for his co-heir? Give me this (universal) church, if it be among you; show yourselves to be all nations, which we already show to be blessed in this seed. Give us this (church), or else, laying aside all fury, receive her from us.’ But it is evident, that Luther could not, when he said, ‘At the beginning I was alone,’ give us an universal church: therefore happy had he been, if he had then, and his followers would now, ‘receive her from us.’ And therefore we must conclude with the same holy Father, saying in another place of the universal church, ‘She hath this most certain mark, that she cannot be hidden: she is then known unto all nations. The sect of Donatus is unknown to many nations; therefore

that cannot be she.' The sect of Luther (at least when he began, and much more before his beginning) was unknown to many nations; therefore that cannot be she.

17. "And that it may yet further appear how perfectly Luther agreed with the Donatists, it is to be noted, that they never taught that the catholic church ought not to extend itself further than that part of Africa where their faction reigned, but only that in fact it was so confined because all the rest of the church was profaned by communicating with Cæcilianus, whom they falsely affirmed to have been ordained bishop by those who were traditors, or givers up of the Bible to the prosecutors to be burned; yea, at that very time they had some of their sect residing in Rome, and sent thither one Victor, a bishop, under colour to take care of their brethren in that city; but indeed, as Baronius observeth, that the world might account them catholics, by communicating with the bishop of Rome, to communicate with whom was ever taken by the ancient Fathers as an assured sign of being a true catholic. They had also, as St. Augustin witnesseth, a pretended church in the house and territory of a Spanish lady, called Lucilla, who went flying out of the catholic church, because she had been justly checked by Cæcilianus. And the same saint, speaking of the conference he had with Fortunius the Donatist, saith, 'Here did he first attempt to affirm, that his communion was spread over the whole earth, &c., but because the thing was evidently false, they got out of this discourse by confusion of language:' whereby nevertheless they sufficiently declared, that they did not hold that the true church ought necessarily to be confined to one place, but only by mere necessity were forced to yield that it was so in fact, because their sect, which they held to be the only true church, was not spread over the world; in which point Fortunius and the rest were more modest than he who should affirm that Luther's reformation in the very beginning was spread over the whole earth; being at that time by many degrees not so far diffused as the sect of the Donatists. I have no desire to prosecute the similitude of Protestants with Donatists, by remembering that the sect of these men were begun and promoted by the passion of Lucilla; and who is ignorant what influence two women, the mother and daughter, ministered to protestancy in England? Nor will I stand to observe their very likeness of phrase with the Donatists, who called the chair of Rome the chair of pestilence, and the Roman church an harlot, which is Dr. Potter's own phrase; wherein he is less excusable than they, because he maintaineth her to be a true church of Christ; and therefore let him duly ponder these words of St. Augustin against the Donatists; 'If I persecute him justly who detracts from his neighbour, why should not I persecute him who detracts from the church of Christ, and saith, This is not she, but this is an harlot?' And least of all will I consider, whether you may not be well compared to one Ticonius a Donatist, who wrote against Parmenianus, likewise a Donatist, who blasphemed that the church of Christ had perished, (as you do even in this your book write against some of your protestant brethren, or, as you call them, zealots among you, who hold the very same, or rather a worse heresy,) and yet remained among them, even after Parmenianus had excommunicated him; (as those your zealous brethren would proceed against you, if it were in their power;) and yet, like Ticonius, you remain in their communion, and come not into that church, which is, hath been, and ever shall be, universal: for which very cause St. Augustin complains of Ticonius, that although he wrote against the Donatists, yet he was of 'an heart so extremely absurd,' as not to forsake them altogether. And speaking of the same thing in another place, he observes, that although Ticonius did manifestly confute them who affirmed that the church had perished, yet 'he saw not,' saith this holy Father, 'that which in good consequence he should have seen, that those Christians of Africa belonged to the church spread over the whole world who remained united, not with them who are divided from the communion and unity of the same world, but with such as did communicate with the whole world. But Parmenianus and the rest of the Donatists saw that consequence, and resolved rather to settle their mind in obstinacy against the most manifest truth, which Ticonius maintained, than by yielding thereto, to be overcome by those churches in Africa, which enjoyed the communion of that unity which Ticonius defended, from which they had divided themselves.' How fitly

these words agree to catholics in England in respect of the protestants, I desire the reader to consider. But these and the like resemblances of the protestants to the Donatists, I willingly let pass, and only urge the main point; that since Luther's reformed church was not in being for divers centuries before Luther, and yet was (because so forsooth they will needs have it) in the apostle's time,they must of necessity affirm heretically with the Donatists, that the true and unspotted church of Christ perished; and that she which remained on earth (O blasphemy!) an harlot. Moreover the same heresy follows out of the doctrine of Dr. Potter, and other protestants, that the church may err in points not fundamental, because we have showed, that every error against any one revealed truth is heresy, and damnable, whether the matter be otherwise, of itself, great or small. And how can the church more truly be said to perish, than when she is permitted to maintain a damnable heresy? Besides, we will hereafter prove, that by an act of heresy all Divine faith is lost; and to imagine a true church of faithful persons without any faith, is as much as to fancy a living man without life. It is therefore clear, that, Donatist like, they hold that the church of Christ perished; yea, they are worse than the Donatists, who said, that the church remained at least in Africa; whereas protestants must of necessity be forced to grant, that for a long space before Luther she was no where at all. But let us go forward to other reasons.

18. "The Holy Scripture and ancient fathers do assign separation from the visible church as a mark of heresy; according to that of St. John, *They went out from us;* and, *Some who went out from us:* and, *Out of you shall arise men speaking perverse things*. And accordingly, Vincentius Lyrinensis saith, 'Who ever began heresies, who did not first separate himself from the universality, antiquity, and consent of the catholic church?' But it is manifest, that when Luther appeared, there was no visible church distinct from the Roman, out of which she could depart, as it is likewise well known that Luther and his followers departed out of her: therefore she is no way liable to this mark of heresy: but protestants cannot possibly avoid it. To this purpose St. Prosper hath these pithy words: 'A Christian communicating with the universal church is a catholic; and he who is divided from her is an heretic and antichrist.' But Luther in his first reformation could not communicate with the visible catholic church of those times, because he began his reformation by opposing the supposed errors of the then visible church: we must therefore say with St. Prosper, that he was an heretic, &c. Which likewise is no less clearly proved out of St. Cyprian, saying, 'Not we departed from them, but they from us; and since heresies and schisms are bred afterwards, while they make to themselves divers conventicles, they have forsaken the head and origin of truth.'

19. "And that we might not remain doubtful what separation it is which is the mark of heresy, the ancient Fathers tell us more in particular, that it is from the church of Rome, as it is the see of Peter. And therefore Dr. Potter need not to be so hot with us, because we say and write, that the church of Rome, in that sense as she is the mother church of all others, and with which all the rest agree, is truly called the catholic church. St. Hierom, writing to pope Damasus, saith, 'I am in the communion of the chair of Peter; I know that the church is built upon that rock. Whosoever shall eat the lamb out of this house, he is profane. If any shall not be in the ark of Noah, he shall perish in the time of the deluge. Whosoever doth not gather with thee doth scatter; that is, he that is not of Christ is of antichrist,' And elsewhere, 'Which doth he call his faith? that of the Roman church, or that which is contained in the books of Origen? If he answer, The Roman; then we are catholics, who have translated nothing of the error of Origen.' And yet further, 'Know thou, that the Roman faith, commended by the voice of the apostle, doth not receive these delusions, though an angel should denounce otherwise than it hath once been preached.' St. Ambrose, recounting how his brother Satyrus inquired for a church, wherein to give thanks for his delivery from shipwreck, saith, 'He called unto him the bishop, neither did he esteem any favour to be true, except that of the true faith; and he asked of him, whether he agreed with the catholic bishops?' that is, with the Roman church. And having understood that he was a schismatic, that is, separated from the Roman church, he abstained from communicating with him. Where we see the

privilege of the Roman church confirmed both by word and deed, by doctrine and practice. And the same saint saith of the Roman church, 'From thence the rights of venerable communion do flow to all.' St. Cyprian saith, they are bold to sail to the chair of Peter, and to the principal church, from whence priestly unity hath sprung. Neither do they consider that they are Romans whose faith was commended by the preaching of the apostle, to whom falsehood cannot have access.' Where we see this holy Father joins together the 'principal church, and the chair of Peter;' and affirmeth, that falsehood not only hath not had, but 'cannot have access to that see.' And elsewhere, 'Thou wrotest that I should send a copy of the same letters to Cornelius, our colleague, that laying aside all solicitude, he might now be assured that thou didst communicate with him, that is, with the catholic church.' What think you, Mr. Doctor, of these words? Is it so strange a thing to take for one and the same thing, to communicate with the church and pope of Rome, and to communicate with the catholic church? St. Irenæus saith, 'Because it were long to number the successions of all churches, we declaring the tradition (and faith preached to men, and coming to us by tradition) of the most great, most ancient, and most known church, founded by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul, which tradition it hath from the apostles, coming to us by succession of bishops; we confound all those who any way, either by evil complacence of themselves, or vain-glory, or by blindness, or ill opinion, do gather otherwise than they ought. For to this church, for a more powerful principality, it is necessary that all churches resort, that is, all faithful people of what place soever; in which (Roman church) the tradition which is from the apostles hath always been conserved from those who are every where.' St. Augustin saith, 'It grieves us to see you so to lie cut off. Number the priests even from the see of Peter, and consider in that order of Fathers who succeeded, to whom she is the rock which the proud gates of hell do not overcome.' And in another place, speaking of Cæcilianus, he saith, 'He might contemn the conspiring multitude of his enemies, because he knew himself to be united by communicatory letters both to the Roman church, in which the principality of the see apostolic did always flourish; and to other countries, from whence the gospel came first into Africa.' Ancient Tertullian saith, 'If thou be near Italy, thou hast Rome, whose authority is near at hand to us; a happy church, into which the apostles have poured all doctrine, together with their blood.' St. Basil, in a letter to the bishop of Rome, saith, 'In very deed that which was given by our Lord to thy piety, is worthy of that most excellent voice which proclaimed thee blessed, to wit, that thou mayst discern betwixt that which is counterfeit and that which is lawful and pure, and without any diminution mayst preach the faith of our ancestors.' Maximinianus, bishop of Constantinople, about twelve hundred years ago, said, 'All the bounds of the earth, who have sincerely acknowledged our Lord, and catholics through the whole world professing the true faith, look upon the power of the bishop of Rome as upon the sun, &c. For the Creator of the world amongst all men of the world elected him,' (he speaks of St Peter,) 'to whom he granted the chair of doctor, to be principally possessed by a perpetual right of privilege; that whosoever is desirous to know any Divine and profound thing, may have recourse to the oracle and doctrine of this instruction.' John, patriarch of Constantinople, more than eleven hundred years ago, in an epistle to pope Hormisda, writeth thus: 'Because the beginning of salvation is to conserve the rule of right faith, and in no wise to swerve from the tradition of our forefathers; because the words of our Lord cannot fail, saying, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church:* the proofs of deeds have made good those words; because in the see apostolical the catholic religion is always conserved inviolable.' And again, 'We promise hereafter not to recite in the sacred mysteries the names of them who are excluded from the communion of the catholic church, that is to say, who consent not fully with the see apostolic.' Many other authorities of the ancient Fathers might be produced to this purpose; but these may serve to show, that both the Latin and Greek Fathers held for a note of being a catholic or an heretic, to have been united or divided from the see of Rome. And I have purposely alleged only such authorities of Fathers as speak of the privileges of the see of Rome as of things permanent, and depending on our Saviour's promise to St. Peter,

from which a general rule and ground ought to be taken for all ages, because *heaven and earth shall pass, but the word of our Lord shall remain for ever*. So that I here conclude, that seeing it is manifest that Luther and his followers divided themselves from the see of Rome, they bear the inseparable mark of heresy.

20. "And though my meaning be not to treat the point of ordination or succession in the protestants' church, yet, because the Fathers alleged in the last reason assign succession as one mark of the true church, I must not omit to say, that according to the grounds of protestants themselves, they can neither pretend personal succession of bishops, nor succession of doctrine. For whereas succession of bishops signifies a never-interrupted line of persons endued with an indelible quality, which divines call a *character*, which cannot be taken away by deposition, degradation, or other means whatsoever, and endued also with jurisdiction and authority to teach, to preach, to govern the church by laws, precepts, censures, &c., protestants cannot pretend succession in either of these: for (besides that there was never protestant bishop before Luther, and that there can be no continuance of succession where there was no beginning to succeed) they commonly acknowledge no character, and consequently must affirm, that when their pretended bishops or priests are deprived of jurisdiction, or degraded, they remain mere lay persons, as before their ordination; fulfilling what Tertullian objects as a mark of heresy, 'to-day a priest, to-morrow a layman." For if there be no immovable character, their power of order must consist only in jurisdiction and authority, or in a kind of moral deputation to some function, which therefore may be taken away by the same power by which it was given. Neither can they pretend succession in authority or jurisdiction: for all the authority or jurisdiction which they had, was conferred by the church of Rome, that is, by the pope: because the whole church collectively doth not meet to ordain bishops or priests, or to give them authority. But, according to their own doctrine, they believe that the pope neither 'hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm,' which they swear even when they are ordained bishops, priests, and deacons. How then can the pope give jurisdiction where they swear he neither hath or OUGHT to have any? Or, if yet he had, how could they, without schism, withdraw themselves from his obedience? Besides, the Roman church never gave them authority to oppose her, by whom it was given. But grant their first bishops had such authority from the church of Rome; after the decease of those men, who gave authority to their pretended successors? The primate of England? But from whom had he such authority? And after his decease, who shall confer authority upon his successors? The temporal magistrate? King Henry, neither a catholic nor a protestant? King Edward, a child? Queen Elizabeth, a woman? An infant of one hour's age is true king in case of his predecessor's decease: but shall your church lie fallow, till that infant king and green head of the church come to years of discretion? Do your bishops, your hierarchy, your succession, your sacraments, your being or not being heretics, for want of succession, depend upon this new-found supremacy doctrine, brought in by such a man, merely upon base occasions, and for shameful ends; impugned by Calvin and his followers; derided by the Christian world; and even by chief protestants, as Dr. Andrews, Wolton, &c., not held for any necessary point of faith? And from whom, I pray you, had bishops their authority, when there were no Christian kings? Must the Greek patriarchs receive spiritual jurisdiction from the great Turk? Did the pope, by the baptism of princes, lose the spiritual power he formerly had of conferring spiritual jurisdiction upon bishops? Hath the temporal magistrate authority to preach, to assoil from sins, to inflict excommunications, and other censures? Why hath he not power to excommunicate, as well as to dispense in irregularity, as our late sovereign lord king James either dispensed with the late archbishop of Canterbury, or else gave commission to some bishops to do it? And since they were subject to their primate, and not he to them, it is clear that they had no power to dispense with him, but that power must proceed from the prince, as superior to them all, and head of the protestants' church in England. If he have no such authority, how can he give to others what himself hath not? Your ordination or consecration of bishops and priests imprinting no character, can only consist in

giving a power, authority, jurisdiction, or (as I said before) some kind of deputation to exercise episcopal or priestly functions. If then the temporal magistrate confers this power, &c., he can, nay, he cannot choose, but ordain and consecrate bishops and priests, as often as he confers authority or jurisdiction; and your bishops, as soon as they are designed and confirmed by the king, must *ipso facto* be ordained and consecrated by him without intervention of bishops, or matter and form of ordination; which absurdities you will be more unwilling to grant, than well able to avoid, if you will be true to your own doctrines. The pope, from whom originally you must beg your succession of bishops, never received, nor will nor can acknowledge to receive, any spiritual jurisdiction from any temporal prince; and therefore, if jurisdiction must be derived from princes, he hath none at all: and yet either you must acknowledge that he hath true spiritual jurisdiction, or that yourselves can receive none from him.

21. "Moreover this new reformation, or reformed church of protestants, will by them be pretended to be catholic or universal, and not confined to England alone, as the sect of the Donatists was to Africa; and therefore it must comprehend all the reformed churches in Germany, Holland, Scotland, France, &c. In which number they of Germany, Holland, and France are not governed by bishops, nor regard any personal succession, unless of such fat-beneficed bishops as Nicolas Amsfordius, who was consecrated by Luther, (though Luther himself was never bishop,) as witnesseth Dresserus. And though Scotland hath of late admitted some bishops, I much doubt whether they hold them to be necessary, or of Divine institution; and so their enforced admitting of them doth not so much furnish that kingdom with personal succession of bishops, as it doth convince them to want succession of doctrine, since in this their neglect of bishops, they disagree both from the milder protestants of England, and the true catholic church: and by this want of a continued personal succession of bishops, they retain the note of schism and heresy. So that the church of protestants must either not be universal, as being confined to England; or if you will needs comprehend all those churches which want succession, you must confess, that your church doth not only communicate with schismatical and heretical churches, but it is also compounded of such churches, and yourselves cannot avoid the note of schismatics or heretics, if it were but for participating with such heretical churches. For it is impossible to retain communion with the true catholic, and yet agree with them who are divided from her by schism or heresy; because that were to affirm, that for the selfsame time they could be within and without the catholic church, as proportionably I discoursed in the next precedent chapter, concerning the communicating of mode-rate protestants with those who maintain that heresy of the latency and invisibility of God's church, where I brought a place of St. Cyprian to this purpose, which the reader may be pleased to review in the fifth chapter, and 17th number.

22. "But besides this defect in the personal succession of protestant bishops, there is another of great moment; which is, that they want the right form of ordaining bishops and priests, because the manner which they use is so much different from that of the Roman church, (at least according to the common opinion of divines,) that it cannot be sufficient for the essence of ordination; as I could demonstrate, if this were the proper place of such a treatise; and will not fail to do, if Dr. Potter give me occasion. In the mean time, the reader may be pleased to read the author cited here in the margent, and then compare the form of our ordination with that of protestants; and to remember, that if the form which they use either in consecrating bishops, or in ordaining priests, be at least doubtful, they can neither have undoubted priests nor bishops. For priests cannot be ordained but by true bishops, nor can any be a true Bishop unless he first be priest. I say, their ordination is at least doubtful; because that sufficeth for my present purpose. For bishops and priests, whose ordination is notoriously known to be doubtful, are not to be esteemed bishops or priests; and no man without sacrilege can receive sacraments from them; all which they administer unlawfully; and (if we except baptism) with manifest danger of invalidity, and with obligation to be at least conditionally repeated: and so protestants must remain doubtful of remission of sins, of their ecclesiastical hierarchy, and may not pretend to be a true church; which cannot subsist

without undoubted true bishops and priests, nor without due administration of sacraments, which (according to protestants) is an essential note of the true church. And it is a world to observe the proceeding of the English protestants in this point of their ordinations. For first, an. 3 Edw. VI. cap. 2, when he was a child about twelve years of age, 'it was enacted, That such form of making and consecrating bishops and priests, as by six prelates, and six other to be appointed by the king, should be devised' (mark this word *devised*) 'and set forth under the great seal, should be used, and none other.' But after this act was repealed, 1 Mar. sess. 2, insomuch as that when afterward, anno 6. et 7. Reg. Elizabeth, bishop Bonner being indicted upon a certificate made by Dr. Horn, a protestant bishop of Winchester, for his refusal of the oath of supremacy; and he excepting against the indictment, because Dr. Horn was no bishop; all the judges resolved, that his exception was good, if indeed Dr. Horn was not bishop; and they were all at a stand, till anno 8 Eliz. cap. 1, the act of Edw. VI was renewed and confirmed with a particular proviso, that no man should be impeached or molested, by means of any certificate by any bishop or archbishop made before this last act. Whereby it is clear, that they made some doubt of their own ordination, and that there is nothing but uncertainty in the whole business of their ordination, which (forsooth) must depend upon six prelates, the great seal, acts of parliaments being contrary one to another, and the like.

23. "But though they want personal succession, yet at least they have succession of doctrine, as they say, and pretend to prove, because they believe as the apostles believed. This is to beg the question, and to take what they may be sure will never be granted. For if they want personal succession, and slight ecclesiastical tradition, how will they persuade any man that they agree with the doctrine of the apostles? We have heard Tertullian saying, 'I will prescribe' (against all heretics) 'that there is no means to prove what the apostles preached, but by the same churches which they founded.' And St. Irenæus tells us, that 'we may behold the tradition of the apostles in every church, if men be desirous to hear the truth, and we can number them who were made bishops by the apostles in churches, and their successors even to us.' And the same father in another place saith, 'We ought to obey those priests who are in the church, who have succession from the apostles, and who, together with succession in their bishoprics, have received the certain gift of truth.' St. Augustin saith, 'I am kept in the church by the succession of priests from the very see of Peter the apostle, to whom our Saviour after his resurrection committed his sheep to be fed, even to the present bishop.' Origen to this purpose giveth us a good and wholesome rule, (happy if himself had followed the same!) in these excellent words: 'Since there be many who think they believe the things which are of Christ, and some are of different opinion from those who went before them; let the preaching of the church be kept, which is delivered by the apostles by order of succession, and remains in the church to this very day; that only is to be believed for truth, which in nothing disagrees from the tradition of the church.' In vain then do these men brag of the doctrine of the apostles, unless first they can demonstrate, that they enjoy a continued succession of bishops from the apostles, and can show us a church, which according to St. Austin, is deduced 'by undoubted SUCCESSION from the see of the apostles, even to the present bishops.'

24. "But yet nevertheless, suppose it were granted that they agreed with the doctrines of the apostles, this were not sufficient to prove a succession in doctrine. For succession, besides agreement or similitude, doth also require a never-interrupted conveying of such doctrine, from the time of the apostles till the days of those persons who challenge such a succession. And so St. Augustin saith; we are to believe that gospel, which from the time of the apostles 'the church hath brought down to our days, by a never-interrupted course of times, and by undoubted succession of connexion.' Now that the reformation, begun by Luther, was interrupted for divers ages before him, is manifest out of history, and by his endeavouring a reformation, which must pre-suppose abuses. He cannot therefore pretend a continued succession of that doctrine which he sought to revive, and reduce to the knowledge and practice of men.

And they ought not to prove that they have succession of doctrine, because they agree with the doctrine of the apostles; but contrarily we must infer, that they agree not with the apostles, because they cannot pretend a never-interrupted succession of doctrine from the times of the apostles till Luther. And here it is not amiss to note, that although the Waldenses, Wickliff, &c. had agreed with protestants in all points of doctrine, yet they could not brag of succession from them, because their doctrine hath not been free from interruption, which necessarily crosseth succession.

25. "And as want of succession of persons and doctrine cannot stand with that universality of time, which is inseparable from the catholic church; so likewise the disagreeing sects, which are dispersed through divers countries and nations, cannot help towards that universality of place, wherewith the true church must be endued; but rather such local multiplication doth more and more lay open their division, and want of succession in doctrine. For the excellent observation of St. Augustin doth punctually agree with all modern heretics; wherein this holy Father having cited these words out of the prophet Ezekiel, *My flocks are dispersed upon the whole face of the earth;* he adds this remarkable sentence, 'Not all heretics are spread over the face of the earth, and yet there are heretics spread over the whole face of the earth, some here, some there; yet they are wanting in no place, they know not one another. One sect, for example, in Africa, another heresy in the East, another in Egypt, another in Mesopotamia. In diverse places they are diverse; one mother, pride, hath begot them all, as our own mother the catholic church hath brought forth all faithful people dispersed throughout the whole world. No wonder, then, if pride breed dissension, and charity union.' And in another place, applying to heretics those words of the Canticles, *If thou know not thyself, go forth and follow after the steps of the flocks, and feed thy kids*, he saith, 'If thou know not thyself, go thou forth: I do not cast thee out, but go thou out, that it may be said of thee, *they went from us, but they were not of us*. Go thou out in the steps of the flocks; not in my steps, but in the steps of the flocks; nor of one flock, but of divers and wandering flocks; and feed thy kids, not as Peter, to whom it is said, *Feed my sheep;* but feed thy kids in the tabernacles of the pastors, not in the tabernacle of the pastor, where there is one flock and one pastor.' In which words this holy Father doth set down the marks of heresy to wit, going out from the church, and want of unity among themselves, which proceed from not acknowledging one supreme and visible pastor and head under Christ. And so it being proved that protestants having neither succession of persons nor doctrine, nor universality of time or place, they cannot avoid the just note of heresy.

26. "Hitherto we have brought arguments to prove that Luther and all protestants are guilty of heresy against the negative precept of faith, which obligeth us, under pain of damnation, not to embrace any one error, contrary to any truth sufficiently propounded as testified or revealed by Almighty God; which were enough to make good, that among persons who disagree in any one point of faith, one part only can be saved: yet we will now prove, that whosoever erreth in any one point doth also break the affirmative precept of faith, whereby we are obliged positively to believe some revealed truth, with an infallible and supernatural faith, which is necessary to salvation, even *necessitate finis*, or *medii*, as divines speak, that is, so necessary, that not any, after he is come to the use of reason, was or can be saved without it, according to the words of the apostle, *without faith it is impossible to please God.*

27. "In the beginning of this chapter I showed, that to Christian catholic faith are required certainty, obscurity, prudence, and supernaturality; all which conditions we will prove to be wanting in the belief of protestants, even in those points which are true in themselves, and to which they yield assent, as happeneth in all those particulars wherein they agree with us; from whence it will follow, that they, wanting true Divine faith, want means absolutely necessary to salvation.

28. "And first, that their belief wanteth certainty, I prove, because they, denying the universal infallibility of the church, can have no certain ground to know what objects are revealed or testified by God. Holy Scripture is in itself most true and infallible; but without the direction and declaration of the

church, we can neither have certain means to know what Scripture is canonical, nor what translations be faithful, nor what is the true meaning of Scripture. Every protestant, as I suppose, is persuaded that his own opinions be true, and that he hath used such means as are wont to be prescribed for understanding the Scripture; as prayer, conferring of divers texts, &c., and yet their disagreements show, that some of them are deceived; and therefore it is clear, that they have no one certain ground whereon to rely for understanding of Scripture. And seeing they hold all the articles of faith, even concerning fundamental points, upon the selfsame ground of Scripture, interpreted, not by the church's authority, but according to some other rules, which, as experience of their contradictions teach, do sometimes fail; it is clear, that the ground of their faith is infallible in no point at all. And albeit sometimes it chance to hit on the truth, yet it is likewise apt to lead them to error: as all archeretics, believing some truths, and withal divers errors, upon the same ground and motive, have indeed no true Divine infallible faith, but only a fallible human opinion and persuasion; for if the ground upon which they rely were certain, it could never produce any error.

29. "Another cause of uncertainty in the faith of protestants must rise from their distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental; for since they acknowledge that every error in fundamental points destroyeth the substance of faith, and yet cannot determine what points be fundamental, it followeth, that they must remain uncertain whether or no they be not in some fundamental error, and so want the substance of faith, without which there can be no hope of salvation.

30. "And that he who erreth against any one revealed truth (as certainly some protestants must do, because contradictory propositions cannot both be true) doth lose all Divine faith, is a very true doctrine delivered by catholic divines with so general a consent, that the contrary is wont to be censured as temerarious. The angelical doctor St. Thomas proposeth this question, 'Whether he who denieth one article of faith may retain faith of other articles?' and resolves that he cannot; which he proveth (*argumento sed contra*) because, 'as deadly sin is opposite to charity, so to deny one article of faith is opposite to faith. But charity doth not remain with any one deadly sin; therefore faith doth not remain after the denial of any one article of faith.' Whereof he gives this further reason; 'Because,' saith he, 'the nature of every habit doth depend upon the formal motive and object thereof, which motive being taken away, the nature of the habit cannot remain. But the formal object of faith is the supreme truth, as it is manifested in Scriptures, and in the doctrine of the church, which proceeds from the same supreme verity. Whosoever therefore doth not rely upon the doctrine of the church, (which proceeds from the supreme verity manifested in Scriptures), as upon an infallible rule, he hath not the habit of faith, but believes those things which belong to the faith by some other means than by faith; as, if one should remember some conclusion, and not know the reason of that demonstration, it is clear that he hath not certain knowledge, but only opinion; now it is manifest, that he who relies on the doctrine of the church, as upon an infallible rule, will yield his assent to all that the church teacheth; for if among those things which she teacheth, he hold what he will, and doth not hold what he will not, he doth not rely upon the doctrine of the church, as upon an infallible rule, but only upon his own will. And so it is clear that an heretic, who with pertinacity denieth one article of faith, is not ready to follow the doctrine of the church in all things; and therefore it is manifest, that whosoever is an heretic in any one article of faith, concerning other articles hath not faith, but a kind of opinion, or his own will.' Thus far St. Thomas. And afterward, 'A man doth believe all the articles of faith, for one and the selfsame reason, to wit, for the prime verity proposed to us in the Scripture, understood aright according to the doctrine of the church; and therefore whosoever falls from this reason or motive is totally deprived of faith.' From this true doctrine we are to infer, that to retain or want the substance of faith doth not consist in the matter or multitude of the articles, but in the opposition against God's Divine testimony which is involved in every least error against faith. And since some protestants must needs err, and that they have no certain rule

to know why rather one than another, it manifestly follows, that none of them have any certainty for the substance of their faith in any one point. Moreover Dr. Potter being forced to confess, that the Roman church wants not the substance of faith, it follows that she doth not err in any one point against faith, because, as we have seen out of St. Thomas, every such error destroys the substance of faith. Now if the Roman church did not err in any one point of faith, it is manifest that protestants err in all those points wherein they are contrary to her. And this may suffice to prove that the faith of protestants wants infallibility.

31. "And now for the second condition of faith, I say, if protestants have certainty, they want obscurity, and so have not that faith, which, as the apostle saith, is of things not appearing, or not necessitating our understanding to an assent. For the whole edifice of the faith of protestants is settled on these two principles: these particular books are canonical Scripture; and the sense and meaning of these canonical Scriptures is clear and evident, at least in all points necessary to salvation. Now these principles being once supposed, it clearly followeth, that what protestants believe as necessary to salvation is evidently known by them to be true, by this argument: it is certain and evident, that whatsoever is contained in the word of God is true: but it is certain and evident, that these books in particular are the word of God: therefore it is certain and evident, that whatsoever is contained in these books is true. Which conclusion I take for a major in a second argument, and say thus: It is certain and evident, that whatsoever is contained in these books is true: but it is certain and evident, that such particular articles (for example, the Trinity, incarnation, original sin, &c.) are contained in these books: therefore it is certain and evident, that these particular objects are true. Neither will it avail you to say, that the said principles are not evident by natural discourse, but only to the 'eye of reason cleared by grace,' as you speak. For supernatural evidence no less (yea, rather more) drowns and excludes obscurity than natural evidence doth; neither can the party so enlightened be said voluntarily to captivate his understanding to that light, but rather his understanding is by a necessity made captive, and forced not to disbelieve what is presented by so clear a light: and therefore your imaginary faith is not the true faith defined by the apostles, but an invention of your own.

32. "That the faith of protestants wanted the third condition, which was prudence, is deduced from all that hitherto hath been said. What wisdom was it to forsake a church confessedly very ancient, and besides which there could be demonstrated no other visible church of Christ upon earth? a church acknowledged to want nothing necessary to salvation; endued with succession of bishops, with visibility and universality of time and place: a church which, if it be not the true church, her enemies cannot pretend to have any church, ordination, Scripture, succession, &c., and are forced, for their own sake, to maintain her perpetual existence and being. To leave, I say, such a church, and frame a community, without either unity or means to procure it; a church, which at Luther's first revolt had no larger extent than where his body was; a church without universality of time or place; a church, which can pretend no visibility or being, except only in that former church, which it opposeth; a church void of succession of persons or doctrine. What wisdom was it to follow such men as Luther, in an opposition against the visible church of Christ, begun upon mere passion? What wisdom is it to receive from us a church, ordination, Scriptures, personal succession, and not succession of doctrine? Is not this to verify the name of heresy, which signifieth election or choice? Whereby they cannot avoid that note of imprudency, or (as St. Austin calls it) foolishness, set down by him against the Manichees, and by me recited before: 'I would not,' saith he, 'believe the gospel, unless the authority of the church did move me. Those therefore whom I obeyed, saying, Believe the gospel, why should I not obey the same men saying unto me, Do not believe Manichæus (Luther, Calvin, &c.)? Choose what thou pleasest: if thou say, Believe the catholics, they warn me not to believe thee; wherefore if I believe them, I cannot believe thee. If thou say, Do not believe the cathohcs, thou shalt not do well in forcing me to the faith of Manichæus, because by the preaching

of catholics I believed the gospel itself. If thou say, 'You did well to believe them (catholics) commending the gospel; but you did not well to believe them discommending Manichæus; dost thou think me so very FOOLISH, that without any reason at all I should believe what thou wilt, and not believe what thou wilt not?' Nay, this holy Father is not content to call it foolishness, but mere madness, in these words: 'Why should I not most diligently inquire what Christ commanded, of those before all others by whose authority I was moved to believe that Christ commanded any good thing? Canst thou better declare to me what he said, whom I would not have thought to have been, or to be, if the belief thereof had been recommended by thee to me? This therefore I believed by fame, strengthened with celebrity, consent, antiquity. But every one may see that you, so few, so turbulent, so new, can produce nothing which deserves authority. What MADNESS is this Believe them, (catholics,) that we ought to believe Christ; but learn of us what Christ said. Why, I beseech thee? Surely if they (catholics) were not at all, and could not teach me any thing, I would more easily persuade myself that I were not to believe Christ, than I should learn any thing concerning him from any other than those by whom I believed him.' Lastly, I ask, what wisdom it could be to leave all visible churches, and consequently the true catholic church of Christ, which you confess cannot err in points necessary to salvation, and the Roman church, which you grant doth not err in fundamentals, and follow private men, who may err even in points necessary to salvation? Especially, if we add, that when Luther rose, there was no visible true catholic church besides that of Rome, and them who agreed with her; in which sense she was and is the only true church of Christ, and not capable of any error in faith. Nay, even Luther, who first opposed the Roman church, yet coming to dispute against other heretics, he is forced to give the lie both to his own words and deeds, in saying, 'We freely confess that in the papacy there are many good things worthy the name of Christian, which have come from them to us; namely, we confess that in the papacy there is true Scripture, true baptism, the true sacrament of the altar, the true keys for the remission of sins, the true office of preaching, true Catechism, as our Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, Articles of Faith,' &c. And afterward, 'I avouch, that under the papacy there is true Christianity, yea, the kernel and marrow of Christianity, and many pious and great saints.' And again he affirmeth, that 'the church of Rome hath the true spirit, gospels, faith, baptism, sacraments, the keys, the office of preaching, prayer, Holy Scripture, and whatsoever Christianity ought to have.' And a little before, 'I hear and see, that they bring in Anabaptism only to this end, that they may spite the pope, as men that will receive nothing from antichrist, no otherwise than the sacramentaries do, who therefore believe only bread and wine to be in the sacrament, merely in hatred against the bishop of Rome; and they think, that by this means they shall overcome the papacy. Verily these men rely upon a weak ground; for by this means they must deny the whole Scripture, and the office of preaching. For we have all these things from the pope, otherwise we must go make a new Scripture.' 'O truth, more forcible' (as St. Austin says) 'to wring out confession than is any rack or torment!' And so we may truly say with Moses, *Inimici nostri sunt Judices, Our very enemies give sentence for us*.

33. "Lastly, since your faith wanteth certainty and prudence, it is easy to infer that it wants the fourth condition, supernaturality. For being but an human persuasion or opinion, it is not in nature or essence supernatural. And being imprudent and rash, it cannot proceed from Divine motion and grace; and therefore it if neither supernatural in itself, nor in the cause from which it proceedeth.

34. "Since therefore we have proved that whosoever errs against any one point of faith loseth all Divine faith, even concerning those other articles wherein he doth not err; and that although he could still retain true faith for some points, yet any one error in whatsoever other matter concerning faith is a grievous sin; it clearly follows, that when two or more hold different doctrines concerning faith and religion, there can be but one part saved. For declaring of which truth if catholics be charged with want of charity and modesty, and be accused of rashness, ambition, and fury, as Dr. Potter is very free in this kind; I desire every one to ponder the words of St. Chrysostom, who teacheth, that every least error

overthrows all faith, and whosoever is guilty thereof, is, in the church, like one who in the commonwealth forgeth false coin. 'Let them hear,' saith the holy Father, 'what St. Paul saith; namely, that they who brought in some small error had overthrown the gospel. For to show how small a thing ill mingled doth corrupt the whole, he said that the gospel was subverted. For as he who clips a little of the stamp from the king's money makes the whole piece of no value; so whosoever takes away the least particle of sound faith is wholly corrupted, always going from that beginning to worse things. Where then are they who condemn us as contentious persons because we cannot agree with heretics; and do often say, that there is no difference betwixt us and them, but that our disagreement proceeds from ambition to domineer?" And thus having showed that protestants want true faith, it remaineth that, according to my first design, I examine whether they do not also want charity, as respects a man's self.

THE

ANSWER TO THE SIXTH CHAPTER:

That Protestants are not heretics.

AD § 1. He that will accuse any one man, much more any great multitude of men, of any great and horrible crime, should in all reason and justice take care that the greatness of his evidence do equal, if not exceed, the quality of the crime. And such an accusation you would here make show of, by pretending, first, "to lay such grounds of it as are either already proved, or else yielded on all sides;" and, after, to raise a firm and stable structure of convincing arguments upon them. But both these I find to be mere and vain pretences; and, having considered this chapter also without prejudice or passion, as I did the former, I am enforced, by the light of truth, to pronounce your whole discourse a painted and ruinous building, upon a weak and sandy foundation.

2. Ad § 2, 3. First, for your grounds: a great part of them is falsely said to be either proved or granted. It is true, indeed, that "man by his natural wit or industry could never have attained to the knowledge of God's will to give him a supernatural and eternal happiness," nor of the means by which his pleasure was to bestow this happiness upon him. And therefore your first ground is good, "that it was requisite his understanding should be enabled to apprehend that end and means by a knowledge supernatural." I say this is good, if you mean by knowledge an apprehension or belief. But if you take the word properly and exactly, it is both false; for faith is not knowledge, no more than three is four, but eminently contained in it; so that he that knows believes, and something more, but he that believes many times does not know—nay, if he doth barely and merely believe, he doth never know; and besides, it is retracted by yourself presently, where you require "that the object of faith must be both naturally and supernaturally unknown." And again, in the next page, where you say "Faith differs from science in regard of the object's obscurity." For that science and knowledge, properly taken, are synonymous terms, and that a knowledge of a thing absolutely unknown is a plain implicancy, I think, are things so plain that you will not require any proof of them.

3. But then, whereas you add, "that if such a knowledge were no more than probable, it could not be able sufficiently to overbear our will, and encounter with human probabilities, being backed with the strength of flesh and blood; and therefore conclude, that it was further necessary that this supernatural knowledge should be most certain and infallible:" to this I answer, that I do heartily acknowledge and believe the articles of our faith to be in themselves truths, as certain and infallible as the very common principles of geometry and metaphysics. But that there is required of us a knowledge of them, and adherence to them, as certain as that of sense or science; that such a certainty is required of as under pain of damnation, so that no man can hope to be in the state of salvation, but he that finds in himself such a degree of faith, such a strength of adherence; this I have already demonstrated to be a great error, and of dangerous and pernicious consequence. And because I am more and more confirmed in my persuasion that the truth which I there delivered is of great and singular use, I will here confirm it with more reasons. And to satisfy you that this is no singularity of my own, my margent presents you with a protestant divine of great authority, and no way singular in his opinions, and who hath long since preached and justified the same doctrine.

4. I say that every text of Scripture which makes mention of any that were *weak*, or any that were *strong in faith;* of any that were *of little*, or any that were *of great faith;* of any that *abounded*, or any that were *rich* in faith; of *increasing, growing, rooting, grounding, establishing, confirming in faith;* every such text

is a demonstrative refutation of this vain fancy, proving that faith, even true and saving faith, is not a thing consisting in such an indivisible point of perfection as you make it, but capable of augmentation and diminution. Every prayer you make to God to increase your faith, (or if you conceive such a prayer derogatory from the perfection of your faith,) the apostles praying to Christ *to increase their faith*, is a convincing argument of the same conclusion. Moreover, if this doctrine of yours were true, then, seeing not any the least doubting can consist with a most infallible certainty, it will follow that every least doubting in any matter of faith, though resisted and involuntary, is a damnable sin, absolutely destructive, so long as it lasts, of all true and saving faith; which you are so far from granting, that you make it no sin at all, but only an occasion of merit: and if you should esteem it a sin, then must you acknowledge, contrary to your own principles, that there are actual sins merely involuntary. The same is furthermore invincibly confirmed by every deliberate sin that any Christian commits, by any progress in charity that he makes. For seeing, as St. John assures us, *our faith is the victory which overcomes the world*, certainly if the faith of all true believers were perfect—and if true faith be capable of no imperfection, if all faith be a knowledge most certain and infallible, all faith must be perfect; for the most imperfect that is, according to your doctrine, if it be true, must be "most certain," and sure the most perfect that is cannot be more than most certain—then certainly their victory over the world, and therefore over the flesh, and therefore over sin, must of necessity be perfect, and so it should be impossible for any true believer to commit any deliberate sin; and therefore he that commits any sin must not think himself a true believer. Besides, seeing faith worketh by charity, and charity is the effect of faith, certainly if the cause were perfect, the effect would be perfect; and consequently, as you make no degrees in faith, so there would be none in charity, and so no man could possibly make any progress in it, but all true believers should be equal in charity, as in faith you make them equal; and from thence it would follow unavoidably, that whosoever finds in himself any true faith, must presently persuade himself that he is perfect in charity; and whosoever, on the other side, discovers in his charity any imperfection, must not believe that he hath any true faith. These, you see, are strange and portentous consequences; and yet the deduction of them from your doctrine is clear and apparent; which shows this doctrine of yours, which you would fain have true, that there might be some necessity of your church's infallibility, to be indeed plainly repugnant, not only to truth, but even to all religion and piety, and fit for nothing but to make men negligent of making any progress in faith or charity. And therefore I must entreat and adjure you either to discover unto me (which I take God to witness I cannot perceive) some fallacy in my reasons against it, or never hereafter to open your mouth in defence of it.

5. As for that one single reason which you produce to confirm it, it will appear upon examination to be resolved finally into a groundless assertion of your own, contrary to all truth and experience, and that is, "that no degree of faith less than a most certain and infallible knowledge, can be able sufficiently to overbear our will, and encounter with human probabilities, being backed with the strength of flesh and blood." For who sees not that many millions in the world forego many times their present ease and pleasure, undergo great and toilsome labours, encounter great difficulties, adventure upon great dangers, and all this not upon any certain expectation, but upon a probable hope of same future gain and commodity, and that not infinite and eternal, but finite and temporal? Who sees not that many men abstain from many things they exceedingly desire, not upon any certain assurance, but a probable fear of danger that may come after? What man ever was there so madly in love with a present penny, but that he would willingly spend it upon any little hope, that by doing so he might gain a hundred thousand pounds? And I would fain know, "what gay probabilities" you could devise to dissuade from this resolution. And if you can devise none, what reason then or sense is there, but that a probable hope of infinite and eternal happiness, provided for all those that obey Christ Jesus, and much more a firm faith, though not so certain, in some sort, as sense or science, may be able to sway our will to obedience, and

encounter with all those temptations which flesh and blood can suggest to avert us from it? Men may talk their pleasure of an absolute and most infallible certainty, but did they generally believe that obedience to Christ were the only way to present and eternal felicity, but as firmly and undoubtedly as that there is such a city as Constantinople, nay, but as much as Cæsar's Commentaries, or the History of Sallust; I believe the lives of most men, both papists and protestants, would be better than they are. Thus therefore out of your own words I argue against you: he that requires to true faith an absolute and infallible certainty, for this only reason, "because any less degree could not be able to overbear our will," &c., imports, that if a less degree of faith may be able to do this, then a less degree of faith may be true, and Divine, and saving faith: but experience shows, and reason confirms, that a firm faith, though not so certain as sense or science, may be able to encounter and overcome our will and affections: and therefore it follows, from your own reason, that faith, which is not a most certain and infallible knowledge, may be true, and Divine, and saving faith.

6. All these reasons I have employed to show, that such a most certain and infallible faith as here you talk of, is not so necessary, but that without such a high degree of it, it is possible to please God. And therefore the doctrines delivered by you, sect. 25, are most presumptuous and uncharitable, viz. "That such a most certain and infallible faith is necessary to salvation," *necessitate finis* or *medii;* so necessary, that "after a man is come to the use of reason, no man ever was or can be saved without it." Wherein you boldly intrude into the judgment-seat of God, and damn men for breaking laws, not of God's, but your own making. But withal you clearly contradict yourself, not only where you affirm, "that your faith depends finally upon the tradition of age to age, of father to son," which cannot be a fit ground, but only for a moral assurance; nor only where you pretend, "that not alone hearing and seeing," but also "histories, letters, relations of many," (which certainly are things not certain and infallible) are yet foundations good enough to support your faith: which doctrine if it were good and allowable, protestants might then hope, that there histories, and letters, and relations, might also pass for means sufficient of a sufficient certainty, and that they should not be excluded from salvation for want of such a certainty. But indeed the pressure of the present difficulty compelled you to speak here what I believe you will not justify, and with a pretty tergiversation to show Dr. Potter your means of moral certainty; whereas the objection was, that you had no means or possibility of infallible certainty, for which you are plainly at as great a loss, and as far to seek, as any of your adversaries. And therefore it concerns you highly not to damn others for want of it, lest you involve yourselves in the same condemnation; according to those terrible words of St. Paul, *Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things*, &c. In this therefore you plainly contradict yourself. And lastly most plainly, in saying as you do here, you contradict and retract your pretence of charity to protestants in the beginning of your book: for there you make profession, that "you have no assurance, but that protestants, dying protestants, may possibly die with contrition, and be saved:" and here you are very peremptory, that "they cannot but want a means absolute necessary to salvation, and, wanting that, cannot but be damned."

7. The third condition you require to faith is, that our assent to Divine truths should "not only be unknown and unevident by any human discourse," but that "absolutely also it should be obscure in itself, and, ordinarily speaking, be void even of supernatural evidence." Which words must have a very favourable construction, or else they will not be sense. For who can make anything of these words taken properly, that "faith must be an unknown, unevident assent, or an assent absolutely obscure?" I had always thought that known and unknown, obscure and evident, had been affections not of our assent, but the object of it; not of our belief, but the thing believed. For well may we assent to a thing unknown, obscure, or unevident; but that our assent itself should be called therefore unknown or obscure, seems to me as great an impropriety, as if I should say, your sight were green or blue, because you see something

that is so. In other places therefore I answer your words, but here I must answer your meaning: which I conceive to be, that it is necessary to faith, that the objects of it, the points which we believe, should not be so evidently certain, as to necessitate our understanding to an assent, that so there might be some merit in faith, as you love to speak (who will not receive, no, not from God himself, but a pennyworth for a penny), but as we, some obedience in it, which can hardly have place where there is no possibility of disobedience; as there is not, where the understanding does all, and the will nothing. Now seeing the religion of protestants, though it be much more credible than yours, yet is not pretended to have the absolute evidence of sense or demonstration; therefore I might let this doctrine pass without exception, for any prejudice that can redound to us by it. But yet I must not forbear to tell you, that your discourse proves indeed this condition requisite to the merit, but yet not to the essence of faith: without it faith were not an act of obedience, but yet faith may be faith without it; and this you must confess, unless you will say either the apostles believed not the whole gospel which they preached, or that they were not eye witnesses of a great part of it; unless you will question St. John for saying, *That which we have seen with our eyes, and which our hands have handled*, &c., *declare we unto you:* nay, our Saviour himself for saying, *Thomas, because thou seest, thou believest; blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed*. Yet if you will say, that in respect of the things which they saw, the apostles' assent was not pure and proper and mere faith, but somewhat more, an assent containing faith, but superadding to it, I will not contend with you; for it will be a contention about words. But then again I must crave leave to tell you, that the requiring this condition is, in my judgment, a plain revocation of the former. For had you made the matter of faith either naturally or supernaturally evident, it might have been a fitly attempered and duly proportioned object for an absolute certainty natural or supernatural; but requiring as you do, "that faith should be an absolute knowledge of a thing not absolutely known, an infallible certainty of a thing, which though it is in itself, yet is it not made appear to us to be, infallibly certain," to my understanding you speak impossibilities. And truly for one of your religion to do so, is but a good decorum. For the matter and object of your faith being so full of contradictions, a contradictious faith may very well become a contradictious religion. Your faith, therefore, if you please to have it so, let it be a free necessitated, certain uncertain, evident obscure, prudent and foolish, natural and supernatural unnatural assent. But they which are unwilling to believe nonsense themselves, or persuade others to do so, it is but reason they should make the faith, wherewith they believe, an intelligible, compossible, consistent thing, and not define it by repugnances. Now nothing is more repugnant, than that a man should be requited to give most certain credit unto that which cannot be made appear most certainly credible; and if it appear to him to be so, then is it not obscure that it is so. For if you speak of an acquired, rational, discursive faith, certainly these reasons, which make the object seem credible, must be the cause of it; and consequently the strength and firmity of my assent must rise and fall, together with the apparent credibility of the object. If you speak of a supernatural infused faith, then you either suppose it infused by the former means, and then that which was said before must be said again; for whatsoever effect is wrought merely by means, must bear proportion to, and cannot exceed, the virtue of the means by which it is wrought. As nothing by water can be made more cold than water, nor by fire more hot than fire, nor by honey more sweet than honey, nor by gall more bitter than gall: or if you will suppose it infused without means, then that power which infuseth into the understanding assent, which bears analogy to sight in the eye, must also infuse evidence, that is, visibility into the object: and look what degree of assent is infused into the understanding, at least the same degree of evidence must be infused into the object. And for you to require a strength of credit beyond the appearance of the object's credibility, is all one as if you should require me to go ten mile an hour upon a horse that will go but five; to discern a man certainly through a mist or cloud, that makes him not certainly discernible; to hear a sound more clearly than it is audible; to understand a thing more fully than it is intelligible: and he that doth so, I may well expect that his next injunction will be,

that I must see something that is invisible, hear something inaudible, understand something that is wholly unintelligible. For he that demands ten of me, knowing I have but five, does in effect as if he demanded five, knowing that I have none: and by like reason, you requiring that I should see things further than they are visible, require I should see something invisible; and in requiring that I believe something more firmly than it is made to me evidently credible, you require in effect that I believe something which appears to me incredible, and while it does so. I deny not but that I am bound to believe the truth of many texts of Scripture, the sense whereof is to me obscure; and the truth of many articles of faith, the manner whereof is obscure, and to human understandings incomprehensible; but then it is to be observed, that not the sense of such texts, nor the manner of these things, is that which I am bound to believe, but the truth of them. But that I should believe the truth of anything, the truth whereof cannot be made evident with an evidence proportionable to the degree of faith required of me, this I say for any man to be bound to do is unjust and unreasonable, because to do it is impossible.

8. Ad. §§ 4-12. Yet though I deny that it is required of us to be certain in the highest degree, infallibly certain of the truth of the things which we believe, for this were to know, and not believe, neither is it possible, unless our evidence of it, be it natural or supernatural, were of the highest degree; yet I deny not but we ought to be and may be infallibly certain that we are to believe the religion of Christ. For first, this is most certain, that we are in all things to do according to wisdom and reason, rather than against it. Secondly, this is as certain, that wisdom and reason require that we should believe these things which are by many degrees more credible and probable than the contrary. Thirdly, this is as certain, that to every man, who considers impartially what great things may be said for the truth of Christianity, and what poor things they are which may be said against it, either for any other religion, or for none at all, it cannot but appear by many degrees more credible, that the Christian religion is true, than the contrary. And from all these premises, this conclusion evidently follows, that it is infallibly certain that we are firmly to believe the truth of the Christian religion.

9. Your discourse therefore touching the fourth requisite to faith, which is prudence, I admit, so far as to grant, 1, that if we were required to believe with certainty (I mean a moral certainty) things no way represented as infallible and certain, (I mean morally), an unreasonable obedience were required of us. And so likewise were it, were we required to believe as absolutely certain that which is no way represented to us as absolutely certain. 2. That whom God obligeth to believe any thing, he will not fail to furnish their understandings with such inducements as are sufficient (if they be not negligent or perverse) to persuade them to believe. 3. That there is an abundance of arguments exceedingly credible, inducing men to believe the truth of Christianity; I say so credible, that though they cannot make us evidently see what we believe, yet they evidently convince, that in true wisdom and prudence the articles of it deserve credit, and ought to be accepted as things revealed by God. 4. That without such reasons and inducements, our choice even of the true faith is not to be commended as prudent, but to be condemned of rashness and levity.

10. But then for your making prudence not only a commendation of a believer, and a justification of his faith, but also essential to it, and part of the definition of it, in that questionless you were mistaken, and have done as if being to say what a man is, you should define him, a reasonable creature that hath skill in astronomy. For as all astronomers are men, but all men are not astronomers, and therefore astronomy ought not to be put into the definition of man, where nothing should have place but what agrees to all men; so though all that are truly wise (that is, wise for eternity) will believe aright, yet many may believe aright which are not wise. I could wish with all my heart, as Moses did, *that all the Lord's people could prophecy;* that all that believe the true religion *were able* (according to St. Peter's injunction) *to give a reason of the hope that is in them*, a reason why they hope for eternal happiness by this way rather than any other; neither do I think it any great difficulty, that men of ordinary capacities, if they would give

their mind to it, might quickly be enabled to do so. But should I affirm, that all true believers can do so, I suppose it would be as much against experience and modesty, as it is against truth and charity to say as you do, "that they which cannot do so, either are not at all, or to no purpose, true believers." And thus we see that the foundations you build upon are ruinous and deceitful, and so unfit to support your fabric that they destroy one another. I come now to show that your arguments to prove protestants heretics are all of the same quality with your former grounds; which I will do, by opposing clear and satisfying answers in order to them.

11. Ad § 13. To the first, then, delivered by you, sect. 13, "that protestants must be heretics, because they opposed divers truths propounded for Divine by the visible church;" I answer, It is not heresy to oppose any truth propounded by the church, but only such a truth as is an essential part of the gospel of Christ. 2. The doctrines which protestants opposed were not truths, but plain and impious falsehoods. Neither, thirdly, were they propounded as truths by the visible church, but only by a part of it, and that a corrupted part.

12. Ad. § 14. The next argument, in the next particle, tells us, "that every error against any doctrine revealed by God is damnable heresy: now either protestants or the Roman church must err against the word of God: but the Roman church we grant (perforce) doth not err damnably, neither can she, because she is the catholic church, which we (you say) confess cannot err damnably: therefore Protestants must err against God's word, and consequently are guilty of formal heresy." Whereunto I answer plainly, that there be in this argument almost as many falsehoods as assertions. For neither is every error against any doctrine revealed by God a damnable heresy, unless it be revealed publicly and plainly, with a command that all should believe it. 2. Dr. Potter no where grants, that the errors of the Roman church are "not in themselves damnable," though he hopes by accident they may not actually damn some men amongst you; and this you yourself confess in divers places of your book, where you tell us, that he "allows no hope of salvation to those amongst you whom ignorance cannot excuse." 3. You beg the question twice in taking for granted, first, that "the Roman church is the truly catholic church;" which without much favour can hardly pass for a part of it: and again, that the "catholic church cannot fall into any error of itself damnable;" for it may do so, and still be the catholic church, if it retain those truths which may be an antidote against the malignity of this error, to those that held it out of a simple unaffected ignorance. Lastly, though the thing be true, yet I might well require some proof of it from you, that either protestants or the Roman church must err against God's word. For if their contradiction be your only reason, then also you or the Dominicians must be heretics, because you contradict one another as much as protestants and papists.

13. Ad § 15. The third argument pretends, that "you have showed already, that the visible church is judge of controversies, and therefore infallible; from whence you suppose it follows, that to oppose her is to oppose God." To which I answer, that you have said only, and not showed, that "the visible church is judge of controversies." And, indeed, how can she be judge of them, if she cannot decide them? and how can she decide them, if it be a question whether she be judge of them? That which is questioned itself, cannot with any sense be pretended to be fit to decide other questions; and much less this question, Whether it have authority to judge and decide all questions? 2. If she were judge, it would not follow that she were infallible; for we have many judges in our courts of judicature, yet none infallible. Nay, you cannot with any modesty deny, that every man in the world ought to judge for himself what religion is truest; and yet you will not say that every man is infallible. 3. If the church were supposed infallible, yet it would not follow at all, much less manifestly, that to oppose her declaration is to oppose God; unless you suppose also, that as she is infallible, so by her opposers she is known or believed to be so. Lastly, if all this were true, (as it is all most false,) yet were it to little purpose, seeing you have omitted to prove that the visible church is the Roman.

14. Ad § 16. Instead of a fourth argument, this is presented to us: "That if Luther were an heretic, then they that agreed with him must be so." And that Luther was a formal heretic, you endeavour to prove by this most formal syllogism: "To say the visible church is not universal, is properly an heresy: but Luther's reformation was not universal; therefore it cannot be excused from formal heresy." Whereunto I answer, first, to the first part, that it is no way impossible that Luther, had he been the inventor and first broacher of a false doctrine, (as he was not,) might have been a formal heretic, and yet that those who follow him may be only so materially and improperly, and indeed no heretics. Your own men out of St. Austin distinguish between hæretici, et hæreticorum sequaces: and you yourself, though you pronounce "the leaders among the Arians formal heretics," yet confess, that Salvian was at least doubtful, whether these Arians, who in simplicity followed their teachers, might not be excused by ignorance. And about this suspension of his you also seem suspended; for you neither approve nor condemn it. Secondly, to the second part I say, that had you not presumed upon your ignorance in logic, as well as metaphysics and school divinity, you would never have obtruded upon us this rope of sand for a formal syllogism. It is even cousin-german to this: To deny the resurrection, is properly an heresy: but Luther's reformation was not universal; therefore it cannot be excused from formal heresy: or to this: To say the visible church is not universal, is properly an heresy: but the preaching of the gospel at the beginning was not universal; therefore it cannot be excused from formal heresy. For as he whose reformation is but particular may yet not deny the resurrection, so may he also not deny the church's universality. And as the apostles, who preached the gospel in the beginning, did believe the church universal, though their preaching at the beginning was not so; so Luther also might and did believe the church universal, though his reformation were but particular. I say, he did believe it universal, even in your own sense, that is, universal *de jure*, though not *de facto*. And as for universality in fact, he believed the church much more universal than his reformation; for he did conceive, (as appears by your own allegations out of him,) that not only the part reformed was the true church, but also that they were part of it who needed reformation. Neither did he ever pretend to make a new church, but to reform the old one. Thirdly and lastly, to the first proposition of this unsyllogistical syllogism, I answer, That to say the true church is not always *de facto* universal, is so far from being an heresy, that it is a certain truth known to all those that know the world, and what religions possess far the greater part of it. Donatus therefore was not to blame for saying, that the church might possibly be confined to Afric; but for saying, without ground, that then it was so. And St. Austin, as he was in the right in thinking that the church was then extended further than Afric; so was he in the wrong, if he thought of necessity it always must be so; but most palpably mistaken in conceiving that it was then spread over the whole earth, and known to all nations; which, if passion did not trouble you, and make you forget how lately almost half the world was discovered, and in what estate it was then found, you would very easily see and confess.

15. Ad § 17. In the next section you pretend, "that you have no desire to prosecute the similitude of Protestants with the Donatists;" and yet you do it with as much spite and malice as could well be devised, but in vain: for Lucilla might do ill in promoting the sect of the Donatists, and yet the mother and the daughter, whom you glance at, might do well in "ministering influence" (as you phrase it) "to protestants in England." Unless you will conclude, because one woman did one thing ill, therefore no woman can do any thing well; or because it was ill done to promote one sect, therefore it must be ill done to maintain any.

16. "The Donatists might do ill in calling the chair of Rome the chair of pestilence, and the Roman church an harlot;" and yet the state of the church being altered, protestants might do well to do so: and therefore though St. Austin "might perhaps have reason to persecute the Donatists for detracting from the church," and calling her harlot, when she was not so; yet you may have none to threaten Dr. Potter that you would persecute him, (as the application of this place intimates you would,) if it were in your

power; plainly showing that you are a cursed cow, though your horns be short, seeing the Roman church is not now what it was in St. Austin's time. And hereof the conclusion of your own book affords us a very pregnant testimony; where you tell us out of St. Austin, that one grand impediment, which among many kept the seduced followers of the faction of Donatus from the church's communion, was a calumny raised against the catholics, that "they did set some strange thing upon their altar. To how many," saith St. Austin, "did the report of ill tongues shut up the way to enter, who said, that we put I know not what upon the altar?" Out of detestation of the calumny, and just indignation against it, he would not so much as name the impiety wherewith they were charged; and therefore by a rhetorical figure calls it, "I know not what." But compare with him Optatus, writing of the same matter, and you shall plainly perceive that this "I know not what" pretended to be set upon the altar, was indeed a picture, which the Donatists (knowing how detestable a thing it was to all Christians at that time, to set up any pictures in a church to worship them, as your new fashion is) bruited abroad to be done in the churches of the catholic church. But what answer do St. Austin and Optatus make to this accusation? Do they confess and maintain it? Do they say, as you would now, It is true, we do set pictures upon our altar, and that not only for ornament or memory, but for worship also; but we do well to do so; and this ought not to trouble you, or affright you from our communion? What other answer your church could now make to such an objection is very hard to imagine; and therefore were your doctrine the same with the doctrine of the Fathers in this point, they must have answered so likewise. But they, to the contrary, not only deny the crime, but also abhor and detest it. To little purpose therefore do you hunt after these poor shadows of resemblances between us and the Donatists, unless you could show an exact resemblance between the present church of Rome and the ancient; which seeing by this and many other particulars it is demonstrated to be impossible, that church, which was then a virgin, may be now a harlot, and that which was detraction in the Donatists may be in protestants a just accusation.

17. As ill success have you in comparing Dr. Potter with Tyconius, whom as "St. Austin finds fault with for continuing in the Donatists' separation, having forsaken the ground of it, the doctrine of the church's perishing; so you condemn the Doctor for continuing in their communion, who hold," as you say, "the very same heresy." But if this were indeed the doctrine of the Donatists, how is it that you say presently after, "that the protestants, who hold the church of Christ perished, were worse than the Donatists, who said that the church remained at least in Africa?" These things methinks hang not well together. But to let this pass: the truth is, this difference, for which you would fain raise such a horrible dissension between Dr. Potter and his brethren, if it be well considered, is only in words and the manner of expression; they affirming only that the church perished from its integrity, and fell into many corruptions, which he denies not; and the Doctor denying only that it fell from its essence, and became no church at all, which they affirm not.

18. These therefore are but velitations, and you would seem to make but small account of them. But the main point, you say, is, that since Luther's "reformed church was not in being for divers centuries before Luther, and yet was in the apostles' time, they must of necessity affirm heretically with the Donatists, that the true unspotted church of Christ perished, and that she, which remained on earth, was (O blasphemy!) an harlot." By which words it seems you are resolute perpetually to confound "true" and "unspotted;" and to put no difference between a corrupted church, and none at all. But what is this, but to make no difference between a diseased and a dead man? Nay, what is it but to contradict yourselves, who cannot deny but that sins are as great stains, and spots, and deformities, in the sight of God, as errors; and confess your church to be a congregation of men, whereof every particular, not one excepted, (and consequently the generality, which is nothing but a collection of them,) is polluted and defiled with sin? You proceed,

19. But say, "the same heresy follows out of Dr. Potter and other protestants, that the church may err in points not fundamental; because we have showed that every error against any revealed truth is heresy and damnable, whether the matter be great or small: and how can the church more truly he said to perish, than when she is permitted to maintain damnable heresy? Besides, we will hereafter prove, that by every act of heresy all Divine faith is lost; and to maintain a true church without any faith, is to fancy a living man without life." *Ans*. What you have said before, hath been answered before; and what you shall say hereafter, shall be confuted hereafter. But if it be such a certain ground, that "every error against any one revealed truth is a damnable heresy," then, I hope, I shall have your leave to subsume, that the Dominicans in your account must hold a damnable heresy, who hold an error against the immaculate conception; which you must needs esteem a revealed truth, or otherwise why are you so urgent and importunate to have it defined, seeing your rule is, "Nothing may be defined, unless it be first revealed?" But, without your leave, I will make bold to conclude, that, if either that or the contrary assertion be a revealed truth, you or they, choose you whether, must without contradiction hold a damnable heresy; if this ground be true, that every contradiction of a revealed truth is such. And now I dare say, for fear of inconvenience, you will begin to temper the crudeness of your former assertion, and tell us, that neither of you are heretics, because the truth against which you err, though revealed is not sufficiently propounded. And so say I, neither is your doctrine, which protestants contradict, sufficiently propounded. For though it be plain enough that your church proposeth it, yet still, methinks, it is as plain, that your church's proposition is not sufficient; and I desire you would not say, but prove the contrary. Lastly, to your question, "How can the church more truly be said to perish, than when she is permitted to maintain a damnable heresy?" I answer, She may be more truly said to perish, when she is not only permitted to do so, but *de facto* doth maintain a damnable heresy. Again, she may be more truly said to perish, when she falls into an heresy which is not only damnable in itself, and *ex natura rei*, as you speak, but such an heresy the belief of whose contrary truth is necessary, not only *necessitate præcepti*, but *medii*, and therefore the heresy so absolutely and indispensably destructive of salvation, that no ignorance can excuse it, nor any general repentance, without a dereliction of it, can beg a pardon for it. Such an heresy if the church should fall into, it might be more truly said to perish, than if it fell only into some heresy of its own nature damnable. For in that state all the members of it, without exception, all without mercy, must needs perish for ever: in this, although those that might see the truth and would not, cannot upon any good ground hope for salvation, yet without question it might send many souls to heaven, who would gladly have embraced the truth, but that they wanted means to discover it. Thirdly and lastly, she may yet be more truly said to perish, when she apostates from Christ absolutely, or rejects even those truths, out of which her heresies may be reformed; as if she should directly deny *Jesus to be the Christ*, or the Scripture to be the word of God. Towards which state of perdition it may well be feared that the church of Rome doth somewhat incline, by her superinducing upon the rest of her errors the doctrine of her own infallibility, whereby her errors are made incurable; and by her pretending the Scripture is to be interpreted according to her doctrine, and not her doctrine to be judged of by Scripture, whereby she makes the Scripture uneffectual for her reformation.

20. Ad § 18. I was very glad when I heard you say, "the Holy Scripture and ancient Fathers do assign separation from the visible church as a mark of heresy;" for I was in good hope that no Christian would so belie the Scripture as to say so of it, unless he could have produced some one text at least wherein this was plainly affirmed, or from whence it might be undoubtedly and undeniably collected. For assure yourself, good sir, it is a very heinous crime to say, *Thus saith the Lord when the Lord doth not say so*. I expected therefore some Scripture should have been alleged, wherein it should have been said, Whosoever separates from the Roman church is an heretic: or, The Roman church is infallible, or the guide of faith; or at least, There shall be always some visible church infallible in matters of faith. Some such

direction as this I hoped for; and, I pray, consider whether I had not reason. The evangelists and apostles, who wrote the New Testament, we all suppose were good men, and very desirous to direct us the surest and plainest way to heaven; we suppose them likewise very sufficiently instructed by the Spirit of God in all the necessary points of the Christian faith, and therefore certainly not ignorant of this *unum necessarium*, this most necessary point of all others, without which, as you pretend and teach, all faith is no faith; that is, that the church of Rome was designed by God the guide of faith. We suppose them, lastly, wise men, especially being assisted by the Spirit of wisdom, and such as knew that a doubtful and questionable guide was for men's direction as good as none at all. And after all these propositions, which I presume no good Christian will call into question, is it possible that any Christian heart can believe, that not one amongst them all should, *ad rei memoriam*, write this necessary doctrine plainly, so much as once? Certainly, in all reason they had provided much better for the good of Christians if they had wrote this, though they had written nothing else. Methinks the evangelists, undertaking to write the gospel of Christ, could not possibly have omitted any one of them this most necessary point of faith, had they known it necessary (St. Luke especially, who plainly professes, that *his intent was to write all things necessary*). Methinks St. Paul, writing to the Romans, could not but have congratulated this their privilege to them! Methinks, instead of saying, *Your faith is spoken of all the world over*, (which you have no reason to be very proud of; for he says the very same thing to the Thessalonians,) he could not have failed to have told them, once at least in plain terms that their faith was the rule for all the world for ever. But then sure he would have forborne to put them in fear of an impossibility, as he doth in his eleventh chapter, that they also, nay, the whole church of the Gentiles, "if they did not look to their standing, might fall away to infidelity," as the Jews had done. Methinks, in all his other epistles, at least in some, at least in one of them, he could not have failed to have given the world this direction had he known it to be a true one, that all men were to be guided by the church of Rome, and none to separate from it under pain of damnation. Methinks, writing so often of heretics and antichrist, he should have given the world this (as you pretend) only sure preservative from them. How was it possible that St. Peter, writing two catholic epistles, mentioning his own departure, writing to preserve Christians in the faith, should in neither of them commend them to the guidance of his pretended successors, the bishops of Rome! How was it possible that St. James and St. Jude, in their catholic epistles, should not give this catholic direction? Methinks St. John, instead of saying *He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*, (the force of which direction your glosses do quite enervate, and make unavailable to discern who are the sons of God,) should have said, He that adheres to the doctrine of the Roman church, and lives according to it, he is a good Christian, and by this mark ye shall know him! What man, not quite out of his wits, if he consider, as he should, the pretended necessity of this doctrine, that without the belief hereof no man ordinarily can be saved, can possibly force himself to conceive that all these good and holy men, so desirous of men's salvation, and so well assured of it, (as it is pretended,) should be so deeply and affectedly silent in it, and not one of them to say it plainly so much as once, but leave it to be collected from uncertain principles, by many more uncertain consequences? Certainly, he that can judge so uncharitably of them, it is no marvel if he censure other inferior servants of Christ as atheists and hypocrites and what he pleases. Plain places therefore I did and had reason to look for, when I heard you say, "the Holy Scripture assigns separation from the visible church as a mark of heresy." But instead hereof what have you brought us but more impertinencies! St. John said of some who pretended to be Christians, and were not so, and therefore, when it was for their advantage, forsook their profession, *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us they would do doubt have continued with us*. Of some, who before the decree of the council to the contrary, were persuaded, and accordingly taught, that the convert Gentiles were to keep to the law of Moses, it is said in the Acts, *Some who went out from us*. And again, St. Paul in the same book forewarns the Ephesians, that *out of them should arise men speaking perverse things*. And from these

places, which it seems are the plainest you have, you collect, "that separation from the visible church is assigned by Scripture as a mark of heresy." Which is certainly a strange and unheard of strain of logic; unless you will say, that every text, wherein it is said, that somebody goes out from somebody, affords an argument for this purpose: for the first place there is no certainty that it speaks of heretics, but no Christians of antichrists, of *such as denied Jesus to be the Christ*. See the place and you shall confess as much. The second place it is certain, you must not say it speaks of heretics, for it speaks only of some who believed and taught an error, while it was yet a question, and not evident; and therefore, according to your doctrine, no formal heresy. The third says, indeed, that of the professors of Christianity some shall arise that shall teach heresy, but not one of them all that says or intimates, that whosoever separates from the visible church, in what state soever, is certainly an heretic. Heretics, I confess, do always do so; but they that do so are not always heretics; for perhaps the state of the church may make it necessary for them to do so, as rebels always disobey the command of their king, yet they which disobey a king's command (which perhaps may be unjust) are not presently rebels.

21. Your allegations out of Vincentius, Prosper, and Cyprian, are liable to these exceptions: 1. That they are the sayings of men not assisted by the Spirit of God, and whose authority yourselves will not submit to in all things. 2. That the first and last are merely impertinent, neither of them affirming or intimating that separation from the present visible church is a mark of heresy; and the former speaking plainly of separation from universality, consent, and antiquity, which if you will presume without proof that we did, and you did not, you beg the question. For you know that we pretend that we separated only from the present church, which had separated from the doctrine of the ancients, and because she had done so, and so far forth as she had done so, and no further. And lastly, the latter part of Prosper's words cannot be generally true, according to your own grounds, for you say a man may be divided from the church upon mere schism, without any mixture of heresy, and a man may be justly excommunicated for many other sufficient causes besides heresy. Lastly, a man may be divided by an unjust excommunication, and be both before and after a very good catholic and therefore you cannot maintain it universally true, "That he who is divided from the church is an heretic and antichrist."

22. In the 19th section we have the authority of eight Fathers urged to prove, "that the separation from the church of Rome, as it is the see of Peter," (I conceive you mean, as it is that particular church,) "is the mark of heresy." Which kind of argument I might well refuse to answer, unless you would first promise me that, whensoever I should produce as plain sentences of as great a number of Fathers, as ancient, for any doctrine whatsoever, that you will subscribe to it, though it fall out to be contrary to the doctrine of the Roman church. For I conceive nothing in the world more unequal or unreasonable, than that you should press us with such authorities as these, and think yourselves at liberty from them; and that you should account them fathers when they are for you, and children when they are against you. Yet I would not you should interpret this as if I had not great assurance, that it is not possible for you ever to gain this cause at the tribunal of the Fathers; nay, not of the Fathers whose sentences are here alleged. Let us consider them in order, and I doubt not to make it appear, that far the greater part of them, nay, all of them that are any way considerable, fall short of your purpose.

23. St. Hierom, you say, writing to pope Damasus, saith, "I am in the communion of the chair of Peter," &c. But then, I pray, consider he saith it to pope Damasus; and this will much weaken the authority with them who know how great overtruths men usually write to one another in letters. Consider again, that he says only, that "he was then in communion with the chair of Peter;" not that he always would, or of necessity must be so; for his resolution to the contrary is too evident out of that which he saith elsewhere, which shall be produced hereafter. He says, that "the church at that present was built upon that rock;" but not that only, nor that always. Nay, his judgment, as shall appear, is express to the contrary. And so likeness the rest of his expressions (if we mean to reconcile Hierom with Hierom) must

be conceived, as intended by him of that bishop and see of Rome at that present time and in the present state, and in respect of that doctrine which he there treats of. For otherwise, had he conceived it necessary for him and all men to conform their judgment, in matters of faith, to the judgment of the bishop and church of Rome, how came it to pass that he chose rather to believe the Epistle to the Hebrews canonical, upon the authority of the eastern church, than to reject it from the canon, upon the authority of the Roman? How comes it to pass that he dissented from the authority of that church, touching the canon of the Old Testament? For if you say that the church then consented with St. Hierom, I fear you will lose your fort by maintaining your outworks; and by avoiding this, run into a greater danger of being forced to confess the present Roman church opposite herein to the ancient. How was it possible that he should ever believe that Liberius bishops of Rome either was or could have been wrought over by the solicitation of Fortunatianus bishop of Aquileia, and brought after two years' banishment to subscribe heresy? Which act of Liberius though some fondly question, being so vain as to expect we should rather believe them that lived but yesterday, 1300 years almost after the thing is said to be done, and speaking for themselves in their own cause, rather than the disinterested time-fellows or immediate successors of Liberius himself; yet I hope they will not proceed to such a degree of immodesty as once to question whether St. Hierom thought so. And if this cannot be denied, I demand then, If he had lived in Liberius's time, could he or would he have written so to Liberius as he does to Damasus? would he have said to him, "I am in the communion of the chair of Peter: I know that the church is built upon this rock: whosoever gathereth not with thee scattereth?" Would he then have said, the Roman faith and the catholic were the same? or that the Roman faith received no delusions, no, not from an angel? I suppose he could not have said so with any coherence to his own belief; and therefore conceive it undeniable that what he said then to Damasus, he said it (though perhaps he strained too high) only of Damasus, and never conceived that his words would have been extended to all his predecessors and successors.

24. The same answer I make to the first place of St. Ambrose—viz. That no more can be certainly concluded from it, but that the catholic bishops and the Roman church were then at unity; so that whosoever agreed with the latter, could not then but agree with the former. But that this rule was perpetual, and that no man could ever agree with the catholic bishops, but he must agree with the Roman church; this he says not, nor gives you any ground to conclude from him. Athanasius, when he was excommunicated by Liberius, agreed very ill with the Roman church. And yet you will not gainsay but he agreed well enough with the catholic bishops. The second, I am uncertain what the sense of it is, and what truth is in it; but most certain that it makes nothing to your present purpose; for it neither affirms nor imports, that separation from the Roman church is a certain mark of heresy. For the rights of communion, (whatsoever it signifies,) might be said to flow from it, if that church were, by ecclesiastical law, the head of all other churches; but unless it were made so by Divine authority, and that absolutely, separation from it could not be a mark of heresy.

25. For St. Cyprian, all the world knows, that he resolutely opposed a decree of the Roman bishop, and all that adhered to him in the point of rebaptizing, which that church at that time delivered as a necessary tradition; so necessary, that by the bishop of Rome, Firmilianus, and other bishops of Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Galatia, and generally all who persisted in the contrary opinion, were therefore deprived of the church's communion (which ex-communication could not but involve St. Cyprian, who defended the same opinion as resolutely as Firmilianus, though cardinal Perron magisterially, and without all colour of proof, affirms the contrary,) and Cyprian in particular so far cast off, as for it to be pronounced by Stephen a *false Christ*. Again, so necessary, that the bishops which were sent by Cyprian from Afric to Rome were not admitted to the communion of ordinary conference; but all men who were subject to the bishop of Rome's authority were commanded by him, not only to deny them the church's peace and

communion, but even lodging and entertainment; manifestly declaring that they reckoned them among those whom St. John forbids *to receive to house*, or to say *God speed to them*. All these terrors notwithstanding, St. Cyprian holds still his former opinion. And though, out of respect to the church's peace, "he judged no man, nor cut off any man from the right of communion, for thinking otherwise than he held; yet he conceived Stephen and his adherents to hold a pernicious error. And St. Austin, though, disputing with the Donatists, he uses some tergiversation in the point, yet confesses elsewhere that "it is not found that Cyprian did ever change his opinion." And so far was he from conceiving any necessity of doing so, by submitting to the judgment of the bishop and church of Rome, that he plainly professes that no other bishop, "but our Lord Jesus only, had power to judge" (with authority) "of his judgment;" and as plainly intimates, that Stephen for usurping such a power, and making himself a "judge over bishops, was little better than a tyrant;" and as heavily almost he censures him, and peremptorily opposes him as obstinate in error, in that very place where he delivers that famous saying, "How can he have God for his father who hath not the church for his mother?" little doubting, it seems, but a man might have the church for his mother, who stood in opposition to the church of Rome, and being far from thinking, what you fondly obtrude upon him, that to be united to the Roman church and to the church was all one; and that separation from St. Peter's chair was a mark, I mean a certain mark, either of schism or heresy. If, after all this, you will catch at a phrase or a compliment of St. Cyprian's, and with that hope to persuade Protestants, who know this story as well as their own name, that St. Cyprian did believe that "falsehood could not have access to the Roman church," and that opposition to it was the brand of an heretic; may we not well expect that you will, the next time you write, vouch Luther and Calvin also for abettors of this fancy, and make us poor men believe, not only (as you say) that we have no metaphysics, but that we have no sense? And when you have done so, it will be no great difficulty for you to assure us, that we read no such thing in Bellarmine, as "that Cyprian was always accounted in the number of catholics;" nor in Canisius, that he was a "most excellent doctor, and a glorious martyr;" nor in your calendar, that he "is a saint and a martyr;" but that all these are deceptions of our sight, and that you ever esteemed him a very schismatic and an heretic, as having on him the mark of the beast, opposition to the chair of St. Peter; nay, that he (whatever he pretended) knew and believed himself to be so, inasmuch as he knew (as you pretend) and esteemed this opposition to be the mark of heresy, and knew himself to stand, and stand out in such an opposition.

26. But we need not seek so far for matter to refute the vanity of this pretence. Let the reader but peruse this very epistle, out of which this sentence is alleged, and he shall need no further satisfaction against it. For he shall find, first, that you have helped the dice a little with a false, or at least with a very bold and strained translation; for St. Cyprian saith not, "to whom falsehood cannot have access," by which many of your favourable readers, I doubt, understood that Cyprian had exempted that church from a possibility of error, but, "to whom perfidiousness cannot have access," meaning by "perfidiousness" in the abstract, according to a common figure of speech, those perfidious schismatics whom he there complains of; and of these, by a rhetorical insinuation, he says, that "with such good Christians as the Romans were, it was not possible they should find favourable entertainment." Not that he conceived it any way impossible they should do so; for the very writing this epistle, and many passages in it, plainly show the contrary; but because he was confident, or at least would seem to be confident, they never would, and so by his good opinion and confidence in the Romans lay an obligation upon them to do as he presumed they would do; as also in the end of his epistle he says, even of the people of the church of Rome, "That being defended by the providence of their bishop, nay, by their own vigilance sufficiently guarded, they could not be taken nor deceived with the poison of heretics." Not that indeed he thought either this or the former any way impossible; for to what purpose, but for prevention hereof, did he write this long and accurate and vehement epistle to Cornelius? which sure had been most vainly done, to

prevent that which he knew or believed impossible! Or how can this consist with his taking notice in the beginning of it, "that Cornelius was somewhat moved and wrought upon by the attempts of his adversaries," with his reprehending him for being so, and with his vehement exhorting him to courage and constancy, or with his request to him in the conclusion of his epistle, that it should "be read publicly to the whole clergy and laity of Rome, to the intent that if any contagion of their poisoned speech and pestiferous semination had crept in amongst them, it might be wholly taken away from the ears and the hearts of the brethren; and that the entire and sincere charity of good men might be purged from all dross of heretical detraction?" Or lastly, with his vehement persuasions to them to decline, "for the time to come, and resolutely avoid their word and conference, because *their speech crept as a canker*," as the apostle saith; "because evil communication would corrupt good manners, because wicked men carry perdition in their mouths, and hide fire in their lips?" All which had been but vain and ridiculous pageantry, had he verily believed the Romans such inaccessible forts, such immovable rocks, as the former sentences would seem to import, if we will expound them rigidly and strictly, according to the exigence of the words, and not allow him, who was a professed master of the art, to have used here a little rhetoric, and to say, that could not be, whereof he had no absolute certainty but that it might be, but only had, or would seem to have, a great confidence, that it never would be, *Ut fides habita fidem obligaret;* that he, professing to be confident of the Romans, might lay an obligation upon them to do as he promised himself they would do. For as for "joining the principal church and the chair of Peter," how that will serve for your present purpose of proving separation from the Roman church a mark of heresy, I suppose it is hard to understand. Nor indeed how it will advantage you in any other design against us, who do not altogether deny but that the church of Rome might be called "the chair of Peter," in regard he is said to have preached the gospel there; and "the principal church," because the city was the principal and imperial city: which "prerogative of the city," if we believe the Fathers of the council of Chalcedon, was the ground and occasion why the Fathers of former time (I pray observe) conferred upon this church this prerogative above other churches.

27. And as far am I from understanding how you can collect from the other sentence, that to communicate with the church and pope of Rome, and to communicate with the catholic church, is "always" (for that is your assumpt) one and the same thing. St. Cyprian speaks not of the church of Rome at all, but of the bishop only, who when he doth communicate with the catholic church, as Cornelius at that time did, then whosoever communicates with him cannot but communicate with the catholic church; and then by accident one might truly say, such an one communicates with you, that is, with the catholic church; and that to communicate with him, is to communicate with the catholic church. As if Titius and Sempronius be together, he that is in company with Titius cannot but be at that time in company with Sempronius. As if a general be marching to some place with an army, he that then is with the general must at that time be with the army; and a man may say without absurdity, Such a time I was with the general, that is, with the army; and that to be with the general is to be with the army. Or, as if a man's hand be joined to his body, the finger which is joined to the hand is joined to the body; and a man may say truly of it, This finger is joined to the hand, that is, to the body; and to be joined to the hand, is to be joined to the body; because all these things are by accident true. And yet I hope you would not deny, but the finger might possibly be joined to the hand, and yet not to the body, the hand being cut off from the body; and a man might another time be with his general, and not with his army, he being absent from the army. And therefore by like reason your collection is sophistical, being in effect but this: To communicate with such a bishop of Rome, who did communicate with the catholic church, was to communicate with the catholic church; therefore absolutely and always it must be true, that to communicate with him is by consequence to communicate with the catholic church; and to be divided from his communion is to he an heretic.

28. In urging the place of Irenæus, you have showed much more ingenuity than many of your fellows. For whereas they usually begin at "declaring the tradition of the," &c., and conceal what goes before; you have set it down, though not so completely as you should have done, yet sufficiently to show, that what authority in the matter he attributed to the Roman church in particular, the same, for the kind, (though perhaps not in the same degree,) he attributed to all other apostolic churches. Either therefore you must say, that he conceived the testimony of other apostolic churches divine and infallible, (which certainly he did not, neither do you pretend he did; and if he had, the confessed errors and heresies which after they fell into would demonstrate plainly that he had erred,) or else that he conceived the testimony of the Roman church only human and credible, though perhaps more credible than any one church beside, (as one man's testimony is more credible than another's,) but certainly much more credible, which was enough for his purpose, than that secret tradition to which those heretics pretended, against whom he wrote, overbearing them with an argument of their own kind, far stronger than their own. Now if Irenæus thought the testimony of the Roman church in this point only human and fallible, then surely he could never think either adhering to it a certain mark of a catholic, or separation from it a certain mark of an heretic.

29. Again, whereas your great Achilles, cardinal Perron, (in French, as also his noble translatress, misled by him, in English,) knowing that men's resorting to Rome would do his cause little service, hath made bold with the Latin tongue, as he does very often with the Greek, and rendered *Ad hanc ecclesiam necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam*, "To this church it is necessary that every church should agree," you have translated it as it should be, "To this church it is necessary that all churches resort;" wherein you have showed more sincerity, and have had more regard to make the author speak sense. For if he had said, "By showing the tradition of the Roman church, we confound all heretics; for to this church all churches must agree;" what had this been, but to give for a reason that which was more questionable than the thing in question? as being neither evident in itself, and plainly denied by his adversaries, and not at all proved, nor offered to be proved, here or elsewhere by Irenæus. To speak thus therefore had been weak and ridiculous. But on the other side, if we conceive him to say thus: "You heretics decline a trial of your doctrine by Scripture, as being corrupted and imperfect, and not fit to determine controversies without recourse to tradition, and instead hereof you fly for a refuge to a secret tradition, which you pretend that you received from your ancestors, and they from the apostles; certainly your calumnies against Scripture are most unjust and unreasonable: but yet moreover assure yourselves, that if you will be tried by tradition, even by that also you will be overthrown. For our tradition is far more famous, more constant, and in all respects more credible, than that which you pretend to. It were easy for me to muster up against you the uninterrupted successions of all the churches founded by the apostles, all conspiring in their testimonies against you; but because it were too long to number up the successions of all churches, I will content myself with the tradition of the most ancient and most glorious church of Rome, which alone is sufficient for the confutation and confusion of your doctrine, as being in credit and authority as far beyond the tradition you build upon, as the light of the sun is beyond the light of a glowworm. For to this church, by reason it is placed in the imperial city, whither all men's affairs do necessarily draw them, or by reason of the powerful principality it hath over all the adjacent churches, there is, and always hath been, a necessity of a perpetual recourse of all the faithful round about; who, if there had been any alteration in the church of Rome, could not, in all probability, but have observed it. But they, to the contrary, have always observed in this church the very tradition which came from the apostles, and no other:" I say, if we conceive his meaning thus, his words will be intelligible and rational; which, if instead of "resort" we put in "agree," will be quite lost. Herein therefore we have been beholden to your honesty, which makes me think you did not wittingly falsify, but only twice in this sentence mistake *undique* for *ubique*, and translated it "everywhere" and "of what place soever" instead of "round about." For that it

was necessary "for all the faithful of what place soever to resort to Rome," is not true. That "the apostolic tradition hath always been conserved there from those who are every where," is not sense. Now instead of *conservata* read *observata*, as in all probability it should be, and translate *undique* truly "round about," and then the sense will be both plain and good; for then it must be rendered thus: "For to this church, by reason of a more powerful principality, there is a necessity that all the churches, that is, all the faithful round about, should resort, in which the apostolic tradition hath been always observed by those who were round about." If any man say, I have been too bold a critic in substituting *observata* instead of *conservata*, I desire him to know, that the conjecture is not mine; and therefore, as I expect no praise for it, so I hope I shall be far from censure. But I would entreat him to consider, whether it be not likely that the same Greek word signifying *observo* and *conservo*, the translator of Irenæus, who could hardly speak Latin, might not easily mistake, and translated διατήρηται *conservata est*, instead of *observata est:* or whether it be not likely, that those men which anciently wrote books, and understood them not, might not easily commit such an error: or whether the sense of the place can be salved any other way; if it can, in God's name let it; if not, I hope he is not to be condemned, who with such a little alteration hath made that sense which he found nonsense.

30. But whether you will have it *observata* or *conservata*, the new *sumpsimus* or the old *mumpsimus*, possibly it may be something to Irenæus, but to us, or our cause, it is no way material. For if the rest be rightly translated, neither will *conservata* afford you any argument against us, nor *observata* help us to any evasion. For though at the first hearing the glorious attributes here given (and that justly) to the church of Rome, "the confounding heretics with her tradition, and saying, it is necessary for all churches to resort to her," may sound like arguments for you; yet he that is attentive, I hope, will easily discover, that it might be good and rational in Irenæus, having to do with heretics, who, somewhat like those who would be the only catholics, declined a trial by Scripture as not containing the truth of Christ perfectly, and not fit to decide controversies, without recourse to tradition; I say he will easily perceive, that it might be rational in Irenæus to urge them with any tradition of more credit than their own, especially a tradition consonant to Scripture, and even contained in it; and yet that it may be irrational in you to urge us, who do not decline Scripture, but appeal to it as a perfect rule of faith, with a tradition which we pretend is many ways repugnant to Scripture, and repugnant to a tradition far more general than itself, which gives testimony to Scripture; and lastly, repugnant to itself, as giving attestation both to Scripture and to doctrines plainly contrary to Scripture. Secondly, that the authority of the Roman church was then a far greater argument of the truth of her tradition, when it was united with all other apostolic churches, than now, when it is divided from them, according to that of Tertullian, "Had the churches erred, they would have varied; but that which is the same in all cannot be error, but tradition." And therefore Irenæus his argument may be very probable, yet yours may be worth nothing. Thirdly, that fourteen hundred years may have made a great deal of alteration in the Roman church; as rivers, though near the fountain they may retain their native and unmixed sincerity, yet in long progress cannot but take in much mixture that came not from the fountain. And therefore the Roman tradition, though then pure, may now be corrupted and impure: and so this argument (being one of those things which are the worse for wearing) might in Irenæus his time be strong and vigorous, and after declining and decaying, may long since have fallen to nothing: especially, considering that Irenæus plays the historian only, and not the prophet, and says only, that the "apostolic tradition had been always there, as in other apostolic churches, conserved or observed," choose you whether; but that "it should be always so," he says not, neither had he any warrant. He knew well enough, that there was foretold a *great falling away* of the churches of Christ to antichrist; that the Roman church in particular was forewarned, that she also, *nay, the whole church of the Gentiles, might fall, if they looked not to standing;* and therefore to secure her that she should stand for ever, he had no reason nor authority. Fourthly, that it appears manifestly, out of this book of Irenæus, quoted

by you, that the doctrine of the Chiliasts was in his judgment apostolic tradition, as also it was esteemed (for aught appears to the contrary) by all the doctors and saints and martyrs of or about his time; for all speak of it, or whose judgments in the point are any way recorded, are for it: and Justin Martyr professeth, that "all good and orthodox Christians of his time believed it;" and those that did not, he reckons amongst heretics. Now I demand, was this tradition one of those that was conserved and observed in the church of Rome, or was it not? If not, had Irenæus known so much, he must have retracted this commendation of that church. If it was, then the tradition of the present church of Rome contradicts the ancient, and accounts it heretical: and then sure it can be no certain note of heresy to depart from them who have departed from themselves, and prove themselves subject unto error, by holding contradictions. Fifthly and lastly, that out of the story of the church, it is as manifest as the light at noon, that though Irenæus did esteem the Roman tradition a great argument of the doctrine which he there delivers, and defends against the heretics of his time, viz. "That there is one God," yet he was very far from thinking that church was, and ever should be, a safe keeper, and an infallible witness, of tradition in general; inasmuch as, in his own life, his actions proclaimed the contrary. For when Victor, bishop of Rome, obtruded the Roman tradition touching the time of Easter upon the Asian bishops, under the pain of excommunication and damnation; Irenæus, and all the other western bishops, though agreeing with him in his observation, yet sharply reprehended him for excommunicating the Asian bishops for their disagreeing, plainly showing that they esteemed that not a necessary doctrine, and a sufficient ground of excommunication, which the bishop of Rome and his adherents did so account of; for otherwise, how could they have reprehended him for excommunicating them, had they conceived the cause of this excommunication just and sufficient? And besides, evidently declaring that they esteemed not separation from the Roman church a certain mark of heresy, seeing they esteemed not them heretics, though separated and cut off from the Roman church.

Cardinal Perron, to avoid the stroke of this convincing argument, raiseth a cloud of eloquent words, which because you borrow them of him in your second part, I will here insert, and with short censures dispel; and let his idolaters see that truth is not afraid of giants. His words are these:

"The first instance, then, that Calvin allegeth against the Pope's censures is taken from Eusebius, (*a*) an Arian author, and from Ruffinus, (*b*) enemy to the Roman church, his translator, who writ (*c*) that St. Irenæus reprehended Pope Victor for having excommunicated the churches of Asia, for the question of the day of Pasche, which they observed according to a particular tradition that St. John had introduced (*d*) for a time in their provinces, because of the neighbourhood of the Jews, and to bury the synagogue with honour, and not according to the universal tradition of the apostles. 'Irenæus,' saith Calvin, 'reprehended Pope Victor bitterly, because for a light cause he had moved a great and perilous contention in the church.' There is this in the text, that Calvin produceth, 'He reprehended him, that he had not done well to cut off from the body of unity so many and so great churches.' But against whom maketh he this, but (*e*) against those that object it? For who sees not that St. Irenæus doth not there reprehend the Pope for the (*f*) want of power, but for the ill use of his power; and doth not reproach the Pope that he could not excommunicate the Asians, but admonisheth him, that for (*g*) so small a cause he should not have cut off so many provinces from the body of the church? Irenæus (saith Eusebius) 'did fitly exhort Pope Victor that he should not cut off all the churches of God which held this ancient tradition.' And Ruffinus, translating and envenoming Eusebius, saith, 'He questioned Victor that he had not done well in cutting off from the body of unity so many and so great churches of God.' And in truth how could St. Irenæus have reprehended the Pope for want of power? He that cries, 'To the Roman church, because of a more powerful principality,' that is to say, as above appeareth (*h*) because of a principality more powerful than the temporal, or, as we have expounded otherwhere, because of a more powerful original (*i*), it is necessary that every church should agree: and (*k*) therefore also St. Irenæus allegeth not to Pope Victor

the example of him, and of the other bishops of the Gauls assembled in a council holden expressly for this effect, who had not excommunicated the Asians; nor the example of Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, and of the bishops of Palestina, assembled in another council, holden expressly for the same effect, who had not excommunicated them; nor the example of Palmas, and of the other bishops of Pontus, assembled in the same manner and for the same cause, in the region of Pontus, who had not excommunicated them; but only alleges to him the example of the popes his predecessors: 'The prelates,' saith he, who have presided before Soter in the church where thou presidest, Anisius, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, and Sixtus, have not observed this custom, &c., and nevertheless, none of those that observed it have been excommunicated.' And yet, O admirable providence of God! the (*l*) success of the after-ages showed, that even in the use of his power the Pope's proceeding was just. For after the death of Victor the councils of Nicea, of Constantinople, and of Ephesus, excommunicated again those that held the same custom with the provinces that the pope had excommunicated, and placed them in the catalogue of heretics, under the titles of heretics *quartodecumans*.

"But to this instance Calvin's sect do annex two new observations; the first, that the pope having threatened the bishops of Asia to excommunicate them, Polycrates, the bishop of Ephesus and metropolitan bishop of Asia, despised the pope's threats, as it appears by the answer of the same Polycrates to pope Victor, which is inserted in the writings of Eusebius and of St. Jerom, and which Jerom seemeth to approve, when he saith, he reports it, 'to show the spirit and authority of the man.' And the second, that when the pope pronounced anciently his excommunications, he did no other thing but separate himself from the communion of those that he excommunicated, and did not thereby separate them from the universal communion of the church. To the first then we say, that so far is this epistle of Polycrates from abating and diminishing the pope's authority, that contrariwise it greatly magnifies and exalts it. For although Polycrates, blinded with the love of the custom of his nation, which he believed to be grounded upon the word of God, who had assigned the fourteenth of the month of March for the observation of the Pasche, and upon the example of St. John's tradition, maintains it obstinately; nevertheless this that he answers, speaking in his own name, and in the name of the council of the bishops of Asia, to whom he presided, 'I fear not those that threaten us; for my elders have said, *It is better to obey God than man;*' doth it not show, that had it not been that he believed the the pope's threat was against the express words of God there had been cause to fear it, and he had been obliged to obey him? For (*m*) who knows not that this answer, *It is better to obey God than man*, is not to be made but to those whom we were obliged to obey, if their commandments were not contrary to the commandments of God? And that he adds, that he had called the bishops of Asia to a national council, being (*n*) summoned to it by the pope; doth it not insinuate that the other councils, whereof Eusebius speaks, that were holden about this matter, through all the provinces of the earth, and particularly that of Palestina, which, if you believe the act that Beda said came to his hands. Theophilus archbishop of Cæsarea had called by the authority of Victor, were holden at the instance of the pope, and consequently that the pope was the first mover of the universal church? And that the councils of Nicea, of Constantinople, of Ephesus, embraced the censure of Victor, and excommunicated those that observed the custom of Polycrates; doth it not prove, that it was not the pope, but (*o*) Polycrates, that was deceived in believing that the pope's commandment was against God's commandment: And that St. Jerom himself celebrates the Paschal homilies of Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, which followed the order of Nicea concerning the Pasche; doth it not justify, that when St. Jerom saith, that he reports the epistle of Polycrates, 'to show the spirit and authority of the man,' he intends by authority, not authority of right, but of fact, that is to say, the credit that Polycrates had amongst the Asians, and other *quartodecumans?*

These are the cardinal's words, the most material and considerable passages whereof, to save the trouble of repetition, I have noted with letters of reference; whereunto my answers, noted respectively with the same letters, follow now in order.

(*a*) If Eusebius were an Arian author, it is nothing to the purpose; what he writes there, is no Arianism nor any thing towards it. Never any error was imputed to the Arians for denying the authority or the infallibility of the bishop or church of Rome. Besides, what Eusebius says, he says out of Irenæus: neither doth or can the cardinal deny the story to be true, and therefore he goes about by indirect arts to foil it, and cast a blur upon it. Lastly, whensoever Eusebius says any thing which the cardinal thinks for the advantage of his side, he cites him, and then he is no Arian; or at least he would not take that for an answer to the arguments he draws out of him.

(*b*) That Ruffinus was enemy to the Roman church is said, but not proved, neither can it be.

(*c*) Eusebius says the same also of *cæteri omnes episcopi*, all the other bishops, that they advised Victor to keep those things that belonged to peace and unity, and that they sharply reprehended Victor for having done otherwise.

(*d*) This is said, but no offer made of any proof of it: the cardinal thinks we must take every thing upon his word. They to whom the tradition was delivered, Polycrates and the Asian bishops, knew no such matter, nay, professed the contrary. And who is more likely to know the truth, they who lived within two ages of the fountain of it, or the cardinal, who lived sixteen ages after it?

(*e*) How can it make against those that object it, seeing it is evident from Irenæus his reprehensions, that he thought Victor and the Roman church no infallible nor sufficient judge of what was necessary to be believed and done, what not; what was universal tradition, what not; what was a sufficient ground of excommunication, and what not; and consequently, that there was no such necessity as is pretended, that all other churches should in matters of faith conform themselves to the church of Rome?

(*f*) This is to suppose that excommunication is an act, or argument, or sign, of power and authority in the party excommunicating, over the party excommunicated; whereas it is undeniably evident out of the church story, that it was often used by equals upon equals, and by inferiors upon superiors, if the equals or inferiors thought the equals or superiors did any thing which deserved it.

(*g*) And what is this but to confess, that they thought that a small cause of excommunication and unsufficient, which Victor and his adherents thought great and sufficient; and consequently, that Victor and his part declared that to be a matter of faith, and of necessity, which they thought not so? And where was then their conformity?

(*h*) True, you have so expounded it, but not proved nor offered any proof of your exposition. This also we must take upon your authority. Irenæus speaks not one word of any other power, to which he compares, or before which he prefers, the power of the Roman church. And it is evident out of the council of Chalcedon, that "all the principality which it had was given it" (not by God, but) "by the church, in regard it was seated in the imperial city." Whereupon, when afterwards Constantinople was the imperial city, they decreed, that "that church should have equal privileges and dignity and pre-eminence with the church of Rome." All the Fathers agreed in this decree, saving only the legates of the bishops of Rome; showing plainly, that they never thought of any supremacy given the bishops of Rome by God, or grounded upon Scripture, but only by the church, and therefore alterable at the church's pleasure.

(*i*) This is falsely translated: *Convenire ad Romanam ecclesiam*, every body knows, signifies no more but to "resort or come to the Roman church;" which then there was a necessity that men should do, because that the affairs of the empire were transacted in that place. But yet Irenæus says not so of every church simply, which had not been true, but only of the adjacent churches; for so he expounds himself in saying, "To this church it is necessary that every church," that is, all the faithful, "round about, should resort." With much more reason therefore we return the argument thus: Had Irenæus thought that all churches

must of necessity agree with the Roman, how could he and all other bishops have then pronounced that to be no matter of faith, no sufficient ground of excommunication, which Victor and his adherents thought to be so? And how then could they have reprehended Victor so much for the ill use of his power, as cardinal Perron confesses they did; seeing, if that was true which is pretended, in this also as well as other things, it was necessary for them to agree with the church of Rome?

Some there are that say, but more wittily than truly, that all cardinal Bellarmine's works are so consonant to themselves, as if he had written them in two hours. Had cardinal Perron wrote his book in two hours, sure he would not have done that here in the middle of the book which he condemns in the beginning of it; for here he urgeth a consequence drawn from the mistaken words of Irenæus against his lively and actual practice; which proceeding there he justly condemns of evident injustice. His words are, "For who knows not that it is too great an injustice to allege consequences from passages, and even those ill interpreted and misunderstood, and in whose illation there is always some paralogism hid against the express words, and the lively and actual practice of the same Fathers from whom they are collected; and that it maybe good to take the Fathers for adversaries, and to accuse them for want of sense or memory; but not to take them for judges, and to submit themselves to the observation of what they have believed and practised?"

(*k*) This is nothing to the purpose; he might choose these examples, not as of greater force and authority in themselves, but as fitter to be employed against Victor; as domestic examples are fitter and more effectual than foreign: and for his omitting to press him with his own example and others, to what purpose had it been to use them, seeing their letters sent to Victor from all parts, wherein they reprehended his presumption, showed him sufficiently that their example was against him? But besides, he that reads Irenæus's letter shall see, that in the matter of the Lent fast, and the great variety about the celebration of it, which he parallels with this of Easter, he presseth Victor with the example of himself and others, not bishops of Rome; "Both they, saith he, speaking of other bishops, "notwithstanding this difference, retained peace among themselves: and we also among ourselves retain it:" inferring from his example, that Victor also ought to do so.

(*l*) If the pope's proceeding was just, then the churches of Asia were indeed and in the sight of God excommunicate, and out of the state of salvation; which Irenæus and all the other ancient bishops never thought. And if they were so, why do you account them saints and martyrs? But the truth is, that these councils did no way show the pope's proceedings just, but rather the contrary. For though they settled an uniformity in this matter, yet they settled it as a matter formerly indifferent, and not as a matter of faith or necessity, as it is evident out of Athanasius; and consequently they rather declare Victor's proceeding unjust, who excommunicated so many churches for differing from him in an indifferent matter.

(*m*) It seems, then, Polycrates might be a saint and a martyr, and yet think the commands of the Roman church, enjoined upon pain of damnation, contrary to the commandments of God. Besides, St. Peter himself, the head of the church, the vicar of Christ (as you pretend), made this very answer to the high priest; yet I hope you will not say he was his inferior, and obliged to obey him. Lastly, who sees not, that when the pope commands us any thing unjust, as to communicate laymen in one kind, to use the Latin service, we may very fitly say to him, *It is better to obey God than man*, and yet never think of any authority he hath over us?

(*n*) Between requesting and summoning, methinks there should be some difference; and Polycrates says no more but "he was requested by the church of Rome" to call them, and did so. Here, then (as very often), the cardinal is fain to help the dice with a false translation; and his pretence being false, every one must see, that that which he pretends to be insinuated by it is clearly inconsequent.

(*o*) Polycrates was deceived if he believed it to be against God's commandment, and the pope deceived as much in thinking it to be God's commandment; for it was neither one nor the other, but an

indifferent matter, wherein God had not interposed his authority. Neither did the council of Nice embrace the censure of Victor, by acknowledging his excommunication to be just and well-grounded, for which the cardinal neither doth pretend nor can produce any proof any way comparable to the forealleged words of Athanasius testifying the contrary; though peradventure, having settled the observation, and reduced it to an uniformity, they might excommunicate those who afterward should trouble the church's peace for an indifferent matter. And thus much for Irenæus.

31. I come now to St. Austin, and to the first place out of him, where he seems to say, "that the succession in the see of Peter was the rock which our Saviour meant, when he said, *Upon this rock*," &c. I answer, first, we have no reason to be confident of the truth hereof, because St. Austin himself was not, but retracts it as uncertain, and "leaves to the reader whether he will think that or another more probable," Retr. l. 1. c. 26. Secondly, what he says of the succession in the Roman church in this place, he says it elsewhere of all the successions in all other apostolic churches. Thirdly, that as in this place he urgeth the Donatists with separation from the Roman church as an argument of their error; so elsewhere he presseth them with their separation from other apostolic churches; nay, more from these than from that, because in Rome the Donatists had a bishop, though not a perpetual succession of them; but in other apostolic churches they wanted both. "These scattered men," saith he of the Donatists, Epist. 165, "read in the holy books in the churches to which the apostles wrote, and have no bishop in them: but what is more perverse and mad, than to the lectors reading these epistles to say, *Peace be with you*, and to separate from the peace of these churches, to which these epistles were written?" So Optatus, having done you (as it might seem) great service in upbraiding the Donatists as schismatics, because they had not communion with the church of Rome, overthrows and undoes it all again, and as it were with a spurge wipes out all that he had said for you, by adding after, that they were schismatics, because "they had not the fellowship of communion with the seven churches of Asia, to which St. John writes;" whereof he pronounces confidently (though I know not upon what ground), *Extra septem ecclesias quicquid foris est, alienum est*. Now, I pray tell me, do you esteem the authority of these Fathers a sufficient assurance that separation from these other apostolic churches was a certain mark of heresy, or not? If so, then your church had been for many ages heretical. If not, how is their authority a greater argument for the Roman than for the other churches? If you say they conceived separation from these churches a note of schism only when they were united to the Roman; so also they might conceive of the Roman, only when it was united to them. If you say they urged this only as a probable, and not as a certain argument, so also they might do that. In a word, whatsoever answer you can devise to show that these Fathers made not separation from these other churches a mark of heresy, apply that to your own argument, and it will be satisfied.

32. The other place is evidently impertinent to the present question, nor is there in it any thing but this, that Cæcilian "might contemn the number of his adversaries, because those that were united with him were more, and of more account, than those that were against him." Had he preferred the Roman church alone, before Cæcilian's enemies, this had been little, but something; but when other countries, from which the gospel came first into Africa, are joined in this patent with the church of Rome, how she can build any singular privilege upon it, I am yet to learn: neither do I see what can be concluded from it, but that "in the Roman church was the principality of an apostolic see," which no man doubts; or that the Roman church was not the mother church, because the gospel came first into Africa, not from her, but from other churches.

33. Thus you see his words make very little or indeed nothing for you. But now his action, which, according to cardinal Perron's rule, is much more to be regarded than his words, as not being so obnoxious to misinterpretation, I mean his famous opposition of three bishops of Rome, in succession, touching the great question of appeals, wherein he and the rest of the African bishops proceeded so far in the first or

second Milevitan council, as to "decree any African excommunicate that should appeal to any out of Afric," and therein continued resolute unto death; I say, this famous action of his, makes clearly, and evidently, and infinitely against you. For had Boniface, and the rest of the African bishops, a great part whereof were saints and martyrs, believed as an article of faith, that union and conformity with the doctrine of the Roman church, in all things which she held necessary, was a certain note of a good catholic, and by God's command necessary to salvation, how was it possible they should have opposed it in this? Unless you will say they were all so foolish as to believe at once direct contradictions, viz. that conformity to the Roman church was necessary in all points, and not necessary in this; or so horribly impious, as believing this doctrine of the Roman church true, and her power to receive appeals derived from Divine authority, notwithstanding to oppose and condemn it, and to anathematize all those Africans, of what condition soever, that should appeal unto it; I say, of what condition soever; for it is evident, that they concluded, in their determination, bishops as well as the inferior clergy and laity: and cardinal Perron's pretence of the contrary is a shameless falsehood, repugnant to the plain words of the remonstrance of the African bishops to Celestine bishop of Rome.

34. Your allegation of Tertullian is a manifest conviction of your want of sincerity: for you produce with great ostentation what he says of the church of Rome: but you and your fellows always conceal and dissemble, that immediately before these words he attributes as much for point of direction to any other apostolic church; and that as he sends them to Rome, who lived near Italy, so those near Achaia he sends to Corinth, those about Macedonia to Philippi and Thessalonica, those of Asia to Ephesus. His words are, "Go to now, thou that wilt better employ thy curiosity in the business of thy salvation; run over the apostolical churches, wherein the chairs of the apostles are yet sat upon in their places, wherein their authentic epistles are recited, sounding out the voice, and representing the face of every one: Is Achaia near thee? There thou hast Corinth. If thou art not far from Macedonia, thou hast Philippi, thou hast Thessalonica. If thou canst go into Asia, there thou hast Ephesus. If thou be adjacent to Italy, thou hast Rome, whose authority is near at hand to us" (in Afric); "a happy church, into which the apostles poured forth all their doctrine together with their blood," &c. Now I pray you, sir, tell me, if you can for blushing, why this place might not have been urged by a Corinthian, or Philippian, or Thessalonian, or an Ephesian, to show, that in the judgment of Tertullian, separation from any of their churches is a certain mark of heresy, as justly and rationally as you allege it to vindicate this privilege to the Roman church only. Certainly, if you will stand to Tertullian's judgment, you must either grant the authority of the Roman church, though at that time a good topical argument, and perhaps a better than any the heretics had, especially in conjunction with other apostolic churches; yet, I say, you must grant it perforce but a fallible guide, as well as that of Ephesus, and Thessalonica, and Philippi, and Corinth; or you shall maintain the authority of every one of these infallible as well as the Roman. For though he make a panegyric of the Roman church in particular, and of the rest only in general, yet, as I have said, for point of direction, he makes them all equal, and therefore makes them (choose you whether) either all fallible or all infallible. Now you will and must acknowledge, that he never intended to attribute infallibility to the churches of Ephesus or Corinth; or, if he did, that (as experience shows) he erred in doing so; and what can hinder, but then we may say also, that he never intended to attribute infallibility to the Roman church; or, if he did, that he erred in doing so?

35. From the saying of St. Basil, certainly nothing can be gathered, but only "that the bishop of Rome may discern between that which is counterfeit, and that which is lawful and pure, and without any diminution may preach the faith of our ancestors." Which certainly he might do, if ambition and covetousness did not hinder him, or else I should never condemn him for doing otherwise. But is there no difference between *may* and *must?* between he *may* do so, and he *cannot but* do so? Or doth it follow, because he may do so, therefore he always shall or will do so? In my opinion rather the contrary should

follow; for he that saith, You may do thus, implies, according to the ordinary sense of the words, that if he will, he may do otherwise. You certainly may, if you please, leave abusing the world with such sophistry as this; but whether you will or no, of that I have no assurance.

36. Your next witness I would willingly have examined; but it seems you are unwilling he should be found, otherwise you would have given us your direction where we might have him. Of that Maximianus, who succeeded Nestorius, I can find no such thing in the councils; neither can I believe that any patriarch of Constantinople twelve hundred years ago was so base a parasite of the see of Rome.

37. Your last witness, John of Constantinople, I confess, speaks home, and advanceth the Roman see, even to heaven; but I fear it is that his own may go up with it, which he there professes to be all one see with the see of Rome; and therefore his testimony, as speaking in his own cause, is not much to be regarded. But besides, I have little reason to be confident that this epistle is not a forgery; for certainly Binius hath obtruded upon us many a hundred such. This, though written by a Grecian, is not extant in Greek, but in Latin only. Lastly, it comes out of a suspicious place, an old book of the Vatican library, which library the world knows to have been the mint of very many impostures.

38. Ad § 20-23. The sum of your discourse in the four next sections, if it be pertinent to the question in agitation, must be this: "Want of succession of bishops and pastors, holding always the same doctrine, and of the forms of ordaining bishops and priests which are in use in the Roman church, is a certain mark of heresy: but protestants want all these things; therefore they are heretics." To which I answer, That nothing but want of truth, and holding error, can make or prove any man or church heretical. For if he be a true Aristotelian, or Platonist, or Pyrrhonian, or Epicurean, who holds the doctrine of Aristotle, or Pyrrho, or Epicurus, although he cannot assign any that held it before him for many ages together; why should I not be made a true and orthodox Christian, by believing all the doctrine of Christ, though I cannot derive my descent from a perpetual succession that believed it before me? By this reason, you should say as well, that no man can be a good bishop, or pastor, or king, or magistrate, or father, that succeeds a bad one. For if I may conform my will and actions to the commandments of God, why may I not embrace his doctrine with my understanding, although my predecessors do not so? You have above, in this chapter, defined faith, "a free, infallible, obscure, supernatural assent to Divine truths, because they are revealed by God, and sufficiently propounded," This definition is very fantastical; but for the present I will let it pass, and desire you to give me some piece or shadow of reason, why I may not do all this without a perpetual succession of bishops and pastors that have done so before me. You may judge as uncharitably, and speak as maliciously of me, as your blind zeal to your superstition shall direct you; but certainly I know (and with all your sophistry you cannot make me doubt of what I know), that I do believe the gospel of Christ (as it is delivered in the undoubted books of canonical Scripture) as verily as that it is now day, that I see the light, that I am now writing; and I believe it upon this motive, because I conceive it sufficiently, abundantly, superabundantly proved to be Divine revelation; and yet in this I do not depend upon any succession of men, that have always believed it without any mixture of error; nay, I am fully persuaded there hath been no such succession, and yet do not find myself any way weakened in my faith by the want of it, but so fully assured of the truth of it, that not only though your devils at Lowden do tricks against it, but though an angel from heaven should gainsay it, or any part of it, I persuade myself that I should not be moved. This I say, and this I am sure is true; and if you will be so hypersceptical, as to persuade me that I am not sure that I do believe all this, I desire you to tell me, how are you sure that you believe the church of Rome? For if a man may persuade himself he doth believe what he doth not believe, then may you think you believe the church of Rome, and yet not believe it. But if no man can err concerning what he believes, then you must give me leave to assure myself that I do believe, and consequently that any man may believe, the foresaid truths upon the foresaid motives, without any dependence upon any succession that hath believed it always. And as from your definition of faith, so

from your definition of heresy, this fancy may be refuted. For questionless no man can be an heretic but he that holds an heresy, and an heresy, you say, "is a voluntary error;" therefore no man can be necessitated to be an heretic whether he will or no, by want of such a thing that is not in his power to have: but that there should have been a perpetual succession of believers in all points orthodox, is not a thing which is in our own power; therefore our being or not being heretics depends not on it. Besides, what is more certain, than that he may make a straight line, who hath a rule to make it by, though never man in the world hath made any before? And why then may not he that believes the Scripture to be the word of God, and the rule of faith, regulate his faith by it, and consequently believe aright, without much regarding what other men either will do or have done? It is true, indeed, there is a necessity that if God will have his word believed, he by his providence must take order, that either by succession of men, or by some other means, natural or supernatural, it be preserved and delivered, and sufficiently notified to be his word; but that this should be done by a succession of men that holds no error against it, certainly there is no more necessity than that it should be done by a succession of men that commit no sin against it. For if men may preserve the records of a law, and yet transgress it, certainly they may also preserve directions for their faith, and yet not follow them. I doubt not but lawyers at the bar do find by frequent experience, that many men preserve and produce evidences, which, being examined, ofttimes make against themselves. This they do ignorantly, it being in their power to suppress, or perhaps to alter them. And why then should any man conceive it strange, that an erroneous and corrupted church should preserve and deliver the Scriptures uncorrupted, when, indeed, for many reasons which I have formerly alleged, it was impossible for them to corrupt them? Seeing therefore this is all the necessity that is pretended of a perpetual succession of men orthodox in all points, certainly there is no necessity at all of any such, neither can the want of it prove any man or any church heretical.

39. When therefore you have produced some proof of this, which was your major in your former syllogism, that want of succession is a certain mark of heresy, you shall then receive a full answer to your minor. We shall then consider, whether your indelible character be any reality, or whether it be a creature of your own making, a fancy of your own imagination? And if it be a thing, and not only a word, whether our bishops and priests have it not as well as yours; and whether some men's persuasions, that there is no such thing, can hinder them from having it, or prove that they have it not, if there be any such thing (any more than a man's persuasion that he has not taken physic or poison, will make him not to have taken it, if he has, or hinder the operation of it)?" And whether Tertullian, in the place quoted by you, speaks of a priest made a layman by just deposition or degradation, and not by a voluntary desertion of his order? And whether in the same place he set not some mark upon heretics that will agree to your church? Whether all the authority of our bishops in England before the reformation was conferred on them by the pope? And if it were, whether it were the pope's right, or an usurpation? If it were his right, whether by Divine law, or ecclesiastical? And if by ecclesiastical only, whether he might possibly so abuse his power, as to deserve to lose it? Whether *de facto* he had done so? Whether, supposing he had deserved to lose it, those that deprived him of it had power to take it from him? Or if not, whether they had power to suspend him from the use of it, until good caution were put in, and good assurance given, that if he had it again, he would not abuse it as he had formerly done? Whether, in case they had done unlawfully that took his power from him, it may not (things being now settled, and the present government established) be as unlawful to go about to restore it? Whether it be not a fallacy to conclude, because we believe the pope hath no power in England, now when the king and state and church hath deprived him upon just grounds of it, therefore we cannot believe that he had any before his deprivation? Whether without schism a man may not withdraw obedience from an usurped authority, commanding unlawful things? Whether the Roman church might not give authority to bishops and priests to oppose her errors, as well as a king gives authority to a judge to judge against him, if his cause be bad; as well as Trajan gave his sword to his prefect

with this commission, that "if he governed well, he should use it for him; if ill, against him?" Whether the Roman church gave not authority to her bishops and priests to preach against her corruptions in manners? and if so, why not against her errors in doctrine, if she had any? Whether she gave them not authority to preach the whole gospel of Christ, and consequently against her doctrine, if it should contradict any part of the gospel of Christ? Whether it be not acknowledged lawful in the church of Rome, for any layman or woman that has ability, to persuade others by word or writing from error, and unto truth? and why this liberty may not be practised against their religion if it be false, as well as for it if it be true? Whether any man need any other commission or vocation than that of a Christian to do a work of charity? and whether it be not one of the greatest works of charity (if it be done after a peaceable manner, and without an unnecessary disturbance of order) to persuade men out of a false, into a true way of eternal happiness? especially the apostle having assured us, that *he* (whosoever he is) *who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins*. Whether the first reformed bishops died all at once, so that there were not enough to ordain others in the places that were vacant? Whether the bishops of England may not consecrate a metropolitan of England, as well as the cardinals do the pope? Whether the king or queen of England, or they that have the government in their hands, in the minority of the prince, may not lawfully commend one to them to be consecrated, against whom there is no canonical exception? Whether the doctrine, that the king is supreme head of the church of England (as the kings of Judah and the first Christian emperors were of the Jewish and Christian church), be any new-found doctrine? Whether it may not be true, that bishops, being made bishops, have their authority immediately from Christ, though this or that man be not made bishop without the king's authority; as well as you say, the pope, being pope, has authority immediately from Christ, and yet this or that man cannot be made pope without the authority of the cardinals? Whether you do well to suppose that Christian kings have no more authority in ordering the affairs of the church, than the great Turk or the pagan emperors? Whether the king may not give authority to a bishop to exercise his function in some part of his kingdom, and yet not be capable of doing it himself; as well as a bishop may give authority to a physician to practise physic in his diocese, which the bishop cannot do himself? Whether if Nero the emperor would have commanded St. Peter or St. Paul to preach the gospel of Christ, and to exercise the office of a bishop of Rome, whether they would have questioned his authority to do so? Whether there were any law of God or man that prohibited king James to give commission to bishops, nay, to lay his injunction upon them, to do any thing that is lawful? Whether a casual irregularity may not be lawfully dispensed with? Whether the pope's irregularities, if he should chance to incur any, be indispensable? and if not, who is he, or who are they, whom the pope is subject unto, that they may dispense with him? Whether that be certain, which you take for granted, "That your ordination imprints a character, and ours doth not?" Whether the power of consecrating and ordaining by imposition of hands may not reside in the bishops, and be derived unto them, not from the king, but God; and yet the king have authority to command them to apply this power to such a fit person, whom he shall commend unto them? As well as if some architects only had the faculty of architecture, and had it immediately by infusion from God himself, yet if they were the king's subjects, he wants not authority to command them to build him a palace for his use, or a fortress for his service; or, as the king of France pretends not to have power to make priests himself, yet I hope you will not deny him power to command any of his subjects, that has this power, to ordain any fit person priest, whom he shall desire to be ordained. Whether it do not follow, that whensoever the king commands an house to be built, a message to be delivered, or a murderer to be executed, that all these things are presently done without intervention of the architect, messenger, or executioner? as well as that they are *ipso facto* ordained and consecrated who by the king's authority are commended to the bishops to be ordained and consecrated; especially seeing the king will not deny but that these bishops may refuse to do what he requires to be

done, lawfully, if the person be unworthy, if worthy, unlawfully indeed, but yet *de facto* they may refuse; and in case they should do so, whether justly or unjustly, neither the king himself, nor any body else, would esteem the person bishop upon the king's designation? Whether many popes, though they were not consecrated bishops by any temporal prince, yet might not, or did not, receive authority from the emperor to exercise their episcopal function in this or that place? And whether the emperors had not authority, upon their desert, to deprive them of their jurisdiction, by imprisonment or banishment? Whether protestants do indeed pretend that their reformation is universal? Whether in saying, the "Donatists' sect was confined to Africa," you do not forget yourself, and contradict what you said above in sect. 17 of this chapter, where you tell us, "they had some of their sect residing in Rome?" Whether it be certain, that none can admit of bishops willingly, but those that hold them of Divine institution? whether they may not be willing to have them, conceiving that way of government the best, though not absolutely necessary? Whether all those protestants, that conceive the distinction between priests and bishops not to be of Divine institution, be schismatical and heretical for thinking so? Whether your form of ordaining bishops and priests be essential to the constitution of the true church? Whether the forms of the church of England differ essentially from your forms? Whether in saying, that "the true church cannot subsist without undoubted true bishops and priests," you have not overthrown the truth of your own church? wherein I have proved it plainly impossible, that any man should be so much as morally certain, either of his own priesthood, or any other man's. Lastly, whether any one kind of these external forms and orders and government be so necessary to the being of a church, but that they may be diverse in diverse places, and that a good and peaceable Christian may and ought to submit himself to the government of the place where he lives, whatsoever it be? All these questions will be necessary to be discussed for the clearing of the truth of the minor proposition of your former syllogism, and your proofs of it; and I will promise to debate them fairly with you, if first you will bring some better proof of the major, "that want of succession is a certain note of heresy," which for the present remains both unproved and unprobable.

40. Ad § 23. "The Fathers," you say, "assign succession as one mark of the true church:" I confess they did urge tradition as an argument of the truth of their doctrine, and of the falsehood of the contrary; and thus far they agree with you. But now see the difference: they urged it not against all heretics that ever should be, but against them that rejected a great part of the Scripture, for no other reason, but "because it was repugnant to their doctrine, and corrupted other parts with their additions and detractions, and perverted the remainder with divers absurd interpretations:" so Tertullian, not a leaf before the words by you cited. Nay, they urged it against them, who, "when they were confuted out of Scripture, fell to accuse the Scriptures themselves, as if they were not right, and came not from good authority, as if they were various one from another, and as if truth could not be found out of them by those who know not tradition; for that it was not delivered in writing" (they did mean wholly), "but by word of mouth: and that thereupon Paul also said, *We speak wisdom amongst the perfect;*" so Irenæus, in the very next chapter before that which you allege. Against these men being thus necessitated to do so, they did urge tradition; but what or whose tradition was it? Certainly no other but the joint tradition of all the apostolic churches, with one mouth and one voice, teaching the same doctrine. Or if, for brevity's sake, they produce the tradition of any one church, yet it is appparent that that one was then in conjunction with all the rest: Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, testify as much in the words cited, and St. Austin in the place before alleged by me. This tradition they did urge against these men, and in a time, in comparison of ours, almost contiguous to the apostles; so near, that one of them, Irenæus, was scholar to one who was scholar to St. John the apostle; Tertullian and Origen were not an age removed from him; and the last of them all little more than an age from them. Yet after all this they urged it not as a demonstration, but only as a very probable argument, far greater than any their adversaries could oppose against it. So Tertullian, in the place above quoted, sect. 5, "How is it likely that so many and so great churches should err in one faith?"

(it should be, "should have erred into one faith.") And this was the condition of this argument, as the Fathers urged it. Now, if you having to deal with us, who question no book of Scripture, which was not anciently questioned by some whom you yourselves esteemed good catholics; nay, who refuse not to be tried by your own canon and your own translation; who in interpreting Scriptures are content to allow all those rules which you propose, only except that we will not allow you to be our judges; if you will come one thousand five hundred years after the apostles, a fair time for the purest church to gather much dross and corruption, and for *the mystery of iniquity* to bring its work to some perfection, which *in the apostles' time began to work;* if, I say, you will come thus long after, and urge us with the single tradition of one of these churches, being now catholic to itself alone, and heretical to all the rest; nay, not only with her ancient and original traditions, but also with her postnate introduced definitions, and these, as we pretend, repugnant to Scripture and ancient tradition, and all this to decline an indifferent trial by Scripture, under pretence (wherein also you agree with the calumny of the old heretics) that "all necessary truth cannot be found in them without recourse to tradition:" if, I say, notwithstanding all these differences, you will still be urging us with this argument, as the very same, and of the same force, with that wherewith the forementioned Fathers urged the old heretics; certainly this must needs proceed from a confidence you have, not only that we have no school divinity nor metaphysics, but no logic or common sense; that we are but pictures of men, and have the definition of rational creatures given us in vain.

41. But now suppose I should be liberal to you, and grant what you cannot prove, that "the Fathers make succession a certain and perpetual mark of the true church;" I beseech you what will come of it? What! that want of succession is a certain sign of an heretical company? Truly if you say so, either you want logic, which is a certain sign of an ill disputer; or are not pleased to use it, which is a worse. For speech is a certain sign of a living man, yet want of speech is no sure argument that he is dead; for he may be dumb, and yet living still; and we may have other evident tokens that he is so, as eating, drinking, breathing, moving. So, though the constant and universal delivery of any doctrine by the apostolic churches, ever since the apostles, be a very great argument of the truth of it, yet there is no certainty but that truth, even Divine truth, may, through men's wickedness, be contracted from its universality, and interrupted in its perpetuity, and so lose this argument, and yet not want others to justify and support itself. For it may be one of those principles which God hath written in all men's hearts, or a conclusion evidently arising from them: it may be either contained in Scripture in express terms, or deducible from it by apparent consequence. If therefore you intend to prove "want of a perpetual succession of professors a certain note of heresy," you must not content yourself to show, that having it is one sign of truth; but you must show it to be the only sign of it, and inseparable from it. But this, if you be well advised, you will never undertake; first, because it is an impossible attempt; and then, because if you do it, you will mar all: for by proving this an inseparable sign of catholic doctrine, you will prove your own, which apparently wants it in many points, not to be catholic. For whereas you say, "this succession requires two things; agreement with the apostles' doctrine, and an uninterrupted conveyance of it down to them that challenge it;" it will be proved against you, that you fail in both points; and that some things, wherein you agree with the apostles, have not been held always; as, your condemning the doctrine of the Chiliasts, and holding the eucharist not necessary for infants; and that in many other things you agree not with them, nor with the church for many ages after: for example, in mutilation of the communion—in having your service in such a language as the assistants generally understand not—your offering to saints—your picturing of God—your worshipping of pictures.

42. Ad § 24. As for "universality of place, the want whereof you object to protestants as a mark of heresy;" you have not set down clearly and univocally what you mean by it, whether universality of fact or of right; and if of fact, whether absolute or comparative; and if comparative, whether of the church in comparison of any other religion, or only of heretical Christians; or if in comparison of these, whether in

comparison of all other sects conjoined, or in comparison only of any one of them. Nor have you proved it by any good argument in any sense to be a certain mark of heresy; for those places of St. Austin do not deserve the name. And truly in my judgment you have done advisedly in proving it no better. For as for universality of right, or a right to universality, all religions claim it, but only the true has it; and which has it cannot be determined, unless it be first determined which is the true. An absolute universality and diffusion through all the world if you should pretend to, all the world would laugh at you: if you should contend for latitude with any one religion, Mahumetism would carry the victory from you: if you should oppose yourselves against all other Christians besides you, it is certain you would be cast in this suit also. If lastly, being hard driven, you should please yourselves with being more than any one sect of Christians, it would presently be replied, that it is uncertain whether now you are so, but most certain, that the time has been when you have not been so; then when the "whole world wondered that it was become Arian;" then when Athanasius "opposed the world, and the world Athanasius;" then when your Liberius having the contemptible paucity of his adherents objected to him as a note of error, answered for himself, "There was a time when there were but three opposed the decree of the king, and yet those three were in the right, and the rest in the wrong;" then when the "professors of error surpassed the number of the professors of truth in proportion, as the sands of the sea do the stars of heaven" (as St. Austin acknowledges); then when Vincentius confesses, that "the poison of the Arians had contaminated, not now some certain portion, but almost the whole world;" then when the author of Nazianzen's life testifies, "that the heresy of Arius had possessed in a manner the whole extent of the world;" and when Nazianzen found cause to cry out, "Where are they who reproach us with our poverty, who define the church by the multitude, and despise the little flock? They have the people, but we the faith." And lastly, when Athanasius was so overborne with shoals and floods of Arians, that he was enforced to write a treatise on purpose, against those "who judge of the truth only by plurality of adherents." So that if you had proved want of universality even thus restrained, to be an infallible note of heresy, there would have been no remedy but you must have confessed, that the time was when you were heretics. And besides, I see not how you would have avoided this great inconvenience, of laying grounds and storing up arguments for antichrist against he comes, by which he may prove his company the true church. For it is evident out of Scripture, and confessed by you, that though his time be not long, his dominion shall be very large, and that the true church shall be then *the woman driven into the wilderness.*

43. Ad § 25 and 26. The remainder of this chapter, if I would deal strictly with you, I might let pass, as impertinent to the question now disputed. For whereas your judgment promises, that this whole chapter shall be employed in proving Luther and the protestants guilty of heresy; here you desert this question, and strike out into another accusation of them, that "their faith, even of the truth they hold, is not indeed true faith." But put case it were not, does it follow that the having of this faith makes them heretics, or that they are therefore heretics because they have this faith? Aristotle believed there were intelligences which moved the spheres; he believed this with an human persuasion, and not with a certain, obscure, prudent, supernatural faith; and will you make Aristotle an heretic, because he believed so? You believe there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, that there is such a city as Constantinople, and your belief hereof has not these qualifications which you require: And will you be content that this shall pass for a sufficient proof that you are an heretic? Heresy you have defined above to be a voluntary error; but he that believes truth, though his belief be not qualified according to your mind, yet sure in believing truth he believes no error; and from hence, according to ordinary logic, methinks it should follow, that such a man, for doing so, cannot be guilty of heresy.

44. But you will say, though he be not guilty of heresy for believing these truths, yet, if his faith be not saving, to what purpose will it be? Truly very little to the purpose of salvation, as little as it is to your proving protestants guilty of heresy. But out of our wonted indulgence, let us pardon this fault also, and

do you the favour to hear what you can say, to beget this faith in us, that indeed we have no faith, or at least not such a *faith without which it is impossible to please God*. Your discourse upon this point you have, I know not upon what policy, disjointed, and given us the grounds of it in the beginning of the chapter, and the superstructure here in the end. Them I have already examined, and, for a great part of them, proved them vain and deceitful. I have showed by many certain arguments, that though the subject matter of our faith be in itself most certain, yet that absolute certainty of adherence is not required to the essence of faith, no, nor to make it acceptable with God; but that to both these effects it is sufficient, if it be firm enough to produce obedience and charity. I have showed besides, that prudence is rather commendable in faith than intrinsical and essential to it: so that whatsoever is here said, to prove the faith of protestants no faith, for want of certainty, or for want of prudence, is already answered before it is objected; for the foundation being destroyed, the building cannot stand. Yet, for the fuller refutation of all pretences, I will here make good, that to prove our faith destitute of these qualifications you have produced but vain sophisms, and, for the most part, such arguments as return most violently upon yourselves. Thus then you say,

45. First, "That their belief wanteth certainty, I prove, because they, denying the universal infallibility of the church, can have no certain ground to know what objects are revealed or testified by God." But if there be no other ground of certainty but your church's infallibility, upon what certain ground do you know that your church is infallible? Upon what certain ground do you know all those things which must be known, before you can know that your church is infallible? As, that there is a God; that God hath promised his assistance to your church in all her decrees; that the Scripture, wherein this promise is extant, is the word of God; that those texts of Scripture, which you allege for your infallibility, are uncorrupted; that that which you pretend is the true sense of them? When you have produced certain grounds for all these things, I doubt not but it will appear that we also may have grounds certain enough to believe our whole religion, which is nothing else but the Bible, without dependence on the church's infallibility. Suppose you should meet with a man that for the present believes neither church nor Scripture nor God, but is ready and willing to believe them all, if you can show some sufficient grounds to build his faith upon; will you tell such a man, there are no certain grounds by which he may be converted, or there are? If you say the first, you make all religion an uncertain thing; if the second, then either you must ridiculously persuade that your church is infallible because it is infallible, or else that there other certain grounds besides your church's infallibility.

46. But you proceed and tell us, that "Holy Scripture is in itself most true and infallible; but without the direction and declaration of the church, we can neither have certain means to know what Scripture is canonical, nor what translations be faithful, nor what is the true meaning of Scripture." *Answ*. But all these things must be known before we can know the direction of your church to be infallible; for no other proof of it can be pretended, but only some texts of canonical Scripture truly interpreted: therefore either you are mistaken, in thinking there is no other means to know these things but your church's infallible direction, or we are excluded from all means of knowing her direction to be infallible.

47. "But protestants, though, as you suppose, they are persuaded their own opinions are true, and that they have used such means as are wont to be prescribed for understanding the Scripture, as prayer, conferring of texts, &c., yet by their disagreement show that some of them are deceived. Now they hold all the articles of their faith upon this only ground of Scripture, interpreted by these rules; and therefore it is clear, that the ground of their faith is infallible in no point at all." The first of these suppositions must needs be true, but the second is apparently false; I mean, that every protestant is persuaded that he hath used those means which are prescribed for understanding of Scripture. But that which you collect from these suppositions is clearly inconsequent; and by as good logic you might conclude, that logic and geometry stand upon no certain grounds, that the rules of the one and the principles of the other do

sometimes fail, because the disagreement of logicians and geometricians shows that some of them are deceived. Might not a Jew conclude as well against all Christians, that they have no certain ground whereon to rely in their understanding of Scripture, because their disagreements show that some are deceived; because some deduce from it the infallibility of a church, and others no such matter? So likewise a Turk might use the same argument against both Jews and Christians, and an atheist against all religions, and a sceptic against all reason. Might not the one say, men's disagreement in religion shows that there is no certainty in any; and the other, that experience of their contradictions teacheth that the rules of reason do sometimes fail? Do not you see and feel how void of reason and how full of impiety your sophistry is? and how, transported with zeal against protestants, you urge arguments against them, which if they could not be answered, would overthrow, not only your own, but all religion? But, God be thanked! the answer is easy and obvious: for let men but remember not to impute the faults of men but only to men, and then it will easily appear that there may be sufficient certainty in reason, in religion, in the rules of interpreting Scripture, though men, through their faults, take not care to make use of them, and so run into divers errors and dissensions.

48. "But protestants cannot determine what points be fundamental, and therefore must remain uncertain whether or no they be not in some fundamental error." *Answ*. By like reason, since you acknowledge that every error in points defined and declared by your church destroys the substance of faith, and yet cannot determine what points to be defined, it followeth, that you must remain uncertain whether or no you be not in some fundamental error, and so want the substance of faith, without which there can be no hope of salvation. Now that you are uncertain what points are defined appears from your own words, c. 4. § 3, of your second part, where, say you, "No less impertinent is your discourse concerning the difficulty to know what is heresy; for we grant, that it is not always easy to determine in particular occasions whether this or that doctrine be such, because it may be doubtful whether it be against any Scripture or Divine tradition, or definition of the church." Neither were it difficult to extort from you this confession, by naming divers points, which some of you say are defined, others the contrary, and others hang in suspense, and know not what to determine. But this I have done elsewhere; as also I have showed plainly enough, that though we cannot perhaps say in particular, thus much, and no more, is fundamental, yet believing all the Bible, we are certain enough that we believe all that is fundamental. As he that in a receipt takes twenty ingredients, whereof ten only are necessary, though he know not which those ten are, yet taking the whole twenty, he is sure enough that he hath taken all that are necessary.

49. Ad § 29. "But that he who erreth against any one revealed truth loseth all Divine faith, is a very true doctrine, delivered by catholic divines" (you mean your own) "with so general a consent, that the contrary is wont to be censured as temerarious: now certainly some protestants must do so, because they hold contradictions, which cannot all be true; therefore some of them at least have no Divine faith." *Answ*. I pass by your weakness in urging protestants with the authority of your divines, which yet in you might very deservedly be censured. For when Dr. Potter, to show the many actual dissensions between the Romish doctors, notwithstanding their brags of potential unity, refers to Pappus, who has collected out of Bellarmine their conradictions, and set them down in his own words to the number of 237; and to Flacius, *de Sectis et Controversiis Religionis Papisticæ;* you, making the very same use of Brerely against protestants, yet jeer and scorn Dr. Potter, as if he offered you for a proof the bare authority of Pappus and Flacius; and tell him, which is all the answer you vouchsafe him, 'It is pity that he brings Pappus and Flacius, flat heretics, to prove your many contradictions:" as if he had proved this with the bare authority, the bare judgment, of these men, which sure he does not, but with the formal words of Bellarmine faithfully collected by Pappus. And why then might we not say to you, Is it not pretty, that you bring Brerely, as flat an heretic as Pappus or Flacius, to prove the contradictions of protestants? Yet had he been so vain as to press you with the mere authority of protestant divines in any point, methinks for your own

sake you should have pardoned him, who here, and in many other places, urge us with the judgment of your divines as with weighty arguments. Yet if the authority of your divines were even canonical, certainly nothing could be concluded from it in this matter, there being not one of them who delivers for true doctrine this position of yours, thus nakedly set down, "That any error against any one revealed truth destroys all Divine faith." For they all require (not yourself excepted), that this truth must not only be revealed, but revealed publicly, and (all things considered) sufficiently propounded to the erring party, to be one of those which God, under pain of damnation, commands all men to believe. And therefore the contradiction of protestants (though this vain doctrine of your divines were supposed true) is but a weak argument, that any of them have no Divine faith, seeing you neither have, nor ever can prove (without begging the question of your church's infallibility), that the truths about which they differ are of this quality and condition. But though out of courtesy we may suppose this doctrine true, yet we have no reason to grant it, nor to think it any thing but a vain and groundless fancy; and that this very weak and inartificial argument, from the authority of your divines, is the strongest pillar which it hath to support it. Two reasons you allege for it out of Thomas Aquinas, the first whereof vainly supposeth, against reason and experience, that "by the commission of any deadly sin, the habit of charity is quite extirpated." And for the second, though you cry it up for an Achilles, and think, like the Gorgon's head, it will turn us all into stone; and in confidence of it, insult upon Dr. Potter, as if he durst not come near it; yet in very truth, having considered it well, I find it a serious, grave, prolix, and profound nothing. I could answer it in a word, by telling you, that it begs without all proof, or colour of proof, the main question between us, that the infallibility of your church is either the formal motive or rule, or a necessary condition of faith; which you know we flatly deny, and therefore all that is built upon it has nothing but wind for a foundation. But to this answer I will add a large confutation of this vain fancy out of one of the most rational and profound doctors of your own church, I mean Estius, who upon the third of the sent. the 23rd dist. the 13 §, writes thus: "It is disputed," saith he, "whether in him who believes some of the articles of our faith, and disbelieves others, or perhaps some one, there be faith properly so called in respect of that which he does believe? In which question we must, before all, carefully distinguish between those who, retaining a general readiness to believe whatsoever the church believes, yet err by ignorance in some doctrine of faith, because it is not as yet sufficiently declared to them that the church does so believe; and those who, after sufficient manifestation of the church's doctrine, do yet choose to dissent from it, either by doubting of it, or affirming the contrary. For of the former the answer is easy; but of these, that is, of heretics retaining some part of wholesome doctrine, the question is more difficult, and on both sides by the doctors probably disputed. For that there is in them true faith of the articles wherein they do not err, first experience seems to convince; for many at this day denying, for example sake, purgatory, or invocation of saints, nevertheless firmly hold, as by Divine revelation, that God is three and one—that the Son of God was incarnate and suffered—and other like things. As anciently the Novatians, excepting their peculiar error, of denying reconciliation to those that fell in persecution, held other things in common with catholics; so that they assisted them very much against the Arians, as Socrates relates in his Ecclesiastical History. Moreover, the same is proved by the example of the apostles, who, in the time of Christ's passion, being scandalized, lost their faith in him: as also Christ, after his resurrection, upbraids them with their incredulity, and calls Thomas incredulous, for denying the resurrection, John xx. Whereupon St. Austin also, in his preface upon Psalm xvci., saith, "that after the resurrection of Christ, the faith of those that fell was restored again. And yet we must not say, that the apostles then lost the faith of the Trinity, of the creation of the world, of eternal life, and such-like other articles. Besides, the Jews, before Christ's coming, held the faith of one God the Creator of heaven and earth; who although they lost the true faith of the Messias by not receiving Christ, yet we cannot say that they lost the faith of one God, but still retained this article as firmly as they did before.

"Add hereunto, that neither Jews nor heretics seem to lie, in saying they believe either the books of the prophets, or the four Gospels; it being apparent enough that they acknowledge in them Divine authority, though they hold not the true sense of them; to which purpose is that in the Acts, ch. xx., *Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest*. Lastly, it is manifest, that many gifts of God are found even in bad men, and such as are out of the church; therefore nothing hinders but that Jews and heretics, though they err in many things, yet in other things may be so divinely illuminated as to believe aright. So St. Austin seems to teach in his book *De Unico Baptismso contra Petilianum*, c. 3, in these words: 'When a Jew comes to us to be made a Christian, we destroy not in him God's good things, but his own ill. That he believes one God is to be worshipped, that he hopes for eternal life, that he doubts not of the resurrection, we approve and commend him: we acknowledge that as he did believe these things, so he is still to believe them; and as he did hold, so he is still to hold them.' Thus he, subjoining more to the same purpose in the next. And again in the 26th chap., and in his third book, *De Bapt. contr. Donat*. cap. ult. and upon Psa. lxiv. 'But now this reason seems to persuade the contrary, because the formal object of faith seems to be the first verity, as it is manifested by the church's doctrine as the Divine and infallible rule; wherefore, whosoever adheres not to this rule, although he assent to some matters of faith, yet he embraces them not with faith, but with some other kind of assent: as if a man assent to a conclusion, not knowing the reason by which it is demonstrated, he hath not true knowledge, but an opinion only of the same conclusion. Now that an heretic adheres not to the rule aforesaid, it is manifest; because if he did adhere to it, as Divine and infallible, he would receive all, without exception, which the church teacheth, and so would not be an heretic.' After this manner discourses St. Thom. 2. 2. q. 5. art. 3. From whom yet Durand dissents upon this distinction, thinking there may be in an heretic true faith, in respect of the articles in which he doth not err. Others, as Scotus and Bonaventure, define not the matter plainly, but seem to choose a middle way.

"To the authority of St. Austin and these schoolmen, this may be adjoined, That it is usual with good Christians to say, that heretics have not the entire faith. Whereby it seems to be intimated, that some part of it they do retain: whereof this may be another reason; that if the truths, which a Jew or a heretic holds, he should not hold them by faith, but after some other manner, to wit, by his own proper will and judgment, it will follow, that all that excellent knowledge of God and divine things, which is found in them, is to be attributed, not to the grace of God, but to the strength of freewill; which is against St. Austin, both elsewhere, and especially in the end of his book *De Potentia*.

"As for the reason alleged to the contrary, we answer, It is impertinent to faith, by what means we believe the prime verity, that is, by what means God useth to confer upon men the gift of faith. For although now the ordinary means be the testimony and teaching of the church, yet it is certain, that by other means faith hath been given heretofore, and it is given still. For many of the ancients, as Adam, Abraham, Melchisedec, Job, received faith by special revelation; the apostles by the miracles and preaching of Christ; others again by the preaching and miracles of the apostles; and lastly, others by other means, when as yet they had heard nothing of the infallibility of the church. To little children by baptism, without any other help, faith is infused: and therefore it is possible, that a man not adhering to the church's doctrine as a rule infallible, yet may receive some things for the word of God, which do indeed truly belong to the faith; either because they are now or heretofore have been confirmed by miracles, or because he manifestly sees that the ancient church taught so, or upon some other inducement. And yet, nevertheless, we must not say that heretics and Jews do hold the faith, but only some part of the faith. For the faith signifies an entire thing, and complete in all parts; whereupon an heretic is said to be simply an infidel, to have lost the faith, and according to the apostle, 1 Tim. i., *to have made ship-wreck of it*, although he holds some things with the same strength of assent and readiness of will, wherewith by others are held all these points which appertain to the faith." And thus far Estius; whose discourse, I presume,

may pass for a sufficient refutation of your argument out of Aquinas. And therefore your corollaries drawn from it—that "every error against faith involves opposition against God's testimony;" that "protestants have no faith, no certainty;" and that "you have all faith,"—must, together with it, fall to the ground.

50. But "if protestants have certainty, they want obscurity, and so have not that faith, which, as the apostle saith, *is of things not appearing*." This argument you prosecute in the next paragraph; but I can find nothing in it to convince or persuade me that protestants cannot have as much certainty as is required to faith of an object not so evident as to beget science. If obscurity will not consist with certainty in the highest degree, then you are to blame for requiring to faith contradicting conditions. If certainty and obscurity will stand together, what reason can be imagined that a protestant may not entertain them both as well as a papist? Your bodies and souls, your understandings and wills, are, I think of the same condition with ours; and why then may not we be certain of an obscure thing as well as you? And as you make this long discourse against protestants, why may not we, putting *church* instead of *Scripture*, send it back again to you, and say, "If papists have certainty, they want obscurity, and so have not that faith, which, as the apostle saith, *is of things not appearing*, or not necessitating our understanding to an assent? for the whole edifice of the faith of papists is settled on these two principles; these particular propositions are the propositions of the church; and the sense and meaning of them is clear and evident, at least in all points necessary to salvation. Now these principles being once supposed, it clearly followeth, that what papists believe as necessary to salvation is evidently known by them to be true, by this argument; It is certain and evident, that whatsoever is the word of God, or Divine revelation, is true: but it is certain and evident, that these propositions of the church in particular are the word of God, or Divine revelations: therefore it is certain and evident, that all propositions of the church are true. Which conclusion I take for a major in a second argument, and say thus: It is certain and evident, that all propositions of the church are true: but it is certain and evident, that such particulars, for example, the lawfulness of the half-communion, the lawfulness and expedience of Latin service, the doctrine of transubstantiation, indulgences, &c., are the propositions of the church: therefore it is certain and evident, that these particular objects are true. Neither will it avail you to say, that the said principles are not evident by natural discourse, but only by the eye of reason cleared by grace; for supernatural evidence no less (yea, rather more) drowns and excludes obscurity than natural evidence doth. Neither can the party so enlightened be said voluntarily to captivate his understanding to that light, but rather, his understanding is by necessity made captive, and forced not to disbelieve what is presented by so clear a light; and therefore your imaginary faith is not the true faith defined by the apostle, but an invention of your own."

51. And having thus cried quittance with you, I must entreat you to devise (for truly I cannot) some answer to this argument, which will not serve in proportion to your own. For I hope you will not pretend that I have done you injury, in settling your faith upon principles which you disclaim. And if you allege this disparity, that you are more certain of your principles than we of ours, and yet you do not pretend that your principles are so evident as we do that ours are; what is this to say, but that you are more confident than we, but confess you have less reason for it? For the evidence of the thing assented to, be it more or less, is the reason and cause of the assent in the understanding. But then besides, I am to tell you, that you are here, as every where, extremely, if not affectedly, mistaken in the doctrine of protestants; who, though they acknowledge that the things which they believe are in themselves as certain as any demonstrable or sensible verities, yet pretend not that their certainty of adherence is most perfect and absolute, but such as may be perfected and increased as long as they *walk by faith, and not by sight*. And consonant hereunto is their doctrine touching the evidence of the objects whereunto they adhere. For you abuse the world and them, if you pretend that they hold the first of your two principles, that these particular books are the word of God (for so I think you mean), either to be in itself evidently certain, or of itself, and being divested of the motives of credibility, evidently credible: for they are not so fond as to

conceive, nor so vain as to pretend, that all men do assent to it, which they would, if it were evidently certain; nor so ridiculous as to imagine, that if an Indian, that never heard of Christ or Scripture, should by chance find a Bible in his own language, and were able to read it, that upon the reading it, he would certainly, without a miracle, believe it to be the word of God; which he could not choose, if it were evidently credible. What then do they affirm of it? Certainly no more than this; that whatsoever man, that is not of a perverse mind, shall weigh with serious and mature deliberation those great moments of reason which may incline him to believe the Divine authority of Scripture, and compare them with the light objections that in prudence can be made against it, he shall not choose but find sufficient, nay, abundant inducements to yield unto it firm faith and sincere obedience. Let that learned man Hugo Grotius speak for all the rest, in his book "of the Truth of Christian Religion;" which book whosoever attentively peruses, shall find that a man may have great reason to be a Christian without dependence upon your church for any part of it; and that your religion is no foundation of, but rather a scandal and an objection against Christianity. He then, in the last chapter of his second book, hath these excellent words: "If any be not satisfied with these arguments above said, but desires more forcible reasons for confirmation of the excellency of Christian religion, let such know, that as there are variety of things which be true, so are there divers ways of proving or manifesting the truth. Thus is there one way in mathematics, another in physics, a third in ethics, and lastly, another kind, when a matter of fact is in question: wherein verily we must rest content with such testimonies as are free from all suspicion of untruth; otherwise down goes all the frame and use of history, and a great part of the art of physic, together with all dutifulness that ought to be between parents and children; for matters of practice can no way else be known but by such testimonies. Now it is the pleasure of Almighty God, that those things which he would have us to believe (so that the very belief thereof may be imputed to us for obedience), should not so evidently appear as those things which are apprehended by sense and plain demonstration, but only be so far forth revealed as may beget faith, and a persuasion thereof, in the hearts and minds of such as are not obstinate; that so the gospel may be as a touchstone for trial of men's judgments, whether they be sound or unsound. For seeing these arguments, whereof we have spoken, have induced so many honest, godly, and wise men to approve of this religion, it is thereby plain enough that the fault of other men's infidelity is not for want of sufficient testimony, but because they would not have that to be had and embraced for truth which is contrary to their wilful desires; it being a hard matter for them to relinquish their honours, and set at nought other commodities; which thing they know they ought to do, if they admit of Christ's doctrine, and obey what he hath commanded. And this is the rather to be noted of them, for that many other historical narrations are approved by them to be true, which notwithstanding are only manifest by authority, and not by any such strong proofs and persuasions, or tokens, as to declare the history of Christ to be true; which are evident, partly by the confession of those Jews that are yet alive, and partly in those companies and congregations of Christians, which are anywhere to be found; whereof doubtless there was some cause.

"Lastly, seeing the long duration or continuance of Christian religion, and the large extent thereof, can be ascribed to no human power, therefore the same must be attributed to miracles: or if any deny that it came to pass through a miraculous manner, this very getting so great strength and power without a miracle may be thought to surpass any miracle."

52. And now you see, I hope, that protestants neither do nor need to pretend to any such evidence in the doctrine they believe, as cannot well consist both with the essence and obedience of faith. Let us come now to the last nullity which you impute to the faith of protestants, and that is, "want of prudence:" touching which point, as I have already demonstrated that wisdom is not essential to faith, but that a man may truly believe truth, though upon insufficient motives; so I doubt not but I shall make good, that if prudence were necessary to faith, we have better title to it than you; and that if a wiser than Solomon

were here, he should have better reason to believe the religion of protestants than papists, the Bible rather than the council of Trent. But let us hear what you can say.

53. Ad § 31. You demand then first of all, "What wisdom was it to forsake a church confessedly very ancient, and besides which there could be demonstrated no other visible church of Christ upon earth?" I answer, Against God and truth there lies no prescription, and therefore certainly it might be great wisdom to forsake ancient errors for more ancient truths. One God is rather to be followed than innumerable worlds of men; and therefore it might be great wisdom either for the whole visible church, nay, for all the men in the world, having wandered from the way of truth, to return unto it; or for a part of it, nay, for one man, to do so, although all the world besides were madly resolute to do the contrary. It might be great wisdom to forsake the errors, though of the only visible church, much more of the Roman, which, in conceiving herself the whole visible church, does somewhat like the frog in the fable, which thought the ditch he lived in to be all the world.

54. You demand again, "What wisdom was it to forsake a church acknowledged to want nothing necessary to salvation, endued with succession of bishops," &c., *usque ad* "election or choice?" I answer, Yet might it be great wisdom to forsake a church not acknowledged to want nothing necessary to salvation, but accused and convicted of many damnable errors: certainly damnable to them who were convicted of them, had they still persisted in them after their conviction; though perhaps pardonable (which is all that is acknowledged) to such as ignorantly continued in them: a church vainly arrogating, without possibility of proof, a perpetual succession of bishops, holding always the same doctrine; and with a ridiculous impudence pretending perpetual possession of the world; whereas the world knows, that a little before Luther's arising, your church was confined to a part of a part of it: lastly, a church vainly glorying in the independence of other churches upon her, which she supports no more than those crouching antics, which seem in great buildings to labour under the weight they bear, do indeed support the fabric. For a corrupted and false church may give authority to preach the truth, and consequently against her own falsehoods and corruptions. Besides, a false church may preserve the Scripture true, (as now the Old Testament is preserved by the Jews, (either not being arrived to that height of impiety as to attempt the corruption of it, or not able to effect it, or not perceiving or not regarding the opposition of it to her corruptions. And so we might receive from you lawful ordination and true Scriptures, though you were a false church; and, receiving the Scriptures from you, (though not from you alone,) I hope you cannot hinder us, neither need we ask your leave to believe and obey them. And this, though you be a false church, is enough to make us a true one. As for a "succession of men that held with us in all points of doctrine," it is a thing we need not, and you have as little as we. So that if we acknowledge that your church before Luther was a true church, it is not for any ends, for any dependence that we have upon you, but because we conceive that in a charitable construction you may pass for a true church, such a church (and no better) as you do sometimes acknowledge protestants to be, that is, a company of men wherein some ignorant souls may be saved. So that in this balancing of religion against religion, and church against church, it seems you have nothing of weight and moment to put into your scale; nothing but smoke and wind, vain shadows and fantastical pretences. Yet if Protestants, on the other side, had nothing to put in their scale but those negative commendations which you are pleased to afford them; nothing but—no unity, nor means to procure it; no further extent, when Luther arose, than Luther's body; no universality of time or place; no visibility or being, except only in your church; no succession of persons or doctrine; no leader but Luther, in a quarrel begun upon no ground but passion; no church, no ordination, no Scriptures, but such as they received from you; if all this were true, and this were all that could be pleaded for by protestants, possibly, with an allowance of three grains of partiality, your scale might seem to turn. But then, if it may appear that part of these objections are falsely made against them, the rest vainly; that whatsoever of truth is in these imputations is impertinent to this trial, and whatsoever

is pertinent is untrue; and besides, that plenty of good matter may be alleged for protestants, which is here dissembled; then, I hope, our cause may be good, notwithstanding these pretences.

55. I say, then, that want of universality of time and place, the invisibility or not existence of the professors of protestant doctrine before Luther, Luther's being alone when he first opposed your church, our having our church, ordination, Scriptures, personal and yet not doctrinal succession from you, are vain and impertinent allegations against the truth of our doctrine and church. That the entire truth of Christ, without any mixture of error, should be professed or believed in all places at any time, or in any place at all times, is not a thing evident in reason, neither have we any revelation for it. And, therefore, in relying so confidently on it, you build your house upon the sand. And what obligation we had either to be so peevish as to take nothing of yours, or so foolish as to take all, I do not understand. For whereas you say, that "this is to be choosers, and therefore heretics," I tell you, that though all heretics are choosers, yet all choosers are not heretics, otherwise they also which choose your religion must be heretics. As for "our wanting unity, and means of proving it, Luther's opposing your church upon mere passion, our following private men rather than the Catholic church," the first and last are mere untruths; for we want not unity, nor means to procure it in things necessary. Plain places of Scripture, and such as need no interpreter, are our means to obtain it. Neither do we follow any private men, but only the Scripture, the word of God, as our rule; and reason, which is also the gift of God, given to direct us in all our actions, in the use of this rule. And then for "Luther's opposing your church upon mere passion," it is a thing I will not deny, because I know not his heart, and for the same reason you should not have affirmed it. Sure I am, whether he opposed your church upon reason or no, he had reason enough to oppose it. And therefore if he did it upon passion, we will follow him only in his action, and not in his passion; in his opposition, not in the manner of it: and then I presume you will have no reason to condemn us, unless you will say that a good action cannot be done with reason, because somebody before us hath done it upon passion. You see then how imprudent you have been in the choice of your arguments, to prove protestants unwise in the choice of their religion.

56. It remains now that I should show that many reasons of moment may be alleged for the justification of Protestants, which are dissembled by you, and not put into the balance. Know then, sir, that when I say the religion of protestants is in prudence to be preferred before yours, as, on the one side, I do not understand by your religion, the doctrine of Bellarmine or Baronius, or any other private man amongst you; nor the doctrine of the Sorbonne, or of the Jesuits, or of the Dominicans, or of any other particular company among you, but that wherein you all agree, or profess to agree, "the doctrine of the council of Trent:" so accordingly on the other side, by the "religion of protestants," I do not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon; nor the confession of Augusta, or Geneva, nor the Catechism of Heidelberg, nor the Articles of the Church of England, no, nor the harmony of protestant confessions; but that wherein they all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as a perfect rule of their faith and actions; that is, the BIBLE. The BIBLE, I say, the BIBLE only, is the religion of protestants! Whatsoever else they believe besides it, and the plain, irrefragable, indubitable consequences of it, well may they hold it as a matter of opinion; but as matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds believe it themselves, nor require the belief of it of others, without most high and most schismatical presumption. I for my part, after a long and (as I verily believe and hope) impartial search of "the true way to eternal happiness," do profess plainly that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot but upon this rock only. I see plainly and with mine own eyes, that there are popes against popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the church of one age against the church of another age. Traditive interpretations of Scripture are pretended; but there are few or none to be found: no tradition, but only of Scripture, can derive itself from the fountain, but may be plainly

proved either to have been brought in, in such an age after Christ, or that in such an age it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certainty but of Scripture only for any considering man to build upon. This therefore, and this only, I have reason to believe: this I will profess, according to this I will live, and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly, lose my life, though I should be sorry that Christians should take it from me. Propose me anything out of this book, and require whether I believe it or no, and seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this; God hath said so, therefore it is true. In other things I will take no man's liberty of judgment from him, neither shall any man take mine from me. I will think no man the worse man, nor the worse Christian, I will love no man the less, for differing in opinion from me. And what measure I mete to others, I expect from them again. I am fully assured that God does not, and therefore that men ought not, to require any more of any man than this, to believe the Scripture to be God's word, to endeavour to find the true sense of it, and to live according to it.

57. This is the religion which I have chosen after a long deliberation, and I am verily persuaded that I have chosen wisely, much more wisely than if I had guided myself according to your church's authority. For the Scripture being all true, I am secured, by believing nothing else, that I shall believe no falsehood as matter of faith. And if I mistake the sense of Scripture, and so fall into error, yet I am secure from any danger thereby, if but your grounds be true; because endeavouring to find the true sense of Scripture, I cannot but hold my error without pertinacity, and be ready to forsake it, when a more true and a more probable sense shall appear unto me. And then all necessary truth being, as I have proved, plainly set down in Scripture, I am certain by believing Scripture to believe all necessary truth; and he that does so, if his life be answerable to his faith, how is it possible he should fail of salvation?

58. Besides, whatever may be pretended to gain to your church the credit of a guide, all that, and much more, may be said for the Scripture. Hath your church been ancient? the Scripture is more ancient. Is your church a means to keep men at unity? so is the Scripture to keep those that believe it, and will obey it, in unity of belief, in matters necessary or very profitable; and in unity of charity, in points unnecessary. Is your church universal for time or place? certainly the Scripture is more universal; for all the Christians in the world (those, I mean, that in truth deserve this name) do now and always have believed the Scripture to be the word of God, so much of it at least as contains all things necessary; whereas only you say, that you only are the church of God, and all Christians besides you deny it.

59. Thirdly, following the Scripture, I follow that whereby you prove your church's infallibility, (whereof, were it not for Scripture, what pretence could you have, or what notion could we have?) and by so doing tacitly confess, that yourselves are surer of the truth of the Scripture than of your church's authority. For we must be surer of the proof than of the thing proved, otherwise it is no proof.

60. Fourthly, following the Scripture, I follow that which must be true, if your church be true; for your church gives attestation to it: whereas, if I follow your church, I must follow that which, though Scripture be true, may be false, nay, which, if Scripture be true, must be false, because the Scripture testifies against it.

61. Fifthly, to follow the Scripture, I have God's express warrant and command, and no colour of any prohibition; and to believe your church infallible, I have no command at all, much less an express command. Nay, I have reason to fear that I am prohibited to do so in these words: *Call no man master on the earth: They Fell by infidelity, thou standest by faith: Be not high minded, but fear: The Spirit of truth the world cannot receive*.

62. Following your church, I must hold many things not only above reason, but against it, if anything be against it; whereas, following the Scripture, I shall believe many mysteries, but no impossibilities; many things above reason, but nothing against it; many things which, had they not been revealed, reason could never have discovered, but nothing which by true reason may be confuted; many things, which reason

cannot comprehend how they can be, but nothing which reason can comprehend that it cannot be. Nay, I shall believe nothing which reason will not convince that I ought to believe it; for reason will convince any man, unless he be of a perverse mind, that the Scripture is the word of God: and then no reason can be greater than this; God says so, therefore it is true.

63. Following your church, I must hold many things, which to any man's judgment, that will give himself the liberty of judgment, will seem much more plainly contradicted by Scripture, than the infallibility of your church appears to be confirmed by it; and consequently, must be so foolish as to believe your church exempted from error upon less evidence, rather than subject to the common condition of mankind upon greater evidence. Now, if I take the Scripture only for my guide, I shall not need to do any thing so unreasonable.

64. If I will follow your church, I must believe impossibilities, and that with an absolute certainty, upon motives which are confessed to be but only prudential and probable; that is, with a weak foundation I must firmly support a heavy, a monstrous heavy building: now following the Scripture, I shall have no necessity to undergo any such difficulties.

65. Following your church, I must be servant of Christ, and a subject of the king, but only *ad placitum papæ*. I must be prepared in mind to renounce my allegiance to the king, when the pope shall declare him a heretic, and command me not to obey him; and I must be prepared in mind "to esteem virtue vice and vice virtue, if the pope shall so determine." Indeed, you say, it is impossible he should do the latter; but that, you know, is a great question, neither is it fit my obedience to God and the king should depend upon a questionable foundation. And howsoever, you must grant, that if by an impossible supposition the pope's commands should be contrary to the law of Christ, that they of your religion must resolve to obey rather the commands of the pope than the law of Christ; whereas, if I follow the Scripture, I may, nay, I must, obey my sovereign in lawful things, though a heretic, though a tyrant; and though, I do not say the pope, but the apostles themselves, nay, *an angel from heaven, should teach any thing against the gospel of Christ*, I may, nay, I must, denounce anathema to him.

66. Following the Scripture, I shall believe a religion, which being contrary to flesh and blood, without any assistance from worldly power, wit, or policy, nay, against all the power and policy of the world, prevailed and enlarged itself in a very short time all the world over; whereas it is too apparent that your church hath got, and still maintains, her authority over men's consciences by counterfeiting false miracles, forging false stories, by obtruding on the world suppositious writings, by corrupting the monuments of former times, and defacing out of them all which any way makes against you, by wars, by persecutions, by massacres, by treasons, by rebellions; in short, by all manner of carnal means, whether violent or fraudulent.

67. Following the Scripture, I shall believe a religion, the first preachers and professors whereof, it is most certain, they could have no worldly ends upon the world; that they should not project to themselves by it any of the profits, or honours, or pleasures of this world, but rather were to expect the contrary, even all the miseries which the world could lay upon them. On the other side, the head of your church, the pretended successor of the apostles and guide of faith, it is even palpable that he makes your religion the instrument of his ambition, and by it seeks to entitle himself directly or indirectly to the monarchy of the world. And besides it is evident to any man that has but half an eye, that most of those doctrines which you add to the Scripture do make, one way or other, for the honour or temporal profit of the teachers of them.

68. Following the Scripture only, I shall embrace a religion of admirable simplicity, consisting in a manner wholly in the worship of *God in spirit and in truth:* whereas your church and doctrine is even loaded with an infinity of weak, childish, ridiculous, unsavoury superstitions and ceremonies, and full of that unrighteousness for which Christ shall judge the world.

69. Following the Scripture, I shall believe that which universal, never-failing tradition assures me, that it was by the admirable supernatural works of God confirmed to be the word of God, whereas never any miracle was wrought, never so much as a lame horse cured, in confirmation of your church's authority and infallibility. And if any strange things have been done, which may seem to give attestation to some parts of your doctrine, yet this proves nothing but the truth of the Scripture, which foretold that (God's providence permitting it, and the wickedness of the world deserving it) strange signs and wonders should be wrought to confirm false doctrine, that they which love not the truth may be given over to strong delusions. Neither does it seem to me any strange thing, that God should permit some true wonders to be done, to delude them who have forged so many to deceive the world.

70. If I follow the Scripture, I must not promise myself salvation without effectual dereliction and mortification of all vices, and the effectual practice of all Christian virtues: but your church opens an easier and a broader way to heaven, and though I continue all my life long in a course of sin, and without the practice of any virtue, yet gives me assurance, that I may be let into heaven at a posternegate, even by an act of attrition at the hour of death, if it be joined with confession, or by an act of contrition without confession.

71. Admirable are the precepts of piety and humility, of innocence and patience, of liberality, frugality, temperance, sobriety, justice, meekness, fortitude, constancy, and gravity, contempt of the world, love of God, and the love of mankind; in a word, of all virtues, and against all vice, which the Scriptures impose upon us, to be obeyed under pain of damnation: the sum whereof is in a manner comprised in our Saviour's sermon on the mount, recorded in the 5th, 6th, and 7th of St. Matthew, which if they were generally obeyed, could not but make the world generally happy, and the goodness of them alone were sufficient to make any wise and good man believe that this religion, rather than any other, came from God, the Fountain of all goodness. And that they may be generally obeyed, our Saviour hath ratified them all in the close of his sermon with these universal sanctions: *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.* And again, *Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof*. Now your church, notwithstanding all this, enervates, and in a manner dissolves and abrogates many of these precepts, teaching men that they are not laws for all Christians, but counsels of perfection, and matters of supererogation; that a man shall do well, if he do observe them, but he shall not sin, if he observe them not; that they are for them who aim at high places in heaven, who aspire with the two sons of Zebedee to the right hand or the left hand of Christ; but if a man will be content barely to go to heaven, and to be a doorkeeper in the house of God, especially if he will be content to taste of purgatory in the way, he may attain it at an easier purchase. Therefore the religion of your church is not so holy nor so good as the doctrine of Christ delivered in Scripture, and therefore not so likely to come from the fountain of holiness and goodness.

72. Lastly, if I follow your church for my guide, I shall do all one as if I should follow a company of blind men in a judgment of colours or in the choice of a way. For every unconsidering man is blind in that which he does not consider. Now what is your church but a company of unconsidering men, who comfort themselves because they are a great company together? but all of them, either out of idleness refuse the trouble of a severe trial of their religion, (as if heaven were not worth it,) or out of superstition fear the event of such a trial, that they may be scrupled, and staggered, and disquieted by it; and therefore, for the most part, do it not at all; or if they do it, they do it negligently and hypocritically, and perfunctorily, rather for the satisfaction of others than themselves; but certainly without indifference, without liberty of judgment, without a resolution to doubt of it, if upon examination the grounds of it prove uncertain, or to leave it, if they prove apparently false. My own experience assures me, that in this imputation I do you

no injury; but it is very apparent to all men from your ranking "doubting of any part of your doctrine" among mortal sins. For from hence it follows, that seeing every man must resolve that he will never commit mortal sin, that he must never examine the grounds of it at at all, for fear he should be moved to doubt; or if he do, he must resolve that no motives, be they never so strong, shall move him to doubt, but that with his will and resolution he will uphold himself in a firm belief of your religion, though his reason and his understanding fail him. And seeing this is the condition of all those whom you esteem good catholics, who can deny but you are a company of men unwilling and afraid to understand, lest you should do good? that have eyes to see, and will not see, that *have not the love of truth*, (which is only to be known by an indifferent trial,) and therefore deserve to be *given over to strong delusions;* men that *love darkness more than light:* in a word, that you are *the blind leading the blind;* and what prudence there can be in following such guides our Saviour hath taught us in saying, *If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*.

73. There remain unspoken to in this section some places out of St. Austin, and some sayings of Luther, wherein he confesses that in the papacy are many good things. But for the former, I have already considered, and returned the argument grounded on them. As for Luther's speeches, I told you, not long since, that we follow no private men, and regard not much what he says either against the church of Rome or for it, but what he proves. He was a man of a vehement spirit, and very often what he took in hand he did not do it, but overdo it. He that will justify all his speeches, especially such as he wrote in heat of opposition, I believe will have work enough. Yet in these sentences, though he overreach in the particulars, yet what he says in general we confess true, and confess with him, "that in the papacy are many good things," which have come from them to us; but withal we say, there are many bad; neither do we think ourselves bound in prudence either to reject the good with the bad, or to retain the bad with the good, but rather conceive it a high point of wisdom to separate between the *precious and the vile, to sever the good from the bad, and to put the good in vessels to be kept, and to cast the bad away; to try all things, and to hold to that which is good*.

74. Ad § 32. Your next and last argument against the faith of protestants is, because "wanting certainty and prudence, it must also want the fourth condition, supernaturality. For that being a human persuasion, it is not in the essence of it supernatural; and being imprudent and rash, it cannot proceed from Divine motion, and so is not supernatural in respect of the cause from which it proceedeth." *Answ*. This little discourse stands wholly upon what went before, and therefore must fall together with it. I have proved the faith of protestants as certain and as prudent as the faith of papists; and therefore if these be certain grounds of supernaturality, our faith may have it as well as yours, I would here furthermore be informed, how you can assure us that your faith it not your persuasion or opinion, (for you make them all one,) that your church's doctrine is true? or if you grant it your persuasion, why is it not the persuasion of men, and, in respect of the subject of it, an human persuasion? I desire also to know, what sense there is in pretending that your persuasion is, not in regard of the object only and cause of it, but in the nature or essence of it, supernatural? Lastly, whereas you, that "being imprudent, it cannot come from Divine motion;" certainly by this reason, all they that believe your own religion, and cannot give a wise and sufficient reason for it, (as millions amongst you cannot,) must be condemned to have no supernatural faith; or if not, then without question nothing can hinder but that the imprudent faith of protestants may proceed from Divine motion, as well as the imprudent faith of papists.

75. And thus having weighed your whole discourse, and found it altogether lighter than vanity, why should I not invert your conclusion, and say, Seeing you have not proved that whatsoever errs against any one point of faith loseth all Divine faith; nor that any error whatsoever, concerning that which by the parties litigant may be esteemed a matter of faith, is a grievous sin; it follows not at all, that when two men hold different doctrines concerning religion, that but one can be saved? Not that I deny but that the

sentence of St. Chrysostom, with which you conclude this chapter, may in a good sense be true; for ofttimes by "the faith" is meant only that doctrine which is "necessary to salvation;" and to say, that salvation may be had without any the least thing which is necessary to salvation, implies a repugnance, and destroys itself. Besides, not to believe all necessary points, and to believe none at all, is for the purpose of salvation all one; and therefore he that does so may justly be said to destroy the gospel of Christ, seeing he makes it ineffectual to the end for which it was intended, the salvation of men's souls. But why you should conceive that all differences about religion are concerning matters of faith, in this high notion of the word, for that I conceive no reason.

CHAPTER VII.

In regard of the precept of charity towards one's self, protestant are in a state of sin, as long as they remain separated from the Roman Church.

1. "THAT due order is to be observed in the theological virtue of charity, whereby we are directed to prefer some objects before others, is a truth taught by all divines, and declared in these words of Holy Scripture, *He hath ordered charity in me*. The reason whereof is, because the infinite goodness of God, which is the formal object or motive of charity, and for which all other things are loved, is differently participated by different objects; and therefore the love we bear to them for God's sake must accordingly be unequal. In the virtue of faith, the case is far otherwise; because all the objects or points which we believe do equally participate the Divine testimony or revelation, for which we believe alike all things propounded for such. For it is as impossible for God to speak an untruth in a small as in a great matter. And this is the ground for which we have so often affirmed, that any least error against faith is injurious to God, and destructive of salvation.

2. "This order in charity may be considered, towards God, our own soul, the soul of our neighbour, our own life or goods, and the life or goods of our neighbour. God is to be beloved above all things, both *objective*, (as the divines speak,) that is, we must wish or desire to God a good more great, perfect, and noble, than to any or all other things; namely, all that indeed he is, a nature infinite, independent, immense, &c.; and also *appreciativé*, that is, that we must sooner leave what good soever, than leave and abandon him. In the other objects of charity, of which I spake, this order is to be kept: we may, but are not bound to prefer the life and goods of our neighbour before our own: we are bound to prefer the soul of our nighbour before our own temporal goods or life, if he happen to be in extreme spiritual necessity, and that we by our assistance can succour him, according to the saying of St. John, *In this we have known the charity of God, because he hath yielded his life for us: and we ought to yield our life for our brethren*. And St. Augustin likewise saith 'A Christian will not doubt to lose his own temporal life for the eternal life of his neighbour.' Lastly, we are to prefer the spiritual good of our own soul, before both the spiritual and temporal good of our neighbour, because as charity doth of its own nature chiefly incline the person in whom it resides to love God, and to be united with him, so of itself it inclines him to procure those things whereby the said union with God is effected, rather to himself than to others. And from hence it follows, that in things necessary to salvation, no man ought in any case, or in any respect whatsoever, to prefer the spiritual good either of any particular person or of the whole world before his own soul, according to those words of our blessed Saviour, *What doth it avail a man, if he gain the whole world, and sustain the damage of his own soul?* And therefore (to come to our present purpose) it is directly against the order of charity, or against charity as it hath a reference to ourselves, which divines call *charitas propria*, to adventure either the omitting of any means necessary to salvation, or the committing of any thing repugnant to it, for whatsoever respect; and consequently, if by living out of the Roman church we put ourselves in hazard either to want something necessarily required to salvation, or else to perform some act against it, we commit a most grievous sin against the virtue of charity, as it respects ourselves, and so cannot hope for salvation without repentance.

3. "Now of things necessary to salvation there are two sorts, according to the doctrine of all divines. Some things, say they, are necessary to salvation, *necessitate præcepti,* necessary only because they are commanded; for, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*. In which kind of things, as probable ignorance of the law or of the commandment doth excuse the party from all faulty breach thereof, so

likewise doth it not exclude salvation in case of ignorance. Some other things are said to be necessary to salvation, *necessitate medii, finis* or *salutis;* because they are means appointed by God to attain our end of eternal salvation, in so strict a manner, that it were presumption to hope for salvation without them. And as the former means are said to be necessary because they are commanded, so the latter are commonly said to be commanded because they are necessary; that is, although there were no other special precept concerning them, yet supposing they be once appointed as means absolutely necessary to salvation, there cannot but arise an obligation of procuring to have them, in virtue of that universal precept of charity which obligeth every man to procure the salvation of his own soul. In this sort, 'Divine infallible faith' is necessary to salvation; as likewise repentance of every deadly sin, and in the doctrine of catholics, baptism *in re*, that is, 'in act,' to children, and for those who are come to the use of reason, *in voto*, or hearty desire, when they cannot have it in act. And as baptism is necessary for remission of original and actual sin committed before it, so the sacrament of confession or penance is necessary *in re*, or *in voto*, in act or desire, for the remission of mortal sins, committed after baptism. The minister of which sacrament of penance being necessarily a true priest, true ordination is necessary in the church of God for remission of sins by this sacrament, as also for other ends not belonging to our present purpose. From hence it riseth, that no ignorance or impossibility can supply the want of those means which are absolutely necessary to salvation. As if, for example, a sinner depart this world without repenting himself of all deadly sins, although he die suddenly, or unexpectedly fall out of his wits, and so commit no new sin by omission of repentance; yet he shall be eternally punished for his former sins committed, and never repented of. If an infant die without baptism, he cannot be saved; not by reason of any actual sin committed by him in omitting baptism, but for original sin, not forgiven by the means which God hath ordained to that purpose. Which doctrine all or most protestants will (for aught I know) grant to be true, in the children of infidels; yea, not only Lutherans, but also some other protestants, as Mr. Bilson, late of Winchester, and others, hold it to be true, even in the children of the faithful. And if protestants in general disagree from catholics in this point, it cannot be denied but that our disagreement is in a point very fundamental. And the like I say of the sacrament of penance, which they deny to be necessary to salvation, either in act or in desire: which error is likewise fundamental, because it concerns (as I said) a thing necessary to salvation: and for the same reason, if their priesthood and ordination be doubtful, as certainly it is, they are in danger to want a means, without which they cannot be saved. Neither ought this rigour to seem strange or unjust; for Almighty God having, of his own goodness, without our merit, first ordained man to a supernatural end of eternal felicity; and then after our fall in Adam, vouchsafed to reduce us to the attaining of that end, if his blessed will be pleased to limit the attaining of that end, to some means which in his infinite wisdom he thinks most fit; who can say, Why dost thou so? or who can hope for that end without such means? Blessed be his Divine Majesty, for vouchsafing to ordain us, base creatures, to so sublime an end by any means at all!

4. "Out of the foresaid difference followeth another, that (generally speaking) in things necessary only because they are commanded, it is sufficient, for avoiding sin, that we proceed prudently, and by the conduct of some probable opinion, maturely weighed and approved by men of virtue, learning, and wisdom. Neither are we always obliged to follow the most strict and severe, or secure part, as long as the doctrine which we embrace proceeds upon such reasons as may warrant it to be truly probable and prudent, though the contrary part want not also probable grounds. For in human affairs and discourse evidence and certainty cannot be always expected. But when we treat not precisely of avoiding sin, but moreover of procuring something without which I cannot be saved, I am obliged by the law and order of charity, to procure as great certainty as morally I am able, and am not to follow every probable opinion or dictamen, but *tutiorem partem*, 'the safer part,' because, if my probability prove false, I shall not probably, but certainly, come short of salvation. Nay, in such a case I shall incur a new sin against the

virtue of charity towards myself, which obligeth every one not to expose his soul to the hazard of eternal perdition, when it is in his power, with the assistance of God's grace, to make the matter sure. From this very ground it is, that although some divines be of opinion that it is not a sin to use some matter or form of sacraments only probable, if we respect precisely the reverence or respect which is due to sacraments, as they belong to the moral infused virtue of religion; yet when they are such sacraments, as the invalidity thereof may endanger the salvation of souls, all do with one consent agree that it is a grievous offence to use a doubtful or only probable matter or form, when it is in our power to procure certainty. If therefore it may appear, that though it were not certain that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation, (as we have proved to be very certain,) yet at least that it is probable, and withal that there is a way more safe; it will follow out of the grounds already laid, that they are obliged by the law of charity to embrace that safe way.

5. "Now that protestants have reason at least to doubt in what case they stand, is deduced from what we have said and proved about the universal infallibility of the church, and of her being judge of controversies, to whom all Christians ought to submit their judgment (as even some protestants grant,) and whom to oppose in any one of her definitions is a grievous sin: as also from what we have said of the unity, universality, and visibility of the church, and of succession of persons and doctrine; of the conditions of Divine faith—certainty, obscurity, prudence, and supernaturality—which are wanting in the faith of protestants; of the frivolous distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental (the confutation whereof proveth, that heretics disagreeing among themselves in any least point cannot have the same faith, nor be of the same church); of schism, of heresy, of the persons who first revolted from Rome, and of their motives; of the nature of faith, which is destroyed by any least error; and it is certain, that some of them must be in error, and want the substance of true faith; and since all pretend the like certainty, it is clear that none of them have any certainty at all, but that they want true faith, which is a means most absolutely necessary to salvation. Moreover, as I said heretofore, since it is granted that every error in fundamental points is damnable, and that they cannot tell in particular what points be fundamental, it follows, that none of them knows whether he or his brethren do not err damnably, it being certain, that among so many disagreeing persons some must err. Upon the same ground of not being able to assign what points be fundamental, I say, they cannot be sure whether the difference among them be fundamental or no, and consequently, whether they agree in the substance of faith and hope of salvation. I omit to add, that you want the sacrament of penance, instituted for remission of sins; or at least you must confess that you hold it not necessary; and yet your own brethren, for example, the century writers, do acknowledge, that in the times of Cyprian and Tertullian, private confession, even of thoughts, was used; and that it was then commanded and thought necessary. The like I say concerning your ordination, which at least is very doubtful, and consequently all that depends thereon.

6. "On the other side, that the Roman church is the safer way to heaven, (not to repeat what hath been already said upon divers occasions,) I will again put you in mind, that unless the Roman church was the true church, there was no visible true church upon earth: a thing so manifest, that protestants themselves confess, that more than one thousand years the Roman church possessed the whole word, as we have showed heretofore, out of their own words: from whence it follows, that unless ours be the true church, you cannot pretend to any perpetual visible church of your own; but ours doth not depend on yours, before which it was. And here I wish you to consider with fear and trembling, how all Roman catholics, not one excepted, that is, those very men whom you must hold not to err damnably in their belief, unless you will destroy your own church and salvation, do with unanimous consent believe and profess, that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation; and then tell me, as you will answer at the last day, whether it be not more safe to live and die in that church, which even yourselves are forced to acknowledge 'not to be cut off from hope of salvation,' (which are your own words,) than to live in a church which the said confessedly true church doth firmly believe and constantly profess not to be

capable of salvation. And therefore I conclude, that by the most strict obligation of charity towards your own soul, you are bound to place it in safety, by returning to that church from which your progenitors schismatically departed, lest too late you find that saying of the Holy Ghost verified in yourselves, *He that loves the danger shall perish therein*.

7. "Against this last argument of the greater security of the Roman church, drawn from your own confession, you bring an objection, which in the end will be found to make for us against yourself. It is taken from the words of the Donatists, speaking to catholics in this manner: 'Yourselves confess our baptism, sacraments, and faith,' (here you put an explication of your own, and say, 'for the most part,' as if any small error in faith did not destroy all faith,) 'to be good and available. We deny yours to be so, and say, There is no church, no salvation amongst you: therefore it is safest for all to join with us.'

8. "By your leave, our argument is not (as you say) for simple people alone, but for all them who have care to save their souls. Neither is it grounded upon your charitable judgment, (as you speak,) but upon an inevitable necessity for you either to grant salvation to our church, or to entail certain damnation upon your own; because yours can have no being till Luther, unless ours be supposed to have been the true church of Christ. And since you term this argument a charm, take heed you be none of those, who, according to the prophet David, do not hear *the voice of him who charmeth wisely*. But to come to the purpose, catholics never granted that the Donatists had a true church, or might be saved; and therefore you having cited out of St. Augustin the words of the catholic, that the Donatists had true baptism, when you come to the contrary words of the Donatists, you add, 'No church, no salvation;' making the argument to have *quinque terminos*, without which addition you did see it made nothing against us; for, as I said, the catholics never yielded, that among the Donatists there was a true church, or hope of salvation. And yourself, a few leaves after, acknowledge, that the 'Donatists maintained an error,' which 'was in the matter and nature of it properly heretical, against that article of the Creed wherein we profess to believe the holy catholic church;' and consequently you cannot allow salvation to them, as you do, and must do, to us. And therefore the Donatists could not make the like argument against catholics, as catholics make against you, who grant us salvation, which we deny to you. But at least (you will say) this argument for the certainty of their baptism was like to ours, touching the security and certainty of our salvation; and therefore that catholics should have esteemed the baptism of the Donatists more certain than their own, and so have allowed rebaptization of such as were baptized by heretics or sinners, as the Donatists esteemed all catholics to be. I answer, No; because it being a matter of faith, that baptism administered by heretics, observing due matter, form, &c. is valid; to rebaptize any so baptized, had been both a sacrilege in reiterating a sacrament not reiterable, and a profession also of a damnable heresy, and therefore had not been more safe, but certainly damnable. But you confess, that in the doctrine or practice of the Roman church, there is no belief or profession of any damnable error, which if there were, even your church should certainly be no church. To believe therefore, and profess as we do, cannot exclude salvation, as rebaptization must have done. But if the Donatists could have affirmed with truth, that in the opinion both of catholics and themselves their baptism was good; yea, and good in such sort, as that unless theirs was good, that of the catholics could not be such; but theirs might be good, though that of the catholics were not; and further, that it was no damnable error to believe that baptism administered by the catholics was not good, nor that it was any sacrilege to reiterate the same baptism of catholics: if, I say, they could have truly affirmed these things, they had said somewhat, which at least had seemed to the purpose. But these things they could not say with any colour of truth, and therefore their argument was fond and impious. But we with truth say to protestants, You cannot but confess that our doctrine contains no damnable error, and that our church is so certainly a true church, that unless ours be true, you cannot pretend any; yea, you grant that you should be guilty of schism, if you did cut off our church from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation. But we neither do nor can grant that yours is

a true church, or that within it there is hope of salvation; therefore it is safest for you to join with us. And now against whom hath your objection greatest force?

9. "But I wonder not a little, and so I think will every body else, what the reason may be, that you do not so much as go about to answer the argument of the Donatists, which you say is all one with ours, but refer us to St. Augustin, there to read it; as if every one carried with him a library, or were able to examine the place in St. Augustin: and yet you might be sure your reader would be greedy to see some solid answer to an argument so often urged by us, and which indeed, unless you can confute it, ought alone to move every one that hath care of his soul, to take the safest way, by incorporating himself in our church. But we may easily imagine the true reason of your silence; for the answer which St. Augustin gives to the Donatists is directly against yourself, and the same which I have given, namely, that catholics approve the baptism of Donatists, but abhor their heresy of rebaptization. And that as gold is good, (which is the similitude used by St. Augustin,) yet not to be sought in company of thieves; so though baptism be good, yet it must not be sought for in the conventicles of Donatists. But you free us from damnable heresy, and yield us salvation, which I hope is to be embraced in whatsoever company it is found; or rather, that company is to be embraced before all other, in which all sides agree that salvation may be found. We therefore must infer, that it is safest for you to seek salvation among us. You had good reason to conceal St. Augustin's answer to the Donatists.

10. "You frame another argument in our behalf, and make us speak thus: 'If protestants believe the religion of catholics to be a safe way to heaven, why do they not follow it?' Which wise argument of your own you answer at large, and confirm your answer by this instance: 'The Jesuits and Dominicans hold different opinions touching predetermination, and the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin; yet so, that the Jesuits hold the Dominicans' way safe, that is, their error not damnable; and the Dominicans hold the same of the Jesuits; yet neither of them with good consequence can press the other to believe his opinion, because, by his own confession, it is no damnable error.'

11. "But what catholic maketh such a wise demand as you put into our mouths? If our religion be a safe way to heaven, that is, not damnable, why do you not follow it? As if every thing that is good must be of necessity embraced by every body! But what think you of the argument framed thus? Our religion is safe even by your confession; therefore you ought to grant that all may embrace it. And yet further, thus: Among different religions and contrary ways to heaven, one only can be safe: but ours, by your own confession, is safe, whereas we hold, that in yours there is no hope of salvation; therefore you may and ought to embrace ours. This is our argument. And if the Dominicans and Jesuits did say one to another, as we say to you, then one of them might with good consequence press the other to believe his opinion. You have still the hard fortune to be beaten with your own weapon.

12. "It remaineth, then, that both in regard of faith and charity protestants are obliged to unite themselves with the church of Rome. And I may add also, in regard of the theological virtue of hope, without which none can hope to be saved, and which you want, either by excess of confidence, or defect by despair, not unlike to your faith, which I showed to be either deficient in certainty or excessive in evidence; as likewise, according to the rigid Calvinists, it is either so strong, that, once had, it can never be lost; or so more than weak, and so much nothing, that it can never be gotten. For the true theological hope of Christians is a hope which keeps a mean between presumption and desperation, which moves us to work our salvation with fear and trembling, which conducts us to make sure our salvation by good works, as Holy Scripture adviseth: but, contrarily, protestants do either exclude hope by despair, with the doctrine, that our Saviour died not for all, and that such want grace sufficient to salvation; or else by vain presumption, grounded upon a fantastical persuasion, that they are predestinate; which faith must exclude all fear and trembling. Neither can they make their calling certain by good works, who do certainly believe, that before any good works they are justified, and justified even by faith alone, and by

that faith whereby they certainly believe that they are justified. Which points some protestants do expressly affirm to be 'the soul of the church,' 'the principal origin of salvation,' of all other points of doctrine the chiefest and weightiest,' as already I have noted, chap. 3. n. 19. And if some protestants do now relent from the rigour of the aforesaid doctrine, we must affirm, that at least some of them want the theological virtue of hope; yea, that none of them can have true hope, while they hope to be saved in the communion of those who defend such doctrines as do directly overthrow all true Christian hope. And for as much as concerns faith, we must also infer, that they want unity therein, (and consequently have none at all,) by their disagreement about 'the soul of the church,' 'the principal origin of salvation,' 'of all other points of doctrine the chiefest and weightiest.' And if you want true faith, you must by consequence want hope: or if you hold that this point is not to be so indivisible on either side, but that it hath latitude sufficient to embrace all parties, without prejudice to their salvation, notwithstanding that your brethren hold it to be 'the soul of the church,' &c., I must repeat what I have said heretofore, that even by this example it is clear you cannot agree what points be fundamental. And so (to whatsoever answer you fly) I press you in the same manner, and say, that you have no certainty whether you agree in fundamental points, or unity and substance of faith, which cannot stand with difference in fundamentals. And so upon the whole matter I leave it to be considered, whether want of charity can be justly charged on us, because we affirm that they cannot (without repentance) be saved, who want of all other the most necessary means to salvation, which are the three theological virtues, FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY.

13. "And now I end this first part, having, as I conceive, complied with my first design, (in that measure which time, commodity, scarcity of books, and my own small abilities, could afford,) which was to show, that amongst men of different religions one side can only be saved. For since there must be some infallible means to decide all controversies concerning religion, and to propound truths revealed by Almighty God; and this means can be no other but the visible church of Christ, which at the time of Luther's appearance was only the church of Rome, and such as agreed with her; we must conclude, that whosoever opposeth himself to her definitions, or forsaketh her communion, doth resist God himself, whose spouse she is, and whose Divine truth she propounds, and therefore becomes guilty of schism and heresy, which since Luther, his associates, and protestants have done, and still continue to do, it is not want of charity, but abundance of evident cause, that forces us to declare this necessary truth, PROTESTANCY UNREPENTED DESTROYS SALVATION."

THE

ANSWER TO THE SEVENTH CHAPTER:

That protestants are not bound by the charity which they owe to themselves to re-unite themselves to the Roman church.

THE first four paragraphs of this chapter are wholly spent in an unnecessary introduction unto a truth, which I presume never was, nor will be, by any man in his right wits, either denied or questioned; and that is, that "every man, in wisdom and charity to himself, is to take the safest way to his eternal salvation."

2. The fifth and sixth are nothing, in a manner, but references to discourses already answered by me, and confuted in their proper places.

3. The seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh, have no other foundation but this false pretence, that "we confess the Roman church free from damnable error."

4. In the twelfth, there is something that has some probability to persuade some protestants to forsake some of their opinions, or others to leave their communion; but to prove protestants in general to be in the state of sin, while they remain separate from the Roman Church, there is not one word or syllable: and besides, whatsoever argument there is in it for any purpose, it may be as forcibly returned upon papists, as it is urged against protestants; inasmuch as all papists either hold the doctrine of pre-determination, and absolute election, or communicate with those that do it. Now from this doctrine, what is more plain and obvious, than for every natural man (without God's especial preventing grace) to make this practical collection: Either I am elected or not elected; but if I be, no impiety possible can ever damn me; if not, no possible industry can ever save me? Now whether this disjunctive persuasion be not as likely as any doctrine of any protestants to extinguish Christian hope and filial fear, and to lead some men to despair, others to presumption, all to a wretchless and impious life, I desire you ingeniously to inform me. And if you deny it, assure yourself you shall be contradicted and confuted by men of your own religion, and your own society, and taught at length this charitable doctrine, that though men's opinions may be charged with the absurd consequences which naturally flow from them, yet the men themselves are not; I mean, if they perceive not the consequence of these absurdities, nor do not own and acknowledge, but disclaim and detest them. And this is all the answer which I should make to this discourse, if I should deal rigidly and strictly with you. Yet, that you may not think yourself contemned, nor have occasion to pretend that your arguments are evaded, I will entreat leave of my reader to bring to the test every particle of it, and to censure what deserves a censure, and to answer what may any way seem to require an answer; and then I doubt not but what I have affirmed in general will appear in particular.

5. Ad § 1. To the first then I say, 1. It was needless to prove that due order is to be observed in any thing, much more in charity, which being one of the best things, may be spoiled by being disordered: yet if it stood in need of proof, I fear this place of the Canticles, *He hath ordered charity in me*, would be no enforcing demonstration of it. 2. The reason alleged by you why we ought "to love one object more than another, because one thing participates the Divine goodness more than another," is fantastical, and repugnant to what you say presently after. For by this rule, no man should love himself more than all the world, which yet you require, unless he were first vainly persuaded, that he doth more participate the Divine goodness than all the world. But the true reason why one thing ought to be loved more than another is, because one thing is better than another, or because it is better to us, or because God commands us to do so, or because God himself does so, and we are to conform our affections to the will of God. 3. It is no true, "that all objects, which we believe, do equally participate the Divine testimony or

revelation:" for some are testified more evidently, and some more obscurely; and therefore whatsoever you have built upon this ground must of necessity fall together with it. And thus much for the first number.

6. Ad § 2. In the second, many passages deserve a censure: for, 1. It is not true, that "we are to wish or desire to God a nature infinite, independent, immense;" for it is impossible I should desire to any person that which he hath already, if I know that he hath it; nor the perpetuity of it, if I know it impossible but he must have it for perpetuity. And therefore rejoicing only, and not well-wishing, is here the proper work of love. 2. Whereas you say, that "in things necessary to salvation, no man ought in any case, or in any respect whatsoever, to prefer the spiritual good of the whole world before his own soul:" in saying this you seem to me to condemn one of the greatest acts of charity, of one of the greatest saints that ever was, I mean St. Paul, who for his brethren desired to be an anathema from Christ. And as for the text alleged by you in confirmation of your saying, *What doth it avail a man, if he gain the whole world, and sustain the damage of his own soul?* it is nothing to the purpose: for without all question, it is not profitable for a man to do so; but the question is, whether it be not lawful for a man to forego and part with his own particular profit, to procure the universal, spiritual, and eternal benefit of others? 3. Whereas you say, "It is directly against charity to ourselves, to adventure the omitting of any means necessary to salvation;" this is true: but so is this also; that it is directly against the same charity, to adventure the omitting any thing that may any way help or conduce to my salvation, that may make the way to it more secure, or less dangerous. And therefore, if the errors of the Roman church do but hinder me in this way, or any way endanger it, I am, in charity to myself, bound to forsake them, though they be not destructive of it. 4. Whereas you conclude, that "if by living out of the Roman church we put ourselves in hazard to want something necessary to salvation, we commit a grievous sin against the virtue of charity, as it respects ourselves;" this consequence may be good in those which are thus persuaded of the Roman church, and yet live out of it. But the supposition is certainly false; we may live and die out of the Roman church, without putting ourselves in any such hazard; nay, to live and die in it is as dangerous as to shoot a gulf, which though some good ignorant souls may do and escape, yet it may well be feared that not one in a hundred but miscarries.

7. Ad § 3. I proceed now to the third section; and herein first I observe this acknowledgment of yours, "That in things necessary only because commanded, a probable ignorance of the commandment excuses the party from all fault, and doth not exclude salvation." From which doctrine it seems to me to follow, that seeing obedience to the Roman church cannot be pretended to be necessary, but only because it is commanded, therefore not only an invincible, but even a probable ignorance of this pretended command, must excuse us all from faulty breach of it, and cannot exclude salvation. Now seeing this command is not pretended to be expressly delivered, but only to be deduced from the word of God, and that not by the most clear and evident consequences that may be; and seeing an infinity of great objections lie against it, which seem strongly to prove that there is no such command; with what charity can you suppose that our ignorance of this command is not at the least probable, if not, all things considered, plainly invincible? Sure I am, for my part, that I have done my true endeavour to find it true, and am still willing to do so; but the more I seek, the further I am from finding; and therefore, if it be true, certainly my not finding it is very excusable, and you have reason to be very charitable in your censures of me. 2. Whereas you say, that "besides these things necessary because commanded, there are other things which are commanded because necessary; of which number you make a Divine infallible faith, baptism in act for children, and in desire for those who are to come to the use of reason, and the sacrament of confession for those who have committed mortal sin;" in these words you seem to me to deliver a strange paradox, viz. that faith and baptism and confession are not therefore necessary for us because God appointed them, but are therefore appointed by God because they were necessary for us antecedently to his appointment; which if it were true, I wonder what it was beside God that made them necessary, and made it necessary for God

to command them! Besides, in making faith one of these necessary means, you seem to exclude infants from salvation; for *faith comes by hearing*, and they have not heard. In requiring that this faith should be "Divine and infallible," you cast your credents into infinite perplexity, who cannot of possibly, by any sure mark, discern whether their faith be Divine or human, or if you have any certain sign, whereby they may discern whether they believe your church's infallibility with Divine or only with human faith, I pray produce it; for perhaps it may serve us to show that our faith is Divine as well as yours. Moreover, in affirming that "baptism in act is necessary for infants, and for men only in desire," you seem to me in the latter to destroy the foundation of the former. For if a desire of baptism will serve men instead of baptism, then those words of our Saviour, *Unless a man be born again of water*, &c., are not to be understood literally and rigidly of external baptism; for a desire of baptism is not baptism; and so your foundation of the absolute necessity of baptism is destroyed. And if you may gloss the text so far, as that men may be saved by the desire, without baptism itself, because they cannot have it, why should you not gloss it a little further, that there may be some hope of the salvation of unbaptized infants; to whom it was more impossible to have a desire of baptism, than for the former to have the thing itself? Lastly, for your "sacrament of confession," we know none such, nor any such absolute necessity of it. They that confess their sins, and forsake them, shall find mercy, though they confess them to God only, and not to men. They that confess them both to God and men, if they do not effectually and in time forsake them, shall not find mercy. 3. Whereas you say, that "supposing these means once appointed as absolutely necessary to salvation, there cannot but arise an obligation of procuring to have them;" you must suppose, I hope, that we know them to be so appointed, and that it is in our power to procure them; otherwise, though it may be our ill fortune to fail of the end for want of the means, certainly we cannot be obliged to procure them. For the rule of the law is also the dictate of common reason and equity, that "no man can be obliged to what is impossible." We can be obliged to nothing but by virtue of some command: now it is impossible that God should command in earnest any thing which he knows to be impossible. For to command in earnest, is to command with an intent to be obeyed, which it is not possible he should do, when he knows the thing commanded to be impossible. Lastly, whosoever is obliged to do any thing, and does it not, commits a fault; but infants commit no fault in not procuring to have baptism; therefore no obligation lies upon them to procure it. 4. Whereas you say, that "if protestants dissent from you in the point of the necessity of baptism for infants, it cannot be denied but that our disagreement is in a point fundamental;" if you mean a point esteemed so by you, this indeed cannot be denied; but if you mean a point that indeed is fundamental, this may certainly be denied: for I deny it, and say, that it doth not appear to me any way necessary to salvation to hold the truth, or not to hold an error, touching the condition of these infants. This is certain, and we must believe, that God will not deal unjustly with them; but how in particular he will deal with them, concerns not us, and therefore we need not much regard it. 5. Whereas you say the like of your sacrament of penance you only say so, but your proofs are wanting. Lastly, whereas you say, "This rigour ought not to seem strange or unjust in God, but that we are rather to bless him for ordaining us to salvation by any means;" I answer, that it is true, we are not to question the known will of God of injustice; yet whether that which you pretend to be God's will be so indeed, or only your presumption, this I hope may be questioned lawfully and without presumption; and if we have occasion, we may safely put you in mind of Ezekiel's commination against all those who say, *Thus saith the Lord*, when they have no certain warrant or authority from him to do so.

8. Ad § 4. In the fourth paragraph, you deliver this false and wicked doctrine, "That for the procuring our own salvation, we are always bound, under pain of mortal sin, to take the safest way; but for avoiding sin we are not bound to do so, but may follow the opinion of any probable doctors," though the contrary way be certainly free from sin, and theirs be doubtful. Which doctrine, in the former part of it, is apparently false; for though wisdom and charity to ourselves would persuade us always to do so, yet many

times that way, which to ourselves and our salvation is more full of hazard, is notwithstanding, not only lawful, but more charitable and more noble. For example, to fly from a persecution, and so to avoid the temptation of it, may be a safer way for a man's own salvation; yet I presume no man ought to condemn him of impiety, who should resolve not to use his liberty in this matter, but for God's greater glory, the greater honour of truth, and the greater confirmation of his brethren in the faith, choose to stand out the storm, and endure the fiery trial, rather than to avoid it; rather to put his own soul to the hazard of a temptation, in hope of God's assistance to go through with it, than to balk the opportunity of doing God and his brethren so great a service. This part therefore of this doctrine is manifestly untrue: the other, not only false, but impious; for therein you plainly give us to understand, that, in your judgment, a resolution to avoid sin, to the uttermost of our power, is no necessary means of salvation; nay, that a man may resolve not to do so, without any danger of damnation. Therein you teach us, that we are to do more for the love of ourselves, and our own happiness, than for the love of God; and in so doing contradict our Saviour, who expressly commands us *to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength;* and hath taught us, *that the love of God consists in avoiding sin, and keeping his commandments*. Therein you directly cross St. Paul's doctrine, who, though he were a very probable doctor, and had delivered his judgment for the *lawfulness of eating meats offered to idols;* yet he assures us, that he which should make scruple of doing so, and forbear upon his scruple, should not sin, but only be a *weaker brother;* whereas he who should do it with a doubtful conscience (though the action were by St. Paul warranted lawful, yet) *should sin, and be condemned for so doing*. You pretend indeed to be rigid defenders and stout champions for the necessity of good works; but the truth is, *you speak lies in hypocrisy*, and when the matter is well examined, will appear to make yourselves and your own functions necessary, but obedience to God unnecessary: which will appear to any man who considers what strict necessity the Scripture imposes upon all men, of effectual mortification of the habits of all vices, and effectual conversion to newness of life, and universal obedience; and withal remembers, that an act of attrition, which, you say, with priestly absolution, is sufficient to salvation, is not mortification, which being a work of difficulty and time, cannot be performed in an instant. But, for the present, it appears sufficiently out of this impious assertion, which makes it absolutely necessary for men, either in act, if it be possible, or if not, in desire, to be baptized and absolved by you, and that with intention; and in the mean time warrants them, that for avoiding of sin, they may safely follow the uncertain guidance of vain man, who you cannot deny may either be deceived himself, or out of malice deceive them, and neglect the certain direction of God himself, and their own consciences. What wicked use is made of this doctrine, your own long experience can better inform you than it is possible for me to do; yet my own little conversation with you affords one memorable example to this purpose. For upon this ground I knew a young scholar in Doway, licensed by a great casuist to swear a thing as upon his certain knowledge, whereof he had yet no knowledge, but only a great presumption, "because (forsooth) it was the opinion of one doctor, that he might do so." And upon the same ground, whensoever you shall come to have a prevailing party in this kingdom, and power sufficient to restore your religion, you may do it by deposing or killing the king, by blowing up of Parliaments, and by rooting out all others of a different faith from you. Nay, this you may do, though in your own opinion it be unlawful, because Bellarmine, a man with you of approved virtue, learning, and judgment, had declared his opinion for the lawfulness of it in saying, that want of power to maintain a rebellion was the only reason that the primitive Christians did not rebel against the persecuting emperors." By the same rule, seeing the priests and scribes and Pharisees, men of greatest repute among the Jews for virtue, learning, and wisdom, held it a lawful and a pious work to persecute Christ and his apostles, it was lawful for the people to follow their leaders; for herein, according to your doctrine, they proceeded prudently, and according to the conduct of opinion, maturely weighed and approved by men (as it seemed to them) of virtue, learning, and wisdom; nay, by such as sat in Moses' chair, and of whom it was said, *Whatsoever*

they bid you observe, that observe and do; which universal you pretend is to be understood universally, and without any restriction or limitation. And as lawful was it for the pagans to persecute the primitive Christians, because Trajan and Pliny, men of great virtue and wisdom, were of this opinion. Lastly, that most impious and detestable doctrine, (which by a foul calumny you impute to me, who abhor and detest it,) that "men may be saved in any religion," follows from this ground unavoidably. For certainly religion is one of those things which is necessary only because it is commanded; for if none were commanded, under pain of damnation, how could it be damnable to be of any, or to be of none? Neither can it be damnable to be of a false religion, unless it be a sin to be so. For neither are men saved by good luck, but only by obedience; neither are they damned for their ill fortune, but for sin and disobedience. Death is the wages of nothing but sin; and St. James sure intended to deliver the adequate cause of sin and death in these words: *Lust, when it hath conceived, bringerh forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*. Seeing therefore in such things, according to your doctrine, it is sufficient for avoiding of sin that we proceed prudently, and by the conduct of some probable opinion maturely weighed and approved by men of learning, virtue, and wisdom; and seeing neither Jews want their Gamaliels, nor pagans their Antoninuses, nor any sect of Christians such professors and maintainers of their several sects as are esteemed by the people, which know no better, (and that very reasonably,) men of virtue, learning, and wisdom; it follows evidently, that the embracing their religion proceeds upon such reason as may warrant their action to be prudent; and this (you say) is "sufficient for the avoiding of sin," and therefore certainly for avoiding damnation, for "that in human affairs and discourse evidence and certainty cannot be always expected." I have stood the longer upon the refutation of this doctrine, not only because it is impious, and because bad use is made of it, and worse may be, but also because the contrary position. "That men are bound for avoiding sin always to take the safest way," is a fair and sure foundation for a clear confutation of the main conclusion which in this chapter you labour in vain to prove, and a certain proof, that in regard of the precept of charity towards one's self, and of obedience to God, papists (unless ignorance excuse them) are in a state of sin as long as they remain in subjection to the Roman church.

9. For if the safer way for avoiding sin be also the safer way for avoiding damnation, then certainly it will not be hard to determine, that the way of protestants must be more secure, and the Roman way more dangerous. Take but into your consideration these ensuing controversies; whether it be lawful to worship pictures—to picture the Trinity—to invocate saints and angels—to deny laymen the cup in the sacrament— to adore the sacrament—to prohibit certain orders of men and women to marry—to celebrate the public service of God in a language which the assistants generally understand not; and you will not choose but confess, that in all these you are on the more dangerous side for the committing of sin, and we on that which is more secure. For in all these things, if we say true, you do that which is impious. On the other side, if you were in the right, yet we might be secure enough; for we should only not do something which you confess not necessary to be done. We pretend, and are ready to justify out of principles agreed upon between us, that in all these things you violate the manifest commandments of God; and allege such texts of Scripture against you, as, if you would weigh them with any indifference, would put the matter out of question; but certainly you cannot with any modesty deny, but that at least they make it questionable. On the other side, you cannot with any face pretend, and if you should, know not how to go about to prove, that there is any necessity of doing any of these things: that it is unlawful not to worship pictures, not to picture the Trinity, not to invocate saints and angels, to give all men the entire sacrament, not to adore the eucharist, not to prohibit marriage, not to celebrate Divine service in an unknown tongue: I say, you neither do nor can pretend, that there is any law of God which enjoins us, no, nor so much as an evangelical council that advises us, to do any of these things. Now *where no law is, there can be no sin; for sin is the transgression of the law*. It remains therefore, that if your church should forbear to do these things, she must undoubtedly herein be free from all danger and suspicion of sin;

whereas your acting of them must be, if not certainly impious, without all contradiction questionable and dangerous. I conclude therefore that which was to be concluded, that if the safer way for avoiding sin be also (as most certainly it is) the safer way for avoiding damnation, then certainly the way of protestants must be more safe, and the Roman way more dangerous. You will say, I know, that "these things being by your church concluded lawful, we are obliged by God, though not to do, yet to approve them; at least in your judgment we are so, and therefore our condition is as questionable as yours." I answer, the authority of your church is no common principle agreed upon between us, and therefore from that you are not to dispute against us. We might press you with our judgment as well and as justly as you do us with yours. Besides, this very thing, that your church hath determined these things lawful, and commanded the approbation of them, is that whereof she is accused by us, and we maintain you have done wickedly, or at least very dangerously, in so determining; because in these very determinations you have forsaken that way which was secure from sin, and have chosen that which you cannot but know to be very questionable and doubtful; and consequently have forsaken the safe way to heaven, and taken a way which is full of danger. And therefore, although, if your obedience to your church were questioned, you might fly for shelter to your church's determinations, yet when these determinations are accused, methinks they should not be alleged in defence of themselves. But you will say, your church is infallible, and therefore her determinations not unlawful. *Ans*. They that accuse your church of error, you may be sure do question her infallibility: show therefore where it is written that your church is infallible, and the dispute will be ended. But till you do so, give me leave rather to conclude thus; Your church, in many of her determinations, chooses not that way which is most secure from sin, and therefore not the safest way to salvation; than vainly to imagine her infallible, and thereupon to believe, though she teach not the surest way to avoid sin, yet she teaches the certainest way to obtain salvation.

10. In the close of this number you say as follows: "If it may appear, though not certain, yet at least probable, that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation, and withal that there is a safer way, it will follow, that they are obliged by the law of charity to embrace that safe way." *Answ*. Make this appear, and I will never persuade any man to continue a protestant; for if I should, I should persuade him to continue a fool. But after all these prolix discourses, still we see you are at, "If it may appear:" from whence, without all *ifs* and *ands*, that appears sufficiently which I said in the beginning of the chapter, that the four first paragraphs of this chapter are wholly spent in an unnecessary introduction unto that which never by any man in his right wits was denied, that "men, in wisdom and charity to themselves, are to take the safest way to eternal salvation."

11. Ad § 5. In the fifth you begin to make some show of arguing, and tell us, that "protestants have reason to doubt in what case they stand, from what you have said about the church's universal infallibility, and of her being judge of controversies," &c. *Answ*. From all that which you have said, they have reason only to conclude, that you have nothing to say. They have as much reason to doubt, whether there can be any motion, from what Zeno says in Aristotle's Physics, as to doubt, from what you have said, whether the Roman church may possibly err. For this I dare say, that not the weakest of Zeno's arguments but is stronger than the strongest of yours, and that you would be more perplexed in answering any one of them, than I have been in answering all yours. You are pleased to repeat two or three of them in this section, and in all probability so wise a man as you are, if he would repeat any, would repeat the best; and therefore, if I desire the reader by these to judge of the rest, I shall desire but ordinary justice.

12. The first of them, being put into form, stands thus: "Every least error in faith destroys the nature of faith: it is certain that some protestants do err; and therefore they want the substance of faith." The major of which syllogism I have formerly confuted by unanswerable arguments out of one of your own best authors, who shows plainly that he hath amongst you, as strange as you make it, many other abettors.

Besides, if it were true, it would conclude that either you or the Dominicans have no faith, inasmuch as you oppose one another as much as Arminians and Calvinists.

13. The second argument stands thus: "Since all protestants pretend the like certainty, it is clear that none of them have any certainty at all." Which argument if it were good, then what can hinder but this must also be so: Since protestants and papists pretend the like certainty, it is clear that none of them have any certainty at all! And this too: Since all Christians pretend the like certainty, it is clear that none of them have any certainty at all! And thirdly this: Since men of all religions pretend a like certainty, it is clear that none of them have any at all! And lastly this: Since ofttimes they which are abused with a specious paralogism pretend the like certainty with them which demonstrate, it is clear that none have any certainty at all! Certainly, sir, zeal and the devil did strangely blind you, if you did not see that these horrid impieties were the immediate consequences of your positions; if you did see it and yet would set them down, you deserve a worse censure. Yet such as these are all the arguments wherewith you conceive yourself to have proved undoubtedly, that "protestants have reason at least to doubt in what case they stand." Neither am I afraid to venture my life upon it, that yourself shall not choose so much as one out of all the pack, which I will not show, before indifferent judges, either to be impertinent to the question, inconsequent in the deduction, grounded upon some false, or at least uncertain foundation.

14. Your third and fourth argument may be thus put into one: "Protestants cannot tell what points in particular be fundamental; therefore they cannot tell whether they or their brethren do not err fundamentally, and whether their difference be not fundamental." Both which deductions I have formerly showed to be most inconsequent; for knowing the Scripture to contain all fundamentals, (though many more points besides, which makes it difficult to say precisely what is fundamental and what not; knowing this, I say, and believing it,) what can hinder but that I may be well assured that I believe all fundamentals, and that all who believe the Scripture sincerely as well as I, do not differ from me in any thing fundamental?

15. In the close of this section you say, that "you omit to add that we want the sacrament of repentance, instituted for the remission of sins; or at least we must confess that we hold it not necessary; and yet our own brethren the century writers acknowledge, that in the time of Cyprian and Tertullian, private confession even of thoughts was used, and that it was then commanded and thought necessary; and then our ordination," you say, "is very doubtful, and all that depends upon it." *Answ*. I also omit to answer, 1. That your brother Rhenanus acknowledges the contrary, and assures us, that the confession then required, and in use, was public, and before the church, and that your auricular confession was not then in the world; for which his mouth is stopped by your *Index Expurgatorius*. 2. That your brother Arcudius acknowledges, that the eucharist was in Cyprian's time given to infants, and esteemed necessary, or at least profitable for them; and the giving it shows no less; and now I would know, whether you will acknowledge your church bound to give it, and to esteem so of it? 3. That it might be then commanded, and being commanded be thought necessary, and yet be but a church constitution. Neither will I deny, if the present church could and would so order it, that the abuses of it might be prevented, and conceiving it profitable, should enjoin the use of it, but that, being commanded, it would be necessary. 4. Concerning our ordinations, besides that I have proved it impossible that they should be so doubtful as yours, according to your own principles; I answer, that experience shows them certainly sufficient to bring men to faith and repentance, and consequently to salvation; and that if there were any secret defect of any thing necessary, which we cannot help, God will certainly supply it.

16. Ad § 6. In the 6th, you say, "you will not repeat, but only put us again in mind, that unless the Roman church were the true church, there was no visible church upon earth, a thing so manifest, that protestants themselves confess," &c. *Answ*. Neither will I repeat, but only put you in mind, that you have not proved that there is any necessity that there should be any true church in your sense visible; nor if

there were, that there was no other besides the Roman. For as for the confession of protestants, which here you insist upon, it is evident, out of their own words cited by yourself, that by the "whole world," they meant only the greatest part of it, which is an unusual figure of speech, and never intended to deny, that besides the church then reigning and triumphing in this world, there was another militant church, other Christians visible enough, though persecuted and oppressed. Nor, thirdly, do you here make good so much as with one fallacy, that if the Roman church were then the visible church, it must needs be now the only or the safer way to heaven; and yet the connexion of this consequence was very necessary to be shown. For, for aught I know, it was not impossible that it might then be the only visible church, and yet now a very dangerous way to heaven, or perhaps none at all.

17. Afterwards you vainly pretend, that all Roman catholics, "not one excepted, profess, that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation." From which generality we may except two at least to my knowledge, and those are, yourself, and Franciscus de Sancta Clara, who assures us, that "ignorance and repentance may excuse a protestant from damnation, though dying in his error." And this is all the charity, which by your own confession also, the most favourable protestants allow to papists; and therefore, with strange repugnance to yourself, you subjoin, "that these are the men whom we must hold not to err damnably, unless we will destroy our own church and salvation." Whereas, as I have said before, though you were Turks and Pagans, we might be good christians. Neither is it necessary for perpetuating of a church before Luther, that your errors even then should not be damnable, but only not actually damning, to some ignorant souls among you. In vain therefore do you make such tragedies as here you do! in vain you conjure us with "fear and trembling to consider these things!" We have considered them again and again, and looked upon them on both sides, and find neither terror nor truth in them. Let children and fools be terrified with bugbears; men of understanding will not regard them.

18. § 7-11. Your whole discourse in your five next paragraphs I have in the beginning of this chapter fully confuted, by saying that it stands altogether upon the false foundation of this affected mistake, that "we do and must confess the Roman church free from damnable error;" which will presently be apparent to any one who considers, that the seventh and tenth are nothing but Dr. Potter's words, and that in the other three you obtrude upon us this crambe no fewer than seven times. May you be pleased to look back to your own book, and you shall find it so as I have said; and that at least in a hundred other places you make your advantage of this false imputation: which when you have observed, and withal considered that yourself plainly intimate that Dr. Potter's discourses, which here you censure, would be good and concluding, if we did not (as we do not) free you from damnable error, I hope you will acknowledge, that my vouchsafing these sections the honour of any further answer is a great superrerogation in point of civility, Nevertheless, partly that I may the more ingratiate myself with you, but especially that I may stop their mouths who will be apt to say, that every word of yours which I should omit to speak to is an unanswerable argument, I will hold my purpose of answering them more punctually and particularly.

19. First, then, to your little parenthesis, which you interline among Dr. Potter's words, sect. 7, "that any small error in faith destroys all faith," (to omit what hath been said before,) I answer here, what is proper for this place, that St. Austin, whose authority is here stood upon, thought otherwise: he conceived the Donatists to hold some error in faith, and yet not to have no faith. His words of them to this purpose are most pregnant and evident: "You are with us" (saith he to the Donatists, Ep. 48.) "in baptism, in the creed, and in the other sacraments:" and again, *Super gestis cum emerit:* "Thou hast proved to me that thou hast faith; prove to me likewise that thou hast charity." Parallel to which words are these of Optatus: "Amongst us and you is one ecclesiastical conversation, common lessons, the same faith, the same sacraments." Where, by the way, we may observe, that in the judgment of these Fathers, even Donatists, though heretics and schismatics, gave true ordination, the true sacrament of matrimony, true sacramental absolution, confirmation, the true sacrament of the eucharist, true extreme unction; or else

(choose you whether) some of these were not then esteemed sacraments. But for ordination, whether he held it a sacrament or no, certainly he held that it remained with them entire; for so he says in express terms, in his book against Parmenianus's epistle. Which doctrine if you can reconcile with the present doctrine of the Roman church, *eris mihi magnus Apollo*.

20. Whereas, in the beginning of the eighth section, "you deny that your argument, drawn from our confessing the possibility of your salvation, is for simple people alone, but for all men:" I answer, certainly whosoever is moved with it must be so simple as to think this a good and concluding reason: some ignorant men in the Roman church may be saved, by the confession of protestants (which is indeed all that they confess); therefore it is safe for me to be of the Roman church: and he that does think so, what reason is there why he should not think this as good: Ignorant protestants may be saved, by the confession of papists (by name Mr. K.); therefore it is safe for me to be of the protestant church? Whereas you say, that "this your argument is grounded upon an inevitable necessity for us either to grant salvation to your church, or to entail certain damnation upon our own, because ours can have no being till Luther, unless yours be supposed to have been the true church:" I answer, this cause is no cause; for first, as Luther had no being before Luther, and yet he was when he was, though he was not before; so there is no repugnance in the terms, but that there might be a true church after Luther, though there were none for some ages before; as since Columbus's time there have been Christians in America, though before there were none for many ages. For neither do you show, neither does it appear, that the generation of churches is univocal, that nothing but a church can possibly beget a church; nor that the present being of a true church depends necessarily upon the perpetuity of a church in all ages, any more than the present being of truth, being "ready, when they found it, to correct their error, were not heretics; and therefore, notwithstanding their error, might be saved." And this is all the charity that protestants allow to papists.

22. Whereas you say that Dr. Potter, having cited out of St. Austin the words of the catholics, "that the Donatists had true baptism," when he comes to the contrary words of the Donatists, adds, "No church, no salvation:" *Answ*. You wrong Dr. Potter, who pretends not to cite St. Austin's formal words, but only his sense, which in him is complete and full for that purpose whereto it is alleged by Dr. Potter. His words are, *Petilianus dixet, Venite ad ecclesiam, populi, et aufugite traditores, si perire non vultis:* "Petilian saith, Come to the church, ye people, and fly from the traditors, if ye will not be damned; for that ye may know that they, being guilty, esteem very well of our faith, behold, I baptize these whom they have infected, but they receive those whom we have baptized." Where it is plain, that Petilian by his words makes the Donatists the church, and excludes the catholics from salvation absolutely. And therefore "no church, no salvation" was not Dr. Potter's addition. And whereas you say, the "Catholics never yielded that among the Donatists there was a true church and hope of salvation;" I say, it appears, by what I have alleged out of St. Austin, that they yielded both these were among the Donatists, as much as we yield them to be among the papists. As for Dr. Potter's acknowledgrnent, that "they maintained an error in the matter and nature of it heretical;" this proves them but material heretics, whom you do not exclude from possibility of salvation. So that, all things considered, this argument must be much more forcible from the Donatists against the catholics, than from papists against protestants, in regard protestants grant papists no more hope of salvation than papists grant protestants: whereas the Donatists excluded absolutely all but their own party from hope of salvation, so far as to account them no Christians that were not of it; the catholics meanwhile accounting them brethren, and freeing those among them from the imputation of heresy, who being in error, *quærebant cauta sollicitudine veritatum, corrigi parati, cum invenerint*.

23. Whereas you say, "that the argument for the certainty of their baptism (because it was confessed good by catholics whereas the baptism of catholics was not confessed by them to be good) is not so good as yours, touching the certainty of your salvation grounded on the confession of protestants, because we confess there is no damnable error in the doctrine or practice of the Roman church:" I answer, No; we

confess no such matter, and though you say so a hundred times, no repetition will make it true. We profess plainly, that many damnable errors, plainly repugnant to the precepts of Christ, both ceremonial and moral, more plainly than this of rebaptization, and therefore more damnable, are believed and professed by you. And therefore, seeing this is the only disparity you can devise, and this is vanished, it remains, that as good an answer as the catholics made touching the certainty of their baptism, as good may we make, and with much more evidence of reason, touching the security and certainty of our salvation.

24. By the way, I desire to be informed, seeing you affirm, that "rebaptising those whom heretics had baptized was a sacrilege and a profession of damnable heresy," when it began to be so? If from the beginning it were so, then was Cyprian a sacrilegious professor of a damnable heresy, and yet a saint and a martyr. If it were not so, then did your church excommunicate Firmilian and others, and separate from them without sufficient ground of excommunication or separation, which is schismatical. You see what difficulties you run into on both sides; choose whether you will but certainly both can hardly be avoided.

25. Whereas again, in this section, you obtrude upon us, "that we cannot but confess that your doctrine contains no damnable error, and that yours is so certainly a true church, that unless yours be true, we cannot pretend any;" I answer, There is in this neither truth nor modesty to outface us, that we cannot but confess what indeed we cannot but deny. For my part, If I were upon the rack, I persuade myself I should not confess the one nor the other.

26. Whereas again presently you add, that "Dr. Potter grants we should be guilty of schism, if we did cut off your church from the body of Christ and the hope of salvation;" I have showed above, that he grants no such matter. He says indeed, "that our not doing so frees us from the imputation of schism;" and from hence you sophistically infer, that "he must grant, if we did so, we were schismatics;" and then make your reader believe, that this is Dr. Potter's confession, it being indeed your own false collection. For as every one that is not a papist is not a Jesuit; and yet not every one that is a papist is a Jesuit: as whosoever comes not into England comes not to London; and yet many may come to England, and not come to London: as whosoever is not a man is not a king; and yet many are men that are not kings: so likewise it may be certain, that whosoever does not so is free from schism, and yet they that do so (if there be sufficient cause) may not be guilty of it.

27. Whereas you "pretend to wonder, that the doctor did not answer the argument of the Donatists, which he says is all one with yours, but refers you to St. Austin, there to read it, as if every one carried with him a library, or were able to examine the places in St. Austin;" I answer, the parity of the arguments was, that which the doctor was to declare, whereunto it was impertinent what the answer was; but sufficient it was to show, that the Donatists' argument, which you would never grant good, was yet as good as yours, and therefore yours could not be good. Now to this purpose, as the concealing the answer was no way advantageous, so to produce it was not necessary; and therefore he did you more service than he was bound to, in referring you to St. Austin for an answer to it. Whereas you say, "he had reason to conceal it, because it makes directly against himself;" I say, it is so far from doing so, that it will serve in proportion to the argument, as fitly as if it had been made for it: for as St. Austin says, "that catholics approve the doctrine of Donatists, but abhor their heresy of rebaptization;" so we say, that we approve those fundamental and simple necessary truths which you retain, by which some good souls among you may be saved, but abhor your many superstitions and heresies. And as he says, that as gold is good, yet not ought to be sought for among a company of thieves; and baptism good, but not to be sought for in the conventicles of Donatists; so say we, that the truths you retain are good, and, as we hope, sufficient to bring good ignorant souls among you to salvation; yet are they not to be sought for in the conventicles of papists, who hold with them a mixture of many vanities and many impieties. For, "as for our freeing you from damnable heresy, and yielding you salvation," (which stone here again you stumble at,) neither he nor any other protestant is guilty of it; and therefore you must confess, that this very answer will serve

protestants against this charm of papists, as well as St. Austin against the Donatists, and that indeed it was not Dr. Potter, but you, that without a sarcasm had reason to conceal it.

28. The last piece of Dr. Potter's book, which you are pleased to take notice of in the first part of yours, is an argument he makes in your behalf, p. 79 of his book, where he makes you speak thus:—"If protestants believe the religion of papists to be a safe way to heaven, why do they not follow it?" This argument you like not because "many things may be good, and yet not necessary to be embraced by every body;" and therefore scoff at it, and call it an "argument of his own, a wise argument, a wise demand:" and then ask of him what he thinks of it being framed thus: "Our religion is safe, even by your confession; and therefore you ought to grant that all may embrace it." And yet further, thus: "Among different religions one only can be safe. But yours, by our own confession, is safe; whereas you hold, that in ours there is no hope of salvation; therefore we ought to embrace yours." *Answ*. I have advised with him, and am to tell you from him, that he thinks reasonably well of the arguments, but very ill of him that makes them, as affirming so often without shame and conscience, what he cannot but know to be plainly false; and his reason is, because he is so far from confessing or giving you any ground to pretend he does confess, "that your religion is safe for all that are of it," from whence only it will follow, that all may safely embrace it, that in this very place from which you take these words, he professeth plainly, "that it is extremely dangerous, if not certaintly damnable, to all such as profess it, when either they do, or if their hearts were upright, and not perversely obstinate, might believe the contrary; and that for us, who are convinced in conscience that she (the Roman church) errs in many things, it lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors:" and though here you take upon you a show of great rigour, and will seem to hold, "that in our way there is no hope of salvation;" yet formerly you have been more liberal of your charity towards us, and will needs vie and contend with Dr. Potter, which of "the two shall be more charitable," assuring us, that "you allow protestants as much charity as Dr. Potter spares you, for whom he makes ignorance the best hope of salvation." And now I appeal to any indifferent reader, whether our disavowing to confess you free from damnable error were not (as I pretend) a full confutation of that you say in these five foregoing paragraphs: and as for you, I wonder what answer, what evasion, what shift you can devise to clear yourself from dishonesty, for imputing to him, almost a hundred times, this acknowledgment, which he never makes, but very often, and that so plainly that you take notice of it, professeth the contrary.

29. The best defence that possibly can be made for you, I conceive, is this; that you were led into this error, by mistaking a supposition of a confession for a confession, a rhetorical concession of the doctor's for a positive assertion. He says indeed of your errors, "Though in the issue they be not damnable to them which believe as they profess; yet for us to profess what we believe not, were without question damnable." But to say, "Though your errors be not damnable, we may not profess them," is not to say your errors are not damnable, but only, "though they be not." As if you should say, Though the church err in points not fundamental, yet you may not separate from it; or, Though we do err in believing Christ really present, yet our error frees us from idolatry; or as if a protestant should say, Though you do not commit idolatry in adoring the host, yet being uncertain of the priest's intention to consecrate, at least you expose yourself to the danger of it; I presume you would not think it fairly done, if any man should interpret either this last speech as an acknowledgment that you do not commit idolatry, or the former as confessions, that you do err in points not fundamental, that you do err in believing the real presence. And therefore you ought not so to have mistaken Dr. Potter's words, as if he had confessed the errors of your church not damnable, when he says no more but this, Though they be so, or, Suppose, or put the case they be so, yet being errors, we that know them may not profess them to be Divine truths. Yet this mistake might have been pardonable, had not Dr. Potter, in many places of his book, by declaring his judgment touching the quality and malignity of your errors, taken away from you all occasion of error. But now that he says

plainly, "That your church hath many ways played the harlot, and in that regard deserved a bill of divorce from Christ, and the detestation of Christians," p. 11: "That for that mass of errors and abuses in judgment and practice, which is proper to her, and wherein she differs from us, we judge a reconciliation impossible, and to us (who are convicted in conscience of her corruptions) damnable," p. 20: "That popery is the contagion or plague of the church," p. 60: "That we cannot, we dare not, communicate with her in her public liturgy, which is manifestly polluted with gross superstition," p. 68: "That they who in former ages died in the church of Rome, died in many sinful errors," p. 78: "That they that have understanding and means to discover their errors, and neglect to use them, he dares not to flatter them with so easy a censure as to give them hope of salvation," p. 79: "That the way of the Roman religion is not safe, but very dangerous, if not certainly damnable, to such as profess it, when they believe (or if their hearts were upright, and not perversely obstinate, might believe) the contrary," p. 79: " That your church is but in some sense a true church, and your errors only to some men not damnable; and that we, who are convinced in conscience that she errs in many things, are, under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors:" seeing, I say, he says all this so plainly and so frequently, certainly your charging him falsely with this acknowledgment, and building a great part, not only of your discourse in this chapter, but of your whole book upon it, possibly it may be palliated with some excuse, but it can no way be defended with any just apology; especially seeing you yourself, more than once or twice, take notice of these his severer censures of your church, and the errors of it, and make your advantage of them. In the first number of your first chapter you set down three of the former places, and from thence infer, that "as you affirm protestancy unrepented destroys salvation, so Dr. Potter pronounces the like heavy doom against Roman Catholics:" and again, sect. 4, of the same chapter, "We allow protestants as much charity as Dr. Potter spares us, for whom he makes ignorance the best hope of salvation. And chap. 5, sect. 41, you have these words; "It is very strange that you judge us extremely uncharitable in saying protestants cannot be saved, while yourself avouch the same of all learned catholics, whom ignorance cannot excuse!" Thus out of the same mouth you blow hot and cold; and one while, when it is for your purpose, you profess Dr. Potter "censures your errors as heavily as you do ours;" which is very true, for he gives hope of salvation to none among you, but to those whose ignorance was the cause of their error, and no sin cause of their ignorance; and presently after, when another project comes in your head, you make his words softer than oil towards you; you pretend he does and must confess "that your doctrine contains no damnable error, that your church is certainly a true church, that your way to heaven is a safe way;" and all these acknowledgments you set down simple and absolute, without any restriction or limitation; whereas in the doctor they are all so qualified, that no knowing papist can promise himself any security or comfort from them. "We confess," saith he, "the church of Rome to be, in some sense, a true church, and her errors, to some men, not damnable; we believe her religion safe, that is, by God's great mercy, not damnable, to some such as believe what they profess; but we believe it not safe, but very dangerous, if not certainly damnable, to such as profess it, when they believe (or, if their hearts were upright, and not perversely obstinate, might believe) the contrary." Observe, I pray you, these restraining terms which formerly you have dissembled: "A true church in some sense—not damnable to some men—a safe way—that is, by God's great mercy, not damnable to some men." And then, seeing you have pretended these confessions to be absolute, which are thus plainly limited, how can you avoid the imputation of an egregious sophister? You quarrel with the doctor, in the end of your preface, for using in his book such ambiguous terms as these, "in some sort," "in some sense," "in some degree;" and desire him, if "he make any reply, either to forbear them, or to tell you roundly in what sort, in what sense, in what degree, he understands these and the like mincing phrases." But the truth is, he hath not left them so ambiguous and undetermined as you pretend; but told you plainly "in what sense your church may pass for a true church," viz. in regard we may hope that she retains those truths which are simply, absolutely, and indispensably

necessary to salvation, which may suffice to bring those good souls to heaven who wanted means of discovering their errors. This is the charitable construction in which you may pass for a church; and "to what men your religion may be safe, and your errors not damnable," viz, to such whom ignorance may excuse. And therefore he hath more cause to complain of you, for quoting his words without those qualifications, than you to find fault with him for using of them.

30. That your discourse in the 12th section presseth you as forcibly as protestants, I have showed above. I add here, 1. Whereas you say, that "faith, according to your rigid Calvinists, is either so strong, that once had it can never be lost; or so more than weak, and so much nothing, that it can never be gotten;" that these are words without sense. Never any Calvinist affirmed that faith was so weak, and so much nothing, that it can never be gotten; but it seems you wanted matter to make up your antithesis, and therefore were resolved to speak empty words rather than lose your figure:

> . . . . . Crimina rasis
> Librat in antitetis, doctas posuisse figuras
> Laudatur——

2. That there is no Calvinist that will deny the truth of this proposition, *Christ died for all;* nor subscribe to that sense of it which your Dominicans put upon it; neither can you, with coherence to the received doctrine of your own society, deny that they, as well as the Calvinists, take away the distinction of sufficient and effectual grace, and indeed hold none to be sufficient but only that which is effectual. 3. Whereas you say, "They cannot make their calling certain by good works; who do certainly believe, that before any good works they are justified, and justified by faith alone, and by that faith whereby they certainly believe they are justified:" I answer, There is no protestant but believes that faith, repentance, and universal obedience, are necessary to the obtaining of God's favour and eternal happiness. This being granted, the rest is but a speculative controversy, a question about words, which would quickly vanish, but that men affect not to understand one another. As if a company of physicians were in consultation, and should all agree that three medicines, and no more, were necessary for the recovery of the patient's health; this were sufficient for his direction towards the recovery of his health; though concerning the proper and specifical effects of these three medicines, there should be amongst them as many differences as men; so likewise being generally at accord that these three things, faith, hope, and charity, are necessary to salvation, so that whosoever wants any of them cannot obtain it, and he which hath them all cannot fail of it, is it not very evident that they are sufficiently agreed for men's directions to eternal salvation? And seeing charity is a full comprehension of all good works, they requiring charity as a necessary qualification in him that will be saved, what sense is there in saying, "They cannot make their calling certain by good works?" They know what salvation is as well as you, and have as much reason to desire it; they believe it as heartily as you, that there is no good work but shall have its proper reward; and that there is no possibility of obtaining the eternal reward without good works; and why then may not this doctrine be a sufficient incitement and provocation unto good works?

31. You say, that "they certainly believe that before any good works they are justified;" but this is a calumny. There is no protestant but requires to justification remission of sins, and to remission of sins they all require repentance; and repentance, I presume, may not be denied the name of a good work; being indeed, if it be rightly understood, and according to the sense of the word in Scripture, an effectual conversion from all sin to all holiness. But though it be taken for mere sorrow for sins past, and a bare purpose of amendment, yet even this is a good work; and therefore protestants, requiring this to remission of sins, and remission of sins to justification cannot with candour be pretended to believe that they are justified before any good work.

32. You say, "They believe themselves justified by faith alone, and that by that faith whereby they believe themselves justified:" some peradventure do so; but withal they believe that that faith which is alone, and unaccompanied with sincere and universal obedience, is to be esteemed not faith, but presumption, and is at no hand sufficient to justification; that though charity be not imputed unto justification, yet it is required as a necessary disposition in the person to be justified; and that though, in regard of the imperfection of it, no man can be justified by it, yet that, on the other side, no man can be justified without it. So that, upon the whole matter, a man may truly and safely say, that the doctrine of these protestants, taken altogether, is not a doctrine of liberty, not a doctrine that turns hope into presumption and carnal security; though it may justly be feared, that many licentious persons, taking it by halves, have made this wicked use of it. For my part, I do heartily wish that by public authority it were so ordered, that no man should ever preach or print this doctrine, "that faith alone justifies," unless he joins this together with it, "that universal obedience is necessary to salvation:" and besides, that those chapters of St. Paul which entreat of justification by faith without the works of the law, were never read in the church, but when the 13th chap. of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, concerning the absolute necessity of charity, should be, to prevent misprision, read together with them.

33. Whereas you say, that "some protestants do expressly affirm the former point to be the soul of the church, &c., and that therefore they must want the theological virtue of hope; and that none can have true hope while they hope to be saved in their communion:" I answer, They have great reason to believe the doctrine of justification by faith only, a point of great weight and importance, if it be rightly understood: that is, they have reason to esteem it a principal and necessary duty of a Christian, to place his hope of justification and salvation, not in the perfection of his own righteousness, (which if it be imperfect will not justify,) but only in the mercies of God through Christ's satisfaction; and yet notwithstanding this, nay, the rather for this, may preserve themselves in the right temper of good Christians, which is a happy mixture and sweet composition of confidence and fear. If this doctrine be otherwise expounded than I have here expounded, I will not undertake the justification of it; only I will say, (that which I may do truly,) that I never knew any protestant such a soli-fidian, but that he did believe these Divine truths: "That he must make his calling certain by good works—that he must work out his salvation with fear and trembling—and that while he does not so, he can have no well-grounded hope of salvation" I say, I never met with any who did not believe these Divine truths, and that with a more firm and a more unshaken assent than he does that himself is predestinate, and that he is justified by believing himself justified. I never met with any such, who if he saw there was a necessity to do either, would not rather forego his belief of these doctrines than the former; these, which he sees disputed, and contradicted, and opposed, with a great multitude of very potent arguments, than those, which being the express words of Scripture, whosoever should call into question could not with any modestly pretend to the title of Christian. And therefore there is no reason but we may believe that their full assurance of the former doctrine doth very well qualify their persuasion of the latter; and that the former (as also the lives of many of them do sufficiently testify) are more effectual to temper their hope, and to keep it at a stay of a filial and modest assurance of God's favour, built upon the conscience of his love and fear, than the latter can be to swell and puff them up into vain confidence and ungrounded presumption. This reason, joined with our experience of the honest and religious conversation of many men of this opinion, is a sufficient ground for charity to hope well of their hope; and to assure ourselves that it cannot be offensive, but rather most acceptable to God, if, notwithstanding this diversity of opinion, we embrace each other with the strict embrace of love and communion. To you and your church we leave it, to separate Christians from the church, and to proscribe them from heaven upon trivial and trifling causes. As for ourselves, we conceive a charitable judgment of our brethren and their errors, though untrue, much more pleasing to God than a true judgment, if it be uncharitable; and therefore shall always choose (if we do err) to err on the milder

and more merciful part, and rather to retain those in our communion which deserve to be ejected, than eject those that deserve to be retained.

34. Lastly, Whereas you say, that "seeing protestants differ about the point of justification, you must needs infer that they want unity in faith, and consequently all faith, and then, that they cannot agree what points are fundamental:" I answer to the first of these inferences, that as well might you infer it upon Victor bishop of Rome, and Polycrates; upon Stephen bishop of Rome, and St. Cyprian; inasmuch as it is undeniably evident, that what one of those esteemed necessary to salvation, the other esteemed not so. But points of doctrine (as all other things) are as they are, and not as they are esteemed: neither can a necessary point be made unnecessary by being so accounted, or an unnecessary point be made necessary by being overvalued. But as the ancient philosophers, (whose different opinions about the soul of man you may read in Aristotle *de Anima*, and Cicero's Tusculan Questions) notwithstanding their diverse opinions touching the nature of the soul, yet all of them had souls, and souls of the same nature: or, as those physicians who dispute whether the brain or heart be the principal yet all of them have brains and have hearts, and herein agree sufficiently: so likewise, though some protestants esteem that doctrine the soul of the church which others do not so highly value, yet this hinders not but that which is indeed the soul of the church may be in both sorts of them; and though one account that a necessary truth which others account neither necessary nor perhaps true, yet, this notwithstanding, in those truths which are truly and really necessary, they may all agree. For no argument can be more sophistical than this: They differ in some points which they esteem necessary; therefore they differ in some that indeed and in truth are so.

35. Now as concerning the other inference, "that they cannot agree what points are fundamental;" I have said and proved formerly, that there is no such necessity as you imagine or pretend, that men should certainly know what is and what is not fundamental. They that believe all things plainly delivered in Scripture believe all things fundamental, and are at sufficient unity in matters of faith, though they cannot precisely and exactly distinguish between what is fundamental and what is profitable; nay, though by error they mistake some vain or perhaps some hurtful opinions, for necessary and fundamental truths. Besides, I have showed above, that as protestants do not agree for you overreach in saying they cannot) touching what points are fundamental; so neither do you agree what points are defined, and so to be accounted, and what are not; nay, not concerning the subject in which God hath placed this pretended authority of defining; some of you settling it in the pope himself, though alone, without a council; others, in a council, though divided from the pope; others, only in the conjunction of council and pope; others, not in this neither, but in the acceptation of the present church universal; lastly, others not attributing it to this neither; but only to the perpetual succession of the church of all ages: of which divided company it is very evident and undeniable, that every former may be and are obliged to hold many things defined, and therefore necessary, which the latter, according to their own grounds, have no obligation to do, nay, cannot do so upon any firm and sure and infallible foundation.

THE CONCLUSION.

AND thus, by God's assistance and the advantage of a good cause, I am at length, through a passage rather tiring than difficult, arrived at the end of my undertaken voyage; and have, as I suppose, made appear to all disinterested and unprejudicate readers, what in the beginning I undertook, that a vein of sophistry and calumny runs through this first part of your book; where, though I never thought of the directions you have been pleased to give me in your pamphlet entitled, "A Direction to N. N.," yet upon consideration of my answer, I find that I have proceeded as if I had had it always before my eyes, and steered my course by it, as by a card and compass.

For first, "I have not proceeded by a mere destructive way," as you call it, nor "objected such difficulties against your religion, as upon examination tend to the overthrow of all religion;" but have showed, that the truth of Christianity is clearly independent upon the truth of popery; and that, on the other side, the arguments you urge, and the courses you take, for the maintenance of your religion, do manifestly tend (if they be closely and consequently followed) to the destruction of all religion, and lead men by the hand to atheism and impiety; whereof I have given you ocular demonstrations in divers places of my book; but especially in my answer to your "Direction to N. N."

Neither can I "discover any repugnance between any one part of my answer and any other," though I have used many more judicious and more searching eyes than my own, to make, if it were possible, such a discovery; and therefore am in good hope, that though the music I have made be but dull and flat, and even down right plain-song, even your curious and critical ears shall discover no discord in it; but on the other side, I have charged you frequently, and very justly, with manifest contradiction and retraction of your own assertions, and not seldom of the main grounds you build upon, and the principal conclusions which you endeavour to maintain; which I conceive myself to have made apparent even to the eye, c. 2. § 5, c. 3 § 88. c. 4. § 14 and 24. c. 5. § 93. c. 6 § 6, 7, 12, 17, c. 7. § 29. and in many other parts of my answer.

And though I did never pretend to defend Dr. Potter absolutely and in all things, but only so far as he defends truth, (neither did Dr. Potter desire me, nor any law of God or man oblige me, to defend him any further,) yet I do not find that I have cause to differ from him in any matter of moment, particularly, "not concerning the infallibility of God's church," which I grant with him to be infallible in fundamentals, because if it should err in fundamentals, it were not the church; nor concerning the supernaturality of faith," which I know and believe, as well as you, *to be the gift of God*, and *that flesh and blood revealed it not unto us, but our Father which is in heaven*. But now, if it were demanded, What defence you can make for deserting "Charity Mistaken," in the main question disputed between him and Dr. Potter, "Whether protestancy, without a particular repentance and dereliction of it, destroy salvation," whereof I have convinced you; I believe your answer would be much like which Ulysses makes in the Metamorphosis for his running away from his friend Nestor; that is, none at all.

For "opposing the Articles of the church of England," the approbation, I presume, clears my book from this imputation.

And whereas you gave me a caution, "that my grounds destroy not the belief of divers doctrines, which all good Christians believe, yea, and of all verities that cannot be proved by natural reason;" I profess sincerely, that I do not know nor believe that any ground laid by me in my whole book is any way inconsistent with any one such doctrine, or with any verity revealed in the word of God, though never so improbable or incomprehensible to natural reason; and if I thought there were, I would deal with it as those primitive converts dealt with their curious books in the Acts of the Apostles.

For the Epistle of St. James and those other books which were anciently controverted, and are now received by the church of England as canonical, I am so far from relying upon any principles which must, to my apprehension, bring with them the denial of the authority of them, that I myself believe them all to be canonical.

For the overthrowing the infallibility of all Scripture, my book is so innocent of it, that the infallibility of all Scripture, is the chiefest of all my grounds.

And, lastly, for arguments "tending to prove an impossibility of all Divine, supernatural, infallible faith and religion," I assure myself, that if you were ten times more a spider than you are, you could suck no such poison from them. My heart, I am sure, is innocent of any such intention; and the Searcher of all hearts knows that I had no other end in writing this book, but to confirm, to the uttermost of my ability, the truth of the Divine and infallible religion of our dearest Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, which I am ready to seal and confirm, not with my arguments only, but my blood.

Now these are the directions which you have been pleased to give me, whether out of a fear that I might otherwise deviate from them, or out of a desire to make others think so; but howsoever, I have not, to my understanding, swerved from them in any thing; which puts me in good hope, that my answer to the first part of your book will give even to yourself indifferent good satisfaction.

I have also provided, though this were more than I undertook, a just and punctual examination and refutation of your second part; but, if you will give your consent, am resolved to suppress it, and that for divers sufficient and reasonable considerations.

First, Because the discussion of the controversies entreated of in the first part, if we shall think fit to proceed in it, as I for my part shall, so long as I have truth to reply, will, I conceive, be sufficient employment for us, though we cast off the burden of those many lesser disputes which remain behind in the second. And perhaps we may do God and his church more service by exactly discussing and fully clearing the truth in these few, than by handling many after a slight and perfunctory manner.

Secondly, Because the addition of the second part, whether for your purpose or mine, is clearly unnecessary; there being no understanding man, papist or protestant, but will confess, that (for as much as concerns the main question now in agitation, about the saveableness of protestants) if the first part of your book be answered, there needs no reply to the second: as, on the other side, I shall willingly grant, if I have not answered the first, I cannot answer a great part of the second.

Thirdly, Because the addition of the second not only is unnecessary, but in effect by yourself confessed to be so. For in your preamble to your second part you tell us, "that the substance of the present controversy is handled in the first; and therein also you pretend to have answered the chief grounds of Dr. Potter's book:" so that in replying to your second part, I shall do little else but pursue shadows.

Fourthly, Because your second part (setting aside repetitions and references) is in a manner made up of disputes about particular matters, which you are very importunate to have forborne, as suspecting, at least pretending to suspect, that they "were brought in purposely by Dr. Potter to dazzle the reader's eyes and distract his mind, that he might not see the clearness of the reasons brought in defence of the general doctrine delivered in Charity Mistaken:" all which you are likely enough, if there be occasion, to say again to me; and therefore I am resolved for once even to humour you so far as to keep my discourse within those very lists and limits which yourself have prescribed, and to deal with you upon no other arguments, but only those wherein you conceive your chief advantage and principal strength, and, as it were, your Samson's lock, to lie; wherein if I gain the cause clearly from you, (as I verily hope by God's help I shall do,) it cannot but redound much to the honour of the truth maintained by me, which by so weak a champion can overcome such an Achilles in error, even in his strongest holds.

For these reasons, although I have made ready an answer to your second part, and therein have made it sufficiently evident, that, for shifting evasions from Dr. Potter's arguments, for impertinent cavils, and

frivolous exceptions, and injurious calumnies against him for his misalleging of authors; for proceeding upon false and ungrounded principles; for making inconsequent and sophistical deductions; and, in a word, for all the virtues of an ill answer, your second part is no way second to the first; yet notwithstanding all this disadvantage, I am resolved, if you will give me leave, either wholly to suppress it, or at least to defer the publication of it, until I see what exceptions, upon a twelvemonth's examination, (for so long, I am well assured, you have had it in your hands,) you can take at this which is now published; that so, if my grounds be discovered false, I may give over building on them; or (if it shall be thought fit) build on more securely, when it shall appear that nothing material and of moment is or can be objected against them. This I say upon a supposition that yourself will allow these reasons for satisfying and sufficient, and not repent of the motion which yourself has made, of reducing the controversy between us to this short issue. But in case your mind be altered, upon the least intimation you shall give me, that you do but desire to have it out, your desire shall prevail with me above all other reasons, and you shall not fail to receive it with all convenient speed.

Only, that my answer may be complete, and that I may have all my work together, and not be troubled myself, nor enforced to trouble you, with after-reckonings, I would first entreat you to make good your promise, of not "omitting to answer all the particles of Dr. Potter's book, which may any way import," and now at least to take notice of some (as it seems to me) not inconsiderable passages of it, which between your first and second part, as it were between two stools, have been suffered hitherto to fall to the ground, and not been vouchsafed any answer at all.

For after this neglectful fashion you have passed by in silence, first his discourse, wherein he proves briefly, but very effectually, that "protestants may be saved, and that the Roman church, especially the Jesuits, are very uncharitable:" s. l. p. 6-9. Secondly, The authorities whereby he justifies, that "the ancient fathers by the Roman understood always a particular, and never the catholic church;" to which purpose he allegeth the words of Ignatius, Ambrose, Innocentius, Celestine, Nicolaus: s. l. p. 10; whereunto you say nothing, neither do you infringe his observation with any one instance to the contrary.

Thirdly, The greatest and most substantial part of his answers to the arguments of Charity Mistaken, built upon Deut. xvii., Numb. xvi., Matt. xxviii. 20., Matt. xviii. 17, and in particular many pregnant and convincing texts of Scripture, quoted in the margin of his book, p. 25, to prove that the judges of the synagogue (whose infallibility yet you make an argument of yours, and therefore must be more credible than yours) are vainly pretended to have been infallible: but as they were obliged to judge according to the law, so were obnoxious to deviations from it: s. 2. p. 23-27.

Fourthly, His discourse, wherein he shows the difference between the prayers for the dead used by the ancients, and those now in use in the Roman church.

Fifthly, The authority of three ancient and above twenty modern doctors of your own church, alleged by him to show, that in their opinion pagans, and therefore much more erring Christians, (if their lives were morally honest,) by God's extraordinary mercy, and Christ's merit, may be saved: s. 2. p. 45.

Sixthly, A great part of his discourse, whereby he declares that actual and external communion with the church is not of absolute necessity to salvation; nay, that those might be saved whom the church utterly refused to admit to her communion: s. 2. p. 46-49.

Seventhly, His discourse concerning the church's latitude, which hath in it a clear determination of the main controversy against you: for therein he proves plainly, that all appertain "to the church, who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, with submission to his doctrine" in mind and will; which he irrefragably demonstrates by many evident texts of Scripture, containing the substance of his assertion even in terms: s. 4. p. 114-117.

Eighthly, That wherein he shows, by many pertinent examples, that "gross error and true faith may be lodged together in the same mind;" and that men are not "chargeable with the damnable consequences of their own erroneous opinions;" s. 4. p 112.

Ninthly, A very great part of his chapter, touching "the dissensions of the Roman church," which he shows (against the pretences of Charity Mistaken) "to be no less than ours, for the importance of the matter, and the pursuit of them to be exceedingly uncharitable:" s. 6. p. 188-191, 193-197.

Tenthly, His clear refutation and just representation of "the doctrine of implicit faith, as it is delivered by the doctors of your church:" which he proves very consonant to the doctrine of heretics and infidels, out evidently repugnant to the word of God: s. 6. p. 201-205.

Lastly, His discourse, wherein he shows that "it is unlawful for the church of after-ages to add any thing to the faith of the apostles;" and many of his arguments, whereby he proves that in the "judgment of the ancient church the Apostles' Creed was esteemed a sufficient summary of the necessary" points of simple belief; and a great number of great authorities, to justify the doctrine of the church of England, touching the canon of Scripture, especially the Old Testament: s. 7. p. 221, 223, 228, 229.

All these parts of Dr. Potter's book, for reasons best known to yourself, you have dealt with, as the priest and Levite in the gospel did with the wounded Samaritan, that is, *only looked upon them, and passed by;* but now at least when you are admonished of it, that my reply to your second part (If you desire it) may be perfect, I would entreat you to take them into your consideration, and to make some show of saying something to them, lest otherwise the world should interpret your obstinate silence a plain confession that you can say nothing.

THE END.