

Hear the Church:

OR, AN

APPEAL

TO THE

Mother of us All.

BEING AN

EPISTLE

TO

All the Baptized Believers in *England*; exhorting them to Stedfastness in the Truth, according to the SCRIPTURES.

TOGETHER

With some farther Considerations of seven Queries, sent to the Baptized Believers in *Lincolnshire*, concerning the Judge of Controversies in Matters of Religion.

All the Baptized

In Three PARTS.

By THOMAS GRANTHAM.

And they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned into Fables, 2 Tim. 4. 4.

But I will shew thee that which is noted in the Scripture of Truth, and there is none that holdeth with me in these things but Michael your Prince, Dan. 10. 21.

L O N D O N, Printed in the Year, 1687.

TO THE
READER.

THere is nothing, which Men sincerely Religions, do more heartily desire, than that all Men were so too; and because they are fully satisfied that they are in that very Way which most truly leads to Life, they therefore strive that all may know it and walk in it.

And truly this is my Case, my Hearts Desire and Prayer to God for all Men is, that they may be saved. And as I believe it hath pleased God to shew me the Path of Life, I cannot but do my best to shew it to others; for as some by their Labours, have been helpful to me, so I hope mine may be helpful to others.

When I call the Primitive Christian Church at Jerusalem, the Mother of us All, I allude to that Place, Gal. 4. 26. Interpreters, (so far as I have observed) take Jerusalem there, for the Gospel Catholick Church; now this Church had its Beginning, and this Beginning was at Jerusalem; and because in the Progress of Christianity in the World, for near one thousand seven hundred years, there has abundance of Errors crept in,

To the Reader.

and much truth in the antient Simplicity of it rejected, I think it highly rational, that (all prejudice being laid a-part) Men should seek with the greatest diligence, for their greatest Security, into the State of Christs Gospel-Church, as by himself established; for whatsoever has not been planted by our Heavenly Father, is nigh to its being rooted up.

God Almighty direct us all, is the hearty Prayer of thy Friend,

Thomas Grantham.

Let the Reader further take notice, that these Papers were originally written upon several occasions; otherwise some things repeated, would have been otherwise. Let thy discretion bear with this.

Hear

Hear the Church.

The First P A R T.

Containing, by way of Preface, a particular consideration of the State of the first Christian Church at Jerusalem, and the Reasonableness of appealing to Her, as The Mother of us All.

IT is evident to all such as have conversed with the Histories of the Ages, which have been since the coming of our Lord, to make known and establish all things in the Kingdom of Grace, in the first Church at Jerusalem; that there hath been great striving among the Christian Churches for some Honour and Prerogative above the rest. Sometimes the Church at Alexandria, sometimes the Church at Constantinople, and especially the Church at Rome, pressing very hard for Precedence of Honour, and Preheminence of Power; few minding the poor afflicted Church at Jerusalem, the true Mother of all true Christian Churches; when yet the Holy Ghost hath left a high Commendation upon those who do follow Her, both in the effectual Reception of the Gospel, *not as the Word of such or such a man,* (though preached by Apostles) *but as it is in truth the Word of God,* 1 Thess. 2. 13, 14. and also (not in persecuting, but) *in suffering like things of their Country-men, as they did of the Jews.* And we desire, and hope that there may be yet, all due consideration had by all Christians in these days, of the Heavenly Frame and Holy Walking of that MOTHER-CHURCH.

Unto

Hear the Church!

Unto whom was committed, in the first place, the Principles of the Oracles of God; unto whom our dearest Lord was a personal Minister, and did actually Dispense to, and Communicate with them, in the Divine Mysteries or Ordinances of the Christian Religion; upon whom was poured the most excellent Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit of Promise. It was this Church, from whom (according to the Prophets) the Law of Christ should first go forth, *Isa. 2. 3. Mich. 4. 1, 2.* Here was the *House of the Lord established in the top of the Mountains, and exalted above the Hills, that all Nations might flow unto it: an Honour not given to other Churches, 1 Cor. 14. 36. What, came the Word of God out from you? No, this was the Glory of another, For out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* Which by special Order from Christ was fulfilled, when he gave Commandment to his Apostles, *that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name, in all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem, Luk. 24. 47.* And here it was that the Spirit gave utterance unto the Apostles, to preach in all Languages, that then some of all Nations (who were at that very time at Jerusalem) might hear from thence the joyful Sound of the Gospel, and consequently, keep the same Holy Doctrine in all Ages and Nations, as it was there delivered, and confirmed by *divers Signs and Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, Math. 28. 19, 20. Heb. 2. 4. Act. 2.*

Forasmuch then, as all Churches, in all Ages and Nations, are indispensibly bound to follow this Church, in the Observation of all things whatsoever Christ commanded them; we hold our selves concern'd, at this time, to declare our unfeign'd Assent unto the Truth of the Gospel, *as it was here delivered; and our humble Resolution to keep the Ordinances of Christ, as they were here practis'd* (not doubting but the same was received in all Churches at the first) being confident of this very thing, that a safer way cannot be found for the security of our Souls, from the manifold Errors, which since the Plantation of this Church, have been obtruded upon the Consciences of Men, in most parts of the Christian Nations.

To the intent then that we may avoid Error, and cleave to Truth, we shall consider particularly (though very briefly) the Frame of this Heavenly Building, in respect of her Foundation, her Form of Government, and the Way of her Worship, in order to her Perfection. And First,

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Hear the Church.

We find her Foundation-Principles to consist in six particulars, called, *the beginning of the Word of Christ*, which Articles are therefore called the Foundation, because of the Relation they have to Christ, who is a Foundation to his Church, as held forth in his own Doctrine, and other Foundations than Christ so held forth, can no man lay.

Of such importance are these Sacred Principles, that we find the Ancient Christians used to call them the Christian Catechism. *Chryssostom, Testimony is this; That all these are fundamental Articles; that is, that we ought to repent from dead Works, to be baptized into the Faith of Christ, and be made worthy of the Gift of the Spirit, who is given by imposition of Hands; and we are to be taught the Mysteries of the Resurrection and Eternal Judgment. This Catechism, saith he, is perfect.* And indeed in the whole New Testament, we meet not with such an excellent Epitome of the Christian Doctrine as in this place, which was written to this Mother-Church.

'Tis true, we have some mention of a Form of Doctrine delivered to the believing Romans: And Timothy is commanded to hold fast the Form of sound Words, which he had heard of St. Paul; Christ is said to be the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, we are willing to contend for the Faith once delivered to the Saints. But none of these places do shew us, as the Text under consideration, *what this Form of Doctrine, this Form of sound Words, this Profession, and this Faith* was, in respect of the Composition, and Foundationality of them; nor can there any thing be assigned, that is so properly the Analogy or Rule of Faith, as these Principles of Catechism.

Happy had it been, if all Christian Churches had held fast this Catechism, though no more had ever been composed; Unity in the Truth would have been better maintained by this one, than by so many as are now extant. And sure this being of Divine Composure and Authority, the Principles of the Oracles of God, the Beginning of the Word of Christ, must needs outweigh all others, being but of Human Composition. To begin with the first Principle of this Church, let us consider.

I. Repentance from Dead Works.

We are first to consider why Repentance is put in the first place, even before Faith; sure it is because no unrepenting Sinner can have the Faith of Justification; therefore this Principle of the Christian

Faith

Faith must follow Repentance. There is indeed a Faith (which we may call the Faith of Mankind) to believe there is a God, that will both punish Sinners, and reward the Righteous, and this Faith must needs precede Repentance, *Heb. 11. 6.*

This Repentance, as it was a Principle of this *Mother-Church*, comprehends three things, a true Sence of Sin, in the exceeding sinfulness of it; in which respect it is said, *They were pricked at the heart, and cried out, or said, Men and Brethren, what shall we do? Act. 2. 37.* which is accompanied with Godly Sorrow, and with Amendment of Life, without which, Repentance is rather to be repented of, than to be esteemed any part of the Foundation of Christian Religion; *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out. Act. 3. 19.* Without which Repentance, there is no Remission. *Luk. 13. 5. Except ye repent, ye shall all perish, saith our Saviour.* How blessed had it been, if this Doctrine had been preached, and Men brought to the Obedience of it, before they had been admitted to Membership in the Church of Christ? The not keeping to this Rule, has filled all National Churches with unregenerate, unconverted Persons, to the Scandal of the Christian Religion.

2. Of Faith towards God in this *Mother-Church.*

The Excellency of the Faith of this *Mother-Church*, appeared in these things: *That they gladly received the Word of the Gospel of their Salvation. Act. 2. 40.* To the illumination of their Souls, and the expelling the darkness of Error and Unbelief; by this Faith they had their *Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience*, and their Confidence in God had a great Recompence of Reward, in the Love and Expectation of which, they willingly endured a great Fight of Afflictions, whilst they were made a *Gazing-stock*, both by Reproaches, and suffering the Spoiling of their Goods with joyfulness; and were willingly *Companions with*, and charitably compassionate towards, those that were in Bonds for Righteousness sake, working the Work of God, *ministring to the Saints*, labouring in Love: all which are Arguments of true and lively Faith. *Ileb. 6. 10, 11. Heb. 10. 32, 33, 34, 35.*

He that reads and considers this Excellent Epistle, written to this *Mother-Church*, wherein we may be sure no new Doctrine is delivered but the same corroborated which they had received, shall find that the true Knowledge and Belief of Christ was amongst them, in respect

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of his Divinity, Chap. 1. in respect of his Humanity. Chap. 2. in respect of Priestly Office and Sacrifice, with all other Offices to which he was appointed of God, in the residue of the Epistle, of which we cannot now speak particularly.

3. Of the Doctrine of Baptism in this Church.

The Lord Christ had fully taught the Guides of this *Mother-Church* the Doctrine of Baptism both by Word and Example; and thereby had informed them of a three-fold Baptism. The first delivered by Precept, himself making the People Disciples, by teaching them to repent and believe the Gospel, and then appointing his Disciples to dip them in the River, in which respect it is said that Jesus made and dipped (or Baptized) more Disciples than *John, Mar. 4. 17. John 4. 1. John 3. 22.* His own example being an unquestionable Rule for the manner of Baptizing, he being *Dipped of John into Jordan*, as the Greek hath it, *Mak. 1. 9. and then coming up out of the Water.* And of this whole Church it is said, their hearts were sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and their Bodies washed with pure water. For Baptifmal Water is therefore purer, because it is Sanctified for our Religious use, both by the Person of Christ, and by the Word of God. And of this Church, was first required, that every one of them should repent, and then be Baptized; and of them it is also said, that they that gladly received the Word preached by *St. Peter*, were baptized, *Acts 2. 38, 40.*

They were also instructed concerning the Baptism of the Holy Spirit; in being the Promise of the Father made to all the called of the Lord, and was particularly applied to them, and poured upon them in the way of Faith and Obedience.

To be willing to be Baptized with Afflictions for Christ and the Gospel's sake, they were also taught by our blessed Saviour in his Discourse with some of his Disciples, and by his own Sufferings, *Luke 12. 30.* of which they were also partakers, *Heb. 10. 32.* as also all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus must expect the same. And it would be considered by what Rule any man can take upon him to make Baptism the first Principle, seeing Christ himself has made it the third Principle? and by what Rule any man can call Sprinkling Baptizing? Dare they speak as they act? that is, dare they say, I sprinkle thee in the Name of the Father? &c. Would not their Conscience lie in their Face if they should so speak? and yet behold, they pervaricate in action, and lye

in expression in that which they call their Baptism; God will surely fend the proudest prevaricators in this case a *Quo warranto* for their presumptuous dealing herein.

Of the Laying on of Hands in this Church.

There are two great Blessings belong to all true Christians, Remission of sin, and the Gift of the Holy Spirit; the first is consigned to them in Sacred Baptism, the second in Prayer, with the laying on of Hands, in which way this *Mother-Church* received this Blessing, as is evident from the enumeration and order of the Principles of her Catechism, and also from this Testimony, *that great Grace was upon them all, Acts 4. 33.* as also in that it is expressly said, that this Church continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine, a Principle whereof is Prayer with Laying on of Hands; and from this Church this Doctrine and Holy Practice was carried by the Apostles to *Samarita*, Acts 14. for it is not to be imagined they would there innovate, a practical principle, which had not first been taught in the Church at *Jerusalem*. But God bearing witness to this service of Prayer and Laying on of Hands at *Samarita*, with the same Blessing of the Holy Spirit, fore-received at *Jerusalem*, confirms it as an acceptable and needful Service for all Churches. And accordingly it was received in the times next succeeding the Apostles days, as many witnesses testify, amongst whom *Tertullian* thus, *De sine manus impositio*, &c. After Baptism the Hand is imposed by Blessing, calling and inviting the Holy Spirit. *Time ille Sanctissimus*, &c. Then that most Holy Spirit most willingly descends from the Father upon the Bodies which are cleansed [meaning in Baptism] and blessed.

Of the Resurrection of the Dead taught and believed in this Mother-Church.

In this Church it was where the Apostle gave witness with great Power of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, in whose Resurrection assurance, yea very full assurance is given to all men, that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and the Unjust. It was here that our Saviour shewed himself alive after he had been dead, by infallible proofs, being seen of his Disciples forty days, converting with them of the way, concerning his Church and Kingdom. It was here that many dead Bodies of the Saints did arise, and come out of their Graves, and went into Jerusalem, and appeared to many, after Christ was risen; which was a full proof, that

that the Resurrection is of the same numerical Bodies which are laid in the Graves, disrobed only of mortality and all imperfections. And this is that Resurrection of the Dead here called a Principle of Christ's Doctrine, and of the Foundation of this *Mother-Church*.

Of the Eternal Judgment Believed by this Church.

It was to the Guides of this Church to whom our Saviour first made known this great privilege, that they should sit on Thrones judging the twelve Tribes of Israel, at that time when he should sit upon the Throne of his Glory, Mat. 19. 28, who also is appointed of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead, Act. 10. 42. which great Article is here recounted among the principles of Catechism, Heb. 6. 2. and called the eternal Judgment, not only for that it is the last Judgment, but because the effects of it shall be perpetual, the pains to be imposed in this sentence of Judgment shall be of eternal duration to all wicked men, who have contemned the Gospel of their Salvation, and judged themselves unworthy of Eternal Life, even that Life which then shall be given to Eternity, to all such as have held fast the beginning of their Confidence, and the hope of this their rejoicing steadfast unto the end, Heb. 3. 14. At therefore the Times are gathered and burnt in the fire; so shall it be in the end of the World. The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity: and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire; there shall be weeping, and gnashing of Teeth. Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. Matth. 13. 40, 41, 42, 43. Lo the eternal Judgment taught by Christ's own Mouth, let all men be admonished to prepare for this Judgment, for the coming of the Lord draws nigh.

Of the further Order and manner of Worship used in this Mother-Church.

This did especially consist in frequently assembling themselves together, to teach and preach Jesus Christ, Acts 5. 42. or for the ministering of the Word of God and Prayers, Acts 6. 4. In which we find no Liturgies, or Forms of Prayer devised or imposed by the Apostles, but these Services were performed by the aid of the Holy Spirit, which as they were given for the work of the Ministry, so 'tis evident they have a remanency in the true Church till the whole be perfected, Eph. 4.

and it is this Blessed Spirit which helps the Church to *make-Intercession according to the will of God, Rom. 8. 27.* They were all very frequent at the Lord's Table breaking the Sacred Bread, in remembrance of the Lord Christ, giving thanks to God by him, *Acts 2. 41, 47.* nor needed they any *Mt. 3. Book Or Common-Prayer-Book,* to direct them in either: Christ's own Institution of his Holy Table, and the holy Prayer which he had taught his Disciples, with other Heavenly Rules contained in the Holy Scriptures, was abundantly sufficient, and are so still, to every Faithful Man of God [and Minister whom God and his Church hath called to that Work] to furnish him to every good work:

It is also exceeding plain that the Holy Table of the Lord is here called the breaking of Bread. And therefore, though that Holy Bread and Wine be the Body and Blood of Christ, yet they are these, in such sort, as they are also the Bread of the Lord, and the Cup of the Lord, *1 Cor. 11. 27.* And forasmuch as the Apostle here, and in the next verse, does expressly call the same things, by these different titles, *the Body and the Blood: the Bread and the Cup:* we must of necessity take him to speak Figuratively in one of these, but in the latter, to wit, *Bread and the Cup,* we have no Figure (save that the Wine in the Cup is taken for the Cup, which is an usual form of speaking;) and therefore of necessity these Words, *Body and Blood,* must be understood to be mystically, spiritually, or figuratively in the *Bread and Wine,* and not the Bread and Wine to be mystically, spiritually, or figuratively, in the *Body and Blood of Christ.*

It is also as certain that the whole Church (*this Mother Church, Acts 2. 42.*) did then receive both the Bread and Cup of the Lord, as that any one of them did partake of both, the whole Service being expressed by a *Synecdoche,* a part for the whole, which yet will better appear, in that this Ordinance ought to be received by every Recipient, as he is a Member of Christ, not as he is a Minister: "It is true, as I am a Minister I dispense this Mytery, but I receive it as a Member, saith *St. Paul:* For *YE* being many, are one Bread, and one Body. For *WE* are all partakers of that one Bread.

It was unto this Church, or the Guides of it, unto whom our Blessed Saviour delivered that Mystical Doctrine, which offended so many of his Disciples, *John 6. 53. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you,* which yet cannot be rightly understood of a corporal eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood, because he expressly says, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ho that believeth on me,*

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hath everlasting life, Verse 47. And it is certain there were many that did truly believe on him at that time, among whom *S. Peter,* and the rest that stood by him, when so many forsook him. Now these things must all be true. 1. That none of Christ's Disciples had Life in them at that time, but such as did eat the Flesh, and drink the Blood of Christ. 2. That *S. Peter* and the rest of the Faithful, had eternal Life in them at that time. 3. That the Lord's Table was not yet instituted; And therefore from these Premises it follows that our Saviour speaks not here of his Disciples now eating and drinking his Flesh and Blood in the Lord's Table, and therefore cannot with any shew of Truth or Reason, be understood of eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood carnally, or corporally, but spiritually, even by believing in him.

Of the several Orders of Ministry in this Mother-Church.

This Church was endowed with a three-fold Order of Ministry; 1. *Messengers* or Apostles, whose work was more especially to gather, constitute, and take care for the Church in general. 2. *Elders,* whose work was especially to feed the Flock committed to them in particular. 3. *Deacons,* whose work more especially was to take care of the Poor, and to distribute the Alms of the Church to the ends for which they were given, and consequently all Churches ought to maintain this Order of Ministry, unless they can shew that God has repealed this Ministry, in part or in whole. 'Tis true, some things were pertinent to the Apostles here, which were temporary and extraordinary, which Churches in after-Ages are not to expect; but it is also true that some things were ordinary, and fixed in that Office, for the continual use of the Church, and therefore to remain for ever *uz.* Their care for all Churches, their travels and labours to plant and settle new Churches, their withstanding false Apostles, as themselves are true Apostles. Their authority to appease strife and contention which may arise among particular Pastors and Churches, which things being demonstrated in our *Constitutionis Primitiva* (to which we refer) we shall not here enlarge.

This part of the Apostolical Office, was conferred on many in the Apostles days, who were also entituled the *Angels of the Churches, Rev. 2. 1, &c.* which in English, is, Messenger of the Churches. Of this Order was *James* the Lord's Brother in this Church at *Jerusalem,* and such were *Timothy, Titus, Sylvanus, Andronicus* and *Junia,* with others. A Ministry as needful as any, both for the unity of Churches, and the management of the most important affairs of the Gospel, both in the Church

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and in the World, as experience may convince men if nothing else will do it. And here it were easie to bring in the full Test of the best Antiquity, but this Letter will not bear it.

Of the Discipline or Government of this Mother-Church.

It was unto the Guides of this Church to whom our Blessed Lord first gave Rules for the Government of his Church, *Mat. 18.* whence we learn that in cases of personal Trespasses, and sins of Infirmitie or Weakness, all possible Love, Patience and Charity, should be exercised by one Christian towards another, and the Offender, upon confession of his fault, forgiven, unto seventy times seven Offences: so abundantly should Charity appear among the Members of Christ. But it was also in this Church where wilfull Iniquity was punished with great severity, as the Hypocritic and Deceit of *Ananias and Sapphira*; and the like severity was shewed against *Simon Magus* for his Pride and Covetousness, in aspiring to a Ministry for which he was not qualified, and to which he was not called by Heaven's Donation and due vocation from the Church, without which, woful experience hath taught the Christian Nations, that it is in vain by Money, or for Money to make Men Ministers in the Christian Church.

In this Church was held the first and best of General Councils, for settling the Churches in peace, when troubles did arise among themselves, by means of false Teachers, &c. And because the Churches in all Ages and Nations, may have perpetual need of such helps, it shall not be amiss that we consider the Quality and Authority of such Assemblies, lest otherwise we be abused by Usurpation and Tyranny: and first of the occasion of the calling this present Assembly, *Acts 15.*

This Assembly was called upon the greatest occasion that ever was, namely, the Repealing, or rather shewing the Repeal, of many Divine Ordinances, and freeing the Christian Church from their Obligation; because they were either fulfilled, or too burthensome for his Church, as indeed *St. Peter* avers, they were so heavic, that neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear them; And the endeavours of this Council was successful to the removal of them, and the settlement of the Churches in the Faith; and to the great encrease of their number, *Acts 16.* From whence we may safely conclude, that if *Moses's Ceremonies* which were from Heaven, were a hindrance to Peace and growth in

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the Christian Church, much more must all Ceremonies devised, and imposed by Human Force and Power only, be an obstruction to it. Let us therefore stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not be entangled in the Yoke of Bondage, whether of Legal, or other devised Ceremonies.

As for the quality of the persons, of whom this Assembly did consist, 'tis plain they were *Messengers, Elders and Brethren*, and these did all freely deliberate upon the matters in question, offering their Reasons *pro & contra*; and the Decision was made, not by the interposition of Power Apostolical, but by the clear evidence of Truth and Reason, to which they all agreed. The Apostles acting here as *Grave Fathers*, giving free Audience and faithful Advice, to which when all agreed, the conclusion was made in all their names, as appears, *Acts 15. 22, 23.* Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own Company to Antioch, and wrote Letters by them after this manner; The Apostles, Elders and Brethren send greeting unto the Brethren which are of the Gentiles, &c. From the sweet concord here, we suppose all Churches should do well to constitute their general Consistories of such, seeing such helps do the may have still, in things ordinary to each Office, if the reader not her self unworthy of them.

Now for the quality and authority of the Decrees, made by this, or succeeding Assemblies, the case is clear of it self; These were such things as seemed good to the Holy Ghost, not that the Holy Ghost now revealed them, but brought to remembrance what the Scriptures had said concerning them, and partly by what before that time had been shewed unto *St. Peter* by a certain Vision of God's accepting the Gentiles, though not cleansed according to Legal Purification. And therefore till the Holy Ghost reverse these Decrees, they are to oblige all Churches to keep them inviolable. And in this point (as indeed in all the rest) the Baptized Churches in this Age do stand a witness against the disorder and disobedience of most of the Christian Nations in the World; who make no Conscience of abstaining from Blood, &c. though they know the true Churches did Religiously observe these Decrees for several hundreds of years after. *Tertullian* tell us, *The custom of Christians is to abstain from all Blood, and things Strangled, so that it is not lawful for themselves they feed at their Tables to meddle with the Blood of any Beast.*

It is further safely concluded from hence, that all Decrees of General Councils are so far obliging only, as the things decreed are proved to be true, and not because they are decreed in Council only; For here

St. Peter

St. Peter proves, that Churches are free from the obligation of Legal Ceremonies, because they wear a Burthen too heavy to be born. 2. Because God had accepted them already without them. And James [the Angel of this Church] proves or confirms the same by the Scriptures, and these Arguments, and Probations, satisfied the Assembly. And it's certain, the things prohibited by these decrees, were always forbidden, even to Noah and his perpetual Generations, Gen. 9. 12, &c. Nor does this Assembly excommunicate or anathematize all that shall doubt of the Necessity of their Determination, but very sweetly tells the Brethren they shall do well to comply with their advice; for they knew that every Church had Power to punish offenders, and to them they seem to leave that Care, and not to take the Power of any Church out of their Hands, as the manner of some is.

Of the Case of Infants, or whether they were admitted to Baptism in the Mother-Church?

In all that is said of the Plantation and growth of this famous Church, or in that excellent Epistle, which was a long time after written to them, there is not one Word to be found of any one Infant being brought to Baptism; and therefore we hold to the Negative of this Question; and it is observable, that though here Infant-Circumcision was absolutely excluded, yet is there no Argument urged for it from their Baptism, which had been very considerable, had there been any such usage in this, or the Gentile Churches. And because it is granted now by many, and these the most Learned too, (among whom the Papists) that there is no Scripture for Infant-Baptism, &c. But that it stands upon the Authority of Ecclesiastical Tradition; all that we shall say to that Plea in this place is, to desire any Man to shew who delivered this thing to the Churches, and by what Authority, whether divine or human? For seeing Tradition signifies a thing delivered, it is fit the Person or Persons delivering such a thing, should be known to be Persons lawfully impowered to deliver such a Tradition, before we can with safety receive it.*

* It is said of the Roman Christians, that the Light of Piety shined in their Minds when they heard Peter, but they were not satisfied with once hearing, neither satisfied with the *Comm. in Gal. vi.* that was *livered*: but earnestly besought St. Mark, (whose Gospel is now in use) that he would leave in Writing unto them the Doctrine which they had received by Preaching, &c. *Ensch. Hist. l. 2. Chap. 15.* We see that the Church of Rome stealed the Gospel in Writing, above the delivery of it in Preaching, though they heard it from Peter himself. Sure they are not the same now as then, for Tradition from whom it's hard to say is more now to them than the Scripture. And the Scripture nothing to them, but as delivered and interpreted by Tradition.

But how then shall Infants be saved if Baptism belong not to them? I answer, out of the mouth of St. Peter, Verse 11. *By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ they shall be saved.* And sure a man might as well ask how can Infants be saved without Faith and Repentance, seeing it is said, *he that believeth not, shall be damned: and except ye repent, ye shall all perish, &c.* And what answer could any wise man make, save this? the grace of God sufficeth them, having Christ's express word for it, that to them belongs the Kingdom of Heaven; and this he spake to unbaptized Infants too, which is therefore so satisfactory that we need no other evidence. If any man say the words which St. Peter spake in Council, *Acts 15. 11.* are not meant of Infants, and therefore not pertinent to my purpose. I shall only desire him to consider, that those words were spoken in opposition to this position, *That without Circumcision, after the manner of Moses, the Gentiles could not be saved:* Now we know, it was after the manner of Moses to Circumcise Infants, and therefore doubtless these false Teachers did question the salvation of Infants dying without Circumcision. Therefore these words of St. Peter, which teaches that *by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ both Jew and Gentile shall be saved,* have their clear extent to Infants as well as to any other persons whatsoever: I shall here only refer the Reader to what we have farther written, in a Treatise upon this Subject, entituled, *The Controversie about Infant-Church-Membership and Baptism epitomized.*

Of the Reverence due to Saints, Angels, and to the Blessed Virgin in particular, according to the usage of this Mother-Church.

It was in this Church where the Holy Virgin, Mother of our Lord, had her Conversation and Society, being with that select Company, consisting of an hundred and twenty names, *Acts 1. 15.* among whom this most blessed Woman is expressly named, and by whose Presence this *Mother-Church* was honoured above all others. And here is the last mention that is made of her in the holy Scriptures. And this honourable mention of her by name, and as the *Mother of our Lord,* (which doubtless calls for great Reverence in the hearts of all God's People) is all the honour that the Word of God does here confer upon her. This Church makes no Prayers to her, nor to Christ in her name, nor taught the succeeding Churches to do so; yet surely she was the greatest Saint that ever was; and if we have no ground from any direction, nor Precedent in the Scripture to perform such Devotion to Her, we cannot with

Hear the Church.

any shew of Reason, or pretence of Truth, do it to any other Creature, Saint or Angel, whatsoever.

And it is remarkable, that though this Church had occasion to make express mention of *David* in their Prayers, *Acts* 4. 25. yet do they not use his Intercession at all: But this Honour they give to *Jesus Christ*, that through his Name such things might be done, as might confirm the Truth against all Opposers. Nor does the Holy Ghost give any notice of the Worshipping of Angels, Saints, nor the *Holy Virgin* in particular, in that Sacred Epistle, which was sent to this Church after the death of *Blessed Mary*, the *Mother of Jesus*; so that this *Mother-Church*, seems altogether unacquainted with such Devotions: And much more may we assure our selves, they paid no such Devotion to the Images of these, or of any of them. If any affirm the contrary, we answer them in the words of *Jerom*, *Non Credimus quia non Legimus*. And with *Apollinarius*, we dare add nothing to the perfect words of the *New Testament*, whereto nothing may be added; and wherfrom nothing may be taken away, by him that will lead a life agreeable to the *Gospel*. *Euseb. Hist.* l. 5. c. 14.

Thus Brethren I have for your sakes (as well as others) taken a fresh view of the State of this most Primitive Church, to whose holy pattern, through the Grace of God, you have diligently laboured to conform your souls, her Principles are yours, her Government in good measure is yours, if in any thing any of them be otherwise minded, my hearts desire is, that God would speedily reveal even the same unto you, and then it is to be hoped that all well disposed, will in time see themselves concerned to adhere to the truth of your Principles, in the very Order wherein you maintain them.

Hear

Hear the Church:

OR AN

EPISTLE

TO

All the Baptized Christians in England; Exciting them to Steadfastness in their Holy Profession, under their various Tryals, and great Afflictions.

The Second PART.

BRETHREN,

AS it hath pleased God to exercise you many years with various Tryals and Afflictions, for your Faithfulness to the Christian Religion (in respect of the Restoration of it to its ancient Purity) both in the Form and Power of it, wherein you have laboured hitherto, and have not fainted, but, by the Grace of God, have attained to some degree in that behalf, above what hath, as yet, been attained by the generality of your Country-men, for which you owe the greatest Thankfulness to Almighty God. And having (as I verily believe) laid a right Foundation for a true Church-State, you are indispensably obliged to go on unto perfection, as the first Churches, which were built upon the same Foundation, were expressly required and exhorted, *Heb.* 6. 1, 2, 3.

In which Holy Profession, being by the Grace of God, one with you, and also called to the Ministry and Office of a Messenger of your Churches [which I mention, because it is the most despised Office amongst all Christians, as it seems to have been in the Apostles days, 1 Cor. 4. 9.] do hold it my Duty, at this time, to endeavour to strengthen you (in what I may) in your Holy Profession; as also to call upon such as have been shaken in mind by the violence of those Temptations which have befallen them in common with their Brethren.

For as it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, (as those undoubtedly shall, who draw back from the Truth they have once embraced unto Perdition) so I am very confident, that for any to fall from the Truth, as it is professed by the Baptized Churches, is the most dangerous of all other, they being indeed the nearest to the Truth, in the Pristine Order and Simplicity of it, of all sorts of Persons, who own the Honorable Appellation of Christian. For,

What sort of Christians can with any Confidence look upon, or bring themselves close to the Rules of St. Paul's Catechism,

* The Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, Repentance, Faith, Doctrine of Baptism, Laying on of Hands, Resurrection of the Dead, Eternal Judgment.

Christ as received in the Power and Order of these Principles, becomes a Foundation to his Church, in which respect the Principles are here called the Foundation also.

ed than this is, which will never be. Yea, so pressing is this place from the true Institution of the Ancient Christian Religion, that the Rhenists seem to be under no small difficulty how to express themselves about it: For thus they speak upon the Text, Heb. 6. 1, 2. *We see hereby (say they) what the first grounds of Christian Institution, or Catechism, were in the Primitive Church, and that there was ever a necessary Instruction and Belief of certain Points, had by Word of mouth and Tradition, before men came to the Scriptures, which could not treat of things so particularly as was requisite.*

requisite for the teaching of all necessary Grounds. Among these Points were the twelve Articles contained in the Apostles Creed; The Doctrine of Penance before Baptism; the Manner and Necessity of Baptism; the Sacrament of Imposition of Hands after Baptism, called Confirmation; the Articles of the Resurrection, Judgment, and such like: without which things first laid, if one should be sent to pick his Faith out of the Scriptures, there would be mad Rule quickly.

1. It's highly observable from hence, that the first Grounds and Principles of our Churches (which indeed are no other than what men read, Heb. 6. 1, 2.) are openly acknowledged, by our most Potent Opposites, to be the same which were in the Primitive Church, received for the first Grounds and Institutions of Christianity, or Christian Institution and Catechism. That in the Primitive Church, these Grounds were held in the very Order now observed by the Baptized Churches; particularly, Repentance before Baptism, and Imposition of Hands after Baptism. Sure this is a full Testimony, that the Institution of the Baptized Churches (now wrongfully called Anabaptists) and theirs only, is truly Apostolical. Whilst all the Psehbaptists in the World (among whom, the Papists) have quite subverted this Order, giving their supposed Baptism before Repentance, and that unto Persons that are not capable of Repentance.

2. They tell us there was a necessary Instruction and Belief of certain Points had by Word of Mouth and Tradition, before men came to the Scripture. Admit this to be so, in respect of such parts of the Holy Scriptures as were then unwritten, when the Apostles first preached the Gospel; yet it is certainly false, in respect of such Books of Scripture as were then in being; for it's evident that our Blessed Saviour propounded the Text of Scripture, Luke 4. 17, 18, 19. and thence preached to the People, and commanded his Hearers to search the Scriptures, John 5. 29. He did not send his Hearers to Tradition, at the Papists do.

The great Apostle of the Jews, St. Peter, even then when he was filled with the Holy Ghost, Acts 2. 17. preached from, and notably confirms his Doctrine by the Scriptures, Acts 2. not by Tradition. And Philip, Acts 8. 35. began at the same Scripture which the Eunuch read, and preached to him Jesus, without making any use of Tradition. Apollo being mighty in the Scripture (not in Tradition) convinced the Jews, shewing (not by Tradition) but by the Scriptures, that Jesus is the Christ. So did the great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul, Acts 28. 23. Persuading:

Persuading men concerning Jesus, out of the Law and the Prophets (not out of Tradition) from Morning to Evening; and the best sort of St. Paul's Hearers, searched the Scriptures daily, (not Tradition) to see whether the things spoken by him were so.

3. Nor can the Papists tell us what one Point of Necessary Instruction or Belief was delivered by Word of Mouth, which is not now contained in the Holy Scripture; if otherwise, let them assign some necessary Point of Faith or Instruction, such, as without which, we cannot know and serve God truly and fully, and be saved eternally, which is not contained in the Holy Scriptures. But as this will hardly be attempted; so let me exhort you, Brethren, to beware of all manner of Principles and Doctrines, which have any tendency to weaken or invalidate the Authority and Sufficiency of the Scriptures, which the Apostle avers to be of that sufficiency (even before all the Books of Sacred Scriptures were extant) as to furnish the Man of God thoroughly to every good Work. And then certainly, he who is in all Points of Faith and Instruction, a good Christian, according to the Doctrine contained in the Holy Scriptures, will be out of the reach of any just reprehension, though he know nothing of the unwritten Tradition, so much pretended and admired by the Papists, or others.

Being thus secured in your Principles, from the very concession of your Enemies, and by the Authority of the best and most Sacred Antiquity, even the Holy Scriptures, you have no cause to fear the most important difficulties, wherewith possibly we may be tried in these days. And that we may the better see how the case stands between the Baptists and the Papists, with respect to the two great Ordinances of Christ, to wit, Holy Baptism, and the Holy Table of our Lord Jesus Christ; we will here take a View of the one, and of the other, in a distinct Column by it self, the better to discern their Disparity.

The

The Manner of Baptism among the Baptized Believers, commonly called Anabaptists.

The Manner of Baptism among the Papists, commonly called Roman Catholicks; taken out of the Roman Ritual, by a Learned Hand translated into English.

Baptist.

Papist.

THE Messenger or Elder being attired in comely Raiment, not much different from the rest of his Brethren, first

Mark 16. Preaches the Gospel to every Creature that is capable and willing to hear, and

Rom. 10. when by hearing they have received Faith, the Minister explains the Doctrine of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God, for the further Illumination of the Disciples understanding, in

Job. 17. the knowledge of the only true God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may obtain Eternal Life.

The Minister does open the Doctrine of Repentance in three parts especially, i. e. as it consists in a due sense or knowledge of the sinfulness of sin

After many preparatory Precriptions, the Priest being dressed in a Purple Robe, calls the Infant to be Baptized by his Name, and faith, *What askest thou of the Church of God?* the God-fathers answer, *Faith.* The Priest faith again, *What shalt thou get by Faith?* The God-father replies, *Eternal Life.* Then adds the Priest, *If therefore thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and thy Neighbour as thy Self.*

Next, the Priest blows three gentle Puffs upon the Infants Face, and faith, *Go out of him thou unclean Spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.* Then with his Thumb he makes the Sign of the Cross on the Infants Forehead and Breast, saying, *Receive the Sign of the Cross, both in thy Forehead and in thy Heart.* Take the Faith of the Heavenly Precept, and be thy Manners such

Baptist.

Papist.

sin: In true Sorrow for sin committed, especially against Almighty God.

Tit. 2. The necessity of forsaking the Conversation of sin, and to walk righteously, soberly, and godly in this present Life.

The Doctrine of Faith is explained concerning

Mat. 28. the Object, in respect of the God-head, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, into whose Name the Party is to be baptized, and especially

1 Cor. 2. concerning Christ crucified, buried, and risen again; and therewith is shewed, that in Baptism

Rom. 6. we are to die unto Sin, to be buried with him in Baptism, to rise to a Holy Life, and so to put on the Lord Jesus Christ in

Job. 3. 3. Baptism, as to be born of Water and of the Spirit through the Word.

The Minister does open to the Party to be Baptized, the whole Doctrine of Baptism; First, That of Water, which is the Baptism of Repen-

Mat. 28. tance for the Remission of sins, in respect of the Power

such as thou mayst now become the Temple of God.

Then follows a Prayer, that God would always protect this his Elect one (calling him by his Name) that is sought with the Sign of the Cross.

Then laying his Hand upon the Child's Head, he comes to the Benediction of Salt, of which this is the Form.

I exorcise or conjure thee, O thou Creature of Salt, in the Name of God the Father Almighty ✠, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ ✠, and in the Power of the Holy Ghost ✠, I conjure thee by the living God ✠, By the true God ✠, By the Holy God ✠,

By the God ✠, which created thee for the safeguard of Mankind, and hath ordained that thou shouldst be consecrated by his Servants to the People, entering into the Faith, that in the Name of the Holy Trinity, thou shouldst be made a wholesome Sacrament for the driving away the Enemy. Moreover, we pray thee, O Lord our God, that in sanctifying, thou wouldst sanctifie ✠, this Creature of Salt, and in blessing, thou wouldst bless it ✠, that it may be to all that receive it, a perfect Medicine, remaining in their Bowels, in the Name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who is about to come to judge the Quick and the Dead, and the World by Fire. Amen.

Then

Baptist.

Papist.

Mat. 28. Power by which it is commanded, the extent of it, to

Act. 2. every repenting Sinner; the end of it to be a Pledge of

Act. 2. the washing away of sin, and to give us admission

Rom. 12. into the Church of Christ, to draw near to God in

13. Prayer, with full assurance, having the Heart sprinkled from an evil

Conscience, by Faith in the Blood of Christ, and our Bodies washed with pure Water, even the Water of the Baptismal Covenant, called the washing of Regeneration.

2. That of the Holy Spirit, the Promise of the Spirit being made to all that our Lord doth call, and therewith doth explain

Act. 8. the fourth Principle of Christ's Doctrine, Laying on of Hands, with Prayers, as the Means appointed of God to obtain that Blessing, even the

Gal. 3. Promise of the Spirit through Faith in the Word of Promise.

Mat. 20. 3. The Baptism of Affliction is also opened, that the Sufferings of Christ (called by himself

Then the Priest putting a little of the Holy Salt into the Child's Mouth, saith, Take thou the Salt of Wisdom, be it thy Propitiation unto Eternal Life. Amen.

Now follows another Exorcising of the Devil, wherein he is conjured as before, then the Priest signs the Infant again with his Thumb on the Forehead, saying, And this Sign of the Holy ✠ which we give to his Forehead, thou cursed Devil, never dare thou to violate, by the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then the Priest puts his Hand on the Infants Head, and makes a Prayer in order to his Baptism, then puts part of his Robe upon the Child, and brings him within the Church, saying, Enter thou into the Temple of God, that thou mayst partake with Christ in Eternal Life. Amen.

Then follows the Apostles Creed, and the Pater-Noster, &c. Then follows another Exorcising or Conjuraton of the Devil.

Then the Priest takes Spittle out of his Mouth, and touches therewith the Ears and Nostrils of the Infant; when he toucheth his Ears, he saith, Ephaphra, be opened; and touching his Nostrils, he saith, for a sweet smelling Saviour. Another Conjuraton follows in these Words; Be packing, O Devil,

D

vil,

Baptist.

a Baptism) may not be feared, but patiently endured, according to the Will of God. This is the Sum of the Doctrine of Baptism, taught by the Baptized Churches.

The 5th and 6th Principles of Christ's Doctrine, *1 Cor.* 15. are likewise particularly opened, concerning the Resurrection of the Dead, and chiefly of Christ's being raised Bodily from the Dead, as the most sure pledge that the Dead shall be raised Bodily: and the eternal Judgment, in which every man shall receive according to the deeds done in the Body, whether good, or bad.

To all which the Party to be Baptized, declares his assent, in the best manner he can; shewing also his sense of Sin, and sorrow for it; his purpose to live holily; his Faith in Christ his Saviour the only Son of God, and that it is his desire to be Baptized according to the Will of God. And then the Minister, with the Congregation, or persons present.

Papist.

vil, for the judgment of God is at hand.

Then the Priest asks the Infant, whether he renounces the Devil and all his Works, and all his Pomps? in three questions, and the God-fathers answer distinctly to them. Then the Priest dips his Thumb in holy Oyl, and anoynting the Infant with it on his Breast and betwix his Shoulders in the figure of a ✠, saying, *I anoynt thee with the Oyl of Salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, that thou mayst obtain eternal Life. Amen.*

Then the Priest puts off his Purple Robe, and puts on another of White, and asks three questions out of the Creed; and receives the God-fathers answers, then asks this question, *whether the Infant will be Baptized?* and receiving the God-fathers answers to that, *He pours Water thrice upon the Child's head, and reciteth over it our Saviour's Form of Baptism, doing it each time at the naming of the three Persons.*

And now comes the Chrysm or holy Oymnt, in which dipping his Thumb and anoynting the Infant on the Crown of the Head, in the Figure of a ✠, He thus prayeth; *O God Omnipotent, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast Regenerated thee of Water and the Holy Ghost, and who hast given thee.*

Baptist.

sent, do make Prayer and Supplication to Almighty God, to receive the returning sinner, and to bless and sanctifie his own Ordinance to him. And then the Party to be Baptized, being clothed with convenient Garments for decency, he is had to the

Mark 1. Water, where, calling up-
15. on the Name of the Lord,
John 3. he is dipped into the Ri-
23. ver, or Water, by the Mi-
nister, in the Name of the

Acts 8. Father, and of the Son, and
38. of the Holy Ghost.

Mat. 28. And as in every thing
19. Christians are to give thanks, so this whole Service is concluded with farther prayer, and thanksgiving to this effect, That as it has pleased God to call his Servant, or Servants out of their sinful state, and to bring them into the way of Truth,

so it would please him to enable them to persevere to the end, to his Glory and their own Eternal Comfort.

Nor do we put any Vow, Covenant or Promise upon any Person, save only what the very Nature of the Baptismal Covenant it self does in its own evidence carry along with it, it being our greatest care, neither to add to, nor to diminish ought from the holy Ordinances of Christ, but to keep them as they were delivered at first to the Church of God. *1 Cor.*

11. 2.

D 2

Now

Papist.

thee pardon of all thy Sins, I anoint thee with the Chrysm of Salvation, in the Name of Christ Jesus our Lord, to Eternal Life. Amen.

And next after follows the Pax riba, and wiping of his Thumb and the anointed Head, he takes a white linnen Cloath, and putting it on the Child's Head useth this Form, Take the white Garment, which thou mayst carry unsported before the Tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayst have Eternal Life. Amen.

And lastly, he puts a lighted Candle into the Child's, or God-fathers hand, and saith, Receive the burning Lamp, and keep thy Baptism blameless; keep God's Commandments, that when the Lord shall come to the Wedding, thou mayst meet him, &c. concluding all with, *Go in peace, and the Lord be with thee.*

There are more Conjurations and Ceremonies added, &c. But let these suffice at present.

Now Brethren, as it is an Observation, that White being compared with Black doth seem more white; so the true Baptism according to the Scripture (and graciously restored in the practick part among you) being thus compared with the supposed Baptism of the present Roman Church, must needs seem more lovely, and the wretchedness of their devised Fables become more manifest to all men. Let us now see whether they have been more happy in the other great Ordinance, *The Holy Table of the Lord.*

Baptist.

The manner of the Baptized Churches in Celebrating the Holy Table of the Lord.

THE Congregation being met together, and having spent part of the day in Preaching, and Prayer, commonly towards the Evening, and ordinarily upon the Lords Day, the Table is decently prepared, and the Bread and Wine set upon it also in decent manner.

The Messenger or Elder does excite the People to due Humility, and Reverence in their approaching to the Holy Table of the Lord, shewing the occasion and Authority by, and upon which it was Instituted for.

Papist.

The manner of the Celebration of the Bread and Cup in the Mass, taken from Dr. Willitt in his Synopsis Papismi.

TO say nothing here of the Roman Church, denying to give the Cup to the People, the Priests only drinking of it; nor of the Priest only partaking of the Bread and Cup in divers of their Masses, the People only looking on: neither of their Adoration of the Elements of Bread and Wine in these words, *I Worship thee, I Glorifie thee, I Praise thee.* Nor yet of that Passage in the Communion of the Mass, *Let us Worship the Sign of the Cross*, which are things too large to be discoursed in a Letter; It shall suffice to set down the manner of their Celebration.

1. All is done in an unknown Tongue, which the People understand not.

2. The

Baptist.

for a perpetual Ministry in the Church of God. The great Use and Mystical signification of it, as Christ is evidently set forth in his Crucifixion, or bitter Death upon the Cross, as the alone Sacrifice, once offered for the Sins of Men, and that there is no more Offering for Sin, but the Offering of Christ once for all.

Then he putteth them in mind of the qualifications, necessary on their part to the due Reception of that Divine Ordinance, without which they will come together for the worse, and not for the better.

Mat. 26. Then taking the Bread into his hands, he calleth upon God in the Mediation of Jesus Christ, for a Blessing upon the Bread, that it may be Sanctified for that holy use for which it was ordained by Christ, and that by Faith, all that are to partake of that Bread, thereby may feed upon the Body of Christ, which is the true Bread, and by him live for ever.

1 Cor. 11. 23, 24.

John 6. 35.

Then

Papist.

2. The *Benedicamus Domino*, is sung ten times together, and *Te Missa est* is sung thirteen times, with long and tedious Notes.

3. The Priest is to say divers Prayers privately to himself.

4. He is taught by the Rubrick to make thirty several Crosses upon the Bread, the Cup, the Altar, and his forehead.

5. Their Gestures are as followeth.

The Priest boweth his Body, and lifting up himself, kisseth the Altar on the right side; then he boweth again, and looketh toward the Host [that is the Bread] he joyneth his hands, wipeth his fingers, listeth up the Host, then he listeth up his eyes, and boweth himself, and listeth up his eyes again, he boweth again, and listeth up the Host above his forehead; then he uncovereth the Cup, and holdeth it between his hands, keeping his thumb and his finger together.

Then he boweth and listeth up the Cup a little, then to his Breast, or above his Head. He setteth it down again and wipeth his fingers; then he spreadeth his Arms a-cross. He boweth his Body, rising up, he kisseth the Altar on the right side. He smiteth his Breast; uncovering the Cup, he makes five Crosses with

this

Baptist.

Then he breaketh the Bread, pronouncing the words of Christ, *This is my Body, &c.* willeth the

1 Cor. 11. People to receive it in remembrance of Christ, and as shewing forth the Death of Christ till he come the second time without sin to Salvation.

In like manner he taketh the Cup, after the Bread, and with Prayer suitable to that great Mystery, it being sanctified, he poureth out of the Wine, remembering the words of Christ, *This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, &c.* partakes of it himself (as he did also of the Bread) and gives it to the Deacons to Communicate to all the Congregation, and they all drink of it.

1 Cor. Then some word of Exhortation is given to the People under the consideration of the unspeakable Mercy of God in the gift of his Son to dye for us, that we might live Eternally with him: all is concluded with Prayers to the Lord for all his Blessings, in the most joyful manner that the Minister is able to express them, and then usually something is given to the Poor, as every mans heart maketh him willing, being not constrained thereunto, but as the love of Christ constraineth him.

Papist.

the Host beyond the Cup, twice, on each side under the Cup and before it.

Then he layeth his hands upon the Altar, the Deacon reaching him the Paten, he putteth it to his right eye, then to his left, he maketh a Cross beyond his head with it, he kisseth it and layeth it down.

Then he breaketh the Host in three, holding two pieces in his left hand and one in his right over the Cup, which with a Cross he letteth fall into it.

Then he kisseth the Corporas: the Deacon taketh the Pax from the Priest, giveth it to the sub-Deacon and he to the Quire. Then humbling himself, he first taketh the Body, and then the Blood, so he goeth to the right horn of the Altar, the sub-Deacon poureth in Wine, and the Priest rinseth the Cup, and washeth his hands turning himself to the People.

Cometh again to the Altar, and turneth to the People the second time.

Then bowing his body, and closing his hands, he prayeth to himself: he riseth again, making the sign of the Cross, and bowing again, goeth from the Altar.

Thus

Thus, Brethren, I have given you a brief account of the Ceremonious Observations of those who would be thought the truest Church on Earth, though they have assuredly changed the Ordinances of our Lord more than any sort of Christians; I have also set before you the purity and simplicity (and yet the great utility) of these two great Ordinances, that you may be more inwardly affected with them, but especially with him whom they so excellently represent, for to this end are they ordained *to see forth Christ and him Crucified.*

Of all the difficulties with which you are likely to be tried in respect of your Religious Profession, *that Question which concerns the Judge of these and other Controversies in Religion,* is like to be the most dangerous, because you have been little exercised in it; as also because many persons of great Eminency and Authority are deeply radicated and very expert in an opinion diametrically opposite to yours, for they say, *that the living voice of the Church, assembled in a General Council of her Bishops and Doctors, is the only infallible Judge to determine all Controversies in matters of Faith and Religion.*

On the other side, We have been taught, and have constantly believed that it is all Christians Duty to rely chiefly, and before all things, upon the Authority and sufficiency of the voice of God himself, as he speaks in the Holy Scriptures, as the best, and only infallible Decider of all Questions that shall arise, (especially in the Christian Church, and since the holy Scriptures were written and received) about matters of Faith and Religion.

And indeed it seems very strange that any man should think there is a better Judge than God himself, of what is true, and what is otherwise, in matters of Religion; and to be sure he speaks to us with the greatest Certainty, and Authority, by the holy Pen-men of the Scriptures. And it is as strange that the Church, who must derive all her Light and Authority from God and his Word, should appeal men to her self rather than to him: methinks they should say to us (as *Cassian's* Substitute said to *St. Paul*) Hast thou Appealed to God, as he speaks in his Scriptures? to God and his Scriptures shalt thou go. And especially when this is the question, What sort of Christians are the true Church of Christ? For it seems then the most unreasonable thing in the World, that any Party contending for this Title [The Church] should be her own Judge; and seeing the Church cannot by merely avouching (upon her own Testimony only) that she is the Church, make any proof or demonstration that she is so, it remains then, that we must have some Infallible Rule by which to find the Church. And now it

God

God himself does not reveal to us who is his Church, we shall never find her; nor does he reveal this, but by the Testimonies of the Scripture, there must we find the Church of God, or no where. For none but *Enthusiasts* pretend to any other Revelation in this Case; and to speak falsely, I doubt the Papists are more than a little *Enthusiastical*; for rather than let God's Word decide this Question about the Church, they will fly to *Miracles*, as if a false Prophet may not show a Sign, or a Wonder, yet, and that Sign and Wonder come to pass too, and yet the thing he brings it to prove, be nothing but a lye: see *Deut. 15*. Surely he that shall pretend to work a Miracle or Wonder in these days, to prove such, or such a People to be the Church, I should the more suspect both him and his Church; because we have a sure Word of Prophecy confirmed by Miracles already, which Word, doth as fully set forth the Church, as it sets forth any thing; inasmuch as men may as well call for Miracles to prove there is a God, and that this God is true, as to call for Miracles to prove the true Church.

Indeed the Church of Christ being once found, then all wise and modest men will readily lend an Ear to her in all things, and especially when she undertakes to expound the dark or mysterious points of our Religion, or offers her Judgment in things doubtful, [for as for the common point of the Christian Faith, he that is a wise and good Man, and no ways biased by Interest, may perhaps know these things, as well as the Church, or at least, such as call themselves Church-men.] But to be bound to adhere to any Church in these days, as to a people which cannot possibly be mistaken in any matters of Faith, or Religion, seems to be an Attribute too high for any Society of sinful men, [and there is none that loveth and smeth not.] For seeing God hath not told us any such thing, That the Church cannot Err or be Mistaken, it ought not to be spoken: and if it be only proper to the Almighty to say *He cannot lie*; it must not be said of the Church, that She cannot lye, lest he reprove us, and we be found Lyars. *Rom. 3. 4. Let God be true, and every Man a liar*, for thus it is written; and again, *Hos. 11. 12. Ephraim compasseth me about with Lyes, and the House of Israel with Deceit*. This was the Case of the ten Tribes: and though Judah be justified as to these Impieties, yet *Chap. 12. 2. God tells them he had a Controversie with them also*. Certain it is that famous Churches have erred in matters of Faith, and others were as liable to err as they, no Church being herein privileged above another, for any thing that God has said in his Word, but he every where exhorts his People to beware of Sin, Error, and

Apoflacy,

Apoflacy, and commands every one that hath Ears, to hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches: but he does not say to any of them that they cannot Err, therefore we are not to hear such a story of any Church. *Mat. 16. 18.* Is a gracious Promise indeed, That the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church of Christ, as founded upon himself, in the true Faith of St. Peter. But this Promise belongs to all true Churches equally, yet no man ever durst affirm from hence, That no true Church can possibly err. And St. Peter, who understood this Promise, never told any Church of his Planting, that they could not Err; but rather tells them they may err, so as to fall from their steadfastness, and be led away with the error of the Wicked. Indeed if any Church could be assigned here on Earth that cannot err, or be deceived in matters of Faith, it were the easiest thing in the World to find the Truth, having once found the Church; for we should have no need to know any thing but what that Church speaks, and to receive her Determinations as God's Oracles: but then I consider again that we should perhaps have great inconvenience also. For, if all the Decrees made by General Councils be obliging to us, and were bound up together, we should never be able to read them, nor I doubt, to understand them; it will then be our best, at the long-run, to take Sanctuary at the Word of God, as our Guide, and Superiour to the Church.

But I consider farther, that no man makes any particular Church this Guide, but does refer us to the Universal Church, as assembled in a General Council. Surely either this is to make as many Universal Churches at least as there has been Ages since Christ was upon the Earth; or if all make but one Universal Church, the direction given to follow her Sentence, is scarce practicable; for how long will it be before a man can be assured, what was held, and what was rejected by the Church in all Ages? indeed there are Men born of great confidence, who will tell us that the Catholick, or Universal Church hath always held such Doctrines, and such Traditions as are unwritten, &c.

Now it highly concerns all Christians, as much as in them lieth, to make sure work with such bold Talkers, about the truth of the things which they affirm, especially about the truth of the Antiquity of these things, that is, that they appear by some Divine Record to have been delivered to the first Churches, by Men approved of God, to be the deliverers of Divine Institutes; and if they fail here, it will be ill venturing to follow them in their after-enquiries. And there is the highest Reason in the World to stand as strongly as possible for the first Age;

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for

for such pure and undoubted Antiquity is necessary in our Case, from the tenour of our Blessed Saviour's Argumentation against the *Jews*, in opposition to a Tradition, or *Mosaic* Precept in the Case of Divorce, *Mat. 19. 8.* From the beginning it was not so. For seeing the Apostles did faithfully deliver the whole Council of God to the first Churches, condemning all that shall teach otherwise than they had taught the the Doctrine of Godliness; or that should not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is therefore necessary to bring all Doctrine and Practices in the Christian Church to the Test of the most pure and Primitive Antiquity; for that Church which hath that Argument fairly on her side, cannot fail of all other Arguments, which can be any way necessary for her Justification; for indeed this first Argument does infer all the rest, and they that have not this, have none of the other; which thing being well considered, look back upon your Principles (O ye Baptized Christians) and upon what hath been said for them, even by your Adversaries, and take comfort; for whoever boasts of the best Antiquity, it is certain that you only have it.

For what is the most ancient Record? Doubtless the Holy Scripture; and if so, let the question be about Christ and his Church, there must we find them both, or no where. If any Man like not this Doctrine; let him shew me, if he can, these lovely Objects without being beholden to the Scripture. Some I have known to attempt this, but with lamentable success, being soon driven to a shameful silence; and indeed the whole World must depart into utter silence as touching this great Mystery, Christ and his Church, unless the Word of God, (as it is delivered in the Holy Scriptures) through Faith, makes us wise in these great Concernments of Salvation, *2 Tim. 3. 14.*

Let men alledge all the Authors in the World, and all the Tradition that ever was, if the Holy Scriptures must not be their own Evidence, and so capable to confirm our Belief of them; then for the same, or rather more forcible Reasons, then any Man can bring against the Scriptures, all Authors and all Traditions shall be dumb and useless as to the production of the least *iota* of Divine Faith; so that the Pillars at the long-run (must if they know how) shew us their Church without Scripture, or any Authors, and without Tradition also, as I have formerly written unto you, being provoked therunto by seven Queries sent by a Learned Papist, who in his last to me, does undertake to deliver himself from this difficulty after this manner; *We may (saith he) prove the Church by the Holy Scripture, and the Scripture by the Church, and this*

by a Regressus Demonstrativus, without a vicious Circle, because we suppose them both sufficiently proved, and prudently accepted for such, by all the Motives of Credibility, as Miracles, Holiness, &c. by which Christ proved himself and his New Gospel. But as for the Sense of the Scripture, I have more than sufficiently demonstrated, that the Scripture it self cannot bear witness for it, but that this must be had from a Living Judge, viz. the Church, the Infallible Interpreter of Gods Word.

To this I answer briefly: That is a vicious Circle, out of which no man can lawfully deliver himself, but must run in a Round without end; and truly such is this Circular Argumentation of *thy* Adversary, he will prove his Church by the Scripture. 2. He will prove the Scripture to be true by his Church, and he will prove his Church true by the Scripture, before the Scripture be proved true; and he will prove the Scripture to be true, after it hath proved his Church true. This Meander is no way to be avoided that I can see, but by suffering either the Scripture, or the Church to be its own Evidence, for his *Demonstrative Regressus* makes his Case worse; for by it, they be both sufficiently proved, before either of them be proved, and both prudently accepted, before either of them be accepted; and which is most strange of all the rest, these things are all done before the Scripture hath any sense known; for of this he is the most of all confident, *that the Sense of the Scripture must be had from a living Judge, viz. the Church, the Infallible Interpreter of Gods Word.* So that this is the Conclusion of the whole Matter: The Scripture without Sense must prove the Roman Church, and the Roman Church must then give the Sense of that Scripture, which had no Sense before, when it proved Her to be the Church; here is indeed a *Regressus*, but no such thing as a *Demonstrativus*.

Metinks wise men should consider that the Holy Scripture is its own Interpreter in a great, if not the greatest part of it, the New Testament being the best Interpreter of the Old Testament, and of it self also in many places: for Example; It tells us in one place, that the *Heavens must receive Christ* from the time of his Ascension, *till the times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord. Act. 3. 21.* And hence we hold, that no Christian must say that the real Body of Christ, which ascended to Heaven, is upon the Earth, till he shall be sent the second time, [for God shall send Jesus, saith St. Peter] because the Scripture tells us in another place, That if Jesus were on Earth, he should not be a Priest, Heb. 8. 4.

It is therefore as plain as plain can be, that the Papists make void the Priesthood of Christ, and contradict St. Peter himself, when they tell the World that the real Body of Christ which ascended into Heaven, is now really, carnally, corporally present upon the Earth, that is, upon their Altars, and in the Hands and Mouths of their Priests and People, as often as they celebrate Mass, and consequently he is so far from being received into Heaven till the time of his second coming, that he is, according to their own Opinion, received bodily upon Earth ten thousand times, and in ten thousand places, to his being once received bodily into Heaven. Sure their Opinion is directly against the Scripture, as sure as their *Transubstantiation* is directly against the best Sense, and the best Reason, with which Almighty God hath endowed the best of Men, as has been clearly evidenced by many learned Discourses; among which, I would commend to your Perusal, one lately published, under the Title of *A Discourse against Transubstantiation*: Printed this Year, and sold by Mr. Ashner at the Three Pigeons against the Royal Exchange, Price Six Pence.

My Learned Adversary, and indeed the *Papists generally*, do urge us vehemently after this manner, admitting that the Church is to follow the Rule of God's revealed Word in all her Definitions; yet they hold it extremely irrational, that all that can read it, should be his own Interpreter of it, for so, say they, He will be his own Judge. And as in a Nation where no Judge of the Law is appointed, there can be no Justice, but every man will be his own Judge; so likewise, unless there be a Supreme Judge in Matters of Faith, to wit, the Church, from whom no Appeal may be allowed, there can be no end of Controversies, &c. This Objection is considerable: to which I say,

1. What my Adversary means by God's revealed Word, I do not very well understand, but I doubt he extends that Term farther than the Holy Scripture, else I am sure enough, the Church of Rome has no revealed Word of God to follow in very many of her Observations: but to let this pass at present, I answer to the Objection thus;

2. It seems to be built upon many dangerous Suppositions, such as these, That we ought to rest upon the Sentence of a Priest (for we must hear the Church out of his Mouth) for the state of our Soul, as on the Sentence of a Judge in a Civil Court for a matter of Debt, &c. and that we are no more bound to search the Scriptures for Eternal Life, than to search the Statute-Book for our Temporal Life [nay, here I do them no wrong, for they will permit us to read the Statute-Book, but they forbid

forbid us to read the Holy Scripture.] It supposes the Priest cannot deceive us; when the Prophet tells us, that though the Priests Lips should preserve Knowledge, and that we should seek the Law at his Mouth, yet they had caused many to stumble at the Law, because they had been partial in the Law, Mat. 2. 8. It supposes, whoever falls under the Sentence of the Priest, is as surely damned, as he is cast or hanged, that falls under the Sentence of a Judge in Law. [Which may be false, for the Priests did jointly sentence our Blessed Saviour, saying, We have a Law, and by our Law he ought to die. It's true, whatsoever the Church doth bind on Earth, is bound in Heaven; but then nothing is bound on Earth, unless she judge righteously; for it is written, that the Cause causeless shall not come, Prov. 26. 2. and seeing she may be deceived, (at least by false Witnesses) She may condemn the Innocent, though She had no mind to do so, which shews She is not infallible, whatever men talk to the contrary.] I do not like this Opinion, therefore because it leaves not Liberty for those whom the Church condemns, to appeal so much as to Almighty God, who knows the Hearts of all men, whilst the Church knows them not. But I answer to the Objection, by saying,

1. There is a Judgment Authoritative; this indeed must be referred to the Church, and no wise Man ever thought otherwise, and the Members of the Church must be content to abide the Sentence of the Church, though they be innocent, till God clears their Innocency; but all this while we suppose the Church we speak of, to be a true Church, and that She judges according to Evidence; and yet because She knows not all Secrets, nor all things contained in the Scriptures, we also suppose She may possibly mistake, though never so Honest. But,

2. There is a Judgment of Knowledge or Discretion, by which Men receive the Truth of the Gospel, as understanding, and so believing it to be so; and by the same Judgment he refuses what is false, as understanding it to be so; and till his Understanding be well informed, or rationally satisfied by convincing Evidence, he cannot, if he have the Understanding and Spirit of a Man, do either the one or the other. And hence it is, that Salvation, (and consequently the means to obtain it) are offered to men in the manner of choice, *John. 24. 15. Choose then this day whom you will serve. Heb. 11. 25: Moses chose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a season.* And so far as Men are not called at the same moment, but some

Some receive the Truth in their Youth, others in their middle Age, some not till Old Age; all the Liberty which we contend for, is, that Men may have the free use of the Means, by which they may know the Truth, and be allowed to understand it before they be admitted to Sacred things, that they may not only be able to give a Reason of the Hope that is in them, but also be able to do (as they are also exhorted) *Prove every man his own Work, that he may have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another,* Gal. 6. 4, 5. Thus much in answer to this Objection.

There is no Man living; that would more gladly (than my self) give to the Church of God, all that Honour and Obedience which God hath allowed Her; but to say, *She cannot err,* is to make Her more like God than She is. I think all that can be safely affirmed, is, That She shall not fall so, as utterly to cease from being, but that God will have a Church in the World, to be his Witnesses to the end of the World, though the Apostacy be never so great, or seemingly universal. And as it pleased God to foreflew the great Apostacies, which should be found among the Christian Nations: So he was graciously pleased to intermix some words of comfort, that when it should fall out, that the Spouse of Christ should be like the *Dove in the secret places of the Straws,* Cant. 2. 14. or thrust into Prisons, and out of sight, which might cause the Faithful even to think there was no Church remaining (like that of the Prophet, who desired rather to die than to live, because he thought the Faithful had utterly failed, and himself left alone) I say, that then they should remember that *the Gates of Hell should not prevail against the Church,* and therefore God hath always had a Church, however the might be obscured.

Finally, Brethren, my Hearts desire and Prayer to God for you, is, that you may be of one Mind and Judgment in all the Will of God, and especially in these Sacred Principles before mentioned, and in the Constitution of your Ministry, in respect of the *Threefold Order* of Ministers, under which the best Churches were undoubtedly governed, *viz. Messengers, Elders, and Deacons.* And I do the rather advise to this, because some have been pleased to publish in Print, that there are only two Offices remaining in the Church of Christ, *viz. Elders and Deacons;* This *Presbyterian Principle,* will, I fear, undo such as receive it. They boldly tell us, that the Office of *Ministry* and *Tauis* was *Temporary,* as if they had none to succeed them. What I have formerly written in the defence of the first of these Offices, is extant among you, and as yet unanswered, and to that I refer you. Our

Our Divisions have been, and will be, if continued, very prejudicial to the Truth it self; and our Adversaries know how to make use of them against us, and our Holy Profession, though they cannot be ignorant of the great Divisions which were in the Churches in the Apostles Days, nor should they be ignorant of their own; and to the end they may see they are no more happy in that matter than their Neighbours, let them consider what *Bernard* hath written of them, as he is quoted by the Learned, in *Cont. Rom.* 33. His Words are to this effect.

“From whom shall the Church hide her self? All are Friends, and all are Enemies; all are Kinsfolks, and all are Adversaries; all are Household Servants, and there is none at peace; all are Neighbours, and all seek but their own Profit. They are Ministers of Christ, and serve Anti-Christ; they do walk in the Honour of the Goodness of the Lord, unto whom they do no Honour. Thereby cometh that Beauty of the Harlot, which thou seest daily in their Apparel, as the Players of Comedies. As in the Apparel of a King, thereby thou seest the Gold in the Bridles, Saddles and Spurs. Thereby are the Tables beautified with Meats and Vessels: Thereby cometh Drunkenness and Gluttony: Thereby proceedeth the Harp and the Viol: Thereby are the Presses running over, and the Garners full, answering the one to the other: Thereby are the Boxes full of Oylment and sweet Savour: Thereby are the Purfes filled. Therefore would they be, and are the Princes of the Churches. The Provosts, Deans, Arch-Deacons, Bishops, Arch-Bishops, and these things come not lawfully, but because they walk in the business of Darknes.

“Behold now in Peace my bitterness is most bitter, It hath been before bitter in the Death of Martyrs, afterwards more bitter in Controversie with Hereticks; now it is most bitter in the manners of those of our own House. We can neither chase them away, they are so mighty, and multiplied without Number; the Sores and Plagues of the Church are entred into the inward parts, and are incurable, and therefore is her Bitterness most bitter.

And in Psal. 90. 6, 11. “O Lord Jesus, thou hast multiplied the People, but not increased their Joy; all the Christians almost, do seek their own Profit, they have removed the Offices to shameful Gain, and into Works of Darknes, and the Health of Souls is not searched for, but the Pleasure of Vices: Therefore are they thorn: Therefore do they frequent Churches, and sing Psalms. They

Hear the Church.

“ They contend most impudently daily by Process, for Bishopricks, Arch-Bishopricks, &c. There remaineth nothing, but that the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, be revealed.

And on the Conversion of St. Paul. “ Alas, O Lord God, for these are the first which do persecute thee, whom we do see to love the highest Places in thy Church, and do hold the Principality, and by Power and strength have taken the Arches of *Sion*, and afterward freely have set all the City on fire. Their Conversation is miserable, the Subversion of thy People is pitiful. *And speaking to the Pope, he saith,* “ This Mortal Corruption hath not begun in thy days, but I pray God it may end in thy time. In the mean time thou art apparelled and decked up very gorgeously. If I durst speak, thy Seat is rather a Pack of Devils than of Sheep. Did St. *Peter* do so? Did St. *Paul* mock after that sort? Behold the murmuring and complaint of all Churches, they do cry out that they are cut in pieces, and dismembered. There are very few, or almost none, that do not fear the streak or Wound. *Thus saith Bernard.*

Let not then the Papists contemn or despise us, because of some Defects, in respect of Unity, neither let us despise them, because of the Discords which have been, or are among them. Let us beware of the cause of these Calamities, and strive only for the true Form, and due Power of Godliness, then shall the Spirit of Hatred, which hath inserted it self amongst Christians, be rooted out; and then shall that great Badge of Christianity, *unfeigned Love*, (even the Love of God, shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost) possess the Room of all our bitter Contentions. That thus it may be, is the Prayer of

Your Loving Brother,

*Written in the
Year 1685.*

Thomas Grantham.

Post.

Post-Script.

Concerning the Original Manuscripts of
the Holy Scriptures.

BRETHREN,

Because our Learned Adversaries are wont to amuse weak Christians, by telling them they knew not the Originals, &c. I thought fit to transcribe part of what I have formerly printed in Answer to this specious Objection; In the Introduction of my Book of Primitive Christianity, how vain and pernicious this Talk is about the Original, will appear, when you consider, That no man living ever saw the very Papers in which the Prophets and Apostles did write the first Draughts of the Holy Scriptures, and therefore none have the Originals, but only Copies of Scripture. And let not this offend any Man: for, It seems to have been the best for all Christians, that after many Copies are taken and spread in many Nations, these first Draughts should not continue long; for had any now but so much Confidence, as to say they have these very first Sheets of Paper to show, how might they trouble the whole World with such a Report? and how might they abuse the World, and all the Churches in the World at pleasure? as by adding or taking away, and who should correct the Original?

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Suppose the Roman Church had those Manuscripts in their Hands, what Mist; might they cast upon the Nations, and who could come to the sight of them to discover any such abuse? and the same may be said of any other potent Party.

But now the Originals being no where to be found, but yet a multitude of Copies extant, and the same translated by multitudes of Men into several Languages; by this means all are forced to be more peaceable than perhaps they are willing to be, since they have only Copies of the Divine Oracles, and others have Copies as well as they, so that they can none of them pretend to have ever seen the Original, and therefore can they less quarrel about their Copies. Thus hath God's Wisdom disposed herein, better for his Church than She could have thought or desired.

And it is worth observation, that scarce any of the Churches to whom St. Paul wrote, had the Original sent to them, (except the Galatians) but had only certain Copies written by divers Hands. For Instance, The Epistle to the Hebrews was written by Timothy, as 'tis said in the Post-Script. The Epistle to the Romans was written by Tertius. Four Persons wrote the first Epistle to the Corinthians, Post-Script. Two Brethren wrote the Second Epistle, Post-Script. Tichicus and Onesimus wrote that to Colossus. All these Churches had only Copies, and for ought appears, never saw the Originals.

And what if some of these Copies did accidentally vary some Word or Title, are the Sacred Epistles ever the worse, so long as the Holy Doctrine therein contained, was not injured? Can we think that when the Holy Apostles preached, that they had still the very self-same Phrases? This were idle to imagine, and yet they had the self-same Gospel to preach in every Place.

Speak not this, as if I approved of altering the Holy Writings; no, not in the least word; yet if accidentally, in Transcribing.

scribing, or Printing, there should be some such Failure, I do not think that by and by that Copy were to be rejected, or the Authority of the Scriptures therefore to be called in question, that men might set up themselves above it. Some under pretence of being the Church, and others pretending the Spirit, whilst they both reject the Church and the Spirit, as held forth in, and speaking by the Holy Scriptures. A plain Instance of this, we have in the Papists, and most Pædo-Baptists, who whilst they seem to admire General Councils, Fathers, &c. they regard not the Decrees of the best Councils and Fathers, which were held by the Apostles and Elders, and Brethren at Jerusalem, who among other things, forbid the eating of things strangled, and Blood, which the Church observed for several hundred of years after [for indeed they were delivered to the Churches to be kept, not to be broken, Acts 16. 1, 2.] and yet without all Conscience of these Decrees, they feed upon Blood, &c. And on the other side, how rigidly do they impose the Decrees of the Trent Councils, in the Case of Transubstantiation (though never heard of before it was there invented) inasmuch as they have punished with the cruelest Death, such as in Conscience could not subscribe unto it. God give them a better Understanding, and more Moderation for the future.

But ye, Brethren, as you have received these Holy Decrees among the rest of the Heavenly Rules left unto us by the most Ancient Fathers, even the Apostles of our Lord, so walk in them, and keep the Ordinances as they were delivered by them, who received them of the Lord. Now the Lord increase our Faith, that we may be able to stand fast in the Truth, and to overcome all Difficulties. So prays your Brother,

Thomas Grantham.

Hear the Church, &c.
OR, AN
E P I T O M E
OF THE CHIEF
CONTROVERSIES
BETWEEN THE
P A P I S T S,
AND THE
Baptized Believers.

By THOMAS GRANTHAM.

Let that therefore abide in you which you have heard from the Beginning: if that which ye have heard from the Beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father, and this is the Promise which he hath Promised us, even Eternal Life, 1 John.

Unto the perfect Words of the New-Testament nothing may be added, and from which nothing may be taken away, by him that will lead a Life agreeable to the Gospel. *Apollinar. l. 5. c. 14.*

L. O. N. D. O N, Printed in the Year, 1687.

T H E
E P I S T L E
T O T H E
R E A D E R .

Christian Friend,

IT is now about six and twenty years since it pleased a Learned Papist to send seven Queries to the People commonly called Anabaptists, in the County of Lincoln, about which many Papers were exchanged, and in the Year 1662, some part of them were Printed under the Title of the Baptist against the Papist, or the Scripture and Rome in Contention about the Supreme Seat of Judgment in Controversies of Religion. To which the Querist never replied in Print, but only sent me a few Notes in Manuscript, which seven Queries, with my seven Anti-queries I shall annex to this Epistle.

The Truth is, I did then, and do still look upon this sort of Christian-Adversaries (so I call them) to be the most subtil, as well as coherent with their Principles, keeping close to their Arguments, and using all very much the same Mediums: and were the Truth with them (as in many things I am satisfied it is not) this very thing would be their high Commendation.

Buts

The Epistle to the Reader.

But missing the Heavenly Mark (*more is the pity*) they must needs be the more dangerous, wherein they stand opposed to the Truth, of which being very sensible. I cannot, as I love plain Truth, and the Souls of all Men, but endeavour as much as in me is, after a Christian sort to undeceive (if it may be) some of them, and to prevent others from being deceived by them.

I speak not this as fearing them, but as truly loving them, as they bear the name of Christians, and doubtless are as zealous in their way as any, tho I do verily believe they are under the greatest mistakes of any that profess the Christian Religion, except professed Enthusiasts.

That I treat them in Love is no new thing, let my Words written more than twenty years since witness, now in my Epistle to the Reader thus you find them. Not that I envy those of the Papal Church, or desire them any evil; Not that I desire they should be exposed to a Suffering Condition for matters of Religion, or that they should be denied any liberty in that Respect which I desire my self, nor for any other prejudice (God knoweth) do I publish this small Treatise, &c.

And what I said then, I say now, being verily persuaded by the Scripture, and all good Principles which I could ever meet with, that they and all men [living soberly and quietly under the Government] ought to have at least a friendly connivance under our differing sentiments from the established Form or Order of Worship, &c. But I am no Dictator, I must leave these things to the pleasure of God, and the prudence of our Governors, only this is my Determination, in Christ's strength to live and die faithful to what I know of the ways of Truth, and to my own Conscience. Praying constantly for the happiness of my Prince, and all his peaceable Subjects.

Tho. Grantham.

Hear the Church:

The Third PART.

CONTAINING AN

EPITOME

OF THE

Controversies depending between those who are commonly called PAPISTS, and those commonly called ANA-BAPTISTS: Occasioned by Seven Queries propounded by a Learned PAPIST.

LET the Christian Reader know, that it is no idle Conceit of the Parts of the Author, above his Brethren, nor yet above his Adversaries (many of whom are undoubtedly Men of very rare Parts and Accomplishments) which moveth him thus to appear, and to call forth all the Strength of *Reme* in Argument to defend their Church and Religion against the poor *Baptized Churches* in this Nation: But it is only the *Clear Evidence of Truth*, on their side, as contained in the holy Oracles of God, which gives Boldness to this great Undertaking. Which in all due Humility, Christian Love, and yet

with holy Confidence, is thus attempted, for a fair Trial of the Case or Cases depending between the Parties above mentioned. In the Name of God therefore let us proceed to the Particulars of the Seven *Queries* sent to the *Baptists* by a *Learned Papist*, which indeed contains the Sum of the Controversies between the said Parties.

Papist Query 1.

Whether we are to resolve all Differences in point of Religion, only out of the Written Word of God?

What Controverſie in point of Religion can you resolve without the Written Word of God? And whether the written Word of God

be a perfect Rule for Matters of Religion?

The first Part of this *Anti-query* concludes in the Negative; the latter Part in the Affirmative, and affords (as I think) this undeniable Argument,

That which is the only perfect Rule to all Christians in the greatest Matters of Religion, and that without which neither Christ, the Church, nor Christian Religion can be known, is the only infallible Rule by which all Controversies in point of Religion, are to be resolved.

But the Holy Scriptures are the only perfect Rule to all Christians in the greatest Matters of Religion; and that without which neither Christ, the Church, nor Christian Religion can be known.

Ergo, The Holy Scriptures are the only infallible Rule by which all Controversies in point of Religion among Christians, are to be resolved.

Papist Query 2.

How know you precisely what is the true Word of God?

Whether some Book must not of necessity speak for it self [or be received for God's Word upon its own Evidence?] and whether the Holy Scriptures do not best deserve that privilege? And whether it be not too great presumption to say, There are no Holy Books, but those which you and we have received for such, seeing those which we have, tell us there were other Holy Writings, which never yet came to our Hands, nor to yours?

Baptist Anti-query 1.

What Controverſie in point of Religion can you resolve without the Written Word of God? And whether the written Word of God

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Forasmuch

Forasmuch as no Society of Christians in these days can bear witness of the truth of any thing upon their own knowledge, sight, or hearing (as the Apostles did, 1 John 1. 2 Pet. 1. 16.) for scarce so much as one hundred years, and this their Testimony, also, being but of human Authority, it remaineth of necessity, that some Books of Record must be received upon the Authority of the Author, in whose Name they speak, and the Divine Evidence of the Matter contained in them; and hence we argue, the Sufficiency of the Scriptures own Authority, to command our reception of them, speaking to us in the Name of God, and carrying in themselves Divine Evidences in respect of the matters therein contained.

Papist Query 3.

How know you that your Copies and Translations of the Bible, are the true Word of God, since the Original Writings are not come to your Hands?

Baptist Anti-query 3.

What Copies and Translations of the Scriptures have you that are more true than ours? And where are the Original Manuscripts of the Prophets and Apostles?

Seeing it was not the Pleasure of the Divine Wisdom, to preserve, and present to all Nations, the very first Pieces of Paper in which the Divine Oracles were written; but rather to preserve many Copies, and cause them to be spread throughout the World. And seeing no sort of Christians dare pretend to have Translated any of these Copies by an infallible Pen, but only according to the best Skill they have acquired or learned in the Original Tongues; It would better become all Learned Christians to bend their Minds to rectifie (what they may) any Imperfection or Mistake that may be in any of the Translations, rather than by such *Queries* as this, to open a Gap to Unbelief and Irreligion.

And though much might be said (by a capricious Person) against the English Translation of the *Papists*, yet to prevent vain Jangling, we refuse not to be tried in the Cases depending in these *Queries* and *Anti-queries*, either by their Translation of the Bible, or by that which is allowed by Authority? And seeing no *Papist* is able to produce the prime Originals, let them beware how they quarrel with our Copies, lest some quarrel with theirs: and so instead of Edification, they bring forth nothing but vain Contention: and show themselves ungrateful to God, and mischievous to men. For what man of any Modesty would upbraid another, because he never saw the Original Writings, when neither himself, nor any man living ever saw them, nor is ever like to see them?

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Papist Query 4.

Where we differ about the Sense of the Word, by whom must we be tried? The dead Letter cannot explain itself.

When we differ about the true Church, or the Meaning of Authors [be they Fathers, or Councils] by whom must we be tried? These cannot speak for themselves, more than the Scriptures: And whether, the Scriptures being compared together, do not explain themselves? Also, whether this be not an opprobrious, and ignominious Speech, for you to call the Scripture a *dead Letter*? And whether the true Lovers of the Scriptures, ever vouchsafed them such ill, and indeed improper Language?

Of all the Seven Queries, this is the most difficult; see what we have said to this Difficulty in our precedent Epistle. Let the Papists prove themselves to be the true Church, and the Contention about the Power of the Church to decide Differences which may arise about the Meaning of the Scriptures, will with more ease be brought to a period. In the mean time, as we must every one give an account of our selves to God, so is it the Duty of every Christian to labour to understand the Scriptures, Mat. 24. 15. Pro. 22. 20, 21.

Papist Query 5:

What clear Text have you out of the Scriptures, for the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father, and the Son? Or for changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday? Or for prohibiting Polygamy, or Infant-Baptism? And whether there be not a clear Texts to prove unwritten Traditions, Purgatory, and the Real Presence?

Whether the Baptism of the true Church be not *One*? And whether the one *Baptism* be not expressly found in the Scriptures? and whether the Scriptures do not prohibit all Baptism of Water, beside that *one*? And whether the Papists have not confessed, in many of their Books, that *Infant-Baptism* is not found in, nor grounded upon the Scripture? And then, whether it be not clear, that all the Texts, which speak of Baptism in Water, do prohibit *Infant-Baptism*? Also, whether *John 15. 26. & 14. 26. & 16. 7.* be not clear Texts, that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from

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from the Father, and the Son? Also whether *1 Cor. 7. 1, 2, 3.* do not as much prohibit one Man for having two Wives, as one Woman for having two Husbands? And, whether it do not clearly prohibit the latter? Also, whether there be any that hold the First Day of the Week under the Notion of a Sabbath, among the Baptized Churches; and yet whether there be not clear proof for the Religious Observation of it, *Acts 20. 7. 1 Cor. 16. 2.* Also, whether it be not absurd for you to ask for clear Texts, to prove unwritten things? Also whether Purgatory, and the Real Presence, as you hold them, are not plainly destructive to some Articles of the Christian Faith.

For, is not this the Faith of all sound Christians?

1. That Almighty God does love no Creature in this World, so much as the Creature Man; nor does he take any Creature on Earth into that nearness of Union with himself, as the Souls and Bodies of those that shall be saved.
2. That the blessed Body of Christ, after his Ascension into Glory, admits of no Change, either by Addition to his Substance of his Flesh, and Blood; or Diminution of any part thereof from either.

Now it is most certain, that the Opinion of the Real Presence by *Transubstantiation* of Bread and Wine into the very Body and Blood of Christ, God-Man, doth evidently militate against these clear Truths, with the greatest opposition, as will appear by these Considerations following,

1. Though the Love of God to Mankind, especially to all that shall be saved, is exceeding great; yet it is certain, he never died, nor ever will so take them into Union with himself, as to *Transubstantiate* their Bodies into the Divine Substance of Christ, and so make their Flesh of the same Essence with himself, as he is God Blessed for ever.

And therefore it is in no wise to be believed, That God Almighty so loves the Creatures, *Bread and Wine*, as to turn, or *transubstantiate* the very Substance of them, into the very Substance of the only Son of God, whom we believe to be of one Substance with the Father.

It is also further to be considered, That though the two Natures in Christ, *i. e.* the Divine, and Human, are united after an unspeakable manner; yet no Christian does believe, that God did *transubstantiate* the Substance of the Humane Nature, into the Substance, of the Divine Nature, and that the Forms of Flesh and Blood only does remain. How then is it at all credible that God should *Deifie* the Creatures of Bread and Wine, by turning them into the Divine Essence, as well as

Human, to be worshipped with the highest degree of Adoration which is proper to God himself? Con. Trent. Sess. 13. Can. 6. And the Words of Bellarmin are very plain; God (saith he) is verily and truly to be worshipped, Mat. 4. But Christ in the Eucharist, is very God; &c.

Thus much of the First Proposition. And for the Second;

2. It is to be considered, That if the very Substance of Bread and Wine, be really transubstantiated, into the Substance of Christ's Flesh and Blood, then they do either remain that same Substance of Christ's Flesh for ever, or else they are after some time either annihilated, or turned to Corruption. But to say either of these, is flatly to deny, or oppose express Scripture, which tells us, That the Fish of Acts 2. 27. Christ saw no Corruption, and that he continueth ever. And Heb. 7. 24. for the first, that Bread and Wine, after the Words of Consecration, remains for ever, of the Substance of Christ's Real Body, it is no way credible. For then the Body of Christ must have received a mighty Augmentation since its Ascension. For,

If all the Bread which has been consecrated for almost 1700 years, shall be supposed to be all in one place, at any time (as sure the whole Flesh of Christ's Body is so) it might, for Magnitude, compare with a Mountain. And if all the vast quantity of Wine, which hath been consecrated for the like space of time, were supposed to be collected (as sure all the Blood of Christ remains in his Body, being impossible to be shed since he went into Heaven) it might compare with a considerable Fountain of Water. But both these are so very absurd, that 'tis hoped no Christian will affirm them; and therefore that Doctrine of Transubstantiation, which necessarily infers these, and many more Absurdities, is by no means to be received.

If the *Papists* shall reply, and say, That though the Bread and Wine be really turned into the Flesh and Blood, Body, Soul, and Divinity of Christ, yet it is not necessary that they remain so for ever; I shall earnestly desire them to shew us what becomes of it then? And I ask whether by such reply they do not make the Real and Glorious Body of Christ the most mutable thing in Heaven and Earth, being, according to this Doctrine, subject to be really made, and unmade every day, and that in a thousand places on the same day?

If any (who are little acquainted with the Doctrine of the present Church of Rome) shall question whether they do indeed hold so gross an Error, as to teach, that the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist is turned into the very Substance of the Divine Nature of Christ, as well as his Humane Nature; he may see it fully asserted by a Learned *Papist* in a certain Catechism, entituled, *An Abridgement to Christian Doctrine*, the last Edition, Printed at Down, 1661. pag. 194, 195. in these Words.

Quest. What is the Blessed Eucharist?

Ans. It is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ; true God, and true Man, whole Christ, under the outward Forms of Bread and Wine.

Quest. In what manner is Christ present under these Forms?

Ans. By the true and Real Presence of his Divine and Human Nature, and not figuratively only, as some would have it. God in Mercy open the eyes of all that are thus blinded with the Doctrine of Transubstantiation; which Word Transubstantiation, the *Papists* confess is not found in Scripture. See the said Catechism pag. 196.

This Catechise is Printed with the approbation of William Hyde, D. D. President of the English College at Down.

Papist Query 6.

Whether Universality both for time and place, be not an evident Mark of the true Church?

meant of Rome? and whether her Cup was not universally received, so that all Nations were made Drunk thereby?

Papist Query 7.

Whether you have really this Mark? that is, whether you can fetch out of all Ages, and Nations, Professors of your Religion; in particular you are desired to name but one, or two in the first six hundred years after Christ of your Profession; for example, such as held the sole sufficiency of Scripture for the deciding Controversies, and denied the Lawfulness and Usefulness of Infant-Baptism?

which remain have not been much altered? and whether they are not in many things contradictory? Also, whether Infant-Baptism was so much as heard of in the first Century, and then how should any be named which denied the usefulness of it in this Age? And whether the first clear mention of it be not from Tertullian? and whether the Learned do not confess that he opposed it in the third Century as an irrational and unwarrantable Custom? Also, whether that Church, whose manner of admitting Persons into her Communion, her Constitution and Government, are according to the Scriptures, Mat. 28. 19, 20. Heb. 6. 1, 2, &c. be not the true Church of Christ?

And whether the Baptized Churches (commonly called Anabaptists) do not excel in these Particulars, all other Churches whatsoever?

Of

Of all the Marks of the Church, so much stood upon by the Papists, this of Antiquity leads, and indeed it is of that importance, that if they fail of this Mark they are like to miss all the rest, and that they must fail of the best Antiquity, in the case of their Baptism (without which they can have no true Church) will with much ease be made evident.

1. Because by their own Confession Infant-Baptism (which is the Baptism of the present Roman-Church) is not grounded upon the Scripture. Here they fail of Scripture-Antiquity, which is the best.

2. Because they have not one Credible Witness for Infant-Baptism, in the first Century after Christ.

3. Because it is acknowledged by themselves, that they have changed the manner of the Administration of Baptism from Dipping to a little Sprinkling, which indeed is no Baptism.

Whereas on the contrary, the best Antiquity is as clear for our Baptism [*i. e.* Believers Baptism] as the light of the Sun, many thousands of Believers being Baptized by John Baptist, and more by Christ (or his appointment) John 3. 23. & 4. 1. three thousand Believers Baptized in one day, Acts. 2. 40. And multitudes of Believers being Baptized in every Age since the Institution of Baptism, yea all the Antient Fathers for the first three hundred years, (if not for the first six hundred years) after Christ were Baptized Believers, so that I should think the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against our Church in the Case of Baptism, whether we consider the Subject, Manner, End and Use of Holy Baptism, Whereas,

The only Witness which is pretended by my Learned Adversary for the first Century is Dionysius the Areopagite, mentioned, Acts. 17. 34. Who is said to speak thus, in a Book entituled Eccles. Hierarch. cult. The Custom of our Mother the Church in Baptizing Children is not to be contemned, nor to be judged superfluous, nor indeed to be credited, if it were not an Apostolical Tradition.

Truly this Author speaks not like a Man that was satisfied in this Point of Infant Baptism, and such is the faintness of his Evidence, that

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methinks

nothing he should leave a suspicion upon every man that reads him, that he did not know what to say, nor whereof to affirm, but leaving every man to think of the Words as he pleases, we will hear what the Learned have said concerning this Book, *Eccles. Hierarchy*.

First, They put it down in the Catalogue of Forged Writings, and *Cajetan* a Papist deys that Work to be written by *Dionysius*: Their Reasons are,

1. Because he never makes mention of *St. Paul* in that Book, who was the happy Instrument by whom *Dionysius* was converted: and yet he extolls *Hierotheus* as his Master.

2. Because he writes of many Orders, of Popes, Priests, and Monks, of which the first Age had none.

3. *Eusebius* and *Jerome* in their Catalogues never make mention of this Book. And *Gregory the Great* doth say it was not written by *Dionysius*.

4. *Illicius* hath ten very considerable Reasons, why this Book was written long after the Death of *Dionysius*, one is this, The Author talks often of the *Distinction of the Quire, and the Church*: whereas (saith he) the Christians had no such Churches an hundred years after *Dionysius's* time. This Author therefore will never bear to great a weight, as to prove Infant Baptism to have been either taught or practised by the Apostles.

Being thus found destitute of all Antiquity in the first Age, let us hear what one of their own Chronographers tells us concerning both the beginning of Infant-Baptism and the want of any Evidence for Infant-Baptism, in this Nation till more then three hundred years after Christ.

Robert Fabian, a Papist, in his *Chron. part 5. c. 118. fol. 105.* tells us, the Faith had endured in Britain from the time of *Lucius* (the first Christian King in Britain) near upon the season of four hundred years, and odd, and then in the next Chapter he gives account of *Augustin*: the Monk coming into England, and how he prevailed with some Bishops to observe his Orders. And in *Fol. 107.* he saith, But for all this, there were of them that

The present Baptized Believers only do hold to the old Religion at least in the Point of Sacred Baptism

as said, that they might not leave the Custom which they so long had continued, without the Assent of all such as used the same. Then *Austin* gathered a Synod, to the which came seven Bishops of Brittain, with the wisest men of the famous Abby of Bangor. But first they took Counsel of an Holy Man, whether they should be obedient to *Austin* or not. And he said, if you find him humble and meek, as so Christ's Disciple belongeth, that then they should assent to him, which meekness they should perceive in him, if he at their coming into the Synod, or Council, arose against them. When the said Bishop entered the said Synod, *Augustine* sat still in the Chair and removed not, wherefore they were wroth and disclaimed him, and would not obey to his requests. Then he said to them, Since ye will not assent to my Hest; generally, assent to me especially, in three things.

The first is, That you keep Easter Day in due Form and Time, as it is Ordained.

The Second, That ye give Christendom to Children.

And the Third is, That ye Preach unto the English the Word of God as I afore-time have exhorted you: and all the other Decale I will suffer you to amend, and reform among your selves. But they would not thereof.

From this Passage it is very evident, that Infant-Baptism came not into this Nation till about four hundred years after the Gospel was first Received here; and therefore the Papists must needs fail of Antiquity here, and must, (if they will do us right) give place to the Baptized Believers, not only in the Case of Believers-Baptism, but also in respect of the denial of Baptism to Infants, seeing these seven Bishops, and the wisest Men of Bangor withstood *Augustine* the Monk, in that point then, as we withstand the Papists in that point now.

And as we have suffered many hard things, even to the burning of our Bodies in *Smithfield*, for bearing witness to the Ancient and True Baptism of Christ, even so it fared very ill with those that withstood *Infant-Baptism*, &c. in the Days of *Austin*; for *Fabian* relates how they were many hundreds of them murdered; and *Mr. Fox* seems to lay the Fault upon *Austin*. I conclude with these two short Arguments,

1. The present Church of Rome cannot possibly prove her self to be the true Church of Christ; Ergo, the present Church of Rome is not the true Church of Christ.

Hear the Church.

2. *The present Church of Rome hath no true Baptism ; Ergo, She is no the true Church of Christ.* Let the *Papists* defend their present Church against these Arguments [the Grounds whereof are delivered truly in the precedent Discourses] without which, all they can say, will signify little ; for what Power saever the Church hath, it is little to them, unless they make good proof that they are the true Church of *Jesus Christ*.

F I N I S.