

A REVIEW
OF THE
TRUE NATURE OF SCHISM,
WITH
A VINDICATION
OF THE
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES IN ENGLAND
FROM THE IMPUTATION THEREOF;
UNJUSTLY CHARGED ON THEM BY MR. D. CAWDREY,
PREACHER OF THE WORD,
AT BILLING, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Δούλον Κυρίου οὐ δεῖ μάχεσθαι.—2 TIM. ii. 24.
Δεῖ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι, ὡς Θεοῦ οἰκονόμον, μὴ αὐθάδη, μὴ ἐργίλον,
μὴ πᾶροινον, μὴ πλήκτην, μὴ αἰσχρομερῆ.—TIT. i. 7.

BY
JOHN OWEN

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TO THE READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

IT is now about three weeks since, that there was sent unto me, a book entitled, *Independency a Great Schism*: as the frontispiece farther promiseth, undertaken to be managed against something written by me, in a treatise about the true nature of schism, published about a year ago; with an addition of a charge of inconstancy in opinion, upon myself: of the one, and the other, the ensuing discourse will give a farther and full account. Coming unto my hands at such a season, wherein, as it is known, I was pressed with more than ordinary occasions of sundry sorts, I thought to have deferred the examination of it, until farther leisure might be obtained, supposing that some fair advantage would be administered by it, to a farther Christian debate of that discovery of truth, and tender of peace, which in my treatise I had made. Engaging into a cursory perusal of it, I found the reverend author's design and discourse, to be of that tendency and nature, as did not require, nor would admit of any such delay. His manifold mistakes in apprehending the intention of my treatise and of the severals of it; his open presumption of his own principles, as the source and spring of what pretends to be argumentative in his discourse, arbitrarily inferring from them, without the least attempt of proof, whatever tenders its assistance to cast reproach on them with whom he hath to do; his neglect in providing a defence for himself by any principles not easily turned upon him, against the same charge which he is pleased to manage against me; his avowed laying the foundation of his whole fabric, in the sand of notoriously false suppositions, quickly delivered me from the thoughts of any necessity to delay the consideration of

what he tendered to make good the title of his discourse. The open and manifest injury done, not only to myself, in laying things to my charge which I know not, lading me with reproaches, tending to a rendering of me odious to all the ministers and churches in the world, not agreeing with me in some few things concerning gospel administrations, but also to all other churches and persons of the same judgment with myself, called for a speedy account of the true state of the things contended about.

Thou hast therefore here, Christian reader, the product (through the grace of him who supplieth seed to the sower) of the spare hours of four or five days, in which space of time this ensuing discourse was begun and finished. Expect not therefore any thing from it, but what is necessary for the refutation of the book, whereunto it is opposed ; and as to that end and purpose, I leave it to thy strictest judgment. Only I shall desire thee to take notice, that having kept myself to a bare defence, I have resolvedly forborne all recharge on the presbyterian way, either as to the whole of it, whence by way of distinction it is so called, or as to the differences in judgment and practice of them who profess that way, among themselves, which at this day, both in this and the neighbour nation, are more and greater, than any that our author hath as yet been able to find amongst them whom he doth principally oppose. As the ensuing sheets were almost wrought off at the press, there came to my hand a vindication of that eminent servant of God, Mr. John Cotton, from the unjust imputations and charge of the reverend person with whom I have now to do, written by himself not long before his death. The opportunity of publishing that discourse, with the ensuing, being then lost, I thought meet to let the reader know, that a short season will furnish him with it. Farewell, and love, truth, and peace.

A

VINDICATION OF THE TREATISE

ABOUT

THE TRUE NATURE OF SCHISM,

&c.

CHAP. I.

THE present state of things in the Christian world, will on a slight consideration yield this account of controversies in religion; that when they are driven to such an issue, as by foreign coincidences to be rendered the interest of parties at variance, there is not any great success to be obtained by a management of them, though with never so much evidence and conviction of truth. An answering of the profession that is on us, by a good and lawful means, the paying of that homage and tribute we owe to the truth, the tendering of assistance to the safe-guarding of some weaker professors thereof, from the sophisms and violence of adversaries, is the most that in such a posture of things, the most sober writers of controversies can well aim at.

The winning over of men to the truth we seek to maintain, where they have been pre-engaged in an opposition unto it, without the alteration of the outward state of things, whence their engagements have insensibly sprung and risen, is not ordinarily to be expected. How far I was from any such thoughts in the composing and publishing my treatise of the nature of schism, I declared in sundry passages in the treatise itself. Though the thing contended about, whatsoever is pretended to the contrary, will not be found amongst the most important heads of our religion, yet knowing how far, on sundry accounts, the stated fixed interest of several sorts of men engageth them to abide by the principles they own in reference thereunto, I was so far from hoping to see speedily any visible fruits of the efficacy of the truth I had

managed, that I promised myself a vigorous opposition, until some urgent providence or time, altering the frame of men's spirits, should make way for its acceptance. Freely I left it in the hand of him, whose truth I have good security I had in weakness maintained, to dispose of it with its issues and events at his pleasure. I confess, knowing several parties to be concerned in an opposition to it, I was not well able to conjecture from what hand the first assault of it would arise. Probability cast it on them who looked on themselves in the nearest proximity of advantage by the common notion of schism opposed. The truth is, I did apprehend myself not justly chargeable with want of charity, if I thought that opposition would arise from some other principles, than mere zeal for a supposed truth, and therefore took my aim in conjecturing at the prejudices that men might fear themselves and interests obnoxious unto by a reception and establishment of that notion of schism, which I had asserted. Men's contentedness to make use of their quietness in reference to popery, Socinianism, Arminianism, daily vented amongst us, unless it were in some declamatory expressions against their toleration, which cost no more than they are worth, if shaken off by a speedy engagement against my treatise, confirmed such thoughts in me. After, therefore, it had passed in the world for some season, and had found acceptance with many learned and godly persons, reports began to be raised about a design for a refutation of it: that so it should be dealt withal I heard was judged necessary at sundry conventions; what particular hand it was likely the task would fall upon, judging myself not concerned to know, I did not inquire. When I was informed how the disposal of the business did succeed, as I was not at all surprised in reference to the party in general from which it did issue, so I did relieve myself under my fears, and loathing to be engaged in these contests, by these ensuing considerations. 1. That I was fully persuaded that what I had written was for the substance of it the truth of God, and being concerned in it only on truth's account, if it could be demonstrated that the sentence I had asserted, was an unlawful pretender thereunto, I should be delivered from paying any farther respect or service to that, whereunto none at all was due. 2. That in the treatise itself so threatened, I

had laid in provision against all contending about words, expressions, collateral assertions, deductions, positions, all and every thing, though true, that might be separated from the life or substance of the notion, or truth pleaded for. 3. That whereas the whole weight of the little pile turned on one single hinge, and that visible and conspicuous, capable of an ocular demonstration, as to its confirmation or refutation, I promised myself that any man who should undertake the demolishing of it, would be so far from passing that by, and setting himself to the superstruction, that subsists in its single strength and vigour, that indeed finding that one thing necessary for him, he would solely attempt that, and therein rest. This I knew was evident to any considering person that should but view the treatise, that if that foundation were cast down, the whole superstructure would fall with its own weight; but if left standing, a hundred thousand volumes against the rest of the treatise could not in the least prejudice the cause undertaken to be managed in it. Men might indeed by such attempts manifest my weakness and want of skill, in making inferences and deductions from principles of truth, wherein I am not concerned, but the truth itself contended for, would still abide untouched. 4. Having expressly waved man's day and judgment, I promised myself security from a disturbance by urging against me the authority of any, of old or late; supposing that from the eviction of their several interests, I had emancipated myself from all subjection to their bare judgments in this cause. 5. Whereas I had confined myself to a bare defensative of some, not intending to cast others from the place, which in their own apprehensions they do enjoy (unless it was the Roman party), I had some expectations that peace-loving godly men, would not be troubled that an apparent immunity from a crime was without their prejudice or disadvantage manifested in behalf of their brethren, nor much pain themselves to reinforce the charge accounted for. So that the bare notion of schism, and the nature of it abstracted from the consideration of persons, would come under debate. Indeed, I questioned whether in that friendly composure of affections, which for sundry years hath been carrying on between sober and godly men of the presbyterian and congregational judgment, any person of real godliness would

interest himself to blow the coal of dissension, and engage in new exasperations. I confess I always thought the plea of Cicero for Ligarius against Tubero most unreasonable; namely, that if he had told (as he calls it) an honest and merciful lie in his behalf, yet it was not the part of a man to refel it, especially of one who was accused of the same crime; but yet I must needs say, a prompt readiness to follow most questionable accusations against honest defensatives, from good men unjustly accused by others of the same crime, I did not expect. I added this also in my thoughts, that the facility of rendering a discourse to the purpose, on the business under consideration, was obviated by its being led out of the common road, wherein common-place supplies would be of little use to any that should undertake it; not once suspecting that any man of learning and judgment would make a return unto it out of vulgar discourses about ministers' calling, church-government, or the like. How far these and the like considerations might be a relief unto my thoughts, in my fears of farther controversial engagements, having the pressure of more business upon me than any one man I know of my calling in the whole nation, I leave it to the judgment of them who love truth and peace. But what little confidence I ought, in the present posture of the minds of men, to have placed in any or all of them, the discourse under consideration hath instructed me. That any one thing hath fallen out according to my expectations and conjectures, but only its being a product of the men, of the persuasions owned therein, I am yet to seek. The truth is, I cannot blame my adversary '*viis et modis*' to make good the opposition he is engaged in; it concerns him and his advisers beyond their interest in the appearing skirts of this controversy. Perhaps, also, an adjudged necessity of endeavouring a disreputation to my person and writings, was one ingredient in the undertaking; if so, the whole frame was to be carried on by correspondent mediums. But let the principles and motives to this discourse be what they will, it is now made public, there being a warmer zeal acting therein, than in carrying on some other things expected from the same hand.

To what may seem of importance in it, I shall with all possible plainness give a return. Had the reverend author

of it thought good to have kept within the bounds by me fixed, and candidly debated the notion proposed, abstracting from the provocations of particular applications, I should most willingly have taken pains for a farther clearing and manifesting of the truth contended about.

But the whole discourse wherewith I have now to do is of another complexion, and the design of it of another tendency; yea, so managed sometimes, that I am ready to question whether it be the product and fruit of his spirit whose name it bears: for though he be an utter stranger to me, yet I have received such a character of him, as would raise me to an expectation of any thing from him, rather than such a discourse.

The reader will be able to perceive an account of these thoughts in the ensuing view of his treatise.

1. I am without any provocation intended, and I hope given, reviled from one end of it to the other; and called, partly in downright terms, partly by oblique intimations, whose reflections are not to be waved, Satan, atheist, sceptic, Donatist, heretic, schismatic, sectary, Pharisee, &c. and the closure of the book is merely an attempt to blast my reputation, whereof I shall give a speedy account.

2. The professed design of the whole is to prove independency, as he is pleased to call it, which what it is he declares not, nor (as he manages the business) do I know to be a great schism, and that Independents (by whom it is full well known whom he intends) are schismatics, sectaries, the troublers of England. So that it were happy for the nation, if they were out of it; or discovering sanguinary thoughts in reference unto them; and these kinds of discourses fill up the book, almost from one end to the other.

3. No Christian care doth seem to have been taken, nor good conscience exercised from the beginning to the ending, as to imputation of any thing unto me, or upon me, that may serve to help on the design in hand.

Hence, I think, it is repeated near a hundred times, that I deny their ministers to be ministers, and their churches to be churches, that I deny all the reformed churches in the world, but only our own (as he calls them) to be true churches; all which is notoriously untrue, contrary to my

known judgment, professedly declared on all occasions, contrary to express affirmations in the book he undertakes to confute, and the whole design of the book itself. I cannot easily declare my surprisal on this account. What am I to expect from others, when such reverend men as this author, shall by the power of prejudice be carried beyond all bounds of moderation, and Christian tenderness in offending? I no way doubt but that Satan hath his design in this whole business. He knows how apt we are to fix on such provocations, and to contribute thereupon to the increase of our differences. Can he, according to the course of things in the world, expect any other issue, but that in the necessary defensative I am put upon, I should not wave such reflections and retortions on him and them, with whom I have to do, as present themselves with as fair pleas and pretences unto me, as it is possible for me to judge, that the charges before mentioned (I mean of schism, heresy, and the like) did unto him. For as to a return of any thing in its own nature false and untrue, as to matter of fact, to meet with that of the like kind wherewith I am entertained, I suppose the devil himself was hopeless to obtain it. Is he not filled with envy to take notice in what love without dissimulation I walk with many of the presbyterian judgment? what Christian intercourse and communion I have with them in England, Scotland, Holland, France, fearing that it may tend to the furtherance of peace and union among the churches of Christ? God assisting I shall deceive his expectations, and though I be called schismatic and heretic a thousand times, it shall not weaken my love or esteem of or towards any of the godly ministers or people of that way and judgment with whom I am acquainted, or have occasion of converse.

And for this reverend author himself, I shall not fail to pray, that none of the things, whereby he hath, I fear, administered advantage unto Satan to attempt the exasperations of the spirits of brethren one against another, may ever be laid to his charge. For my own part I profess in all sincerity, that such was my unhappiness, or rather happiness in the constant converse which in sundry places I have with persons of the presbyterian judgment, both of the English and Scottish nation, utterly of another frame of

spirit, than that which is now shewed, that until I saw this treatise, I did not believe that there had remained in any one godly, sober, judicious person in England, such thoughts of heart in reference to our present differences, as are visible and legible therein :

Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ ?

I hope the reverend author will not be offended, if I make bold to tell him, that it will be no joy of heart to him one day, that he hath taken pains to cast oil on those flames, which it is every one's duty to labour to extinguish.

But that the whole matter in difference may be the better stated and determined, I shall first pass through with the general concernments of the book itself, and then consider the several chapters of it, as to any particulars in them that may seem to relate to the business in hand. It may possibly not a little conduce towards the removal of those obstructions unto peace and love, laid in our way by this reverend author, and to a clearer stating of the controversy pretended to be ventilated in his discourse, to discover and lay aside those mistakes of his, which being interwoven with the main discourse from the beginning to the end, seem as principles to animate the whole, and to give it that life of trouble, whereof it is partaker. Some of them were, as absolutely considered, remarked before ; I shall now renew the mention of them, with respect to that influence which they have into the argumentative part of the treatise under consideration.

1. First, then, it is strenuously supposed all along, that I deny all, or any churches in England, to be true churches of Christ, except only the churches gathered in the congregational way, and upon their principles : then, that I deny all the reformed churches beyond the seas to be true churches of Christ. This supposition being laid, as the foundation of the whole building, a confutation of my treatise is fixed thereon, a comparison is instituted between the Donatists and myself : arguments are produced to prove their churches to be true churches, and their ministers true ministers. The charge of schism on this bottom is freely given out and asserted, the proof of my schismatical separation from hence deduced, and many terms of reproach are

returned as a suitable reply to the provocation of this opinion. How great a portion of a small treatise may easily be taken up with discourses relating to these heads, is easy to apprehend. Now lest all this pains should be found to be useless, and causelessly undergone, let us consider how the reverend author proves this to be my judgment. Doth he evince it from any thing delivered in that treatise he undertakes to confute? doth he produce any other testimonies out of what I have spoken, delivered, or written elsewhere, and on other occasions to make it good? This I suppose he thought not of, but took it for granted, that either I was of that judgment, or it was fit I should be so, that the difference between us might be as great, as he desired to have it appear to be.

Well, to put an end to this controversy, seeing he would not believe what I told the world of my thoughts herein in my book of schism, I now inform him again, that all these surmises are fond and untrue. And truly for his own sake with that respect which is due to the reputation of religion, I here humbly entreat him not to entertain what is here affirmed with unchristian surmises, which the apostle reckons amongst the works of the flesh, as though I were of another mind but durst not declare it, as more than once in some particulars he insinuates the state of things with me to be. But blessed be the God of my salvation, and of all my deliverances, I have yet liberty to declare the whole of my judgment in and about the things of his worship. Blessed be God, it is not as yet in the power of some men to bring in that their conceited happiness into England, which would in their thoughts accrue unto it, by my removal from my native soil, with all others of my judgment and persuasion. We are yet at peace, and we trust that the Lord will deliver us from the hands of men, whose tender mercies are cruel. However be it known unto them, that if it be the will of the Lord upon our manifold provocations to give us up to their disposal, who are pleased to compass us with the ornaments of reproaches before mentioned, that so we might fall as a sacrifice to rage or violence, we shall, through his assistance and presence with us, dare to profess the whole of that truth, and those ways of his, which he hath been pleased to reveal unto us.

And if on any other account this reverend person suppose I may foster opinions and thoughts of mine own and their ways which I dare not own, let him at any time give me a command to wait upon him, and as I will freely and candidly answer to any inquiries he shall be pleased to make after my judgment and apprehensions of these things, so he shall find that (God assisting) I dare own, and will be ready to maintain, what I shall so deliver to him. It is a sufficient evidence that this reverend author is an utter stranger to me, or he would scarce entertain such surmises of me as he doth. Shall I call in witnesses as to the particular under consideration? one evidence by way of instance lies so near at hand, that I cannot omit the producing of it: not above fourteen days before this treatise came to my hands, a learned gentleman, whom I had prevailed withal to answer in the vespers of our act, sent me his questions by a doctor of the presbyterian judgment, a friend of his, and mine. The first question was, as I remember, to this purpose: '*Utrum ministri ecclesiæ Anglicanæ habeant validam ordinationem.*' I told the doctor, that since the questions were to pass under my approbation, I must needs confess myself scrupled at the limitation of the subject of the question in that term '*ecclesia Anglicana,*' which would be found ambiguous and equivocal in the disputation; and therefore desired that he would rather supply it with '*ecclesiarum reformatarum,*' or some other expression of like importance; but as to the thing itself aimed at, namely, the assertion of the ministry of the godly ministers in England, I told him, and so now do the reverend author of this treatise, that I shall as willingly engage in the defence of it, with the lawfulness of their churches, as any man whatever. I have only in my treatise questioned the institution of a national church, which this author doth not undertake to maintain, nor hath the least reason so to do, for the asserting of true ministers and churches in England; I mean those of the presbyterian way. What satisfaction now this reverend author shall judge it necessary for him to give me, for the public injury which voluntarily he hath done me, in particular for his attempt to expose me to the censure and displeasure of so many godly ministers and churches as I own in England, as a person denying their ministry, and church station, I leave it to himself to consider.

And by the declaration of this mistake how great a part of his book is waved as to my concernments therein, himself full well knows.

2. A second principle of like importance, which he is pleased to make use of, as a thing granted by me, or at least which he assumes, as that which ought so to be, is that whatever the presbyterian ministers and churches be, I have separated from them, as have done all those whom he calls Independents. This is another fountain, out of which much bitter water flows. Hence we must needs be thought to condemn their ministry and churches. The Brownists were our fathers, and the Anabaptists are our elder brothers, we make a harlot of our mother, and are schismatics and sectaries from one end of the book to the other. ‘*Quod erat demonstrandum.*’ But doth not this reverend author know that this is wholly denied by us? Is it not disproved sufficiently in that very treatise which he undertakes to answer?

He grants, I suppose, that the separation he blames, must respect some union of Christ’s institution: for any other, we profess ourselves unconcerned in its maintenance, or dissolution, as to the business in hand. Now wherein have we separated from them as to the breach of any such union? For an individual person to change from the constant participation of ordinances in one congregation, to do so in another, barely considered in itself, this reverend author holds to be no separation. However for my part, who am forced to bear all this wrath and storm, what hath he to lay to my charge? I condemn not their churches in general, to be no churches, nor any one that I am acquainted withal in particular. I never disturbed, that I know of, the peace of any one of them, nor separated from them; but having already received my punishment, I expect to hear my crime by the next return.

3. He supposeth throughout that I deny not only the necessity of a successive ordination, but as far as I can understand him, the lawfulness of it also. By ordination of ministers, many upon a mistake understand only the imposition of hands that is used therein. Ordination of ministers is one thing, and imposition of hands another, differing as whole and part; ordination in Scripture compriseth the whole authoritative translation of a man from among the

number of his brethren into the state of an officer in the church. I suppose he doth not think that this is denied by me, though he tells me, with the same Christian candour and tenderness, which he exerciseth in every passage almost of his book, of making myself a minister, and I know not what. I am, I bless the Lord, extremely remote from returning him any of his own coin in satisfaction for this love. For that part of it which consists in the imposition of hands by the presbytery (where it may be obtained according to the mind of Christ), I am also very remote from managing any opposition unto it. I think it necessary by virtue of precept, and that to be continued in a way of succession. It is, I say, according to the mind of Christ, that he who is to be ordained unto office in any church, receive imposition of hands from the elders of that church, if there be any therein. And this is to be done in a way of succession, that so the churches may be perpetuated. That alone which I oppose is the denying of this successive ordination, through the authority of antichrist. Before the blessed and glorious reformation, begun and carried on by Zuinglius, Luther, Calvin, and others, there were, and had been two states of men in the world, professing the name of Christ and the gospel, as to the outward profession thereof. The one of them in glory, splendour, outward beauty, and order, calling themselves the church, the only church in the world, the catholic church; being indeed and in truth in that state wherein they so prided themselves, the mother of harlots, the beast, with his false prophet. The other party, poor, despised, persecuted, generally esteemed and called heretics, schismatics, or as occasion gave advantage for their farther reproach, Waldenses, Albigenses, Lollards, and the like. As to the claim of a successive ordination drawn from the apostles, I made bold to affirm, that I could not understand the validity of that successive ordination, as successive, which was derived down unto us, from and by the first party of men in the world.

This reverend author's reply hereunto, is like the rest of his discourse: p. 118. he tells me, 'This casts dirt in the face of their ministry, as do all their good friends the sectaries, and that he hath much ado to forbear saying, The Lord rebuke thee.' How he doth forbear it, having so expressed

the frame of his heart towards me, others will judge: the searcher of all hearts knows, that I had no design to cast dirt on him, or any other godly man's ministry in England. Might not another answer have been returned without this wrath?—This is so, or it is not so, in reference to the ministry of this nation. If it be not so, and they plead not their successive ordination from Rome, there is an end of this difference. If it be so, can Mr. C. hardly refrain from calling a man Satan, for speaking the truth? It is well if we know of what spirit we are.

But let us a little farther consider his answer in that place. He asketh first, 'Why may not this be a sufficient foundation for their ministry, as well as for their baptism?' If it be so, and be so acknowledged, whence is that great provocation that arose from my inquiry after it? For my part I must tell him, that I judge their baptism good and valid, but to deal clearly with him, not on that foundation. I cannot believe, that that idolater, murderer, man of sin, had since the days of his open idolatry, persecution, and enmity to Christ, any authority more or less from the Lord Jesus committed to him, in or over his churches. But he adds, secondly, 'That had they received their ordination from the woman flying into the wilderness, the two witnesses, or Waldenses, it had been all one to me, and my party; for they had not their ordination from the people (except some extraordinary cases), but from a presbytery, according to the institution of Christ.' So then, ordination by a presbytery is, it seems, opposed by me and my party; but I pray, sir, who told you so? when, wherein, by what means have I opposed it? I acknowledge myself of no party. I am sorry so grave a minister should suffer himself to be thus transported, that every answer, every reply, must be a reflection, and that without due observation of truth and love. That those first reformers had their ordination from the people, is acknowledged; I have formerly evinced it by undeniable testimony. So that the proper succession of a ministry amongst the churches that are their offspring, runs up no higher than that rise. Now the good Lord bless them in their ministry, and the successive ordination they enjoy, to bring forth more fruit in the earth to the praise of his glorious grace. But upon my disclaiming all thoughts of rejecting the mi-

nistry of all those, who yet hold their ordination on the account of its successive derivation from Rome, he cries out, ‘*egregiam vero laudem*,’ and says, ‘that yet I secretly derive their pedigree from Rome.’ Well then, he doth not so : why then, what need these exclamations ? we are as to this matter wholly agreed ; nor shall I at present farther pursue his discourse in that place : it is almost totally composed and made up of scornful revilings, reflections, and such other ingredients of the whole.

He frequently and very positively affirms, without the least hesitation, that I have ‘renounced my own ordination,’ and adds hereunto, that ‘whatever else they pretend, unless they renounce their ordination, nothing will please me ;’ that ‘I condemn all other churches in the world as no churches.’ But who, I pray, told him these things ? did he inquire so far after my mind in them, as without breach of charity to be able to make such positive and express assertions concerning them ? A good part of his book is taken up in the repetition of such things as these, drawing inferences and conclusions from the suppositions of them, and warming himself by them into a great contempt of myself and party, as he calls them. I am now necessitated to tell him, that all these things are false, and utterly in part and in whole untrue, and that he is not able to prove any one of them. And whether this kind of dealing becomes a minister of the gospel, a person professing godliness, I leave it to himself to judge. For my own part I must confess, that as yet I was never so dealt withal by any man, of what party soever, although it hath been my unhappiness to provoke many of them. I do not doubt but that he will be both troubled and ashamed when he shall review these things. That whole chapter, which he entitles, *Independence*, is *Donatism* ; as to his application of it unto me, or any of my persuasion, is of the same importance, as I have sufficiently already evinced. I might instance in sundry other particulars, wherein he ventures without the least check or supposition, to charge me with what he pleaseth, that may serve the turn in hand ; so that it may serve to bring in, ‘he and his party are schismatics, are sectaries, have separated from the church of God, are the cause of all our evils and troubles,’ with the like terms of reproach and

hard censures, lying in a fair subserviency to a design of widening the difference between us, and mutually exasperating the spirits of men professing the gospel of Jesus Christ, one against another, nothing almost comes amiss. His sticking upon by-matters, diverting from the main business in hand, answering arguments by reflections and the like, might also be remarked. One thing wherein he much rejoiceth, and fronts his book with the discovery he hath made of it, namely, concerning my change of judgment as to the difference under present debate, which is the substance and design of his appendix, must be particularly considered, and shall be, God assisting, in the next chapter accordingly.

CHAP. II.

An answer to the appendix of Mr. C.'s charge.

THOUGH perhaps impartial men will be willing to give me an acquitment from the charge of altering my judgment in the matters of our present difference, upon the general account of the co-partnership with me of the most inquiring men in this generation, as to things of no less importance; and though I might against this reverend brother, and others of the same mind and persuasion with him, at present relieve myself sufficiently by a recrimination, in reference to their former episcopal engagements, and sundry practices in the worship of God them attending, pleading in the meantime the general issue of changing from error to truth (which that I have done as to any change I have really made, I am ready at any time to maintain to this author), yet it being so much insisted upon by him as it is, and the charge thereof in the instance given, accompanied with so many evil surmisings, and uncharitable reflections, looking like the fruits of another principle than that whereby we ought in the management of our differences to be ruled, I shall give a more particular account of that, which hath yielded him this great advantage. The sole instance insisted on by him, is a small treatise published long ago by me, entitled, *The Duty of Pastors and People distinguished*;

wherein I profess myself to be of the presbyterian judgment. ‘Excerpta’ out of that treatise, with animadversions and comparisons thereon, make up the appendix, which was judged necessary to be added to the book, to help on with the proof that independency is a great schism: had it not been indeed needful to cause the person to suffer, as well as the thing, some suppose this pains might have been spared. But I am not to prescribe to any, what way it is meet for them to proceed in, for the compassing of their ends aimed at. The best is, here is no new thing produced, but what the world hath long since taken notice of, and made of it the worst they can. Neither am I troubled that I have a necessity laid upon me to give an account of this whole matter. That little treatise was written by me in the year 1643, and then printed; however, it received the addition of a year in the date affixed to it by the printers, which for their own advantage is a thing usual with them. I was then a young man myself, about the age of twenty-six or twenty-seven years. The controversy between independency and presbytery was young also; nor indeed by me clearly understood, especially as stated on the congregational side. The conceptions delivered in the treatise were not (as appears in the issue) suited to the opinion of the one party, nor of the other; but were such as occurred to mine own naked consideration of things, with relation to some differences that were then upheld in the place where I lived, only being unacquainted with the congregational way, I professed myself to own the other party, not knowing but that my principles were suited to their judgment and profession; having looked very little farther into those affairs, than I was led by an opposition to episcopacy and ceremonies. Upon a review of what I had there asserted, I found that my principles were far more suited to what is the judgment and practice of the congregational men, than those of the presbyterian. Only whereas I had not received any farther clear information in these ways of the worship of God, which since I have been engaged in, as was said, I professed myself of the presbyterian judgment, in opposition to democratical confusion; and indeed so I do still; and so do all the congregational men in England, that I am acquainted withal; so that when I compare what then I wrote,

with my present judgment, I am scarce able to find the least difference between the one and the other; only a misapplication of names and things by me gives countenance to this charge. Indeed not long after, I set myself seriously to inquire into the controversies then warmly agitated in these nations. Of the congregational way, I was not acquainted with any one person, minister or other; nor had I, to my knowledge, seen any more than one in my life. My acquaintance lay wholly with ministers, and people of the presbyterian way. But sundry books being published on either side, I perused, and compared them with the Scripture, and one another, according as I received ability from God. After a general view of them, as was my manner in other controversies, I fixed on one to take under peculiar consideration and examination, which seemed most methodically and strongly to maintain that which was contrary as I thought to my present persuasion. This was Mr. Cotton's book of the Keys. The examination and confutation hereof, merely for my own particular satisfaction, with what diligence and sincerity I was able, I engaged in. What progress I made in that undertaking, I can manifest unto any by the discourses on that subject, and animadversions on that book yet abiding by me. In the pursuit and management of this work, quite besides, and contrary to my expectation, at a time and season wherein I could expect nothing on that account but ruin in this world, without the knowledge or advice of, or conference with, any one person of that judgment, I was prevailed on to receive that, and those principles which I had thought to have set myself in an opposition unto. And indeed this way of impartial examining all things by the word, comparing causes with causes, and things with things, laying aside all prejudicate respects unto persons, or present traditions, is a course that I would admonish all to beware of, who would avoid the danger of being made independents. I cannot indeed deny, but that it is possible I was advantaged in the disquisition of the truth I had in hand, from my former embracing of the principles laid down in the treatise insisted on; now being by this means settled in the truth, which I am ready to maintain to this reverend and learned author, if he or any other suppose they have any advantage hereby against me,

as to my reputation, which alone is sought in such attempts as this : or if I am blameably liable to the charge of inconstancy and inconsistency with my own principles, which he thought meet to front his book withal, hereupon I shall not labour to divest him of his apprehension, having abundant cause to rejoice in the rich grace of a merciful and tender father, that men seeking occasion to speak evil of so poor a worm, tossed up and down in the midst of innumerable temptations, I should be found to fix on that which I know will be found my rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

I am necessitated to add somewhat also to a surmise of this reverend man, in reference to my episcopal compliances in former days, and strict observation of their canons. This indeed I should not have taken notice of, but that I find others, besides this author, pleasing themselves with this apprehension, and endeavouring an advantage against the truth I profess thereby. How little some of my adversaries are like to gain, by branding this as a crime, is known; and I profess I know not the conscience, that is exercised in this matter. But to deliver them once for all from involving themselves in the like unchristian procedure hereafter, let them now know what they might easily have known before; namely, that this accusation is false, a plain calumny, a lie. As I was bred up from my infancy under the care of my father, who was a nonconformist all his days, and a painful labourer in the vineyard of the Lord; so ever since I came to have any distinct knowledge of the things belonging to the worship of God, I have been fixed in judgment against that which I am calumniated withal; which is notoriously known to all that have had any acquaintance with me: what advantage this kind of proceeding is like to bring to his own soul, or the cause which he manageth, I leave to himself to judge.

Thus in general, to take a view of some particular passages in the appendix destined to this good work; the first section tries with much wit and rhetoric to improve the pretended alteration of judgment to the blemishing of my reputation, affirming it to be from truth to error; which, as to my particular, so far as it shall appear I am concerned (I am little moved with the bare affirmation of men, especially if induced to it by their interest), I desire him to let me

know when and where I may personally wait upon him to be convinced of it : in the mean time, so much for that section : in the second, he declares what my judgment was in that treatise about the distance between pastors and people, and of the extremes that some men on each hand run into : and I now tell him, that I am of the same mind still, so that that note hath little availed him. In the third, he relates what I delivered, ‘that a man, not solemnly called to the office of the ministry by any outward call, might do as to the preaching of the gospel in a collapsed church-state:’ unto this he makes sundry objections, that my discourse is dark, not clear, and the like ; but, remembering that his business was not to confute that treatise also, but to prove from it my inconstancy, and inconsistency with myself, he says, I am changed from what I then delivered : this is denied, I am punctually of the same judgment still : but he proves the contrary by a double argument. 1. Because I have renounced my ordination. 2. Because I think now, that not only in a complete church-state, but when no such thing can be charged, that gifts and consent of the people is enough to make a man a preacher in office : both untrue and false in fact. I profess I am astonished, to think with what frame of spirit, what neglect of all rules of truth and love this business is managed. In the fourth section, he chargeth me to have delivered somewhat in that treatise about the personal indwelling of the Holy Ghost in believers, and my words to that purpose are quoted at large. What then? am I changed in this also? no, but that is an error in the judgment of all that be orthodox : but that is not the business in hand, but the alteration of my judgment ; wherefore he makes a kind of exposition upon my words in that treatise, to shew that I was not then of the mind that I have now delivered myself to be of, in my book of schism ; but I could easily answer the weakness of his exceptions, and pretended expositions of my former assertions, and evidence my consistency in judgment with myself in this business ever since ; but this he saith is an error which he gathered out of my book of schism ; and somebody hath sent him word from Oxford that I preached the same doctrine at St. Mary’s. I wish his informer had never more deceived him ; it is most true I have done so, and since printed at large what then I

delivered, with sundry additions thereunto; and if this reverend author shall think good to examine what I have published on that account (not in the way in this treatise proceeded in, which in due time will be abhorred of himself and all good men, but with candour, and a spirit of Christian ingenuity and meekness), I shall acknowledge myself obliged to him: and in the mean time I desire him to be cautious of large expressions, concerning all the orthodox, to oppose that opinion, seeing evidences of the contrary lie at hand in great plenty: and let him learn from hence how little his insulting in his book on this account is to be valued. Sect. 5. he shews that I then proved the name of priests not to be proper, or to be ascribed to the ministers of the gospel; but that now (as is supposed in scorn) I call the ministers of their particular congregations parochial priests: untrue! In the description of the prelatical church, I shewed what they esteemed and called parish ministers amongst them. I never called the presbyterian ministers of particular congregations, parochial priests. Love, truth, and peace; these things ought not thus to be. Sect. 6. he labours to find some difference in the tendency of several expressions in that treatise, which is not at all to the purpose in hand, nor true, as will appear to any that shall read the treatise itself. In sect. 7—11. he takes here and there a sentence out of the treatise and examines it, interlacing his discourse with untrue reflections, surmises, and prognostications: and in particular, p. 238, 239. But what doth all this avail him in reference to his design in hand? not only before, but even since, his exceptions to the things then delivered, I am of the same mind that I was, without the least alteration. And in the viewing of what I had then asserted, I find nothing strange to me, but the sad discovery of what frame of spirit the charge proceeded from. Sect. 12. doth the whole work; there I acknowledge myself to be of the presbyterian judgment, and not of the independent or congregational. Had this reverend author thought meet to have confined his charge to this one quotation, he had prevented much evil that spreads itself over the rest of his discourse, and yet have attained the utmost of what he can hope for from the whole; and hereof I have already given an account. But he will yet proceed, and,

sect. 13. inform his reader, that in that treatise I aver, that two things are required in a teacher, as to formal ministerial teaching. 1. Gifts from God. 2. Authority from the church: well! what then? I am of the same mind still: but now I cry down ordination by presbytery; what, and is not this a great alteration and sign of inconstancy? Truly, sir, there is more need of humiliation in yourself, than triumphing against me; for the assertion is most untrue, and your charge altogether groundless; which I desire you would be satisfied in, and not to be led any more by evil surmises, to wrong me, and your own soul. He adds, sect. 14. two cautions, which in that treatise I give to private Christians in the exercise of their gifts, and closeth the last of them with a juvenile epiphonema, divinely spoken, and like a true presbyterian: and yet there is not one word in either of these cautions that I do not still own and allow; which confirms the unhappiness of the charge. Of all that is substantial in any thing that follows, I affirm the same, as to all that which is gone before. Only as to the liberty to be allowed unto them which meet in private, who cannot in conscience join in the celebration of public ordinances, as they are performed amongst us, I confess myself to be otherwise minded at present, than the words there quoted by this author do express. But this is nothing to the difference between presbytery and independency: and he that can glory, that in fourteen years he hath not altered or improved in his conception of some things, of no greater importance than that mentioned, shall not have me for his rival. And this is the sum of Mr. C.'s appendix; the discourse whereof being carried on with such a temper of spirit as it is, and suited to the advantage aimed at, by so many evil surmises, false suggestions, and uncharitable reflections, I am persuaded the taking of that pains, will one day be no joy of heart unto him.

CHAP. III.

A review of the charger's preface.

HIS first chapter consists for the most part in a repetition of my words, or so much of the discourse of my first chapter as he could wrest, by cutting off one, and another parcel of it from its coherence in the whole, with the interposure of glosses of his own, to serve him to make biting reflections upon them with whom he hath to deal. How unbecoming such a course of procedure is, for a person of his worth, gravity, and profession, [perhaps his *δευτέραι φροντίδες*, have by this time convinced him. If men have a mind to perpetuate controversies unto an endless, fruitless reciprocation of words and cavils; if to provoke to easy and facile retortions; if to heighten and aggravate differences beyond any hope of reconciliation, they may do well to deal after this manner with the writings of one another. Mr. C. knows how easy it were to make his own words dress him up in all those ornaments wherein he labours to make me appear in the world, by such glosses, inversions, additions, and interpositions, as he is pleased to make use of; but ‘*meliora speramus.*’ Such particulars that seem to be of any importance to our business in hand, may be remarked as we pass through it: p. 1. he tells us the Donatists had two principles. 1. That they were the only church of Christ in a corner of Africa, and left no church in the world but their own. 2. That none were truly baptized, or entered members of the church of Christ, but by some minister of their party.⁸ These principles, he says, are again improved by men of another party: whom though yet he name not, yet it is evident whom he intends; and p. 3. he requires my judgment of those principles.

Because I would not willingly be wanting in any thing that may tend to his satisfaction, though I have some reason to conjecture at my unhappiness in respect of the event; I shall with all integrity give him my thoughts of the principles expressed above.

1. Then, if they were considered in reference to the Donatists who owned them, I say, they were wicked, corrupt, erroneous principles, tending to the disturbance of the com-

munition of saints, and everting all the rules of love that our Lord Jesus Christ hath given to his disciples and servants to observe; if he intend my judgment of them in reference to the churches of England, which he calls independent, I am sorry that he should think he hath any reason to make this inquiry. I know not that man in the world who is less concerned in obtaining countenance to those principles than I am. Let them who are so ready on all occasions, or provocations, to cast abroad the solemn forms of reproach, schismatics, sectaries, heretics, and the like, search their own hearts as to a conformity of spirit unto these principles. It is not what men say, but what men do, that they shall be judged by. As the Donatists were not the first who in story were charged with schism, no more was their schism confined to Africa. The agreement of multitudes in any principles, makes it in itself not one whit better, and in effect worse. For my part, I acknowledge the churches in England, Scotland, and France, Helvetia, the Netherlands, Germany, Greece, Muscovia, &c. as far as I know of them, to be true churches; such, for aught I know, may be in Italy or Spain; and what pretence or colour this reverend person hath to fix a contrary persuasion upon me, with so many odious imputations and reflections, of being one of the restorers of all lost churches, and the like, I profess I know not. These things will not be peace in the latter end; shall the sword devour for ever? I dare not suppose that he will ask, why then do I separate from them? he hath read my book of schism, wherein I have undeniably proved, that I have separated from none of them, and I am loath to say, though I fear before the close of my discourse I shall be compelled to it, that this reverend author hath answered a matter before he understood it, and confuted a book, whose main and chief design he did not once apprehend. The rest of this chapter is composed of reflections upon me from my own words wrested at his pleasure, and added to according to the purpose in hand, and the taking for granted unto that end that they are in the right, we in the wrong, that their churches are true churches, and yet not esteemed so by me, that we have separated from those churches, with such like easy suppositions. He is troubled that I thought the mutual chargings of each other with schism, between the Presbyterians and Independents, was as to its

heat abated and ready to vanish : wherein he hath invincibly compelled me to acknowledge my mistake ; and I assure him I am heartily sorry that I was mistaken, it will not be somebody's joy one day that I was so. He seems to be offended with my notion of schism, because if it be true, it will carry it almost out of the world, and bless the churches with everlasting peace. He tells me, that a learned doctor said ' my book was one great schism ;' I hope that is but one doctor's opinion ; because, being nonsense, it is not fit it should be entertained by many. In the process of his discourse, he culls out sundry passages, delivered by me in reference to the great divisions and differences that are in the world among men professing the name of Christ, and applies them to the difference between the Presbyterians and Independents, with many notable lashes in his way ; when they were very little in my thoughts, nor are the things spoken by me in any tolerable measure applicable to them. I suppose no rational man will expect that I should follow our reverend author in such ways and paths as these ; it were easy in so doing to enter into an endless maze of words, to little purpose, and I have no mind to deal with him as he hath done by me, I like not the copy so well as to write by it ; so his first chapter is discussed, and forgiven.

CHAP. IV.

Of the nature of schism.

THE second chapter of my book, whose examination this author undertakes in the second of his, containing the foundation of many inferences that ensue, and in particular of that description of schism which he intends to oppose, it might have been expected, that he should not have culled out passages at his pleasure to descant upon, but either have transcribed the whole, or at least under one view have laid down clearly what I proposed to confirmation, that the state of the controversy being rightly formed, all might understand what we say, and whereof we do affirm : but he thought better of another way of procedure, which I am now bound to allow him

in; the reason whereof he knows, and other men may conjecture.

The first words he fixes on are the first of the chapter, ‘The thing whereof we treat being a disorder in the instituted worship of God;’ whereunto he replies, ‘It is an ill sign or omen, to stumble at the threshold in going out; these words are ambiguous, and may have a double sense, either that schism is to be found in matter of instituted worship only, or only in the differences made in the time of celebrating instituted worship; and neither of these is yet true, or yet proved, and so a mere begging of the thing in question: for,’ saith he, ‘schism may be in, and about, other matter besides instituted worship.’

What measure I am to expect for the future from this entrance or beginning, is not hard to conjecture. The truth is, the reverend author understood me not at all, in what I affirmed: I say not, that schism in the church is either about instituted worship, or only in the time of worship, but that the thing I treat of, is a disorder in the instituted worship of God, and so it is, if the being and constitution of any church be a part of God’s worship; but when men are given to disputing, they think it incumbent on them to question every word and expression, that may possible give them an advantage: but we must, now we are engaged, take all in good part as it comes. Having nextly granted my request of standing to the sole determination of Scripture, in the controversy about the nature of schism, he insists on the Scripture use and notion of the word, according to what I had proposed; only in the metaphorical sense of the word, as applied unto civil and political bodies, he endeavours to make it appear, that it doth not only denote the difference and division that falls among them in judgment, but their secession also into parties; which though he proves not from any of the instances produced, yet because he may not trouble himself any farther in the like kind of needless labour, I do here inform him, that if he suppose that I deny that to be a schism, where there is a separation, and that because there is a separation, as though schism were in its whole nature exclusive of all separation, and lost its being when separation ensued, he hath taken my mind as rightly, as he has done the whole design of my book, and my sense in his first animadversions

on this chapter. But yet, because this is not proved, I shall desire him not to make use of it for the future as though it were so. The first place urged, is that of John vii. 43. ‘There was a schism among the people:’ it is not pretended that here was any separation: Acts xiv. 4. ‘the multitude of the city was divided,’ that is, in their judgment about the apostles and their doctrine; but not only so, for οἱ μὲν ἦσαν, is spoken of them, which expresses their separation into parties: what weight this new criticism is like to find with others, I know not; for my part, I know the words enforce not the thing aimed at, and the utmost that seems to be intended by that expression, is the siding of the multitude, some with one, some with another, whilst they were all in a public commotion, nor doth the context require any more. The same is the case, Acts, xxiii. 7. where the Sadducees and Pharisees were divided about Paul, whilst abiding in the place where the sanhedrim sat, being divided into parties long before; and in the testimony cited in my margent for the use of the word in other authors, the author makes even that διεμερίσθησαν εἰς τὰ μέρη, to stand in opposition, only to ὁμονοήσαν, nor was it any more. There was not among the people of Rome such a separation as to break up the corporation, or to divide the government, as is known from the story. The place of his own producing, Acts xix. 9. proves indeed that then and there, there was a separation, but as the author confesses in the margent, the word there used to express it hath no relation to σχίσμα. Applied to ecclesiastical things, the reverend author confesses with me, that the word is only used in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xi. 18, 19. and therefore, that from thence the proper use and importance of it is to be learned. Having laid down the use of the word to denote difference of mind and judgment, with troubles ensuing thereupon, amongst men met in some one assembly about the compassing of a common end and design, I proceed to the particular accommodation of it, to church-rents and schism in that solitary instance given of it in the church of Corinth. What says our author hereunto? Says he, p. 26. ‘This is a forestalling the reader’s judgment, by a mere begging of the thing in question: as it hath in part been proved from the Scripture itself, where it is used for separation into parties, in the political use of the word, why it may not so be

used in the ecclesiastical sense, I see no reason.' But if this be the way of begging the question, I confess I know not what course to take to prove what I intend. Such words are used sometimes in warm disputes causelessly; it were well they were placed where there is some pretence for them; certainly they will not serve every turn. Before I asserted the use of the word, I instanced in all the places where it is used, and evinced the sense of it from them: if this be begging, it is not that lazy trade of begging which some use; but such as a man had as good professedly work as follow. How well he hath disproved this sense of the word from Scripture, we have seen; I am not concerned in his seeing no reason why it may not be used in the ecclesiastical sense, according to his conception, my inquiry was how it was used, not how it might be used in this reverend author's judgment. And this is the substance of all that is offered to overthrow that principle, which if it abide and stand, he must needs confess all his following pains to be to no purpose. He sees no reason but it may be as he says.

After the declaration of some such suspicions of his, as we are now wonted unto, and which we cannot deny him the liberty of expressing, though I profess he do it unto my injury, he says, 'this is the way on the one hand to free all church-separation from schism, and on the other to make all particular churches more or less inschismatical;' well, the first is denied; what is offered for the confirmation of the second? saith he, 'what one congregation almost is there in the world, where there are not differences of judgment, whence ensue many troubles about the compassing of one common end and design. I doubt whether his own be free therefore.' If any testimony may remove his scruple, I assure him, through the grace of God, hitherto it hath been so, and I hope it is so with multitudes of other churches; those with whom it is otherwise, it will appear at last to be more or less blameable on the account of schism.

Omitting my farther explication of what I had proposed, he passes unto p. 27. of my book, and thence transcribes these words: 'they had differences among themselves about unnecessary things, on these they engaged into disputes and sidings even in the solemn assemblies, probably much vain janglings, alienation of affections, exasperations of

spirit, with a neglect of due offices of love ensued hereupon ;' whereunto he subjoins, 'that the apostle charges this upon them is true, but was that all? were there not divisions into parties as well as in judgments? we shall consider that ere long.' But I am sorry he hath waved this proper place of the consideration of this important assertion; the truth is, '*hic pes figendus*,' if he remove not this position, he labours in vain for the future. I desire also to know what he intends by divisions into parties; if he intend that some were of one party, some of another, in these divisions and differences, it is granted; there can be no difference in judgment amongst men, but they must on that account be divided into parties; but if he intend thereby, that they divided into several churches, assemblies, or congregations, any of them setting up new churches on a new account, or separating from the public assemblies of the church whereof they were, and that their so doing is reprov'd by the apostle under the name of schism, then I tell him that this is that indeed whose proof is incumbent on him. Fail he herein, the whole foundation of my discourse continues firm and unshaken; the truth is, I cannot meet with any one attempt to prove this, which alone was to be proved, if he intended that I should be any farther concerned in his discourse, than only to find myself reviled and abused.

Passing over what I produce to give light and evidence unto my assertion, he proceeds to the consideration of the observations and inferences I make upon it, p. 29. and onward.

The first he insists upon is, that the thing mentioned is entirely in one church, amongst the members of one particular society; no mention is made of one church divided against another, or separated from another.

To this he replies, 1. 'That the church of Corinth, was a collective church, made up of many congregations, and that I myself confess they had solemn assemblies, not one assembly only; that I beg the question by taking it for one single congregation.' But I suppose one particular congregation may have more than one solemn assembly, even as many, as are the times, wherein they solemnly assemble.

2. I supposed I had proved that it was only one congregation, that used to assemble in one place, that the apo-

stle charged this crime upon, and that this reverend author was pleased to overlook what was produced to that purpose, I am not to be blamed. 3. Here is another discovery, that this reverend person never yet clearly understood the design of my treatise, nor the principles I proceed upon. Doth he think it is any thing to my present business, whether the church of Corinth were such a church as Presbyterians suppose it to be, or such a one as the Independents affirm it? whilst all acknowledge it to be one church, be that particular church of what kind it will, if the schism rebuked by the apostle consisted in division in it, and not in separation from it, as such, I have evinced all that I intended by the observation under consideration. Yet this he again pursues, and tells me, 'that there were more particular churches in and about Corinth, as that at Cenchrea, and that their differences were not confined to the verge of one church (for there were differences abroad out of the church), and says, that at unawares I confess that they disputed from house to house, and in the public assemblies;' but I will assure the reverend author I was aware of what I said. Is it possible he should suppose that by the verge of one church I intended the meeting place, and the assembly therein? was it at all incumbent on me to prove that they did not manage their differences in private, as well as in public? is it likely any such thing should be? did I deny that they sided and made parties about their divisions and differences? is it any thing to me, or to any thing I affirm, how, where, and when, they managed their disputes, and debated their controversies? it is true there is mention of a church at Cenchrea, but is there any mention that that church made any separation from the church of Corinth? or that the differences mentioned were between the members of these several churches? is it any thing to my present design, though there were twenty particular congregations in Corinth, supposing that on any consideration they were one church? I assure you, sir, I am more troubled with your not understanding the business and design I manage, than I am with all your reviling terms you have laden me withal.

Once for all, unless you prove that there was a separation from that church of Corinth (be it of what constitution

it may by any be supposed) as such, into another church, and that this is reproved by the apostle under the name of schism, you speak not one word to invalidate the principle by me laid down; and for what he adds, 'that for what I say there was no one church divided against another, or separated from another, is assumed, but not proved, unless by a negative, which is invalid;' he wrests my words. I say not there was no such thing, but that there was no mention of any such thing; for though it be as clear as the noonday, that indeed there was no such thing, it sufficeth my purpose that there was no mention of any such thing, and therefore no such thing reproved under the name of schism. With this one observation, I might well dismiss the whole ensuing treatise, seeing of how little use it is like to prove, as to the business in hand, when the author of it indeed apprehends not the principle which he pretends to oppose. I shall once more tell him, that he abide not in his mistake, that if he intend to evert the principle here by me insisted on, it must be by a demonstration that the schism charged on the Corinthians by Paul consisted in the separation from, and relinquishment of, that church whereof they were members, and congregating into another not before erected or established; for this is that which the reformed churches are charged to do by the Romanists, in respect of their churches, and accused of schism thereupon: But the differences which he thinks good to manage and maintain, with, and against the Independents, do so possess the thoughts of this reverend author, that whatever occurs to him, is immediately measured by the regard which it seems to bear, or may possibly bear thereunto, though that consideration were least of all regarded in its proposal.

The next observation upon the former thesis that he takes into his examination, so far as he is pleased to transcribe it, is this: 'Here is no mention of any particular man or number of men separating from the assembly of the whole church, or subducting of themselves from its power; only they had groundless causeless differences amongst themselves.' Hereunto our author variously replies, and says, 1. 'Was this all? were not separations made, if not from that church, yet in that church as well as divisions? Let the Scripture determine;' chap. i. 11. v. 3. 'I am a dis-

ciple of Paul said one, and I a disciple of Apollos said another, in our language : I am a member of such a minister's congregation, says one, such a man for my money, and so a third ; and hereupon they most probably separated themselves into such and such congregations, and is not separation the ordinary issue of such envyings ?'

I doubt not but that our reverend author supposeth that he hath here spoken to the purpose, and matter in hand ; and so perhaps may some others think also. I must crave leave to enter my dissent upon the account of the ensuing reasons ; for, 1. It is not separation in the church by men's divisions and differences whilst they continue members of the same church, that I deny to be here charged under the name of schism, but such a separation from the church, as was before described. 2. The disputes amongst them about Paul and Apollos, the instruments of their conversion cannot possibly be supposed to relate unto ministers of distinct congregations among them. Paul and Apollos were not so, and could not be figures of them that were, so that those expressions do not at all answer those which he is pleased to make parallel unto them. 3. Grant all this, yet this proves nothing to the cause in hand ; men may cry up some the minister of one congregation, some of another, and yet neither of them separate from the one, or other, or the congregations themselves fall into any separation ; wherefore, 4. he says, 'probably they separated into such and such congregations.' But this is most improbable ; for first, there is no mention at all of those many congregations that are supposed, but rather the contrary, as I have declared, is expressly asserted. 2. There is no such thing mentioned or intimated, nor, 3. Are they in the least rebuked for any such thing, though the forementioned differences, which are a less evil, are reprov'd again and again, under the name of schism ; so that this most improbable improbability, or rather vain conjecture, is a very mean refuge and retreat from the evidence of express Scripture, which in this place is alone inquired after. Doth indeed the reverend author think, will he pretend so to do, that the holy apostle should so expressly, weightily, and earnestly, reprove their dissensions in the church, whereof they were members, and yet not speak one word, or give the least in-

timation of their separation from the church; had there indeed been any such thing? I dare leave this to the conscience of the most partially-addicted person under heaven, to the author's cause, who hath any conscience at all; nor dare I dwell longer on the confutation of this fiction, though it be upon the matter the whole of what I am to contend withal. But he farther informs us, that 'there was a separation to parties in the church of Corinth, at least as to one ordinance of the Lord's supper, as appears, chap. xi. 18. 21—23. and this was part of their schism; ver. 16. And not long after they separated into other churches, slighting and undervaluing the first ministers and churches as nothing or less pure than their own, which we see practised sufficiently at this day.' *Ans.* Were not this the head and seat of the first part of the controversy insisted on, I should not be able to prevail with myself, to cast away precious time in the consideration of such things as these, being tendered as suitable to the business in hand. It is acknowledged that there were differences amongst them, and disorders in the administration of the Lord's supper; that therein they used 'respect of persons,' as the place quoted in the margin by our author, James ii. 1—3. manifests that they were ready to do in other places. The disorder the apostle blames in the administration of the ordinances was, when they 'came together in the church,' ver. 18. when they 'came together in one place,' ver. 20. there they tarried 'not one for another' as they ought, ver. 33. but coming unprepared, some having eaten before, some being hungry, ver. 21. all things were managed with great confusion amongst them, ver. 22; and if this prove not, that the schism they were charged withal consisted in a separation from that church with which they came together in one place, we are hopeless of any farther evidence to be tendered to that purpose. That there were disorders amongst them in the celebration of the Lord's supper is certain; that they separated into several congregations on that account, or one from another, or any from all, is not in the least intimation signified; but the plain contrary shines in the whole state of things, as there represented. Had that been done, and had so to do been such an evil as is pleaded (as causelessly to do it is no small evil), it had not passed

unreproved from him, who was resolved in the things of God not to spare them. 2. That they afterward fell into the separation aimed at to be asserted, our reverend author affirms, that so he may make way for a reflection on the things of his present disquietment. But as we are not as yet concerning ourselves in what they did afterward, so when we are, we shall expect somewhat more than bare affirmations for the proof of it; being more than ordinarily confident, that he is not able from the Scripture, or any other story of credit, to give the least countenance to what he here affirms. But now as if the matter were well discharged, when there hath not one word been spoken, that in the least reaches the case in hand; he saith, 3. 'By way of supposition that there was but one single congregation at Corinth, yet,' said he, 'the apostle dehorts the brethren from schism, and writes to more than the church of Corinth,' chap. i. 2. *Ans.* I have told him before, that though I am full well resolved that there was but one single congregation at Corinth in those days, yet I am not at all convinced as to the proposition under confirmation to assert any such thing, but will suppose the church to be of what kind my author pleaseth, whilst he will acknowledge it to be the particular church of Corinth. I confess the apostle dehorts the brethren from schism, even others as well as those at Corinth, so far as the church of God, in all places and ages, are concerned in his instructions and dehortations, when they fall under the case stated, parallel with that which is the ground of his dealing with them at Corinth; but what that schism was from which he dehorts them, he declares only in the instance of the church of Corinth; and thence is the measure of it to be taken, in reference to all dehorted from it. Unto the third observation added by me, he makes no return, but only lays down some exceptions to the exemplification given of the whole matter, in another schism that fell out in that church about forty years after the composition of this, which was the occasion of that excellent epistle unto them from the church of Rome, called the epistle of Clement; dissuading them from persisting in that strife and contention, and pressing them to unity and agreement among themselves. Some things our reverend author offers as to this instance, but so, as that I cannot but sup-

pose, that he consulted not the epistle on this particular occasion; and therefore now I desire him that he would do so, and I am persuaded he will not a second time give countenance to any such apprehension of the then state of the church, as though there were any separation made from it by any of the members thereof, doing or suffering the injury there complained of, about which those differences and contentions arose. I shall not need to go over again the severals of that epistle; one word mentioned by myself, namely, μεταγάγετε, he insists on, and informs us, that it implies a separation into other assemblies; which he says, I waved to understand. I confess I did so in this place, and so would he also, if he had once consulted it. The speech of the church of Rome is there to the church of Corinth, in reference to the elders whom they had deposed. The whole sentence is, ὁρῶμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐνίους ὑμεῖς μεταγάγετε καλῶς πολιτευομένους ἐκ τῆς ἀμέπτως αὐτοῖς τετιμημένης λειτουργίας· and the words immediately going before are, μακάριοι οἱ προοδοιορήσαντες πρεσβύτεροι οἵτινες ἔγκαρπον καὶ τελείαν ἔχον τὴν ἀνάλυσιν, οὐ γὰρ ἐλάβοῦνται μὴ τίς αὐτοὺς μεταστήσῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδρομένου αὐτοῖς τόπου: then follows that ὁρῶμεν δὲ. Our author, I suppose, understands Greek, and so I shall spare my pains of transcribing Mr. Young's Latin translation, or adding one in English of mine own; and if he be pleased to read these words, I think we shall have no more of his μεταγάγετε.

If a fair opportunity call me forth to the farther management of this controversy, I shall not doubt but from that epistle, and some other pieces of undoubted antiquity, as the epistle of the church of Vienna and Lyons, of Smyrna, with some public records of those days, as yet preserved, worthy all of them to be written in letters of gold, to evince that state of the churches of Christ in those days, as will give abundant light to the principles I proceed upon in this whole business.

And thus have I briefly vindicated what was proposed as the precise Scripture notion of schism, against which indeed not any one objection hath been raised, that speaks directly to the thing in hand. Our reverend author being full of warm affections against the Independents, and exercised greatly in disputing the common principles which either

they hold, or are supposed so to do; measures every thing that is spoken by his apprehension of those differences, wherein as he thinks their concernment doth lie: had it not been for some such prejudice (for I am unwilling to ascribe it to more blameable principles), it would have been almost impossible that he should have once imagined that he had made the least attempt towards the eversion of what I had asserted; much less that he had made good the title of his book, though he scarce forgets it, or any thing concerning it but its proof, in any one whole leaf of his treatise. It remains then that the nature and notion of schism, as revealed and described in the Scripture, was rightly fixed in my former discourse; and I must assure this reverend author, that I am not affrighted from the embracing and maintaining of it, with those scarecrows of new light, singularity, and the like, which he is pleased frequently to set up to that purpose. The discourse that ensues in our author concerning a parity of reason, to prove that if that be schism, then much more is separation so, shall afterward, if need be, be considered, when I proceed to shew what yet farther may be granted without the least prejudice of truth, though none can necessitate me to recede from the precise notion of the name and thing delivered in the Scripture. I confess I cannot but marvel, that any man undertaking the examination of that treatise, and expressing so much indignation at the thoughts of my discourse that lieth in this business, should so slightly pass over that, whereon he knew that I laid the great weight of the whole. Hath he so much as endeavoured to prove, that that place to the Corinthians is not the only place wherein there is in the Scripture any mention of schism in an ecclesiastical sense; or that the church of Corinth was not a particular church. Is any thing of importance offered to impair the assertion, that the evil reprov'd was within the verge of that church, and without separation from it? and do I need any more to make good to the utmost that which I have asserted: but of these things afterward.

In all that follows to the end of this chapter, I meet with nothing of importance that deserves farther notice: that which is spoken is for the most part built upon mistakes; as that when I speak of a member or the members of one par-

ticular church, I intend only one single congregation, exclusively to any other acceptation of that expression, in reference to the apprehension of others: that I deny the reformed churches to be true churches, because I deny the church of Rome to be so; and deny the institution of a national church, which yet our author pleads not for. He would have it for granted that because schism consists in a difference among church-members, therefore he that raises such a difference, whether he be a member of that church wherein the difference is raised, or of any other or no (suppose he be a Mahometan or a Jew), is a schismatic: pleads for the old definition of schism, as suitable to the Scripture, after the whole foundation of it is taken away: wrests many of my expressions; as that in particular, in not making the matter of schism to be things relating to the worship of God, to needless discourses about doctrine and discipline, not apprehending what I intended by that expression of the worship of God: and I suppose it not advisable to follow him in such extravagancies. The usual aggravations of schism he thought good to reinforce, whether he hoped that I would dispute with him about them I cannot tell. I shall now assure him that I will not, though if I may have his good leave to say so, I lay much more weight on those insisted on by myself, wherein I am encouraged by his approbation of them.

CHAP. V.

THE third chapter of my Treatise consisting in the preventing and removing such objections as the precedent discourse might seem liable and obnoxious unto, is proposed to examination, by our reverend author, in the third chapter of his book; and the objections mentioned undertaken to be managed by him; with what success, some few considerations will evince.

The first objection by me proposed, was taken from the common apprehension of the nature of schism, and the issue of stating it as by me laid down; namely, hence it would

follow that the 'separation of any man or men from a true church, or of one church from others, is not schism.' But now waving for the present the more large consideration of the name and thing, which yet in the process of my discourse I do condescend upon, according to the principle laid down; I say that in the precise signification of the word, and description of the thing as given by the Holy Ghost, this is true: no such separation is in the Scripture so called, or so accounted; whether it may not in a large sense be esteemed as such, I do not dispute, yea, I afterward grant it so far, as to make that concession the bottom and foundation of my whole plea, for the vindication of the reformed churches from that crime. Our reverend author reinforces the objection by sundry instances; as, 1. 'That he hath disproved that sense or precise signification of the word in Scripture;' how well let the reader judge. 2. 'That supposing that to be the only sense mentioned in that case of the Corinthians, yet may another sense be intimated in Scripture, and deduced by regular and rational consequence.' Perhaps this will not be so easy an undertaking, this being the only place where the name is mentioned, or thing spoken of in an ecclesiastical sense; but when any proof is tendered of what is here affirmed, we shall attend unto it. It is said indeed, that if 'separation in judgment in a church be a schism, much more to separate from a church:' but our question is about the precise notion of the word in Scripture, and consequences from thence, not about consequents from the nature of things, concerning which, if our author had been pleased to have staid awhile, he would have found me granting as much as he could well desire. 3. 1 John ii. 19. is sacrificed, ἀμετρίῳ τῆς ἀνθορκῆς, and interpreted of schism; where (to make one venture in imitation of our author) all orthodox interpreters, and writers of controversies, expound it of apostacy; neither will the context or arguing of the apostle admit of another exposition. Men's wresting of Scripture to give countenance to inveterate errors is one of their worst concomitants; so then that separation from churches is oftentimes evil is readily granted: of what nature that evil is, with what are the aggravations of it, a judgment is to be made from the pleas and pretences that its circumstances affords: so far as

it proceeds from such dissensions as before were mentioned, so far it proceeds from schism, but in its own nature absolutely considered it is not so.

To render my former assertions the more unquestionably evident, I consider the several accounts given of men's blameable departures from any church or churches mentioned in Scripture, and manifest that none of them come under the head of schism. Apostacy, irregularity of walking, and professed sensuality, are the heads whereunto all blameable departures from the churches in the Scripture are referred.

That there are other accounts of this crime, our author doth not assert; he only says, that 'all or some of the places' I produce, as 'instances of a blameable separation from a church, do mind the nature of schism as precedaneous to the separation.' Whatever the matter is, I do not find him speaking so faintly and with so much caution through his whole discourse as in this place: all or some do it; they mind the nature of schism; they mind it as precedaneous to the separation: so the sum of what he aims at in contesting about the exposition of those places of Scripture is this; some of them do mind (I know not how) the nature of schism, which he never once named as precedaneous to separation; therefore the precise notion of schism in the Scripture doth not denote differences and divisions in a church only; 'quod erat demonstrandum.' That I should spend time in debating a consideration so remote from the state of the controversy in hand, I am sure will not be expected by such as understand it.

Page 77. [p. 149.] of my treatise I affirm, 'that for a man to withdraw or withhold himself from the communion external and visible of any church or churches, on that pretension or plea (be it true or otherwise) that the worship, doctrine, or discipline instituted by Christ is corrupted among them, with which corruption he dares not defile himself, is nowhere in the Scripture called schism; nor is that case particularly exemplified, or expressly supposed, whereby a judgment may be made of the fact at large, but we are left, upon the whole matter, to the guidance of such general rules and principles as are given us for that end and purpose.' Such is my meanness of apprehension, that I could not understand

but that either this assertion must be subscribed unto, as of irrefragable verity, or else that instances to the contrary must have been given out of the Scripture; for on that hinge alone doth this present controversy (and that by consent) turn itself. But our reverend author thinks good to take another course (for which his reasons may easily be conjectured), and excepts against the assertion itself in general: first, as ambiguous and fallacious; and then also intimates that he will scan the words in particular, ‘*Mihi jussa capessere,*’ &c. 1. He says, that ‘I tell not whether a man may separate where there is corruption in some one of these only, or in all of them; nor, 2. How far some or all of these must be corrupted before we separate.’ *Ans.* This is no small vanity under the sun, that men will not only measure themselves by themselves, but others also by their own measure. Our author is still with his finger in the sore, and therefore supposes that others must needs take the same course. Is there any thing in my assertion whether a man may separate from any church or no? any thing upon what corruption he may lawfully so do? any thing of stating the difference betwixt the Presbyterians and Independents? do I at all fix it on this foot of account when I come so to do? I humbly beg of this author, that if I have so obscurely and intricately delivered myself and meaning, that he cannot come to the understanding of my design, nor import of my expressions, that he would favour me with a command to explain myself, before he engage into a public refutation of what he doth not so clearly apprehend. Alas, I do not in this place in the least intend to justify any separation, nor to shew what pleas are sufficient to justify a separation, nor what corruption in the church separated from is necessary thereunto, nor at all regard the controversy his eye is always on; but only declare what is not comprised in the precise Scripture notion of schism, as also how a judgment is to be made of that which is so by me excluded, whether it be good or evil. Would he have been pleased to have spoken to the business in hand, or any thing to the present purpose, it must not have been by an inquiry into the grounds and reasons of separation, how far it may be justified by the plea mentioned, or how far not; when that plea is to be allowed, and when rejected; but

this only was incumbent on him to prove; namely, that such a separation upon that plea, or the like, is called schism in the Scripture, and as such a thing condemned. What my concernment is in the ensuing observations, 'that the Judaical church was as corrupt as ours, that if a bare plea, true or false, will serve to justify men, all separatists may be justified,' he himself will easily perceive. But however, I cannot but tell him by the way, that he who will dogmatize, in this controversy, from the Judaical church, and the course of proceedings amongst them, to the direction and limitation of duty as to the churches of the gospel, considering the vast and important differences between the constitutions of the one and the other, with the infallible obligation to certain principles, on the account of the typical institution in that primitive church, when there neither was nor could be any more in the world, must expect to bring other arguments to compass his design, than the analogy pretended. For the justification of separatists of the reason, if it will ensue, upon the examination for separation, and the circumstances of the separating, whereunto I refer them, let it follow, and let who will complain. But to fill up the measure of the mistake he is engaged in, he tells us, p. 75. 'that this is the pinch of the question, whether a man or a company of men may separate from a true church, upon a plea of corruption in it, true or false, and set up another church, as to ordinances, renouncing that church to be a true church. This,' saith he, 'is plainly our case at present, with the doctor and his associates.' Truly I do not know that ever I was necessitated to a more sad and fruitless employment in this kind of labour and travail. Is that the question in present agitation? is any thing, word, tittle, or iota spoken to it? is it my present business to state the difference between the Presbyterians and Independents? do I any where do it upon this account? do I not every where positively deny that there is any such separation made? nay, can common honesty allow such a state of a question, if that were the business in hand, to be put upon me? are their ordinances and churches so denied by me as is pretended? What I have often said, must again be repeated; the reverend author hath his eye so fixed on the difference between the Presbyterians and the Independents, that he is

at every turn led out of the way into such mistakes, as it was not possible he should otherwise be overtaken withal; this is perhaps '*mentis gratissimus error*:' but I hope it would be no death to him to be delivered from it. When I laid down the principles which it was his good will to oppose, I had many things under consideration, as to the settling of conscience in respect of manifold oppositions; and to tell him the truth, least valued that which he is pleased to manage, and to look upon as my sole intendment: if it be not possible to deliver him from this strong imagination, that carries the images and species of independency always before his eyes, we shall scarce speak '*ad idem*' in this whole discourse. I desire then that he would take notice, that as the state of the controversy he proposes, doth no more relate to that which peculiarly is pretended to lie under his consideration, than any other thing whatever that he might have mentioned; so when the peculiar difference between him and the Independents comes to be managed, scarce any one term of his state will be allowed. Exceptions are in the next place attempted to be put in to my assertion; that there is no example in the Scripture of any one church's departure from the union which they ought to hold with others, unless it be in some of their departures from the common faith, which is not schism; much with the same success as formerly: let him produce one instance, and, '*en herbam*.' I grant the Roman church, on a supposition that it is a church (which yet I utterly deny), to be a schismatical church upon the account of the intestine divisions of all sorts: on what other accounts other men urge them with the same guilt, I suppose he knows by this, that I am not concerned. Having finished this exploit, because I had said, if I were unwilling, I did not understand how I might be compelled to carry on the notion of schism any farther; he tells me, 'though I be unwilling, he doubts not but to be able to compel me.' But who told him I was unwilling so to do? do I not immediately, without any compulsion, very freely fall upon the work? did I say I was unwilling? Certainly it ought not to be thus. Of his abilities in other things I do not doubt; in this discourse he is pleased to exercise more of something else.

There is but one passage more that needs to be remarked,

and so this chapter also is dismissed. He puts in a caveat that I limit not schism to the worship of God, upon these words of mine : ‘The consideration of what sort of union in reference to the worship of God’ (where he inserts in the repetition, ‘mark that’), ‘as instituted by Jesus Christ, is the foundation of what I have farther to offer;’ whereto he subjoined ‘the design of this is, that he may have a fair retreat, when he is charged with breach of union, in other respects, and so with schism, to escape by this evasion : this breach of union is not in reference to the worship of God in one assembly met to that end.’ I wish we had once an end of these mistakes, and false uncharitable surmises. By the ‘worship of God,’ I intend the whole compass of institutions, and their tendency thereunto; and I know that I speak properly enough. In so doing I have no such design as I am charged withal, nor do I need it; I walk not in fear of this author’s forces, that I should be providing beforehand to secure my retreat. I have passed the bounds of the precise notion of schism before insisted on, and yet doubt not but, God assisting, to make good my ground. If he judge I cannot, let him command my personal attendance on him at any time, to be driven from it by him : let him by any means prove against me at any time a breach of any union instituted by Jesus Christ, and I will promise him, that with all speed I will retreat from that state, or thing, whereby I have so done. I must profess to this reverend author, that I like not the cause he manages one whit the better for the way whereby he manageth it. We had need watch and pray that we be not led into temptation; seeing we are in some measure not ignorant of the devices of Satan.

Now that he may see this door of escape shut up, that so he may not need to trouble himself any more in taking care lest I escape that way, when he intends to fall upon me with those blows which as yet I have not felt, I shall shut it fast myself, beyond all possibility of my opening again. I here then declare unto him, that whenever he shall prove that I have broken any union of the institution of Jesus Christ, of what sort soever, I will not in excuse of myself insist on the plea mentioned, but will submit to the discipline, which shall be thought meet by him to be exer-

cised towards any one offending in that kind : yet truly on this engagement I would willingly contract with him, that in his next reply he should not deal with me as he hath done in this, neither as to my person, nor as to the differences between us.

CHAP. VI.

HAVING declared and vindicated the Scripture proper notion of schism, and thence discovered the nature of it, with all its aggravations, with the mistakes that men have run into who have suited their apprehensions concerning it unto what was their interests to have it thought to be, and opened a way thereby for the furtherance of peace among professors of the gospel of Jesus Christ ; for the farther security of the consciences of men unjustly accused and charged with the guilt of this evil, I proceeded to the consideration of it in the usual common acceptation of the word and things, that so I might obviate whatever with any tolerable pretence is insisted on, as deduced by a parity of reason from what is delivered in the Scripture, in reference to the charge managed by some or other against all sorts of Protestants. Hereupon I grant, that it may be looked on in general as *διαίρεσις ἐνώτερος*, ‘ a branch of union,’ so that it be granted also, that that union be an union of the institution of Jesus Christ. To find out then the nature of schism under the consideration of the condescension made, and to discover wherein the guilt of it doth consist, it is necessary that we find out what that union is, and wherein it doth consist, whereof it is the breadth and interruption, or is supposed so to be, over and above the breach above-mentioned and described. Now this union being the union of the church, the several acceptations of the church in Scripture are to be investigated, that the union inquired after may be made known. The church in Scripture being taken either for the church catholic, or the whole number of elect believers in the world (for we lay aside the consideration of that part of this great family of God, which is already in heaven, from this distinction), or else for the general visible body of those who profess the gospel of Christ, or for a particular society joining

together in the celebration of the ordinances of the New Testament, instituted by Christ to be so celebrated by them. The union of it, with the breach of that union in these several respects, with the application of the whole to the business under consideration, was to be inquired after; which also was performed.

I began with the consideration of the catholic invisible church of Christ, and the union thereof. Having declared the rise of this distinction, and the necessity of it from the nature of the things themselves; as to the matter of this church, or the church of Christ as here militant on earth, I affirm, and evince it to be, all and only elect believers: the union of this church consists in the inhabitation of the same Spirit in all the members of it, uniting them to the head Christ Jesus, and therein to one another. The breach of this union, I manifested to consist in the loss of that Spirit, with all the peculiar consequences and effects of him in the hearts of them in whom he dwells. This I manifest according to our principles to be impossible; and upon a supposition of it, how remote it would be from schism, under any notion or acceptance of the word; so closing that discourse with a charge on the Romanists, of their distance from an interest in this church of Jesus Christ.

Our reverend author professes that he hath but little to say to these things; some exceptions he puts in unto some expressions used in the explication of my sense, in this particular. That which he chiefly insists upon, is the accommodation of that promise, Matt. xvi. 28. ‘Upon this rock will I build my church,’ to the church in this sense, which he concludes to belong to the visible church of professors. Now as I am not at all concerned, as to the truth of what I am in confirmation of, to which of these be applied, so I am far from being alone in that application of it to the catholic church which I insist upon: all our divines that from hence prove the perseverance of all individual believers, as all do that I have met withal, who write on that subject, are of the same mind with me. Moreover, the church is built on this rock in its individuals, or I know not how it is so built. The building on Christ, doth not denote a mere relation of a general body to his truth, that it shall always have an existence, but the union of the individuals with him, in their being

built on him, to whom the promise is made. I acknowledge it for as unquestionable a truth as any we believe, that Christ hath had, and ever shall have to the end of the world, a visible number of those that profess his name, and subjection to his kingdom; because of the necessary consequence of profession upon believing; but that that truth is intended in this promise, any farther but in respect of this consequence, I am not convinced. And I would be loth to say, that this promise is not made to every particular believer, and only unto them; being willing to vindicate to the saints of God, all those grounds of consolation which he is so willing they should be made partakers of.

As to the union of this church and the breach of it, our reverend author hath a little to say. Because there may be 'some decays in true grace in the members of this church,' he affirms, 'that in a sort there may be said to be a breach in this union, and so consequently a schism in this body.' He seemed formerly to be afraid lest all schism should be thrust out of the world: if he can retrieve it on the account of any true believer's failing in grace, or falling for a season, I suppose he needs not fear the loss of it, whilst this world continues. But it is fit wise and learned men should take the liberty of calling things by what names they please; so they will be pleased withal, not to impose their conceptions and use of terms on them who are not able to understand the reasons of them. It is true there may be a schism among the members of this church, but not as members of this church, nor with reference to the union thereof. It is granted that schism is the breach of union, but not of every union; much less not a breach of that, which, if there were a breach of, it were not schism. However, by the way, I am bold to tell this reverend author, that this doctrine of his concerning schism in the catholic invisible church, by the failings in grace in any of the members of it for a season, is a new notion; which as he cannot justify to us, because it is false, so I wonder how he will justify it to himself, because it is new. And what hath been obtained by the author against my principles in this chapter, I cannot perceive. The nature of the church in the state considered, is not opposed; the union asserted not disproved; the breach of that union is denied, as I suppose, no less by him than myself. That the instances

that some saints, as members of this church, may sometimes fail in grace more or less for some season; and that the members of this church, though not as members of this church, yet on other considerations, may be guilty of schism, concern not the business under debate, himself I hope is satisfied.

CHAP. VII.

OUR progress in the next place is to the consideration of the catholic church visible. Who are the members of this church, whereof it is constituted, what is required to make them so, on what account men visibly professing the gospel may be esteemed justly divested of the privilege of being members of this church, with sundry respects of the church in that sense, are in my treatise discussed. The union of this church, that is proper and peculiar unto it as such, I declared to be the profession of the saving doctrine of the gospel, not everted by any of the miscarriages, errors, or oppositions to it, that are there recounted. The breach of this union, I manifest to consist in apostacy from the profession of the faith, and so to be no schism, upon whomsoever the guilt of it doth fall: pleading the immunity of the Protestants as such from the guilt of the breach of this union, and charging it upon the Romanists, in all the ways whereby it may be broken, an issue is put to that discourse.

What course our reverend author takes in the examination of this chapter, and the severals of it, whereon the strength of the controversy doth lie, is now to be considered. Doth he deny this church to be a collection of all that are duly called Christians in respect of their profession? to be that great multitude, who throughout the world profess the doctrine of the gospel, and subjection to Jesus Christ? doth he deny the union of this church, or that whereby that great multitude are incorporated into one body as visible and professing, to be the profession of the saving doctrines of the gospel, and of subjection to Jesus Christ according to them? Doth he deny the dissolution of this union, as to the interest of any member by it in the body, to be by apostacy

from the profession of the gospel? Doth he charge that apostacy upon those whom he calls Independents, as such, or if he should, could he tolerably defend his charge? Doth he prove that the breach of this union is, under that formality, properly schism? nothing less, as far as I can gather. Might not then the trouble of this chapter have been spared? or shall I be necessitated to defend every expression in my book, though nothing at all to the main business under debate, or else independency must go for a great schism. I confess this is somewhat a hard law, and such as I cannot proceed in obedience unto it, without acknowledging his ability to compel me to go on farther than I am willing; yet I do it with this engagement, that I will so look to myself, that he shall never have that power over me any more; nor will I upon any compulsion of useless, needless cavils and exceptions do so again: so that in his reply he now knows how to order his affairs so, as to be freed from the trouble of a rejoinder.

His first attempt in this chapter is upon a short discourse of mine, in my process, which I profess not to be needful to the purpose in hand, relating to some later disputes about the nature of this church; wherein some had affirmed it to be a genus to particular churches, which are so many distinct species of it, and others that it was a totum made up of particular churches as its parts, both which in some sense I denied; partly out of a desire to keep off all debates about the things of God from being inwrapped and agitated in and under philosophical notions, and feigned terms of art, which hath exceedingly multiplied controversies in the world and rendered them endless, and doth more or less straiten or oppose every truth that is so dealt withal: partly because I evidently saw men deducing false consequents from the supposition of such notions of this church. For the first way, our reverend author lets it pass only with a remark upon my dissenting from Mr. Hooker, of New England, which he could not but note by the way, although he approves what I affirm. A worthy note! as though all the brethren of the presbyterian way, were agreed among themselves in all things of the like importance; or that I were in my judgment enthralled to any man or men, so that it should deserve

a note when I dissent from them. Truly, I bless God, I am utterly unacquainted with any such frame of spirit, or bondage of mind, as must be supposed to be in them whose dissent from other men is a matter of such observation. One is my master, to whom alone my heart and judgment are in subjection: for the latter, I do not say absolutely that particular churches are not the parts of the catholic visible, in any sense, but that they are not so parts of it as such, so that it should be constituted and made up by them, and of them, for the order and purpose of an instituted church, for the celebration of the worship of God, and institutions of Christ, according to the gospel; which, when our author proves that it is, I shall acknowledge myself obliged to him. He says indeed, that 'it was once possible that all the members of the catholic church should meet together, to hear one sermon,' &c. But he is to prove that they were bound to do so, as that catholic church, and not that it was possible for all the members of it under any other notion or consideration so to convene. But he says, they are bound to do so still, but that the multitude makes it impossible: '*credat apella:*' that Christ hath bound his church to that which himself makes impossible. Neither are they so bound: they are bound, by his own acknowledgment, to be members of particular churches, and in that capacity are they bound so to convene, those churches being by the will of God appointed for the seat of ordinances. And so what he adds, in the next place, of particular churches being bound according to the institution of Christ to assemble for the celebration of ordinances, is absolutely destructive of the former figment. But he would know a reason why forty or more, that are not members of one particular church, but only of the catholic, meeting together, may not join together in all ordinances, as well as they may meet to hear the word preached, and often do; to which I answer, that it is because Jesus Christ hath appointed particular churches, and there is more required to them, than the occasional meeting of some, any, or all if possible, of the members of the catholic church as such, will afford.

His reflections upon myself, added in that place, are now grown so common, that they deserve not any notice. In his ensuing discourse, if I may take leave to speak freely to our

reverend author, he wrangles about terms and expressions, adding to, and altering those by me used in this business, at his pleasure, to make a talk to no purpose. The sum of what he pretends to oppose is, that this universal church, or the universality of professors, considered as such, neither formally as members of the church catholic, mystically elect, nor as any members of any particular church, have not as such, any church form of the institution of Christ, by virtue whereof they should make up one instituted church, for the end and purpose of the celebration of the ordinances of the gospel therein. If he suppose he can prove the contrary, let him cease from cavilling at words, and by expressions, which is a facile task for any man to engage in, and no way useful, but to make controversies endless, and answer my reasons against it, which here he passeth over, and produce his testimonies and arguments for that purpose. This trivial ventilation of particular passages cut off from their influence into the whole, is not worth a nut-shell, but is a business fit for them who have nothing else to employ themselves about.

Coming to consider the union that I assign to this church, after whose breach an inquiry is to be made, which is the main, and only thing of his concernment, as to the aim he hath proposed to himself, he passeth it over very slightly, taking no notice at all of my whole discourse, from p. 116. to p. 133. [pp. 169—178.] of my treatise, wherein I disprove the pretensions of other things to be the union, or bond of union to this church; he fixes a very little while on what I assign to be that union. This, I say, ‘is profession of the faith of the gospel, and subjection to Jesus Christ according to it:’ to which he adds, that they are bound to more than this, viz. ‘to the exercise of the same specifical ordinances, as also to love one another, to subjection to the same discipline, and where it is possible, to the exercise of the same numerical worship.’ All this was expressly affirmed by me before; it is all virtually contained in their profession, so far as the things mentioned are revealed in the gospel: only as to the celebrating of the same numerical ordinances, I cannot grant that they are obliged hereunto as formally considered members of that church, nor shall, until our reverend author shall think meet to prove, that particular congregations are

not the institutions of Jesus Christ. But hereupon he affirms, that that is a strange assertion used by me, p. 117. namely, ‘That if there be not an institution of joining in the same numerical ordinances, the union of this church is not really a church union.’ This is no more but what was declared before, nor more than what I urged the testimony of a learned Presbyterian for: no more but this, that the universality of Christians throughout the world, are not under such an institution as that, to assemble together for the celebration of the same numerical ordinances; the pretence of any such institution being supplied by Christ’s acknowledged institution of particular churches for that purpose.

What I have offered in my treatise, as evidence that Protestants are not guilty of the breach of this union, and that where any are, their crime is not schism but apostacy, either as to profession or conversation, I leave to the judgment of all candid, sober, and ingenuous readers; for such as love strife, and debates, and disputes, whereof the world is full, I would crave of them, that if they must choose me for their adversary, they would allow me to answer in person, ‘viva voce,’ to prevent this tedious trouble of writing, which for the most part is fruitless and needless. Some exceptions our author lies in, against the properties of the profession by me required, as necessary to the preservation of this union: as to the first, of professing all necessary saving truths of the gospel, he excepts that the apostles were ignorant of many necessary truths of the gospel for a season, and some had never heard of the Holy Ghost, Acts xxix. and yet they kept the union of the catholic church. And yet our author, before he closeth this chapter, will charge the breach of this union on some, whose errors cannot well be apprehended to lie in the denial of any necessary truth of the gospel, that is indispensably necessary to salvation. As to his instance of the apostles, he knows it is one thing not to know clearly and distinctly for some season, some truths ‘in hypothesi,’ and another to deny them being sufficiently and clearly revealed ‘in thesi;’ and for those in the Acts, it is probable they were ignorant of the dispensations of the Holy Ghost, with his marvellous effects under the gospel, rather than of the person of the Holy Ghost: for even, in respect of the former, it is absolutely said that ‘the Holy Ghost was

not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' I shall not pursue his other exceptions, being sorry that his judgment leads him to make them; that which alone bears any aspect to the business in hand, he insists on, p. 99. in these words: 'I have intimated and partly proved, that there may be a breach of union, with respect to the catholic church, upon other considerations' (namely, besides the renunciation of the profession of the gospel), 'as first, There is a bond that obliges every member of this church to join together in exercising the same ordinances of worship: when then any man shall refuse to join with others, or refuse others to join with him, here is a branch of love and union among the members of the catholic church, and in the particular churches as parts of the catholic.'

The reader must pardon me for producing and insisting on these things, seeing I do it with this profession, that I can fix on nothing else so much to the purpose in hand; and yet how little these are so, cannot but be evident upon a slight view to the meanest capacities. For, 1. he tells us there may be a breach of union, with respect to the catholic church, on other considerations; not that there may be a breach of the union of the catholic church. 2. That there is a bond binding men to the exercise of ordinances; so there is, binding man to all holiness; and yet he denies the vilest profane persons to break that bond or this union. 3. That there may be a breach of union among the members of the church; but who knows it not, that knows all members of particular churches, are also members of this church general. Our inquiry is after the union of the catholic church visible, what it is, how broken, and what the crime or evil is whereby it is broken, what obligations lie on the members of that church, as they stand under any other formal considerations; what is the evil they are any of them guilty of, in not answering these obligations, we were not at all inquiring, nor doth it in this place concern us so to do. And in what he afterward tells us, of some proceedings contrary to the practice of the universal church, he intends, I suppose, all the churches in the world, wherein the members of the universal church have walked or do so; for the universal church, as such, hath no practice as to celebration of ordinances; and if he suppose it hath, let him tell us what it is,

and when that practice was. His appeal to the primitive believers, and their small number will not avail him: for although they should be granted to be the then catholic visible church (against which he knows what exceptions may be laid from the believers amongst the Jews, such as Cornelius, to whom Christ had not as yet been preached, as the Messiah come, and exhibited), yet as such, they joined not in the celebration of ordinances, but (as yet they were) as a particular congregation; yea, though all the apostles were amongst them, the foundation of all the churches that afterward were called.

He concludes this chapter with an exception to my assertion, 'that if the catholic church be a political body it must have a visible political head, which nothing but the pope claims to be.' Of this he says, '1. There is no necessity; for,' saith he, 'he confesses the commonwealth of the Jews was a political body, and God, who is invisible, was their political head. 2. Jesus Christ is a visible head, yea, sometimes more, 'visus,' seen of men whilst on earth, though now for a time in majesty (as some great princes do), he hath withdrawn himself from the sight of men on earth, yet is he seen of angels and saints in heaven.' *Ans.* 1. I confess God was the King and Ruler of the Jews, but yet that they might be a visible political body, the invisible God appointed to them, under him, a visible head; as the pope blasphemously pretends to be appointed under Jesus Christ. 2. Jesus Christ is in his human nature still visible; as to his person, wherein he is the head of his church, he ever was, and is still invisible. His present absence, is not upon the account of majesty, seeing in his majesty he is still present with us; and as to his bodily absence he gives other accounts, than that here insinuated. Now it sufficeth not to constitute a visible political body, that the head of it, in any respect may be seen, unless as that their head he is seen. Christ is visible, as this church is visible; he in his laws, in his word, that in its profession, in its obedience. But I marvel that our reverend author, thus concluding for Christ to be the political head of this church, as a church, should at the same time contend for such subjects of this head as he doth, p. 96. namely, persons 'contradicting their profession of the knowledge of God, by a course of wicked-

ness, manifesting principles of profaneness, wherewith the belief of the truth they profess hath an absolute inconsistency ;' as I expressly describe the persons, whose membership in this church, and relation thereby to Christ their head, he pleads for. Are indeed these persons any better than Mahometans, as to church privileges? they are indeed, in some places, as to providential advantages of hearing the word preached; but woe unto them on that account; it shall be more tolerable for Mahometans in that day of Christ, than for them: shall their baptism avail them? though it were valid in its admistration, that is, was celebrated in obedience to the command of Christ, is it not null to them? is not their circumcision uncircumcision? shall such persons give their children any right to church privileges? let them, if you please, be so subject to Christ, as rebels and traitors are subject to their earthly princes: they ought, indeed, to be so, but are they so? do they own their authority? are they obedient to them? do they enjoy any privilege of laws? or doth the apostle any where call such persons as live in a course of wickedness, manifesting principles utterly inconsistent with the profession of the gospel, brethren? God forbid we should once imagine these things so to be! And so much for that chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Independentism and Donatism.

THE title of our author's book is, Independency a great Schism: of this chapter, that it may be the better known what kind of schism it is, Independentism is Donatism. Men may give what title they please to their books and chapters, though perhaps few books make good their titles. I am sure this doth not as yet, 'nisi accusasse sufficiat.' Attempts of proof we have not as yet met withal: what this chapter will furnish us withal, we shall now consider. He indeed that shall weigh the title, Independentism is Donatism, and then casting his eye upon the first lines of the chapter itself, find that the reverend author says, he cannot

but 'acknowledge, that what I plead for the vindication of Protestants from the charge of schism, in their separation from Rome, as the catholic church, to be rational, solid, and judicious,' will, perhaps, be at a loss in conjecturing how I am like to be dealt withal in the following discourse; a little patience will let him see, that our author lays more weight upon the title, than the preface of this chapter; and that with all my fine trappings I am enrolled in the black book of the Donatists: but, 1. 'Quod fors feret feramus æquo animo;' or as another saith, 'debemus optare optima, cogitare difficillima, ferre quæcunque erunt;' as the case is fallen out, we must deal with it as we can. 1. He saith, 'he is not satisfied, that he not only denies the church of Rome (so called) to be a particular church, p. 154. but also affirms it to be no church at all.' That he is not satisfied with what I affirm of that synagogue of Satan where he hath his throne, I cannot help it, though I am sorry for it.

I am not also without some trouble, that I cannot understand what he means by placing my words, so as to intimate that I say, not only that the church of Rome is no particular church, but also that it is no church at all; as though it might in his judgment or mine be any church, if it be not a particular church; for I verily suppose neither he nor I judge it to be that catholic church, whereto it pretends. But yet as I have no great reason to expect that this reverend author should be satisfied in any thing that I affirm, so I hope that it is not impossible, but that, without any great difficulty, he may be reconciled to himself, affirming the very same thing that I do, p. 113. [p. 168.] It is of Rome in that sense, wherein it claims itself to be a church, that I speak; and in that sense, he says, it is no church of Christ's institution, and so, for my part, I account it no church at all: but he adds, that he is 'far more unsatisfied that I undertake the cause of the Donatists, and labour to exempt them from schism, though I allow them guilty of other crimes.' But do I indeed undertake the cause of the Donatists? do I plead for them? will he manifest it by saying more against them in no more words, than I have done? do I labour to exempt them from schism? are these the ways of peace, love, and truth, that the reverend author walks in? do I not condemn all their practices and pretensions from

the beginning to the end? can I not speak of their cause in reference to the catholic church and its union, but it must be affirmed that I plead for them? But yet as if righteousness and truth had been observed in this crimination, he undertakes as of a thing granted to give my grounds of doing, what he affirms me to have done: the first is, as he says, 'his singular notion of schism, limiting it only to differences in a particular assembly. 2. His jealousy of the charge of schism to be objected to himself and party, if separating from the true churches of Christ be truly called schism.' *Ans.* What may I expect from others, when so grave and reverend a person as this author is reported to be, shall thus deal with me? Sir, I have no singular notion of schism, but embrace that which Paul hath long since declared, nor can you manifest any difference in my notion from what he hath delivered; nor is that notion of schism at all under consideration in reference to what I affirm of the Donatists (who in truth were concerned in it, the most of them to the utmost), but the union of the church catholic, and the breach thereof. Neither am I jealous or fearful of the charge of schism, from any person living on the earth, and least of all from men proceeding in church affairs upon the principles you proceed on. Had you not been pleased to have supposed what you please, without the least ground, or colour, or reason, perhaps you would have as little satisfied yourself in the charge you have undertaken to manage against me, as you have done many good men, as the case now stands, even of your own judgment in other things.

Having made this entrance, he proceeds in the same way, and, p. 164. lays the foundation of the title of his book and this chapter, of his charge of Donatism; in these words: 'This lies in full force against him and his party, who have broken the union of our churches, and separated themselves from all the Protestant churches in the world, not of their own constitution, and that as no true churches of Christ:' this, I say, is the foundation of his whole ensuing discourse; all the ground that he hath to stand upon in the defence of the invidious title of this chapter, and what fruit he expects from this kind of proceeding, I know not; the day will manifest of what sort this work is; although he may have

some mistaken apprehensions to countenance his conscience in the first part of his assertion, or that it may be forgiven to inveterate prejudice, though it be false; namely, that I and my party (that is the phraseology this author in his love to unity delights in) have broken the union of their churches (which we have no more done, than they have broken the union of ours, for we began our reformation with them on even terms, and were as early at work as they), yet what colour, what excuse can be invented to alleviate the guilt of the latter part of it, that we have separated from all the reformed churches as no churches? and yet he repeats this again, p. 106. with especial reflection on myself: ‘I wonder not,’ saith he, ‘that the doctor hath unchurched Rome, for he hath done as much to England and all foreign Protestant churches, and makes none to be members of the church, but such as are by covenant and consent joined to some of their congregations.’ Now, truly, though all righteous laws of men in the world, will afford recompense and satisfaction for calumniating accusations and slanders of much less importance than this, here publicly owned by our reverend author, yet seeing the gospel of the blessed God requires to forgive and pass by greater injuries, I shall labour in the strength of his grace to bring my heart unto conformity to his will therein; notwithstanding which, because by his providence I am in that place and condition, that others also that fear his name may be some way concerned in this unjust imputation, I must declare that this is open unrighteousness, wherein neither love nor truth hath been observed. How little I am concerned in his following parallel of Independentism and Donatism, wherein he proceeds with the same truth and candour, or in all that follows thereupon, is easy for any one to judge. He proceeds to scan my answers to the Romanists, as in reference to their charge of schism upon us, and says, ‘I do it suitable to my own principles.’ And truly if I had not, I think I had been much to blame. I refer the reader to the answers given in my book, and if he like them not, notwithstanding this author’s exceptions, I wish he may fix on those that please him better; in them there given, my conscience doth acquiesce.

But he comes, in the next place, to arguments, wherein if

he prove more happy than he hath done in accusations, he will have great cause to rejoice. By a double argument, as he says, he will prove that there may be schism besides that in a particular church. His first is this :

‘Schism is a breach of union, but there may be a breach of union in the catholic visible church.’ His second this : ‘Where there are differences raised in matter of faith professed, wherein the union of the catholic church consists, there may be a breach of union, but there may be differences in the catholic, or among the members of the catholic church in matter of faith professed, *ergo*.’ Having thus laid down his arguments, he falls to conjecture what I will answer, and how I will evade ; but it will quickly appear, that he is no less unhappy in arguing and conjecturing, than he is and was in accusing. For to consider his first argument, if he will undertake to make it good as to its form, I will by the same way of arguing, engage myself to prove what he would be unwilling to find in a regular conclusion. But as to the matter of it, 1. Is schism every breach of union ? or is every breach of union schism ? Schism in the ecclesiastical notion is granted to be in the present dispute, the breach of the union of a church, which it hath by the institution of Christ ; and this not of any union of Christ’s institution, but of one certain kind of union ; for as was proved, there is a union, whose breach can neither in the language of the Scripture, nor in reason, nor common sense, be called or accounted schism, nor ever was by any man in the world, nor can be without destroying the particular nature of schism, and allowing only the general notion of any separation, good or bad, in what kind soever. So that, secondly, it is granted, not only that there may be a breach of union in the catholic church, but also that there may be a breach of the union of the catholic church, by a denial or relinquishment of the profession wherein it consists ; but that this breach of union is schism, because schism is a breach of union, is as true, as that every man who hath two eyes, is every thing that hath two eyes. For his second, it is of the same importance with the first, there may be differences in the catholic church, and breaches of union among the members of it, which are far enough from the breach of the union of that church, as such. Two professors may fall out and

differ, and yet I think continue both of them professors still. Paul and Barnabas did so; Chrysostom and Epiphanius did so; Cyril and Theodoret did so. That which I denied was, that the breach of the union of the catholic church as such, is schism. He proves the contrary, by affirming there may be differences among the members of the catholic church, that do not break the union of it, as such. But he says, though there be apostacy, or heresy, yet there may be schism also; but not in respect of the breach of the same union, which only he was to prove. Besides evil surmises, reproaches, false criminations, and undue suggestions, I find nothing wherein my discourse is concerned to the end of this chapter, p. 109. upon the passage of mine; ‘we are thus come off from this part of schism for the relinquishment of the catholic church, which we have not done, and so to do, is not schism, but a sin of another nature and importance;’ he adds, ‘that the ground I go upon, why separation from a true church (he must mean the catholic church, or he speaks nothing at all to the business in hand) is no schism, is that aforementioned, that a schism in the Scripture notion is only a division of judgment in a particular assembly.’ But who so blind as they that will not see? the ground I proceeded on evidently, openly, solely, was taken from the nature of the catholic church, its union, and the breach of that union, and if ‘obiter’ I once mention that notion, I do it upon my confidence of its truth, which I here again tender myself in a readiness to make good to this reverend author, if at any time he will be pleased to command my personal attendance upon him to that purpose. To repeat more of the like mistakes and surmises, with the wranglings that ensue on such false suppositions to the end of this chapter, is certainly needless; for my part, in and about this whole business of separation from the catholic church, I had not the least respect to Presbyterians or Independents as such, nor to the differences between them, which alone our author out of his zeal to the truth and peace attends unto. If he will fasten the guilt of schism on any on the account of separation from the catholic church, let him prove that that church is not made up of the universality of professors of the gospel throughout the world, under the limitations expressed; that the union of it as such, doth not consist in the profes-

sion of the truth ; and that the breach of that union, whereby a man ceases to be a member of that church, is schism ; otherwise to tell me that I am a sectary, a schismatic, to fill up his pages with vain surmises and supposals, to talk of a difference and schism among the members of the catholic church, or the like impertinences, will never farther his discourse among men, either rational, solid, or judicious. All that ensues to the end of this chapter is about the ordination of ministers, wherein however he hath been pleased to deal with me in much bitterness of spirit, with many clamours and false accusations ; I am glad to find him, p. 120. renouncing ordination from the authority of the church of Rome as such, for I am assured, that by so doing, he can claim it no way from, by, or through Rome ; for nothing came to us from thence but what came in and by the authority of that church.

CHAP. IX.

WE are now gathering towards what seems of most immediate concernment as to this reverend author's undertaking ; namely, to treat of the nature of a particular church, its union and the breach of that union ; the description I give of such a church is this ; ' It is a society of men called by the word to the obedience of the faith in Christ, and joint performance of the worship of God in the same individual ordinances according to the order by him prescribed.' This I profess to be a general description of its nature, waving all contests about accurate definitions, which usually tend very little to the discovery or establishment of truth : after some canvassing of this description, our author tells us, that he grants it to be the definition of a particular church, which is more than I intended it for ; only he adds, that according to this description, their churches are as true as ours ; which I presume by this time he knows was not the thing in question. His ensuing discourse of the will of Christ, that men should join not all in the same individual congregation, but in this or that, is by me wholly assented unto, and the matter of it contended for by me, as I am able ; what he is pleased to

add about explicit covenanting and the like, I am not at all for the present concerned in; I purposely waved all expressions concerning it, one way or other, that I might not involve the business in hand with any unnecessary contests; it is possible somewhat hereafter may be spoken to that subject, in a tendency unto the reconciliation of the parties at variance. His argument, in the close of the section for a presbyterian church, from Acts xx. 17. because there is mention of more elders than one in that church, and therefore it was not one single congregation, I do not understand; I think no one single congregation is wholly completed according to the mind of Christ, unless there be more elders than one in it; there should be elders in every church; and, for my part, so we could once agree practically in the matter of our churches, I am under some apprehension that it were no impossible thing to reconcile the whole difference, as to a presbyterian church or a single congregation. And though I be reproved anew for my pains, I may offer ere long to the candid consideration of godly men, something that may provoke others of better abilities and more leisure, to endeavour the carrying on of so good a work. Proceeding to the consideration of the unity of this church, he takes notice of three things laid down by me, previously to what I was farther to assert; all which he grants to be true, but yet will not let them pass without his animadversions. The two first are, that, 1. 'A man may be a member of the catholic invisible church;' and, 2. 'Of the visible catholic church, and yet not be joined to a particular church.' These, as I said, he owns to be true, but asks how I can 'reconcile this with what I said before, namely, that the members of the catholic visible church are initiated into the profession of the faith by baptism;' but where lies the difference? why, saith he, 'baptism, according to his principles, is an ordinance of worship only to be enjoyed in a particular church, whilst he will grant (what yet he doth deny, but will be forced to grant) that a minister is a minister to more than his own church, even to the catholic church, and may administer baptism out of a particular church, as Philip did to the eunuch.'

Ans. How well this author is acquainted with my principles, hath been already manifested; as to his present mistake, I shall not complain, seeing that some occasion may be ad-

ministered unto it, from an expression of mine, at least as it is printed, of which I shall speak afterward ; for the present, he may be pleased to take notice, that I am so far from confining baptism subjectively to a particular congregation, that I do not believe that any member of a particular church was ever regularly baptized : baptism precedes admission into church membership, as to a particular church ; the subject of it, is professing believers and their seed ; as such they have right unto it, whether they be joined to any particular church or no ; suitable to this judgment hath been my constant and uninterrupted practice. I desire also to know, who told him that I deny a minister to be a minister to more than his own church, or averred that he may perform ministerial duty only in and towards the members of his own congregation, for so much as men are appointed the objects of the dispensation of the word, I grant a man, in the dispensations of it, to act ministerially towards not only the members of the catholic church, but the visible members of the world also in contradistinction thereunto.

The third thing laid down by me, whereunto also he assents is, ‘ that every believer is obliged to join himself to some one of those churches, that there he may abide in doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread and prayer : ’ but my reasons, whereby I prove this, he says he likes not so well : and truly I cannot help it. I have little hope he should like any thing well which is done by me : let him be pleased to furnish me with better, and I shall make use of them ; but yet when he shall attempt so to do, it is odds but that one or other, will find as many flaws in them as he pretends to do in mine ; but this, he saith, he shall make use of, and that, he shall make advantage of, and I know not what, as if he were playing a prize upon a stage. The third reason is, that which he likes worst of all, and I like the business the better, that what he understands least, that he likes worst ; it is, ‘ that Christ hath given no direction for any duty of worship, merely and purely of sovereign institution, but only to them and by them who are so joined ; ’ hereupon he asks, 1. ‘ Is baptism a part of worship ? ’ *Ans.* Yes, and to be so performed by them, that is a minister in, or of them ; I fear my expression in this place led him to his whole mistake in this matter. 2. ‘ Prayer and reading of the word in private fa-

milies, are they no duty of worship?' *Ans.* Not merely and purely of sovereign institution. 3. 'Is preaching to convert heathens a duty of worship?' not, as described, in all cases; when it is, it is to be performed by a minister; and so he knows my answer to his next invidious inquiry, relating to my own person; against my fourth reason, taken from the apostle's care to leave none out of this order who were converted, where it was possible, he gives in the instance of the eunuch, and others converted where there were not enough to engage in such societies; that is, in them with whom it was impossible: my fifth is, from Christ's providing of officers for these churches; this also he saith is 'weak as the rest, for first, Christ provided officers at first for the catholic church, that is, the apostles. 2. All ordinary officers are set first in the catholic church, and every minister is first a minister to the catholic church, and if, saith he, he deny this, he knows where to find a learned antagonist.'

Ans. But see what it is to have a mind to dispute; will he deny that Christ appointed officers for particular churches, or if he should have a mind to do it, will his arguments evince any such thing; Christ appointed apostles, catholic officers, therefore he did not appoint officers for particular churches; though he commanded that 'elders should be ordained in every church,' pastors and teachers are set first in the catholic church, therefore Christ hath not ordained officers for particular churches. But this is the way with our author! If any word offers itself, whence it is possible to draw out the mention of any thing, that is, or hath at any time been, in difference between Presbyterians and Independents, that presently is run away withal; for my part, I had not the least thought of the controversy which to no purpose at all he would here lead me to; but yet, I must tell him, that my judgment is, that ordinary officers are firstly to be ordained in particular churches; and as I know where to find a learned antagonist as to that particular, so I do, in respect of every thing that I affirm or deny in the business of religion, and yet I bless the Lord I am not in the least disquieted or shaken in my adherence to the truth I profess.

My last reason, he saith, is 'fallacious and inconsequent,' and that because he hath put an inference upon it never in-

tended in it. Now the position that these reasons were produced to confirm being true, and so acknowledged by himself, because it is a truth that indeed I lay some more than ordinary weight upon, it being of great use in the days wherein we live, I would humbly entreat this reverend author to send me his reasons whereby it may be confirmed, and I shall promise him if they be found of more validity than those which, according to my best skill, I have already used, he shall obtain many thanks, and much respect for his favour.

What he remarks upon, or adds to my next discourse, about instituted worship in general, I shall not need to insist on; only by the way I cannot but take notice of that which he calls 'a chief piece of independency,' and that is, 'that those who are joined in church fellowship are so confined, that they cannot or may not worship God in the same ordinances in other churches;' how this comes to be 'a chief piece of independency,' I know not. It is contrary to the known practice of all the churches of England that I am acquainted with, which he calls Independents. For my part, I know but one man of that mind, and he is no child in these things.

For the ensuing discourse about the intercision of ordinances, it being a matter of great importance, and inquired into by me merely in reference to the Roman apostacy, it needs a more serious disquisition, than any thing at present administered by our author will give occasion unto; possibly in convenient time I may offer somewhat farther towards the investigation of the mind of God therein: every thing in this present contest is so warped to the petty difference between Presbyterians and Independents, that no fair progress nor opportunity for it can be afforded. If it may be, in my next debate of it, I shall wave all mention of those meaner differences, and as I remember I have not insisted on them in what I have already proposed to this purpose, so possibly the next time I may utterly escape. For the present, I do not doubt but the Spirit of God in the Scripture, is furnished with sufficient authority to erect new churches, and set up the celebration of all ordinances on supposition that there was an intercision of them. To declare the way of his exerting his authority to this purpose,

with the obviating of all objections to the contrary, is not a matter to be tossed up and down in this scrambling chase ; and I am not a little unhappy, that this reverend person was in the dark to my design and aim all along, which hath entangled this dispute with so many impertinences. But, however, I shall answer a question which he is pleased to put to me in particular. He asks me then, ‘ whether I do not think in my conscience that there were no true churches in England until the Brownists our fathers, the Anabaptists our elder brothers, and ourselves arose and gathered new churches?’ With thanks for the civility of the inquiry in the manner of its expression, I answer, No ; I have no such thoughts, and his pretence of my insinuation of any such thing, is most vain, as also is his insultation thereupon ; truly if men will in all things take liberty to speak what they please, they have no reason but to think that they may at one time or other hear that which will displease.

Having investigated the nature of a particular church, I proceed in my treatise of schism, to inquire after the union of it, wherein it doth consist, and what is the breach thereof. The sum is, the joint consent of the members to walk together in celebration of the same numerical ordinances, according to the mind of Jesus Christ, is that wherein the union of such a church doth consist. This is variously excepted against, and I know not what disputes about an implicit and explicit covenant, of specificating forms, of the practice of New and Old England, of admission of church-members, of the right of the members of the catholic church to all ordinances, of the miscarriage of the Independents, of churchmatriculations, and such like things, not once considered by me in my proposal of the matter in hand, are fallen upon. By the way he falls upon my judgment about the inhabitation of the Spirit, calls it an error, and says, so it hath been reputed by all that are orthodox ; raising terrible suspicions and intimations of judgments on our way from God, by my falling into that error ; when yet I say no more than the Scripture saith in express terms forty times, for which I refer him to what I have written on that subject, wherein I have also the concurrence of Polanus, Bucanus, Dorchetus, with sundry others Lutherans and Calvinists. It may be when he hath seriously weighed

what I have offered to the clearing of that glorious truth of the gospel, he may entertain more gentle thoughts both concerning it and me.

The rest of the chapter I have passed through, once and again, and cannot fix on any thing worthy of farther debate. A difference is attempted to be found in my description of the union of a particular church, in this and another place ; because in one place I require the consent of the members to walk together, in another mention only their so doing, when the mention of that only was necessary in that place, not speaking of it absolutely, but as it is the difference of such a church from the church catholic, some impropriety of expression is pretended to be discovered (*'id populus curat scilicet'*) : which yet is a pure mistake of his, not considering unto what especial end and purpose the words are used. He repeats sundry things as in opposition to me, that are things laid down by myself and granted. Doth he attempt to prove that the union of a church is not rightly stated ; he confesseth the form of such a church consists in the observance and performance of the same ordinances of worship numerically. I ask, is it the command of Christ that believers should so do ? is not their obedience to that command, their consent so to do ? are not particular churches instituted of Christ ? is it not the duty of every believer to join himself to some one of them ? was not this acknowledged above ? can any one do so without his consenting to do so ? Is this consent any thing but his voluntary submission to the ordinances of worship therein ? As an express consent and subjection to Christ in general is required to constitute a man a member of the church catholic visible ; so if the Lord Jesus hath appointed any particular church for the celebration of his ordinances ; is not their consent who are to walk in them, necessary thereunto ? But the topic of an explicit covenant, presenting itself with an advantage, to take up some leaves, would not be waved, though nothing at all to the purpose in hand. After this, my confession made in as much condescension unto compliance as I could well imagine, of the use of greater assemblies, is examined, and excepted against, as *'being in my esteem,'* he saith, *'though it be not so indeed, a matter of prudence only.'* But I know full well, that he knows not

what esteem or disesteem I have of sundry things of no less importance. The consideration of my 'postulata,' proposed in a preparation to what was to be insisted on, in the next chapter, as influenced from the foregoing dissertations, alone remains, and indeed alone deserves our notice.

My first is this: 'The departing of any man or men from any particular church, as to the communion peculiar to such a church, is nowhere called schism, nor is so in the nature of the thing itself, but is a thing to be judged and receive a title according to the circumstances of it;' to this he adjoins; 'this is not the question, a simple secession of a man or men upon some just occasion is not called schism; but to make causeless differences in a church, and then separating from it, as no church, denying communion with it, hath the nature and name of schism in all men's judgments but his own.' *Ans.* What question doth our reverend author mean? I fear he is still fancying of the difference between Presbyterians and Independents, and squaring all things by that imagination; whether it be a question stated to his mind or no, I cannot tell, but it is an assertion expressive of mine own, which he may do well to disprove if he can. Who told him that raising causeless differences in a church, and then separating from it, is not in my judgment schism? May I possibly retain hopes of making myself understood by this reverend author? I suppose though, that a pertinacious abiding in a mistake is neither schism nor heresy; and so this may be passed over.

My second is, 'One church refusing to hold that communion with another, which ought to be between them, is not schism properly so called.' The reply hereunto is twofold: 1. 'That one church may raise differences in, and with another church, and so cause schism.' 2. 'That the Independents deny any communion of churches, but what is prudential, and so that communion cannot be broken.' To the first I have spoken sufficiently before, the latter is but a harping on the same string. I am not speaking of Independent churches, nor upon the principles of Independents, much less on them which are imposed on them. Let the reverend author suppose or aver what communion of churches he pleaseth, my position holds in reference to it, nor can he disprove it; however, for my part, I am not ac-

quainted with those Independents, who allow no communion of churches but what is prudential ; and yet it is thought, that I know as many as this reverend author doth.

Upon the last proposal we are wholly agreed, so that I shall not need to repeat it ; only he gives me a sad farewell at the close of the chapter, which must be taken notice of : ‘ Is,’ saith he, ‘ not the design of his book to prove, if he could, and condemn us as no churches ? let the world be judge ;’ and I say, let all the saints of God judge ; and Jesus Christ will judge whether I have not outrageous injury done me in this imputation : ‘ but,’ saith he, ‘ unless this be proved, he can never justify his separation.’ Sir, when your and our brethren told the bishops, they thanked God they were none of them, and defied the prelatical church, did they make a separation or no ; were they guilty of schism ? I suppose you will not say so ; nor do I ; yet have I done any such thing in reference to you or your churches ? I have no more separated from you, than you have done from me ; and as for the distance which is between us upon our disagreement about the way of reformation, let all the churches of God judge, on which side it hath been managed with more breach of love, on yours or mine. Let me assure you, sir, through the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, I can freely forgive unto you all your reproaches, revilings, hard censurings, and endeavours to expose me to public obliquy, and yet hope that I may have, before we die, a place in your heart and prayers.

CHAP. X.

Independency no schism.

WE are come now to the chapter that must do the work intended, or else ‘ operam et oleum perdidimus ;’ Independentism a great Schism, is the title of it ; what this Independentism is, he doth neither here declare, nor in any other part of his book ; nor do I know what it is that he intends by it. I hear indeed from him that it is a schism, a sect, but of what peculiar import, or wherein it consists, he hath not declared. I suppose he would have it taken for

separation from true churches, but neither doth the notion of the name, though individually broached and disavowed by them, to whom it is ascribed, import any such thing; nor is the thing itself owned by them with whom he pretends to have to do. I find indeed that he tells us, that all sectaries are Independents; Anabaptists, Seekers, Ranters, Quakers. Doth he expect that I should undertake their defence? what if it should appear, that I have done more against them than our reverend author, and many of his brethren joined with him; he may perhaps be willing to load myself and those which he is pleased to call my associates, my party, I know not what, with their evils and miscarriages. But is this done as becomes a Christian, a minister, a brother? what security hath he, that had he been the only judge and disposer of things in religion in this nation, if I and my associates had been sent to plant churches among the Indians, that he should have prevented eruption of the errors and abominations which we have been exercised withal in this generation, unless he had sent for duke D'Alva's instruments to work his ends by? and indeed there is scarce any sect in the nation, but had they their desires, they would take that course. This may be done by any that are uppermost if they please. But how shall we know what it is he intends by Independentism? All, it may be, that are not Presbyterians are Independents. Among these some professedly separate, both from them and us (for there are none that separate from them but withal they separate from us, that I know of), because, as they say, neither theirs nor ours are true churches; we grant them to be true churches, but withal deny that we separate from them; is it possible at once to defend both these sects of men? Is it possible at once with the same arguments to charge them? The whole discourse, then, of our reverend author being uniform, it can concern but one of these sects of Independents; which it is, any man may judge that takes the least view of his treatise. He deals with them that unchurch their churches, unminister their ministers, disannul their ordinances, leaving them churchless, officerless, and in the like sad condition. Is this Independentism a schism? though that it is properly so called, he cannot prove, yet I hope he did not expect that I should plead for

it; what I shall do in this case, I profess, well I know not. I here deny that I unminister their ministers, unchurch their churches; hath this author any more to say to me or those of my persuasion? doth not this whole discourse proceed upon a supposition that it is otherwise with them with whom he hath to do? only I must tell him by the way, that if he suppose by this concession, that I justify and own their way, wherein they differ from the congregational ministers in England, to be of Christ's institution, or that I grant all things to be done regularly among them, and according to the mind of Christ, therein I must profess he is mistaken. In brief, by Independentism he intends a separation from true churches, with condemning them to be no churches, and their ministers no ministers, and their ordinances none, or antichristian; whatever becomes of the nature of schism, I disavow the appearing as an advocate in the behalf of this Independentism. If by Independentism he understand the peaceable proceeding of any of the people of God in this nation in the several parts of it, to join themselves by their free consent to walk together in the observation and celebration of all the ordinances of Christ appointed to be observed and celebrated in particular churches, so to reform themselves from the disorders wherein they were entangled, being not able in some things to join in that way of reformation, which many godly ministers, commonly called Presbyterians, have engaged in, and seek to promote, without judging and condemning them as to the whole of their station or ordinances. If this, I say, be intended by Independentism, when the reverend author shall undertake to prove it schism, having not in this book spoken one word or tittle to it, his discourse will be attended unto. This whole chapter then being spent against them who deny them to be true churches, and defend separation, I marvel what can be said unto it by me, or how I come to be concerned in it, who grant them true churches, and deny separation.

But our reverend author, knowing that if this bottom be taken from under him, he hath no foundation for any thing he asserts, thought it not sufficient to charge me over and over with what is here denied, but at length attempts to make it good from mine own words; which if he doth effect

and make good, I confess he changes the whole nature and state of the dispute in hand. Let us see then how he answers this undertaking.

From those words of mine, ‘the reformation of any church, or any thing in it, is the reducing of it to its primitive institution:’ approving the assertion as true, he labours to evince that I deny their churches to be true churches; how so, I pray? ‘why we erect new churches out of no churches; and it had been happy for England if we had all gone to do this work among the Indians.’ What will prove England’s happiness or unhappiness, the day will manifest; this is but man’s day and judgment; he is coming who will not judge by the seeing of the eye, nor by the hearing of the ear. In the mean time, we bless God, and think all England hath cause to bless God, whatever become of us, that he, and our brethren of the same mind with him in the things of God, have their liberty to preach the gospel, and carry on the work of reformation in their native soil, and are not sent into the ends of the earth, as many of ours have been. But how doth our gathering of churches deny them to be true churches? Doth our granting them to be true churches, also grant that all the saints in England are members of their churches? It is notoriously known, that it is and was otherwise, and that when they and we began to reform, thousands of the people of God in these nations had no reason to suppose themselves to belong to one particular church rather than another. They lived in one parish, heard in another, removed up and down for their advantage, and were in bondage on that account all their days.

But he says, ‘in some words following I discover my very heart.’ I cannot but by the way tell him, that it is a sufficient evidence of his unacquaintedness with me, that he thinks there is need of searching and racking my words to discover my very heart, in any thing that belongs (though in never so remote a distance) to the worship of God. All that know me, know how open and free I am in these things, how ready on all occasions to declare my whole heart; it is neither fear nor favour can influence me unto another frame. But what are the words that make this noble discovery? They are these that follow: ‘When any

society or combination of men (whatever hitherto it hath been esteemed) is not capable of such a reduction, and revocation' (that is to its primitive institution) 'I suppose I shall never provoke any wise or sober person, if I profess I cannot look on such a society as a church of Christ.' His reply hereunto is the hinge upon which his whole discourse turneth, and must therefore be considered. Thus then he; 'Is not this, reader, at once to unchurch all the churches of England since the reformation? for it is known, during the reign of the prelates they were not capable of that reduction; and what capacity our churches are now in for that reduction, partly by want of power and assistance from the magistrate, without which some dare not set upon a reformation, for fear of a præmunire, partly by our divisions amongst ourselves, fomented by he knows whom, he cannot but see as well as we lament.' And hereupon he proceeds with sundry complaints of my dealing with them. And now, Christian reader, what shall we say to these things? A naked supposition, of no strength nor weight, that will not hold in any thing or case, namely, that a thing is not to be judged capable of that which by some external force it is withheld from, is the sole bottom of all this charge. The churches of England were capable of that reduction to their primitive institution under the prelates, though in some things hindered by them from an actual reducement; so they are now in sundry places, where the work is not so much as attempted; the sluggard's field is capable of being weeded; the present pretended want of capacity from the non-assistance of the magistrate, whilst perfect liberty for reformation is given, and the work in its several degrees encouraged, will be found to be a sad plea for some, when things come to be tried out by the rule of the gospel. And for our divisions, I confess I begin to discover somewhat more by whom they are fomented, than I did four days ago; for the matter itself. I desire our reverend author to take notice, that I judge every church capable of a reduction to its primitive institution, which, all outward hindrances being removed, and all assistances granted that are necessary for reformation according to the gospel, may be reduced into the form and order appointed unto a particular church by Jesus Christ; and where any society is not so capable, let

them call themselves what they please, I shall advise those therein, who have personally a due right to the privileges purchased for them by Jesus Christ, in the way of their administration by him appointed, to take some other peaceable course to make themselves partakers of them; and for giving this advice, I neither dread the anger nor indignation of any man living in the world. And so I suppose by this time the author knows what is become of his, 'quod erat demonstrandum;' and here in room of it I desire him to accept of this return.

Those who in the judgment of charity were and continue members of the church catholic invisible by virtue of their union with Christ the head thereof, and members of the general visible church, by their due profession of the saving truths of the gospel, and subjection to Christ Jesus their King and Saviour according to them, do walk in love and concord in the particular churches, whereof by their own consent and choice they are members, not judging and condemning other particular churches of Christ, where they are not members as they are such, as to their station and privileges, being ready for all instituted communion with them, as revealed, are not according to any gospel rule, nor by any principles acknowledged amongst Christians, to be judged or condemned as guilty of schism; but such are all they for whom, under any consideration whatever, I have pleaded as to their immunity from this charge, in my treatise of schism; therefore they are not to be judged so guilty. If you please you may add, 'quod erat demonstratum.'

I shall not digress to a recharge upon this reverend author, and those of the same profession with him, as to their mistakes and miscarriages in the work of reformation, nor discuss their ways and principles, wherein I am not satisfied as to their procedure. I yet hope for better things than to be necessitated to carry on the defensative of the way wherein I walk by opposing theirs. It is true that he who stands upon mere defence, is thought to stand upon none at all; but I wait for better things from men, than their hearts will yet allow them to think of. I hope the reverend author thinks, that as I have reasons wherewith I am satisfied as to my own way, so I have those that are of the same weight with me against him. But, whatever he may surmise, I have no mind

to foment the divisions that are amongst us; hence I willingly bear all his imputations without retortion. I know in part how the case is in the world. The greatest chargers have not always the most of truth; witness Papists, Lutherans, Prelatists, Anabaptists. I hope I can say in sincerity, I am for peace; though others make themselves ready for war.

But we must proceed a little farther, though as to the cause by me undertaken to be managed, causelessly. The discourse of our author from the place fixed on, wherein he faintly endeavoured to make good the foundation of this chapter, which I have already considered, consists of two parts. 1. His animadversions on some principles which I lay down, as necessary to be stated aright and determined, that the question about gathering churches may be clearly and satisfactorily debated. Some of them, he says, have been handled by others, which if it be a rule of silence to him and me, it might have prevented this tedious debate: whatever his thoughts may be of my pamphlet, I do not fear to affirm of his treatise, that I have found nothing in it, from the beginning to the ending, but what hath lien neglected on booksellers' stalls for above these seven years. For the rest of those principles, which he excepts against, as he thinks meet, I leave their consideration to that farther inquiry, which the Lord assisting, I have destined them unto. The way of gathering churches upon a supposition of their antecedency to officers, he says, is very pretty, and loads it with the difficulty of men's coming to be baptized in such a case; but as I can tell him of that which is neither true nor pretty, in the practice of some whom he knows, or hath reason so to do, so I can assure him that we are not concerned in his objection about baptism, and with them who may possibly be so, it is a ridiculous thing to think it an objection. And for that part of my inquiry, whether the church be before ordinary officers, or they before it, as slight as he is pleased to make of it, it will be found to lie very near the bottom of all our differences, and the right stating of it, to conduce to the composure and determination of them. His charges and reflections which he casts about in his passage, are not now to be farther mentioned; we have had them over and over, indeed we have had little else. If strong,

vehement, passionate affirmations, complaints, charges, false imputations and the like, will amount to a demonstration in this business, he hath demonstrated independentism to be a great schism.

He shuts up his discourse as he began it, reciting my words by adding, interposing, perverting, commenting, inquiring; he makes them speak what he pleases, and compasses the ends of his delight upon them. What contentment he hath received in his so doing, I know not; nor shall I express what thoughts I have of such a course of procedure: this only I shall say, it is a facile way of writing treatises and proving whatever men have a mind unto.

My last task is to look back to the beginning of this last chapter, and to gather up in our passage what may seem to respect the business in hand, and so the whole matter will be dismissed. The plea insisted on for immunity from the charge of schism, with reference to the episcopal government of the church of England, and the constitution which under it it is pretended to have had, he passes over, though on sundry accounts his concernments lie as deeply in it as in any thing pleaded in that treatise. The things he is pleased to take notice of, as far as they tend in the least to the issue of the debate between us, shall be reviewed. Considering the several senses wherein that expression, 'the church of England,' may be taken, I manifest in my treatise, in which of them, and how far, we acknowledge ourselves to have been, and to continue members of the church of England. The first is as it comprises the elect believers in England: what the unity of the church in this sense is, was before evinced; our desire to be found members of this church, with our endeavour to keep the unity of it in the bond of peace, was declared. I am grieved to repeat our reverend author's exceptions to this declaration; says he, 'Unless he think there are no members of this church in England, but those that are of his formed particular churches, I fear he will be found to break the union that ought to be between them.' And why so, I pray? The union of the members of the church in this sense, consists in their joint union to, and with, Christ their head by one spirit. What hath the reverend author to charge upon me with reference thereunto? Let him speak out to the utmost; yea, I have some reason to

think that he will scarce spare, where he can strike; God forbid that I should think all the members of the catholic church in England to be comprised either jointly or severally in their churches or ours, seeing it cannot be avoided, but you will keep up those notes of division. I doubt not but there be many thousands of them who walk neither with you nor us. He adds, that by gathering saints of the first magnitude, we do what lies in us, to make the invisible church visible: it is confessed, we do so; yea, we know that that church which is invisible in some respects, and under one formal consideration, is visible as to its profession which it makes unto salvation. This, with all that lies in us, we draw them out unto: what he adds about the churches being elect, and the uncomely parts of it, which they may be for a season who are elect believers, because it must be spoken, are useles cavils. For the scornful rejection of what I affirm, concerning our love to all the members of this church, and readiness to tender them satisfaction in case of offence, with his insinuation of my want of modesty and truth in asserting these thoughts, because he will one day know that the words he so despises were spoken in sincerity, and with the reverence of the great God, and out of love to all his saints, I shall not farther vindicate them; such hay and stubble must needs burn.

My next profession of our relation to the church of England, in respect of that denomination given to the body of professors in this nation, cleaving to the doctrine of the gospel, here preached and established by law, as the public profession of this nation. But he tells me, first, 1. 'That many independent churches of this nation, are grossly apostatized from that doctrine, and so are heretical.' 2. 'That the worship was professed and protested, and established as well as the doctrine, and that we are all departed from it, and so are schismatical; for we hold communion with them,' he says, 'in the same doctrine, but not in the same worship.' *Ans.* His first exception ariseth from the advantage he makes use of, from his large use of the word 'independent,' which will serve him in his sense for what end he pleaseth. In the sense before declared, his charge is denied. Let him prove it by instance if he be able. Surely God hath not given orthodox men leave to speak what they please, without due regard to

love and truth. 2. As to the worship established in this nation by law (he means the way of worship, for the substantial of it we are all agreed in), I suppose he will not say a relinquishment of the practice of it is schism; if he do, I know what use some men will make of his affirmation, though I know not how he will free himself from being schismatical; for his renewed charge of schism, I cannot, I confess, be moved at it, proceeding from him, who neither doth nor will know what it is. His next endeavour is to make use of another concession of mine, concerning our receiving of our regeneration and new birth by the preaching of the word in England; saying, could they make use of our preaching, &c. But the truth is, when the most of us by the free grace of God received our new birth through the preaching of the word, neither they nor we, as to the practice of our ways, were in England; so that their concernment as such, in the concession is very small; and we hope since in respect of others, our own ministry hath not been altogether fruitless, though we make no comparison with them.

In rendering of the next passage which is concerning Anabaptists and Anabaptism, I shall not contend with him; he hath not in the least impaired the truth of what I assert in reference to them and their way. I cannot but take notice of that passage, which for the substance of it hath so often occurred, and that is this, ‘Doth not himself labour in this book to prove that the administration of ordinances in our assemblies is null, our ordination null and antichristian.’ For the proof of which suggestion he refers his reader to p. 197. [p. 211.] of my book. I confess, seeing this particular quotation, I was somewhat surprised, and began to fear that some expression of mine (though contrary to my professed judgment) might have given countenance to this mistake, and so be pleaded as a justification of all the uncharitableness and something else, wherewith his book is replenished; but turning to the place I was quickly delivered from my trouble, though I must ingenuously confess I was cast into another, which I shall not now mention.

Page 167. we arrive at that which alone almost I expected would have been insisted on, and quite contrary thereto, it is utterly waved; namely, the whole business of a national church, upon which account indeed all the pretence

of the charge this reverend author is pleased to manage, doth arise. Take that out of the way, and certainly they, and we are upon even terms; and if we will be judged by them who were last in possession of the reiglement of that church, upon supposition that there is such a church still, they are no more interested in it than we, yea, are as guilty of schism from it as we. But that being set aside and particular churches only remaining, it will be very difficult for him to raise the least pretence of his great charge. But let us consider what he thinks meet to fasten on, in that discourse of mine about a national church. The first thing is my inquiry, whether the denial of the institution of a national church (which he pleads not for) doth not deny in consequence that we had either ordinances or ministry amongst us? to which I say, that though it seems so to do, yet indeed it doth not, because there was then another church-state, even that of particular churches amongst us; with many kind reflections of my renouncing my ministry and rejecting of my jejune and empty vindication of their ministry (which yet is the very same that himself fixes on), he asks me, how I can in my conscience believe, that there were any true ministers in this church in the time of its being national? and so proceeds to infer from hence my denying of all ministry and ordinances among them. Truly, though I were more to be despised than I am (if that be possible), yet it were not common prudence for any man to take so much pains to make me his enemy, whether I will or no. He cannot but know that I deny utterly, that ever we had indeed, whatever men thought, a national church; for I grant no such thing as a national church in the present sense contended about. That in England under the rule of the prelates, when they looked on the church as national, there were true churches, and true ministers, though in much disorder as to the way of entering into the ministry and dispensing of ordinances, I grant freely; which is all this reverend author, if I understand him, pleads for; and this, he says, I was unwilling to acknowledge, lest I should thereby condemn myself as a schismatic. Truly, in the many sad differences and divisions that are in the world amongst Christians, I have not been without sad and jealous thoughts of heart, lest by any doctrine or practice of mine I should occasionally contribute any

thing unto them ; if it hath been otherwise with this author, I envy not his frame of spirit. But I must freely say, that having, together with them, weighed the reasons for them, I have been very little moved with the clamorous accusations, and insinuations of this author. In the mean time, if it be possible to give him satisfaction, I here let him know, that I assent unto that sum of all he hath to say, as to the church of England ; namely, that the true and faithful ministers, with the people in their several congregations, administering the true ordinances of Jesus Christ, whereof baptism is one, was and is the true church-state of England, from which I am not separated ; nor do I think that some addition of human prudence, or imprudence can disannul the ordinances of Jesus Christ, upon the disavower made of any other national church-state ; and the assertion of this, to answer all intents and purposes, I suppose now that the reverend author knows that it is incumbent on him to prove, that we have been members of some of these particular churches in due order, according to the mind of Christ, to all intents and purposes of church membership, and that we have in our individual persons raised causeless differences in those particular churches whereof we were members respectively, and so separated from them, with the condemnation of them ; or else, according to his own principles, he fails in his brotherly conclusion, ἴδου ῥόδος, ἴδου πηδήμα. I suppose the reader is weary of pursuing things so little to our purpose : if he will hear any farther, that Independents are schismatics, that the setting up of their way hath opened a door to all evils and confusions, that they have separated from all churches, and condemn all churches in the world but their own ; that they have hindered reformation and the setting up of the Presbyterian church ; that being members of our churches, as they are members of the nation, because they are born in it, yet they have deserted them ; that they gather churches which they pretend to be ‘ spick and span new ;’ they have separated from us, that they countenance Quakers, and all other sectaries, that they will reform a national church whether men will or no, though they say that they only desire to reform themselves, and plead for liberty to that end.

If any man, I say, have a mind to read or hear of this any

more, let him read the rest of this chapter, or else converse with some persons whom I can direct him to, who talk at this wholesome rate all the day long.

What seems to be my particular concernment, I shall a little farther attend unto. Some words (for that is the manner of managing this controversy) are culled out from pp. 259, 260. [p. 243.] to be made the matter of farther contest. Thus they lie in my treatise: 'As the not giving a man's self up unto any way, and submitting to any establishment pretended or pleaded to be of Christ, which he hath not light for, and which he was not by any act of his own formerly engaged in, cannot with any colour or pretence of reason be reckoned to him for schism, though he may if he persist in his refusal prejudice his own edification; so no more can a man's peaceable relinquishment of the ordinary communion of one church in all its relations be so esteemed.' These words have as yet unto me a very harmless aspect; but our reverend author is sharp-sighted, and sees I know not what monsters in them: for first, saith he, 'here he seems to me to be a very sceptic in his way of independency:' why so, I pray? 'This will gratify all sects, Quakers and all, with a toleration:' how, I pray? it is schism, not toleration, we are treating about. But 'this leaves them to judge of, as well as others, what is, and what is not according to the mind of Christ;' why, pray sir, who is appointed to judge finally for them? 'why then should they be denied their liberty?' but is that the thing under consideration? had you concluded that their not submitting to what they have not light for its institution, is not properly schism, you should have seen how far I had been concerned in the inference: but excursions unto Quakers, &c. are one topic of such discourses. But now he asks me one question, it seems to try whether I am a sceptic or no; 'Whether,' saith he, 'does he believe his own way to be the only true way of Christ, for he hath instituted but one way, having run from and renounced all other ways in this nation?' I promise you this is a hard question, and not easily answered. If I deny it, he will say I am a sceptic, and other things also will be brought in: if I affirm it, it may be he will say that I condemn their churches for no churches, and the like: it is good to be wary when a man hath to deal with wise men; how if I

should say that our way and their way is for the substance of them, one way, and so I cannot say that my way is the only true way exclusively to theirs: I suppose this may do pretty well. But I fear this will scarce give satisfaction, and yet I know not well how I can go any farther; yet this I will add; I do indeed believe, that wherein their way and our way differ, our way is according to the mind of Christ, and not theirs: and this I am ready at any time (God assisting) personally to maintain to him: and as for my running from ways of religion, I dare again tell him, these reproaches and calumnies become him not at all. But he proceeds, 'If so,' saith he, 'is not every man bound to come into it, and not upon every conceived new light to relinquish it?' Truly, I think Mr. C. himself is bound to come into it, and yet I do not think that his not so doing makes him a schismatic: and as for relinquishment, I assert no more than what he himself concludes to be lawful.

And thus, Christian reader, I have given thee a brief account of all things of any importance that I could meet withal in this treatise, and of many which are of very little. If thou shalt be pleased to compare my treatise of Schism with the refutation of it, thou wilt quickly see how short this is of that which it pretends to; how untouched my principles do abide; and how the most material parts of my discourse are utterly passed by, without any notice taken of them. The truth is, in the way chosen by this reverend author to proceed in, men may multiply writings to the world's end, without driving any controversy to an issue; descanting and harping on words, making exceptions to particular passages, and the like, is an easy and facile, and to some men a pleasant labour: what small reason our author had to give his book the title it bears, unless it were to discover his design, I hope doth by this time appear. Much of the proof of it lies in the repeated asseverations of it, it is so, and it is so. If he shall be pleased to send me word of one argument tending that way, that is not founded in an evident mistake, I will promise him, if I live, a reconsideration of it.

In the mean time I humbly beg of this reverend author that he would review, in the presence of the Lord, the frame of spirit wherein he wrote this charge; as also, that he

would take into his thoughts all the reproaches, and all that obloquy he hath endeavoured to load me causelessly and falsely withal. As for myself, my name, reputation, and esteem with the churches of God, to whom he hath endeavoured to render me odious, I commit the whole concernment of them to him, whose presence through grace I have hitherto enjoyed, and whose promise I lean upon, that he will 'never leave me nor forsake me.' I shall not complain of my usage: but what am I? of the usage of many precious saints and holy churches of Jesus Christ, to him that lives and sees, any farther than by begging that it may not be laid to his charge: and if so mean a person as I am, can in any way be serviceable to him, or to any of the churches that he pleads for, in reference to the gospel of Christ, I hope my life will not be dear to me that it may effect it; and I shall not cease to pray that both he and those who promoted this work in his hand, may at length consider the many calls of God that are evident upon them, to lay aside these unseemly animosities, and to endeavour a coalition in love, with all those who in sincerity call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.

For the distances themselves that are between us, wherein we are not as yet agreed; what is the just state of them, the truth and warrantableness of the principles whereupon we proceed, with the necessity of our practice in conformity thereunto; what we judge our brethren to come short in, of, or wherein to go beyond the mind of Jesus Christ; with a farther ventilation of this business of schism, I have some good grounds of expectation, that possibly ere long we may see a fair discussion of these things, in a pursuit of truth and peace.