THE
Doubting Conscience
Resolved.
In Answer to a (pretended)
perplexing
QUESTION, &c.
Wherein is evidently proved,
That the holy Scriptures (not the Pope) is the Foundation whereupon the Church is built.

OR,
That a CHRISTIAN may be infallibly certain of his Faith and Religion by the holy Scriptures.

By WILLIAM TWYSSSE D.D.
Prolocutor of the Assembly of DIVINES.

Written at the desire of Samuel Hartlib, Esquire, for the satisfaction of his Friends beyond the Seas; and now divulged in print for more publick Edification.

LONDON, June 26
Printed for Thomas Mathews at the Sign of the Cock in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1652.
SIR,

I have read this learned and satisfactory Answer to the Perplexing Question and Doubtful Case of Conscience, in the life time of D. Twisse, and if you shall please to give it your Imprimatur, I think it may be advantageous in this juncture of time. I rest, Yours,

J. Cranford.

May 3. 1652.

Imprimatur,
Edm. Calamy

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1652.
THE APPROBATION OF
That Reverend Father of the Church, Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich.
In a Letter to his worthily respected friend, Mr. W. S.

Worthy Sir,

Return you many thanks for the favour you have done me, in affording me the view of this solid and seasonable piece of Dr. Twisse, in full answer to this pretend'd Questionist; who under the colour of a Perplexing Case of Conscience from a Preacher of the Gospell, sends forth a fool-
foolish kind of challenge to all Protestant Divines. Had you not named the Author of the satisfactory Answer, and seconded it by another's attestation, I could both have known and avouched him. There is a face of a style, by which we Scholars know one another, no less than our persons by a visible countenance; whosoever hath read the witty & acute exercitations of this Author upon the writings of Doctor Jackson, will easily find him in this Tractate both for form and matter. This sculking and disguised Challenger could not have met with a meet Combatant; a man so eminent in School-Divinity, that the Jesuits have felt, and (for ought I see) shrunk under his strength, in their Scientia Media, and whom the States of the Netherlands out of the fame of his worth, would fain have tempted away with large offers to a Publick Professorship in one of their Universities. I only wish he had met with a more able Adversary: For certainly, as I intimated to you in my last, this Beagle, whosoever he be, whether out of misprision or craft, hunts counter, and runs all the while upon a wrong ground; vainly supposing, that differences in points not fundamental, make
a diversity of Religions; and weakly conceiving, that because there are many false claims to Truth in the world, God hath not left us means enough in his revealed Will to distinguish Truth from Error; as if, because there are store of counterfeit coyns abroad, it could not be safe for a man to receive, or possible to discern currant money: whereas, if his wit would have served him, he might have considered, that all, both Agenda and Credenda necessary to salvation (which only can difference Religion) are clearly laid down in the sacred Oracles of Scripture, with which if any refractory soul will unjustly quarrell, he may by those helps which God hath left to his Church, be either convinced, or shamed; in the mean while it is no reason that his absurd obstinacy should cast any blemish upon the clear face of truth, or be any prejudice to others, who are blessed with better apprehensions, whose not-forested souls, out of that judgment of discretion, which God hath endowed all wise Christians withal, upon due search may by those good means which God hath held forth to us, give himself to full satisfaction in all important Truths, as wherein he may securely rest, with a resolute
solute defiance of all oppositions.

Had this Questionist but consulted with learned Bishop Davenant's irrefragable Discourse, De judice ac norma fidei; he had forborne the blurring of his Paper, and spared the labor of this his perplexed and shuffling proposal of his pretended edly-perplexing Question, which in very truth is no other than a stale and often exploded Cavill, newly furnished over with a false colour of a tenderly-conscientious irresolution. The man will find himself here, over-answer'd, and receive too much honour from such an Antagonist, in that it may be laid of him, ΑΕ-

nee magni dextrà cadis. Now since you are pleased to desire my Opinion of the whole work: to speak freely, One or two passages, I confess, to meet with in this learned and weighty Discourse, (as concerning the name and number of the Apocalyptical Beast, 666.) which do not altogether carry my assent. That Mystery must and will lye still close, after all the scanning of the sharpest Wits and Judgements. But for all the Doctrinall points, I cannot but applaud them as worthy of the Author,
and satisfactory to the Reader, and convictive of the Adversary. Farewell, from your much devoted

Higham, April 29. 1652.

J. H. B. N.

A Perplexing Question:

OR,
A Doubtful Case of
Conscience,

Of a certain Preacher of the
Gospel.

Our Religion is our Faith.

Faith either saves or condemns; justly ought we therefore to be able to understand, and prove our Faith.

But now there ariseth a great doubt to me, and other of the simpler sort of Christians, whether it be possible for us to have an infallible certainty of our Faith out of the holy Scriptures, and
A perplexing Question.

and so consequently to rely on and trust to this faith, as to an unbroken foundation?

The reason of our doubting is this. Both Papists and Calvinists holding contrary opinions, do maintain and prove by the holy Scriptures (as they suppose) the contrary to that which the Lutherans hold; seriously affirming that in the Scriptures the Lutheran Religion is condemned; and theirs confirmed. Which thing no man will deny to be an evident Argument of the obscurity of the holy Scriptures. If there be two Physicians of equall learning, and of the same intent in curing the sick, that is, alike desirous to cure the disease, and if these Physicians should out of one and the same Book gather, the one that a Fever is cured with wine, and the other, that wine is as bad as poison to them, that have the Fever, how, I pray, shall we know which of these two to take part withal? A man can gather nothing but that the remedy for that disease is obscurely,

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obscurely expressed in that Book. Some may object, The Sects do not follow the Scriptures onely, but they add their traditions, the Calvinists add their reason, the Anabaptists their dreams.

I answer: They do so, in those things which are not clearly taught in the holy Scriptures, but in the controversies between them and Lutherans, they proceed not so, but by Scriptures they fight against Lutheran Tenents, which are confirmed by the Scriptures, and indeavour by the help of the Scriptures to fight for, and defend their own, which the Lutherans by Scriptures doe condemn. Nay more, there are some (viz. the Anabaptists) that urge the Scriptures in the very Letter more than the rest. The Calvinists use their reason, and out of the Scriptures draw Arguments, which thing the Lutherans also doe, never suffering any of theirs to reason against the Scriptures.

2. If it be objected unto them, that they,
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they wilfully, and against their consciences doe condemn the Lutheran Tenents, and confirm their own: They will answer, That this were a very grievous sin, and that men ought not to presume that they would falsifie and corrupt the Letters and Commands of their Lord to his sons and subjects, much less that they do maliciously errest them and lead themselves and others into the danger of their salvation; and to say the truth, it is not likely that so many hundred thousands of men would come to that pitch of malice, though one should especially seeing they dare confirm their honest meaning with an Oath; wherefore unless they be convinced of maliciously wilful error, we shall seem injuriously to slander them.

3. It may be objected, Perhaps they be fore-stalled with preconceived opinions. I answer, How? You will say they accustom themselves, from their cradles, to their own Religion, forsaking the Bible and other Books.

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Answer. This is true in Popery, but not in Calvinists, and others which urge the Bible more than we do. These have more freedom than we have to the other Religions. Do not the children of the Lutherans also inure themselves to their Religion from their childhood? Do they learn a Popish or Calvinisticall Catechism, before they have learned a Lutheran one? Is not that a mans Religion to which he accustoms himself? How doth a child or a Lay-man, that hath been taught no Religion, know what is Lutheranism, or Calvinism? Doth he not take that Religion which is first offered to him? Besides, no fore-conceived Opinion is so fast rooted, but that it will give place to clear demonstrations, which is confessed among all. Therefore we shall never be able to confute any Religion with the Objection of fore-conceived opinions.

What shall I say more? Doe other Religions want civill learning? There are found amongst them sufficiently learned
A perplexing Question.

learned and ingenious men, and oftentimes they have much better and fitter means for the advancement of grace. Learning, than the Lutherans have; especially the Papists, who make choice of the best wits, whom they employ in a manner from their cradles to their full age in nothing else but study, meditation, and continual exercises, and do abundantly supply them with all things which serve or seem to serve for their furthering and forwarding, and with all care and diligence do remove and take away whatsoever causeth, or seems to cause any hindrance of their course. They study the Scriptures and Fathers night and day, and refuse no labour in learning the foundation of their own Religion, and in knowing and understanding the Errors of others. Nay, the method and manner of learning, of comparing the Scriptures, of interpreting according to the ancient of Faith, of bringing no sense to the Scriptures, and such other rules, cannot be unknown to them.

Obj. But perhaps God hath not granted them his Spirit and this

I answer: God being sought unto and solicited by prayers, denies to no man his grace and Spirit of Truth. Now men of other Religions crave of God the enlightening of their minds and direction in a right way, no less than ourselves, nay (as far as we can discern) perhaps with a greater fervency and zeal, neither are we to think, that they ask it out of hypocrisy and with dissimulation, and that so they would mock God. Therefore it is to be taken for granted, that the Spirit is where the fruits of the Spirit are found, of which none ought to boast above others. Nay more, the knowledge of understanding the Scriptures is a peculiar gift of the Spirit, which is granted no less to others than to us. It is true indeed, that he only understands the Scriptures, which hath the Spirit that dictated them, and (as it is in worldly Laws), no
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no Doctors interpretation or deciding doth justify, till the Law-giver approve that deciding. Yet he that boasts of such approbation of the Spirit is bound to shew it, unless he will be counted but an ordinary Doctor.

Obj. If any should here object, that the Scriptures themselves bear witness of their own clearness, according to that, Thy Word is a Lanthorn to my feet, &c. and you have a more sure Word, &c.

I answer: All the Commands of God are his Word, and so are all his Works which are through his Word; for it is confessed by all, that God sets forth his Word by Nature, the Creature, Signs, Wonders, beneath, above, and by infinite wises; also the Scriptures witness that many things neither are nor can be written. Therefore the V Word of his Voice is taken diversly in the Scriptures, and so by consequence, all that is called Gods Word is not necessarily to be understood of the Scriptures. Hereunto add,
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Certain light, by the help whereof they might (if they would) have found out, that it is enough for the Lutheran truth more clearly than we; and many, that they are assured of the truth although in the New Testament a great part of Lutheranism, though others can-light be risen, yet must we not think not see and believe it. For this is that in the Old Testament there was not that which I would have. I en-
mear blindness. Whence we may require, how a man may be sure not of son, that God thought it not useful his own opinion, but of the truth: for us to reveal all things to us, but now if I believe and determine that though all things perhaps be not ne, such a thing is true, this is my opinion, cessay to be known, yet nevertheless yet is it not therefore the truth, seeing there may be had a certain and infallible truth and opinion have nothing in-
lible way of interpreting, by the help them alike. A steadfast persuasion whereof the most, and most necessary changeth not the essence of the thing Controversies, may be decided; whereof a man is persuaded. For then which is triall be made, a clear light might melancholick persons, whose and more harmony may be shown, in opinion is immovable, work miracles, such Scriptures, as according to the o-
pinion of many, are obscure. It is pos-
sible also, that there should: be not a few other ways of illustrating that which is obscure, although this ill tried may be not used alone, for there may be both be admitted and used, agree-
ments coming from the same Spirit and word, sometimes where there is no demonstration. Nor
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The truth or no; and be that knows no other than what he determines may be excused of malice and hypocrisy. But this reasoning, I and my followers are sure of this thing, therefore it is true, is unreasonable reasoning.

Lastly, if we build our Religion only upon the Scripture, the learned shall have a great Prerogative about the unlearned in the matter of Faith and Religion, and shall be more engaged in thankfulness to God than they; and so Religion shall favour and cleave to goodwits. Also many have their senses exercised in the Scripture, or are more inventive and ingenious than others; therefore if a man could by disputing and reasoning confute some Thesis, and as it were take away a man's opinion from him, and become Conqueror, he should also take away his Religion, and the other should be constrained either to take up this Conqueror's Religion, or against his conscience to keep his own.

Nor will that answer serve, the turn. Our Divines and Pastors can answer you, though I cannot: for then should I believe with another man's faith; but faith must be mine, not another man's, else should salvation also be another man's. If Religion be the service of God, surely it is necessary that I understand that service, which I must perform to my Lord. Seeing God will not reckon another man's service for mine, and cannot be served by a substitute, it remains that we conclude, Controversies are to be left to learned men, and are not so very necessary. It may be answered, Then also Religion is to be left to learned men; for Controversies are our very Religion, for (saving the consideration of them) there is no difference, but Papists are Protestants, and Protestants are Papists; look how much a man knows of Controversies.
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So much doth he know of his own Religion. The state of a man's salvation is such as is his Religion and his Faith: Now there is but one salvation, nor but one faith. But if Controversies belong to the learned only, wherefore have the Lay-men incurred so many afflictions, distresses, nay and death itself, for those Controversies sake?

I know indeed that a Calvinist Doctor, one Doctor Bergius, a Preacher at Bremen, affirms in his late published Sermons, that Controversies are not merely necessary to salvation: That the Scripture is plain and clear in those things which are necessary to salvation, and that there was never any contrariety between the Religions themselves, at which also the Leipsich-Collation between the Lutherans and Calvinists seems to aim.

This I am persuaded is very true, that had the Holy Ghost judged these things

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those Controverted Questions necessary to salvation, it would have expressed and propounded them in the holy Scripture clearly and plainly, seeing those Epistles were sent to simple and Lay-men especially. Nor doth it seem likely to be true, that ever there were so many Articles of Faith drawn out of them as are now to be read in the Catechisms, Common-places, and Compendiums of Divines. As yet there is no certain number of them determined, seeing some Divines have propounded more, and some fewer; and some Religions have in process of time, either added or abated whole Articles, and after many miseries incurred for the defence of some of them, entering a way of moderation, they have determined that for tolerable and indifferent, which before they thought damnable. But howsoever, there are so many of them, that a man may deservedly call in question
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*question the precise necessity of them. And this seems the best Solution to
disintangle and appease perplexed,
doubtfull, and erring Consciences.*

But could so many thousand Divi-

vines of former Ages be ignorant

of this? Have there not so many
Wars been undertaken for this
cause? Could those learned men suf-

fer so many thousands of men to run
headlong, both by doing and suffering,
into the hazard of body and soul for
Religions sake? and so many un-

speable mischiefs to arise, whereas it

is possible for a man to be saved with-

out the Controversies of Religion?

But if this be the command of God
under pain of temporall and ever-

lasting punishment, to fight for those
Controversies, how can we excuse
thesewnuffling agreements of Faith,
Religion, and Gods Worship? A
Servant may not abate any thing of
his Lords due.

Let this thing be considered, seeing
it
THE
Doubting Conscience
Resolved.
In Answer to a (pretended)
Perplexing Question.

Consideration.

Tis an old saying, that
UnivIversus Mundus ex-
serct hi5riq"iam, but I
think never more veri-
fied in any Age than in this. There
was a time when the Devil plaid
his part in the shape of a Dragon
with seven heads and ten horns,
Rev.12.3,7,9. But after the war
E 4
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in heaven between Michael and his Angells on the one side, and the Dragon and his Angells on the other, the Dragon was cast out into the earth, and his Angells were cast out with him. But he continued to play the part of an old Serpent still which deceiveth the whole world, *Adversarius qui in apertis inefficax persecuti- onibus tela nocendi arte desavit*, and no marvel if intelligent spirits are very subdolous and full of craft. *Eum nimio Bernard in estutum fecit tam natura Quadrag. subtilis quam longa exer-

This Beast first was operative by deceit: For he did great wonders, so that he made fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceived them that dwelt on earth by the means of his miracles. This is that Man of Sin St. Paul speaks of, whose coming was in the effectuall power of Satan, in signs and lying wonders, and in all deceivableness of unrighteousness, 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10. and by his cunning practices got at length as many heads to his body, and horns to his head, as the Dragon had, and got him a mistress too like himself, the Whore of Babylon, whom John saw Rev. 17. 6. drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus: Witness the slaughters made, and barbarous outrages committed upon the Waldenses, who first proclaimed to the world that Rome was the Whore of Babylon, and the Pope.
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Antichrist. But in these later days the Lord hath blasted that Man of Sin with the breath of his mouth, and broken off many horns of the Beast, which hath provoked those Antichristian Generations in a very high degree, Rev. 12. and the Devill undoubtedly hath now greater wrath than ever, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. Now of late yeers his greatest Proctors the Jesuits have not spared to profess despair of prevailing in their cause by disputations, as appears by Westons Preface to his Book, De triplici hominis status; The Gordian knot of Controversies in Religion must be cut assunder by some Alexanders sword. Belike this sect was privy to some intentions on foot for the raising of such Meteors as at length have broken forth into those storms, which since have exercised all Germany, if not all Christendom in the West; And I have read a discourse

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discourse written by one who was sometimes Secretary to the Pope, discovering the practices of those times, and relating a counsell for the propagating of Religion, erected and instituted by Clemens Octavum that whining Pope, thereby concealing the bloody and barbarous intention of his heart; some say that for all his whining he was as impure as bloody. Now these courses wherewith they travelled many years, being now brought forth unto the light, I wonder not a little that they persist in their motive learning, which of all others is of the basest alay, and hath more of the nature of a charm than of a medicine to cure Error in a rational way. For I cannot be perswaded otherwise, but that some vile Jesuite hath an hand in this Argument to style himself a Preacher of the Gospell, for though he holds the Pope to be Judge of Controversies, yet I presume when he
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he preacheth, he doth not take his Text out of the Popes Cations, but out of the Word of God; and we know there are Dutch Jesuits, as well as Spanish Jesuits, and I have heard, that when the Arminian quarrells were rise in the Netherlands, some Jesuits have insinuated themselves amongst them, and preached in their Congregations, to promote the Arminian cause, thoug not known to be any other than their own Ministers.

This Preacher of the Gospel shapes his discourse at pleasure, calling it a Perplexing Question, or a Doubtfull Case of Conscience, whereas it contains nothing but a threed-bare and old worn-out Argument; he was ashamed to say that it proceeds concerning the Scripture, left the conscience of every sober Christian should rise against it, therefore he balks that, and shapes it to proceed, Concerning

...ing the foundation of the Religion of the Protestants, and others which have made a separation from the Pope. Now this foundation is no other than the Scripture of the Prophets and Apostles, which S. Paul calls the foundation whereupon the Church is built. And the Perplexing Question and Doubtfull Case of Conscience comes to this, *Whether the Scripture or the Pope be the foundation whereupon the Church is built?* I do not well understand what he means by distinguishing those who have made a separation from the Pope, into Protestants and others; for none separate from the Pope, but by reason of the corruptions they finde in the Church of Rome in the way of Error and Heresie; Superstition and Idolatry, and their bloody and barbarous disposition against all those that cannot brook her abominations; and Protestants have their name from their
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their protestation against these their courses.

As for the Question, Whether any Christian bee altogether and infallibly certain of his Faith and Religion by the holy Scriptures, and safely rely upon it against all tentations and objections? Is this the Perplexing Question? Is this the Doubtful Case of Conscience?

It is now above 1600 years since Christs Resurrection, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, whoever was known to make question of this in the Church of God, until this last hundred years, wherein so great and general a separation hath been made, not from the Church of God, but from communion with the Church of Rome? After Christs practice in incurring Satan, and that after a manner competent, to every simple Christian, not discovering the Devills adulterating the Text, Psal. 91. He shall give his Angells charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways, which last clause in all thy ways, the Devill omitted, but replying, (Mat. 4.) It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, and reprehending the Sadduces for not knowing the Scriptures and the power of God, imputing their error to this their ignorance, and shewing how little need there is that any man should rise from the dead to tell men of that place of torment in case they have Moses and the Prophets, and that who so will not believe Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe, though a man rise from the dead, Luk. 16, and counselling the Jews to search the Scriptures, Joh. 5, and justifying them in their opinion, thinking them to be sufficient to direct them unto everlasting life; Afterwards the Apostles submitted their Doctrine to be examined by the Word of God.
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God. The Bereans being commended for this, (Acts 17.) and professing that the Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. 3. 15. After the antient Fathers have called the trial of Controversies to the Word of God, and Constantine at the Council of Nice referred all the Bishops there assembled to proceed according to this; and both Chrysostome and Austin have professed that all things necessary to salvation are clearly set down in Scripture; and in the Controversie between Hierome and Austin about Pauls reproving Peter, whether it were done seriously, or in pretence only, Hierome pleading variety of Fathers for his way, and Austin opposing the clear evidence of the Text against them all. And Papists themselves, many of the more ingenious sort of them, having been found to confess that the last resolution of our faith ought to be made into the Word of God; and the contradictory nature of the Papists' Tenet: in proving the true Church by the Scriptures, and the Scriptures by the Church, having been made manifest to the world by Divines. After all this, I say, that a Preacher of the Gospel should be brought upon the Stage to propose such a Question, as Whether any Christian can be certain of his faith by the holy Scriptures; nor propose it only, but to call it Aristotle's Question, and a Doubtfull Case of Conscience, is so unshamefast a course, as in my judgment it becomest none but such an one as hath an hollow forehead, and cannot be ashamed. Yet I consider the condition of these present times in Germany, where the Antichristian Congregations have confederated themselves, and taken counsel against Gods Secretaries, and as Pharaoh pursued.
pursued the Israelites thinking to overtake them, and that their lust should be satisfied upon them, so these have not only thought so, but done so; it is not impossible but that some weak Preacher of the Gospell may fall into their hands, and be so charmed with fears, or hopes, or both, as to be drawn unto their lure, and brought to do them this piece of service, as to propose such a Question, and name the child after this manner: For these times are the very hour and power of darkness, and Satan is not yet bound, though we trust his binding is not far off. And it is not strange that men should be given over to believe lies; and to become some Jesuits Preator, calling men to relieve a scrupulous and perplexed conscience, and to intreat all Christians (especially the Calvinists Divines and Preachers) with all due respect to give a Solution to this pro-

Resolved, &c. 13 proposed Question, and this in Dutch, whereas I had thought that this Question had neither being, life, or motion in any other part of the Christian world, but only in this our England. Well, let us consider wherein the perplexity of this Question consists, or what it is that makes it.

Disc. Our Religion is our Faith; Faith either saves or condemns; justly ought we therefore to be able to understand and prove our Faith.

Consider. The first proposition, That our Religion is our Faith, is brought in to no purpose: the Argument here used subsists well enough without it, such as it is. The faith that saves is an act in man; but that which is to be proved, is no act in man, but the object of that act, the thing believed; what conscience the Author of this discourse had I know not, but I doubt he will appear to be but of little wit.

Disc.
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Disc. But now there ariseth a great doubt to me, and others of the simpler sort of Christians: Whether it be possible for us to have an infallible certainty of our Faith out of the holy Scriptures, and so consequently to rely and trust to this faith as to an unshaken foundation.

Consideration. Let my Faith be never so certain, and my Repentance and good works never so sincere, I trust neither to the one nor to the other; Christ is the Rock and foundation whereupon God's Church is built, upon which we are built by the knowledge of Christ, and faith in Christ, and in him alone I trust both for the keeping of me in this knowledge and faith of Christ, and for the bringing of me thereby unto salvation, as Paul faith, 1 Cor. 1: 26. I know whom I have trusted, and I know that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him. And 1 Cor. 1: 30. God hath made him unto us

Resolved, &c. us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Who so doubts whether it be possible to have any certainty of faith out of the holy Scriptures, I demand of him, whether he doubts of the possibility for a man to have any certain faith at all, or no; if he doubts whether this be possible, who seeth not that it is more fit this Question should be proposed in the first place, and upon the solution thereof, and not afore, to proceed to inquire by what this certainty may be had; if he doubts not but that this is possible, let him shew us how or by what means he is assured hereof, as namely, whether by natural reason, or by the word of the Pope, or by the word of an Angel. And indeed if the Question were proposed indifferently and fairly with distinction, we should soon perceive how little cause there is to call this a Perplexed Question, or
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a Doubtfull case of Conscience, though these forms favour of no learning, nor judgement; for the perplexity that is found in this Argument is not in the Question, if it be, it is the meer fault of the propounder exhibiting it in perplexed terms, the meaning whereof cannot be easily unfolded; but rather in finding out the truth thereof, and that is onely in case the reasons be of equall moment on both sides, wherewith the truth is incombred; so that the light and convincing evidence thereof cannot easily break forth and appear. Then as for a case of Conscience that is a very alien notion, and ill applied in this place: for cases of Conscience are onely touch- ing what we ought to doe in a certain case, but this is onely touch- ing possibility of assurance, as, Whether we can have any certain faith by the holy Scriptures. But let us proceed distinctly, And 1. Let

Resolved, &c. 17

1. Let us inquire, Whether a man can have any certain faith at all? I answer. 1. They may; for many have had it, as it is defined by S. Paul, Heb. 11. to be the evidence of things not seen, the ground of things hoped for; and there the Apostle reckons up a Catalogue of many that had such a faith. I presume the propounder of this, if he be a Christian, makes no question hereof: And that Abraham the Father of the faithful, Rom. 4. 18, 19, 20. was such a one, who against hope believed in hope, and being not weak in faith, he staggered not at the promis of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and that all the true children of Abraham have the like faith as Abraham had. 2. But then let us distinguish when we treat of possibility, this may be understood either in reference to the power of Nature, or in respect of the power of
18. The Doubting Conscience of God; and according to this distinction I answer, That it is utterly impossible to believe this by power of Nature, Mat. 16. Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven; and 1 Cor. 2. 14. The natural man perceives not the things of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; And Esa. 53. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of God been revealed? And Joh. 12. 39. Therefore they could not believe, because Elias's faith again, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted; and I should heal them; And Rom. 8. 8. They that are in the flesh cannot please God, and consequently they cannot have faith, for surely by faith we please God. But then on the other side, it is most true, that by the power of God

God a man may believe, Mat. 8. 27. They believed through grace. And Phil. 1. 29. To you it is given not only to believe in him, but to suffer for him, and to believe and find mercy at God's hands are all one, Rom. 11. 30.

Now if it be granted that faith may be had in what degree of certainty soever, what sober Christian can make doubt but that if question be made about the means whereby we may have it, it may be had by holy Scripture as well as by any other means? yea and far better, considering that faith is in the proper notion thereof the affent to somewhat from the authority of the speaker, and if the speaker is but a man, it is no better than faith human; if the speaker be God, that and that alone makes it to be faith divine. Now we all confess, that the holy Scripture is the Word of God, and therefore if by any word faith may be had in
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what degree of certainty soever, sure it may be had by the Word of God; yea, and that no other way can Divine Faith be had but by the Word of God, not by the word of the creature, whether man or Angel. And if faith may be wrought by the power of God’s Spirit in the heart of any man, he that makes question whether this may be done by the holy Scriptures, had need of some good measure of Ellebore to purge his brain, for he seems to me to be in the next degree to a mad-man, for seeing faith is no faith, unless it depend upon some word, that God should work his faith by another word than his own, is as uncouth and contradictious assertion I should think as ever was heard among the learned. But it may be this Author through the confusion of his wits, hath not hitherto been so happy as to deliver himself fairly of his own meaning. Therefore fore let us take notice of the Discourse itself, whether it may bear any better state of the Question than yet we have been acquainted with: For I guess that in the issue the state of the Question will come to this,

Whether it be possible for us by the holy Scripture to have any certain assurance of the meaning of it.

Disc. The reason of our doubting is this, both Papists and Calvinists holding contrary opinions, do maintain & prove by the holy Scriptures (as they suppose) the contrary to that which the Lutherans hold; seriously affirming, that in the Scriptures the Lutheran Religion is condemned, and theirs confirmed. Which thing no man will deny to be an evident Argument of the obscurity of the holy Scriptures. If there be two Physicians of equal learning, and of the same intent in curing the sick, that is, alike desirous to cure the disease, and if these Physicians should out of one and the same
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Book gather, the one, that a Fever is cured with wine, and the other, that wine is as bad as poison to them that have the Fever, how, I pray, shall we know which of these two to take part withall? A man can gather nothing, but that the remedy for that disease is obscurely expressed in that Book.

Consider. The sum of all this is, that the Scripture is obscure; and that which the Author would infer from hence is this, therefore it is impossible to be sure of the meaning of it; whereby now I perceive the Perplexed Question and Doubtfull Case of Conscience comes but to this in plain terms, Whether it be possible for a man to be sure of the meaning of Scripture; the Author maintains the Negative, & proves it, because the Scripture is obscure, and the obscurity of Scripture he proves by this, that men differ in the exposition of it: Now this I will examine in order, and first observe the dodging disposition of this Author, and manifest evidence of his corrupt affection, and that he comes to this work with an intention not to seek the truth, but to circumvent it rather: For whereas the force of his Argument to prove that the Scripture is obscure, is but this, that Divines differ in the interpretation of Scripture, yet it served his turn rather to instance in Papists and Calvinists joyning together in the interpretation of Scripture contrary to the Lutherans. Might he not as well give instance in Papists and Lutherans holding together in interpretation of Scripture contrary to the Calvinists? Might he not as well have instanced in Lutherans and Calvinists joyning together in the interpretation of Scripture contrary to the Papists? undoubtedly he might, for it is but an indefinite proposition, and the matter is clearly contingent. Now
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an indefinite proposition in a contingent matter is confessed in Schools to have no greater force than of a particular proposition: As much as to say, they differ one from another in the interpretation of some Scriptures. Now this may very well be true, not onely of Papists differing from Protestants, but of Papists differing from Papists, as Maldonate from Jansenius, and Protestants from Protestants, not onely Lutherans from Calvinists, but one Lutheran from another, and one Calvinist from another in the interpretation of some places of Scripture. Nay, doth not one Father differ from another after this very manner? And do not Modern Divines, even Papists as well as Protestants, take liberty of dissenting from all the Antients, in the interpretation of some places of Scripture? Witness Maldonate in the interpretation of that Mat. 5, Blessed are the poor in spirit, who takes a way of interpretation different from all the Antients, by his own confession. And Cardinall Guifetan when he was put upon the studying of Scripture by occasion of his conference with Martin Luther, who would hear nothing but Scripture, see what a profession he makes in his entrance upon writing Commentaries on the Scriptures, quanquam a Torrente Doctorum Sacrorum alienum, aquos se praebeant censores: And when Vincent takes notice of the multiplicity of translations of the Scripture, he was so far from being offended thereat, that he professed there was more profit than damage redounding thereby to the Church; and why may it not be so by different interpretations also? it being more easie to judge which of them is the right,
right, or by refuting them all to find out the true interpretation, than at the first dash to find out the true meaning.

2. Observe the absurd and malicious carriage of this Author.

1. In shaping different Religions, according to different interpretations of Scriptures, whereas I have shewed, that the force of the proposition is only a particular, namely, that they differ in the interpretation of some places of Scripture, which difference I have shewed may be found, and ever hath been found more or less, even amongst them that are of the same Religion, as amongst none have been more different interpretations of Scripture found than amongst the Antients; yet what Christian is found to be so impudent and immodest, as to lay to their charge that they differed in Religion; and look how many different interpretations of Scripture were found amongst them, so many different Religions there were amongst them? he might as well profess, that the Papists amongst themselves, the Lutherans amongst themselves, and the Calvinists amongst themselves are of different Religions.

3. We acknowledge different opinions between Lutherans and Calvinians; so no doubt there are different opinions among the Lutherans themselves, and the Calvinians themselves, but we utterly deny there are different Religions. The Lutherans we hold to be true Churches, agreeing with us in the fundamental points of faith, and likewise in being free from Idolatry; for albeit they have Images in their Churches, which we conceive to be a very dangerous thing, yet they do not worship them; and although they hold real Presence in the Sacrament, yet they do not adore it.

C. 5.
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So that albeit we think some of their opinions are contrary to the Scripture, and they think the like of some of ours, yet neither we say of their Religion, nor they of ours I trow, that it is contrary to the Scripture, much less that it is condemned in Scripture.

But come we to the main scope of this Authors Discourse, which is to prove that the Scriptures are obscure, and from thence to infer, that we can have no assurance of the true meaning of it. To this we answer,

1. By denying the consequence, which is this, Divines differ in the interpretation of Scripture, therefore the Scripture is obscure.

And I prove the absurdity, and untruth, and weakness of it.

1. It is weak; for at the uttermost it proves that it is obscure but in some places: For this difference of interpretation is but of some places, as I have shewed, and the

Resolved, &c. 29

the force of the proposition I have shewed to be no greater than the force of a particular.

2. It is absurd; for by the same reason I may prove, that the Scripture is clear, thus: That Scripture is clear in the interpretation, wherein men of different opinions and different Religions doe agree; But men of different opinions and Religions do agree in the interpretation of divine Scripture; therefore the divine Scripture is clear; and indeed it will be found that we agree in the interpretation not of some onely, but of many places of holy Scripture. Now what absurd a course is it for a Disputant so to dispute, as that his Argument may be retorted with as good force against him; yea, and much more? For when men of different opinions are found to differ about the interpretation of a Scripture, it may be this arises from the love of their own opinions, which makes
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makes the Scripture seem to found the same way; but when they agree in the interpretation of Scripture, notwithstanding their other differences, this argues the Scripture to be clear enough: Nay, we know Bellarmine will dislike an opinion, and Maldonate an interpretation of Scripture, for Calvin's fake, striving to differ from such as they hate, though without all just cause, and to wrest the Scriptures to serve their turns.

3. Lastly, the Consequence is as untrue, as it is weak and absurd; for the cause of this difference may be in the darkness of their understanding, who take upon them to interpret it, rather than in the darkness of the Scripture itself, which whether we consider the Law or the Gospel, each of them is termed light by the Spirit of God. Thy Law is a Lanthorn to my feet, and a light unto my pathes, saith David, Psal. xxvi. And of the Gospel:

Resolved, &c.

Gospel our Saviour speaks, 'Light came into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light,' Joh. 3:11; the greater will be their condemnation.

And as for the instance proposed to prove the Consequence, of two Physicians, 1. The particular proposed is most insinuate, and a mere fiction without all colour.

2. Yet I doubt not but Galen and Hippocrates in divers places may admit different interpretations: Therefore I answer,

1. This also may arise not so much from the obscurity of the Text, as from the fault of the Interpreter.

2. It is a most alien course, to compare the Word of God, and the word of Man together; for man may contradict himself, God cannot; man may forget one time what he delivered at another, God cannot.

3. There is a vast difference be-
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tween the things of men and the things of God: so that whereas naturall reason and naturall instruction may be sufficient to enable a man to understand the writing of another man, yet onely

supernaturall illumination is sufficient to enable a man to discern the things of God; yet I confess, on this particular some judicious reader may think to find a flaw, yet I presume that upon serious consideration that attempt will prove but vain, and none but a Socinian will oppose in this, who denies all

sides insufisa, and acknowledgeth none but acquisita, faith naturall, and shrewd suspicions that way are betrayed by Mr. Chillingworth, as if he acknowledged no faith, but faith naturall.

2. But be it granted, that the Scripture is obscure. 1. Consider the force of this proposition, it is but an indefinite, and the matter is apparently contingent; for undoubtedly,

Resolved, &c. 33

doubtedly it was at the good pleasure of God to speak after what manner he thought good: Hence it followeth, that the force hereof is but the force of a particular proposition, as much as to say, that the Scripture in some places is obscure, or some places of Scripture are obscure. And indeed Gregory of old had professed that the holy Scripture is like unto a ford, wherein a Lamb may wade, and an Elephant may swim; and before him S. Paul tells us, that it contains both milk for babes, and strong meat for men; there is enough, and that plain enough, to satisfy the hungry; and there is also enough, and that obscure enough, to prevent non-sensing, especially in the Prophecies for the times to come. The first promise of the Covenant of Grace was this, the seed of the woman shall break the Serpents head: Here is a double mystery in general notions carried, the one the mystery
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The seed of the woman, but implied to be somewhat more, yea much more, even such a one as should break the Serpents head; the other the mystery of his Office, carried only in this general notion of breaking the Serpents head. In this time of grace we know this to have been brought to pass by his dying for our sins, and his rising again for our justification. Had this been known to Satan, as now it is to us, is it credible that he would have persuaded Judas as he did to contract with the high Priests to betray him into their hands? that were Judas like after he had betrayed his Master to go forth and hang himself: For we know that upon the Cross he spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a shew of them openly, and triumphed over them. The day of Christ's Resurrection undoubtly was a day of extreme confusion to:

Resolved, &c. to the Devill, and all his Angells of darkness: So the Jewes had they known this mystery of his Person, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. 2.8. but this wisdom of God in a mystery was hid from them, 1 Cor. 2.7. and because they knew him not, nor the words of the Prophets which were read every Sabbath day, they fulfilled them in condemning him, Acts 13.27. But if all things necessary to salvation are plainly set down in holy Scripture, as both Chrysostom a Greek Father, and Austin a Latine Father, have concurrently delivered, what are we the worse for the obscurity of the same? 2. But suppose all were obscure, yet are there not degrees of obscurity? Amongst Writers in all Languages there is this difference, some write more obscurely, some more clearly; as amongst the Greeks, what difference between Chrysostome and Epiphanius this way?
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way? among the Latines between Tertullian and Cyprian? yet who doubts but even Tertullian may be understood, and that by Cyprian, who was wont to call for him in these terms, Da mihi Magistrum; so amongst School-Divines, Aquinas and Durand are perspicuous and clear, not so with Scot or Cajetan; so Alvaro’s fair and clear, Nauarretius à Dominicanto, but all along labours of obscurity as a man doth of the Gout; whether he understood himself or no, I know not; sure I am he torments his Reader, yet by pains and intention of study the difficulty may be overcome, as I have found in part, but I do not think any knowledge in him worthy to be redeemed with the like labour; never anything tormented me more unless it were the construing of Dr. Jackson’s English, yet no where els that I know save in treating of the Divine Essence, Prov. 14.16. Now the Word of God hath taught us that knowledge is easier to him that will understand. If thou callest after knowledge, and criest for understanding: If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and finde the knowledge of God, Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5. especially as touching all things necessary unto salvation. 2. But suppose it were very obscure throughout, is not God the Author able to instruct us in his own meaning, and make us assured of it? And hath not our Saviour assured us, that if earthly Fathers know how to give good things to their children, much more shall the heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him. The holy Apostle teacheth us this saying, 1 Job. 2.27. That annoying which ye received of him dwelleth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same annoying teacheth you all things, --- Here-
Resolved, &c.

Hereupon Nider a Papist, in his Consolatorium timoris et Conscientiae, acknowledgeth, that every childe of God hath the direction of the Spirit to lead him into all truth necessary to salvation. And certainly the truth of God's Word is infallible, cui non potest subesse falsum As for the certainty cx parte Scientis, 1. That God can work in such a measure as he pleaseth.

2. Yet we know in the best there is the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and that swayes to infidelity, but the better part masters it.

3. And as for doubting, that is rather on the part of fiducia, than of fides, and those doubts are mastered, and that is the best faith that masters doubts, and overcometh tentations.

Thus I presume the sober Reader may observe the rotten condition of this Discourse throughout, yet we have spoken nothing of the Scripture, in comparison to other means of assurance which this Author subdolously, or simply conceals, because to leave Scripture, and to seek forth for assurance elsewhere, he perceives that this would manifestly appear in the end to be no better than to leave the fountain of living water, and to dig unto our selves pits, even broken pits that can hold no water, Jer. 2. For consider, shall we fly to the voyce of the Church? consider, the voyce of God it is the voyce of the Church, and more. 1. It is the voyce of the Church, yea of the best Church, and purest Church, namely, the voyce of the Prophetical and Apostolical Church.

For Deus loquitur per Prophetas et Apostolos. And this is that Church into whose voyce the last resolution of our Faith ought to be made, in the opinion of Durand; 5 then it is more than the voyce of the Church, for holy men speak, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,
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2 Pet. i. m. &c. You will say, but all the question is about the meaning of it.

I answer, 1. May there not be as much question about the meaning of the voysce of the Church, as about the meaning of God's Word? Where doth the Church speak more authentically than in generall Councills? See the Councill of Trent, the Pope was unwilling to confirm it, till Cardinal Bon Compagio Bishop of Befrice urged him thereunto upon this ground. That withall he should publish an Edict, forbidding all men to take upon them the interpretation thereof, and commanding them to seek that from him, and then (faith he) let us alone to devise a convenient interpretation of it without prejudices to the advantages of the Court of Rome.

2. Again, Generall Councills may may erre, as Anstien observes, the former have been corrected by the later in some things.

3. Such Councells never went about to write Commentaries upon the Scripture, & if they should, Cajeten confesseth, an interpretation may be given congruous to the Text, yet different from the Torrent of Doctors, notwithstanding which we ought to receive it.

4. Lastly, after what sense soever I interpret Scripture in any Argument, if I am not able to make it good by convincing arguments to every sober conscience, let my proofs be rejected, but withall let him look to it after what manner he refuseth the evidence brought, as he will answer for it at the day of Judgement, according to that of our Saviour, Joh. 12. 48. He that refuseth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken shall judge him at the last day.

5. It
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5. It were easy to produce variety of testimonies, even of Papists acknowledging the last resolution of our faith ought to be made into the VWord of God, and that the true Church, and the power which it hath is not known but by the Word of God.

2. Or will they say the Pope is to resolve us as touching the meaning of Scripture. To this I answer, 1. That I care not who interprets Scripture to me, so he performs the part of an Interpreter indeed, and make it appear to be the meaning of it. 2. And if I doe not so, I am content to suffer the loss of that Argument whatever it be.

3. Then it hath been a very rare thing for Popes to set themselves to interpret Scripture. 4. It is well known that Liberins Pope of Rome, subscibed to Arianism; Honorius was a Monotholite; Pope John the 22. denied that the souls of

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of men lived after separation from the body, like to the Socinians of these dayes, whose opinion was cried down at Paris, and openly proclaimed heretical by the sound of a Trumpet.

3. Or shall the Rule of interpretation of Scripture be the congruity of it to naturall reason, as the Socinians make it? This is most shameful and unreasonable, considering,

1. That our naturall reason is much corrupt by the sin of Adam, The things of God seem foolishness to the naturall man, 1 Cor. 2. 14. naturally we are all darkness.

2. In the state of innocency, do we think that Adam by naturall reason was able to find out or justifie the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Deitie? We say God may be known by light of Nature, quod attinet ad Unitatem nature, but not known quod attinet ad Trinitatem Personarum. God hath set the world in man's heart (faith Solomon) yet can
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he not finde out the works that he hath wrought from the beginning to the end, Eccl. 3. and if he cannot finde out the works of God, js he able to find out the nature of God himself? we know he is said to dwell in a dark cloud.

Disc. Obj. Some may object, The sects do not follow the Scriptures one-ly, but they add, the Papists their Traditions; the Calvinists their Reasons; the Anabaptists their Dreams.

I answer: They do so, in those things which are not clearly taught in the holy Scriptures, but in the controversies between them and Lutherans, they proceed not so, but by scriptures they fight against Lutheran Tenents, which are confirmed by the Scriptures, and endeavors by the help of the Scriptures to fight for, and defend their own, which the Lutherans by Scriptures doe condemn. Nay more, there are some (viz. the Anabaptists) that urge the Scriptures in the very Letter.

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Letter more than the rest. The Calvinists use their reason, and out of the Scriptures draw Arguments, which thing the Lutherans also doe, never suffering any of theirs to reason against the Scriptures.

Consid. This Author will have the making of his own bed, and shapes his Reader at the first encounter to yield, acknowledging the uncontradictable nature of his former one only Argument, which yet I have shewed to be both very weak, very ridiculous, and very untrue: But we keep our ground, professing to the world, that the Scriptures alone being the Word of God, are the rule of our faith, and no word of man; Papists add Traditions, which yet they account the Word of God unwritten; we abhor to make any thing the rule of our faith but the written Word of God. It is falsely said, that Calvinists add their Reason, they rather suppose Reason than add
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add it, the Word of God being given to none but reasonable creatures. Neither doe we make this Reason of ours a rule of faith added to Gods Word, but it is that light which God hath given us wherewith to search into the meaning of his Word, and by studious inquisition and observation to discover it, and make it known to others, and by good reason out of the Text to convict others of the truth. And doth this Authors reason go to bed, and sleepe when he comes to read and studiously to consider the Word of God? If it doth, he will prove no better than a drowsie Student, and I know no reason but such a one may be in love with dreams as well as Anabaptists.

1. In his Answer he carrieth himself most absurdly and ridiculously. For, 1. Most insidiously he supposeth that the Controversies amongst Protestant Divines, are about such things as are clearly taught in Scripture, as if they agreed in those things which are not clearly set down in Scripture, and differ onely about things which are clearly delivered there.

2. He supposeth that Calvinists do not use reason in the controversies between them and the Lutherans, but onely in other things, which is most untrue, and absurd withall; for controversies cannot possibly be mannaged without reason, both as touching the proof of their own Tenet, and touching the disproof of the Tenet opposite: And this must needs be the guise of the Lutherans also.

It is false which he saith of Anabaptists, that they urge the very letter of Scriptures more than the rest. For both Calvinists and Lutherans insist wholly upon the literal sense of Scripture, and more than the Anabaptist in case they (as formerly by this Author said) did depend.
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depend in dreams; for so do not
Protestants but on Scripture only,
and that according unto sense lite-
rall, not at all according to sense
mythicall, save onely in case the
sense mythicall be expounded by
some Apostle, and thereby made
literal. 2. But herein this Au-
thors ignorance discovers itself; 
that hee confounds sense literal
with the proper sense of the words.
We acknowledge sense literal to
comprehend sense Metaphoricall
as well as proper, and to stand in
contradiction onely to sense mysti-
call: But in case we take that in a
metaphoricall sense which our ad-
versaries in any point take in a
sense proper, if we doe not prove
the sense wherein we take it, and
disprove theirs by convincing Ar-
guments, we will allow the liber-
ty to reject our Tenet, and follow
their own; for we desire to make
our faith evident to the conscienc-
es of all opposites, and if they can
make

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make their Tenets in like manner
evident to us, we will renounce our
own and imbrace theirs. 3. And
this Author speaks at random, and
he knows not what, when he would
have his Reader believe the Cal-
vinists permit any to reason against
the Scriptures; for by reason to
clear the meaning of Scripture, is
not, I trust, to reason against it, but
for it rather, especially considering
that by reason of Scripture onely
we dispute the meaning of any
place.

Disc. Object. 2. If it be objected
unto them, that they wilfully and a-
gainst their consciences do condemn
the Lutheran Tenets, and confirm
their own, they will answer,
Anf. This were a very grievous
sin, and that men ought not to pre-
sume that they would satisfie and cor-
r upt the Letters and Commands of
their Lord to his Sons and Subjects,
much less that they do maliciously err,
and lead themselves and others into

D 4. the
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the danger of their salvation; and to say the truth, it is not likely that so many hundred thousands of men would come to that pitch of malice, though one should, especially seeing they dare confirm their honest meaning with an oath; wherefore unless they be convicted of maliciously wilful error, we shall seem injuriously to slander them.

Conf. I see no reason why such a censure should be passed upon the Calvinians more than upon the Lutherans, more speciously it should be passed by them that are Orthodox upon them that are not, though I justifie not this censure whoever makes it; and certainly there is no just cause to pass it upon them who are in the right, and charity will forbid us rashly to pass this censure upon them who are in the wrong. And as I finde defect of love in them who pass such censures hand over head upon their opposites; so I finde want of judgment in this Author, who puts it upon a mans Oath to clear himself of going against his conscience in the Tenets he maintaineth; for he that faith a thing against his conscience is next door by to the swearing of it. But these are such idle and addle conceits that it causeth no small indignation in me to waste precious time in them, which might be better spent on worthier subjects.

Disc. Obj. 3. It may be objected, perhaps they may be forestalled with preconceived opinions.

Ans. I answer. How? You will say, they accustom themselves from their own Religion, forsaking the Bible and other Books. I answer. This is true in Popery, but not in Calvinists, and others which urge the Bible more than we do. These have more freedom than we have to try other Religions. Do not the children of the Lutherans also inure themselves to try Religion from their
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their childhood? Do they learn a Popish or Calvinistical Catechism, before they have learned a Lutheran one? Is not that the same Religion to which he accustomed himself? How doth a child or a Lay-man, that hath been taught no Religion, know what is Lutheranism, or Calvinism? Doth he not take that Religion which is first offered to him? Besides, no fore-conceived Opinion is so fast rooted, but that it will give place to clear demonstrations, which is confessed among all. Therefore we shall never be able to confute any Religion with the objection of fore-conceived opinions.

What shall I say more? Doe other Religions want civil learning? There are found amongst them sufficiently learned and ingenious men, and oftentimes they have much better and fitter means for the advancement of Learning, than the Lutherans have; especially the Papists, who make choice of the best wits, whom they employ in a manner from their cradles to their full

full age in nothing else but study, meditation, and continual exercises; and do abundantly supply them with all things which serve or seem to serve for their furthering and forwarding, and with all care and diligence do remove and take away whatsoever causeth, or seems to cause any hindrance of their course. They study the Scriptures and Fathers night and day, and refuse no labour in learning the foundation of their own Religion, and in knowing and understanding the errors of others. Nay, the method and manner of learning, of comparing the Scriptures, of interpreting according to the nature of Faith, of bringing in sense to the Scriptures, and such other rules, cannot be unknown to them.

Confus. Who is not foreshadowed with preconceived opinions? Is not every one brought up in the Religion of his Parents? Which yet breeds but a natural compliance with it, be it the best Religion, un-
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54. Till God by his Spirit of Regeneration opens their eyes to apprehend the power of God, and the wisdom of God therein, without which in their most zealous profession of it, for their fathers sake, and their education sake, they will prove no better than hypocrites and factious, rather than conscionable in the maintenance of it, which yet may be done with as great strength of learning, as a natural man is capable of. And though it be a false way wherein they have been brought up and bred, and they as zealous and factious in maintaining it as ever Saul was, who made havocck of the Church, and entred into every house and drew out both men and women and put them in prison; yet the Lord in the midst of his persecutions met with him in the way, and confounded him, and struck him with blindness natural, to minde him thereby of his blindness; but afterwards opened his eyes, and brought him out of darkness unto light, and made him not only a Professor of that way of the Gospel, which before he persecuted, but a famous Preacher of it also, even the great Doctor of the Gentiles. So faith Peter of the Jewes to whom hee wrote, that they were redeemed from their vain conversation received by Tradition of their Fathers: And as this was true of the Jewes, so of the Gentiles also, as Jeremia prophesied, Jer. 16. 19. The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the world, and shall say, Surely our fore-fathers have inherited lies and vanity wherein there was no profit. And Isaiah also, I have been sought of them that asked not, I was found of them that sought me not, I said, Behold me, behold me, to a Nation that was not called by my Name. Some while the Apostles and Evangelists abstained from

Resolved, &c. 55
pists; yea and far less. Any man hath freedom to try other Religions, have not we Christians freedom to try the Religion of the Jews and of the Turks? and God abandons some to turn Turks; and Papists have liberty to try our Protestant Religion, Vergerius did so, a Popish Bishop, with a purpose to refute it, but the hand of God was with him to open his eyes, as with Saul; and he turned Protestant. By these words, Calvinists and others urge the Bible more than we doe; it appears this Author is no Calvinist; so by the words following, Do not the children of the Lutherans also inure themselves to their Religion from their childhood also? do argue that this Author is no Lutheran; so that what to make of him I know not, for he would not seem to be a Papist; it seems he is yet to choose his Religion: And yet if this course of his be serious, it is considerable, but he needs not go far.
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far for an Answer to so superficial a Discourse as this.

It is true, naturally every one is apt to be of the Religion he received of his Fathers, but without illumination divine, though he be in the right way, yet shall he have no comfortable apprehension of it, and by illumination divine Saul of a Persecutor shall become a Preacher, and the Gentiles shall have their eyes opened, and be brought out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God, though blindness come upon Israel, as they have been held under it now for 1600. years. A very absurd thing it is to say, we shall never be able to confute any Religion with the objection of foreconceived opinions: For this may be objected to them that are in the right way, as well as to them that are in a wrong way; and undoubtedly the true way may be imbrac'd in a wrong manner, For they are not all

Resolved, &c.

all Israel that are of Israel, Rom. 9. God threatens sometimes to visit the circumcised with the uncircumcised, and the reason why the Lord gave the Christian world over to illusions, to believe lies, was because they received not the love of the truth.

As for civil learning, surely there wanted not both civil and natural knowledge among the Gentiles more than enough, for this made them esteem the Cross of Christ foolishness, which yet to them that are saved, is the power of God: For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will cast away the understanding of the prudent. Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this world? Hath not God made the wisdom of this world foolishness? For seeing the world by wisdom knew not God in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, 1 Cor. 1. 18,19.
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18,19,20,31. And shall we now think that civill learning and naturall ingenuity prefers men to the grace of God, or makes them the more fit to receive the Gospell? Of Princes, who more famous for naturall parts, learning, wisdom, ingenuity, than Trajan and Marcus Antonius? of inferiour condition, than Plinie the second, the Officer of Trajan, who speaks in commendations of the innocency of Christians, yet neither of these became a Christian; nay both these Princes were persecutors of the Church of God; and at Athens for all their learning, which made them renowned throughout the world who were converted by Paul's preaching there, but Dionysius, and Damasius, and some other, Ad. 17. laft.

Papists are great Scholars undoubtedly, not in Logick and Philosophie onely, and that in all kindes, but in Divinity also, and that

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that in the most learned way, Aquinas a great Divine, his Sums, I have heard Doctor Reynolds call it, that absolute Body of Divinitie, but his wit served him to serve that Churches turn in those days, and in maintaining Idolatry he is the most shamefull Writer that ever was, for he will have the Image worshipped with the same honour that is due to the thing represent-ed by it, and that by an Argument drawn out of Aristoteles, De memoria & reminiscencia, opposed herein by Durand and Picus Miranda, and others; I remember what Cicero saied of the Grecians, Do illis erditionem, do Doctrinam, & Religionem nunquam Coluerunt: yet I will not say so of the Church of Rome, though one sometimes did. I know it was renowned for faith all the world over in the days of St. Paul, but a degenerate time came, and as at the first preaching of the Gospell men turned from Idols to serve
Resolved, &c. 63

Religion, God usually infatuating the wisdom of the wise. They have all furtherance, I confess, beyond us, yet God hath not tied himself to annex his truth to these furtherances, least of all if they be employed not indifferently to the investigation of truth, but prejudicably to support their own cause, the madness whereof hath been in these latter days made known to the world more than ever. The triall whereof we make by the Touch-stone of God's Word, according to the counsel of God himself, to shew Law and to the Testimonies if they speak not according to this, it is because there is no light in them, Esai.8. Yet we study Scriptures and Fathers too as well as they, and we have them amongst us that yeeld to them not a jot; nay do we not study their writings too, much more than our own? I willingly profess, I have done so all along, that I might come acquainted with their
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their best strength and fastness, in all which I find nothing but illusions in the maintenance of those Tenets wherein we differ from them. As for interpreting of Scriptures, it is well known they have been brought unto it per force, so was Cajetan in his old years, after he had tasted of Luther's course, who would admit of no other Authority in dispute but the Word of God. And their Commentaries for the most part, are but a Mafs of Collections out of others, yet I despise them not; I am content to use them as soon as any of our own, not so much to learn by them as to observe how they strain their wits to quench that light of truth, which in most places breaks forth to the discovering of their Errors. Well they may talk of bringing no sense to the Scriptures, but their practice is nothing answerable.

Discourse. But perhaps God hath not granted them his Spirit and his grace.

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grace. I answer, God being sought unto and solicited to by prayers, denies to no man his Grace and Spirit of Truth. Now men of other Religions crave of God the enlightning of their minds, and direction in a right way no less than our selves; nay as far as we can discern perhaps with a greater fervency and zeal, neither are we to think that they ask it out of hypocrisy, and with dissimulation, and that so they would mock God; therefore it is to be taken for granted that the Spirit is where the fruits of the Spirit are found, of which none ought to boast above others.

Nay more, the knowledge of understanding the Scriptures is a peculiar gift of the Spirit, which is granted no less to others than to us: It is true, indeed that he only understands the Scriptures which hath the Spirit that did him, and (as it is in worldly laws) no Doctors interpretation or deciding doth justify, till the Law-giver approve that deciding. Yet be that boastseth
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boasteth of such approbation of the spirit is bound to shew it, unless he will be counted but an ordinary Doctor.

Consider. We are bid to try the spirits whether they be of God: Now we have no other triall of the Spirit of Truth speaking in any, but by the Word of God, so the Bereans tried the Doctrine of Saint Paul, Acts 17. and the Apostles professed to preach nothing but what they confirmed by the Word of God. And our Saviour referred the Jews hereunto for the triall of himself, Search the Scriptures for in them you think to have eternal life, they are they that testify of me. Now we have a more compleat rule of triall, the Books both of the Old Testament, and of the New: Saint Paul delivered the whole counsel of God to the Ephesians, Acts 20. and doe we think that the whole scripture doth fail in some necessary part thereof? But I would Popery.

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Popery did not plainly contradict that Scripture which is generally received by us both, if so, I would bear with them for the rest, though in two things we cannot endure that ought should be imposed upon us besides the written Word, namely, Articles of Faith, and parts of Gods Worship. Now by this course of triall we finde, that not the Spirit of Truth, but the spirit of Error hath possessed them in all points of difference between us.

Prayers (I grant) are the ordinary means to obtain any grace at the hands of God, save one, and that is the Spirit of Prayer, and that is the Spirit of Faith, of all the rest it is true Sides imprecat & lex imperat, but with a limitation, or two.

1. All knowledge necessary to salvation, according to that 1 John 2.

27. and Nider (though a Papist) his interpretation thereof in his
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Consolatory of an affrighted Conscience. 2. Other graces also, and that in such a measure also as shall be found fit for each man's calling: And I think every Christian should rest contented with such an Indulgence. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God disposed the members every one of them in the body at his own pleasure: For if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are there many members, yet but one body, 1 Cor. 12, 17, 18, 19.

But men may draw nearer to God with their lips, when their hearts are estranged far from him; and how their hearts stand affected we know not, God alone beholds their hearts: nay we are not so much as privy to their prayers: but we examine their Doctrines by God's Word, according to that Sun

Resolved, &c. 69

Sunt certi libri dominici, and it was a worthy saying of Martin Luther mentioned by Scultetus in his Story of the first ten years of Reformation, Solis Canonicis debemus fidem, eateris omnibus judicium. I do not deny but all the Regenerate who have the Spirit of God according to that, Because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, whereby ye cry Abba Father, Gal. 4. 6.) do seek unto God to enlighten their minds, and God hears them, and grants their requests in his good time, according to the limitations formerly mentioned, but who they are we know not; and we are bid to try the spirits; nor what their fervency and zeal is are we acquainted with, yet surely it is not for their fervency fake that God hears them, but for Christ's sake. And are not they as far bound in charity to think of us, as this Author would shape us to be
be obliged to think of them? we acknowledge no Spirit of Faith, but that which is the Spirit of Truth, at least in all fundamentals necessarily required unto salvation, and to God's holy Worship without idolatry.

As for the Prayers of Papists, they are well known to be shamefully foul, they were wont more frequently to run to Saints than to God, and the Bishop of Bos was to seek whether he should run to God in the name of Christ's blood, or in the name of the Virgins Milk, for he was made to profess in the wall in certain verses, that he knew not well which of the two he should prefer; nay, if of any prayers God faith, though he make many prayers I will not hear, Esai surely he should say as much of these in my judgement. Have not Turks their prayers as well as Papists, and may they not be performed formed with great fervency, and zeal? and may they not be as expert in tricks of gesture, as the Papists? as I have heard once of a child trained up to it by her mother, even unto admiration; the countenance composed unto a sad and solemn disposition, and the hands lift up first to an equall height with the breasts, after a while to an equal height with the head, and lastly above the head, and all this in dumb shewes without one word of ejaculation.

As for hypocrisy here mentioned, I doubt it is delivered hand over head; for first, Hypocrisy is most considerable in a right way, and not in a wrong way; the reason whereof is, because natural men are naturally apt to imbrace false ways and lewd ways too truly, and as apt they may be to imbrace the way of truth hypocritically, and not only to profess Christ,
Resolved, &c. 73

is not conscious of, until God be pleased in mercy to discover it; and as for gross hypocrisy it makes a man a plain Atheist.

This Author seems to be taken with the beauty of the Whore of Babylon, he is so much in love with Papists as to obtrude upon us an acknowledgement that they have the fruits of the Spirit, and consequently without any denial that they have the Spirit. To proceed one degree further, were to profess Antichrist to be Christ, and Christ Antichrist.

To understand the Scriptures is but to acknowledge the true meaning of them, and this we deny that Papists have; as touching all the points of difference between us, which they pretend to ground upon Scripture, yea and in many other particulars they are wide of the right understanding of them; so may our Divines be also, and...
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like enough, that as M. Hooker faith, there are some depths of Scripture, the searching out whereof will hold us as long as the world lasts. Yet I deny not but a Reprobate may have the knowledge of the Scriptures as well as an Elect, this being no grace of Sanctification, but of Edification; but to know the Scriptures to be the Word of God, the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God, that I take to be peculiar to a regenerate spirit in whom the Spirit of God dwells as the fountain of the life of grace, of which in-dwelling of the Spirit a child of God may be conscious in a comfortable manner without boasting.

I count it an absurd course for any to justify his interpretation of Scripture to be found, because he hath the Spirit; we are ready to dispute the meaning we give of Scripture, and to prove it against all opposites made against it; and we look not that any interpretation of Scripture we give should be received any further than we make it appear to be the truth of God to the consciences of them we deal with.

Obj. If any should here object, that the Scriptures themselves bear witness of their own clearness, according to that, Thy Word is a Lanthorn to my feet, and a light unto my paths.

I answer: All the Commands of God are his Word, and so are all his Works which are through his Word; for it is confessed by all, that God sets forth his Word by Nature, the Creature, Signs, Wonders, beneath, above, and by infinite ways; also the Scriptures witness that many things neither are nor can be written. Therefore the Word of his Voice is taken diversely in the Scriptures, and so by consequence, all that is called God's Word.
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Word is not necessarily to be understood of the Scriptures. Hereunto add, that at that time many parts of Scripture were not yet written; whereas the evidence of the thing manifestly proveth, that this is not spoken of the whole Argument and Letter of the Scripture, for as much as the Figures of the Prophecy of the Apocalypse, and infinite other things belonging to the fulfilling of those Prophecies, were hidden from the Prophets themselves, and the Fathers, (much more then from others) and are yet hidden. Christ himself speaks in parables, to the end that men may bear with their ears and not understand. The Scripture itself in very many places witnesseth that the Word of God is secret, obscure, hidden, and discovered only to the Spirit, or to the Godly only, to whom God revealeth it. So that in the Scriptures there are more testimonies of their obscurities, than of their clearness; yet is not

Resolved, &c.

the Scripture hereby either rejected, or slighted. For even before the Law was given and written, men had a certain light, by the help whereof they might (if they would) have found out the truth more clearly than we; and although in the New Testament a great light be risen, yet must we not think that in the Old Testament there was a mere blindness; whence we may reason, that God thought it not usefull for us to reveal all things to us; but though all things perhaps be not necessary to be known, yet nevertheless there may be had a certain and infallible way of interpreting, by the help whereof the most and most necessary Controversies may be decided, of which if trial be made, a clear light and meer harmony may be shewn in such Scriptures, as according to the opinion of many are obscure; it is possible also that there should be not a few other ways of illustrating that which is obscure, although this ill-tried way be
be not used alone; for they may be both admitted and used, agreements coming from the same spirit and word, where there is no demonstration.

Consid. The further I wade in this business, the worse I like my employment, and hereupon I resolve I will no more be employed in any such business, unless I am fairly dealt withal, that I may know who is the Author I am to deal with, at least of what profession he is in Religion; for upon the perusing of this Section some doubts arise within me concerning the intention of the Author, carrying himself in a covert manner that he may be unknown, which doth much move me. Henry the seventh of England was wont to say, he desired nothing more than that he might know his Adversary that encountred him; we do not use to buy a pig in a poke; nor will I hereafter

Resolved, &c. after encounter with I know not whom, nor of what profession he is.

Here the Author returns to oppose the cleerness of Scripture, considering it hand over head, and so opposing it, whereas our Saviour requires that we should search the Scriptures, that is, study them well, and inquire after the true meaning of them. No man searcheth after that which is before his eyes, yea, we are commanded to search for wisdom as we search after gold and silver, and a man will be content to search deep for treasure. It was wont to be said, that in profundis latet veritas. Truth lies deep, how much more should we be content to search diligently and dig deep for the treasures of that truth which is according unto godliness, after the treasures of that wisdom which makes us wise unto salvation? Then again, we distinguish between
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between things necessary to salvation, and other things: Things necessary to salvation, we say are plainly contained in Scripture, many other things are not so.

Here we have a wilde answer at the first, all the Commandments of God are his Word, and so are all his Works which are through his Word.

1. To say, so are all his Works, is to say, all his Works are his Word, which yet forthwith is corrected, by saying they are through his Word: Yet of old I have read in Chrysostome of a double Book of God, the Book of his Word, and the Book of his Creatures, and that God at the first did teach his Creatures γραμματεῖα by his Works, afterwards γραμματεῖα by his written Word. It is most true, the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy works, Psal. 19. And the invisible things of God, given his eternall Power and Godhead.
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of the mystery of Godliness, and these are the things most remote from our capacities. As for the Law as a rule of life, that is more or less written in the hearts of all men. It is true, the Author of the Book De Vocatione Gentium, talks of such a manner of instruction by Gods VVorks, but (I pray) do not compare that in clearness to the Word of God; what ground have we for the right interpretation of signs, and wonders, beneath, above? Astrologers would make us believe they read strange things in the Constellations referred to mens Nativities, but what ground have we for this Calculation? what Abraham the father of the faithfull discoursed thereof in his Astronomical Lectures read by him in the plain of Mamre, we have received no tydings hereof from the hill Avarath in Aethiopia. I know that in holy Scripture, Thunder is called.

Resolved, &c.

called the voice of God; I know also that the Lord spake unto the Patriarks, but that word is not written; winds and storms also are said to fulfill his VWord, by a Metaphor, because what he will have done by them, is done by them, as if they were most obedient and faithfull servants unto their Master, whom yet they know not any more than Ravens doe, though in Scripture-phrase, and by a figure of speech, they are said to call upon him. Now we are upon another point, namely, as touching the Scriptures, the written Word of the Prophets and Apostles, and the question is about the clearness of them, or the intelligible nature of them to all such as will understand: And to such faith Solomon, knowledge is easie, which I take to be spoken of the knowledge of God by the Scriptures, whereunto I am sure our Saviour refers.
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refers the Jewes, and the Apostle would not have us affect to bee wise above that which is written.

It is true, when that was delivered, *thy Law is a Lanthorn unto my feet,* none of the later Prophets had committed their Prophecies unto writing, much less were the Books of the New Testament written then: But in reference to all the Books of the Old Testament our Saviour spake, when he said, *Search the Scriptures,* for in them you think to have eternal life, and they are they that Testifie of me; *Joh. 5.*

And as for the Books of the New Testament, the Gospels were written that men might acknowledge the certainty of those things whereof they had been instructed by word of mouth, *Luk. 1.4,* which could not be were they not intelligible by a studious Reader, and Paul was in bonds when he wrote of

Resolved, &c. 85

of the whole Scripture, that it was profitable to teach, to convince, to correct, to instruct in righteousness, that the man of God might be made absolute, being made perfect to all good works, *2 Tim. 3.16, 17.*

Now if we deny the intelligible nature of it therewithall must utterly be removed. The Apostles we know by preaching converted many, surely the Word preached was understood by the hearers, otherwise it had wrought but a wilde conversion: Now look what they preached that is committed to writing in the Accts of the Apostles, and in their Epistles written unto severall Churches.

The knowledge of the figures of the Prophecies of the Revelation and the like, is not necessary to salvation; and great reason they should be carried in a mysterious way, like as the mysteries of Christs Person
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Person, and of his Office, in breaking the Serpents head, were carried a long time in the clouds of types and figures, had it been known that the Messiah must be crucified before he reigned, the Devill would not have been so forward to possess the heart of Judas with a project of betraying him into the hands of his enemies to procure his death. So the Revelation in the New Testament, and many of the like nature in the Old concerning the Devills and Antichrists practice, no marvell if they be mysteriously carried, that neither the Devill nor Antichrist should understand them untill they were accomplished. Nevertheless the Lord by his Spirit which dictated them, can inspire his servants with an understanding heart to know the meaning of them when the time comes appointed for the communication of this

Resolved, &c. 87

this knowledge; many shall pass to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased; as if the opening of the world by Navigation and Commerce, and the increase of knowledge, should meet together in one time and age, as one wittily observeth; we have seen of late yeers a strange progress made in opening the mysteries of the Revelation, and other mysterious Prophecies of the Old Testament even to admiration; The time when first Antichrist should be discovered and protested against is found out in Daniels Numbers, left we should wonder at the Fathers ignorance hereof: For as Christians at their first conversion from Idols to serve the living God, did forthwith look for the Son of God his comming from heaven to deliver us from the wrath to come, 1 Thes. i. last. Yea, and some were of opinion in the Apostles dayes, that it should
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should be within the age of a man, whereupon Paul wrote his second Epistle to the Thessalonians, wherein he gives to understand, that an Apostacy must come first, and the man of sin must be revealed, and before that the Roman Empire must be broken. 2 Thes. 2, compared with 1 Thes. 4.15. So in Austins dayes that good Father projects that the comming of Christ might be 400. years off, nay, suppose 500. he would not go further, presuming that the Beast which slaughtered the Lords witnesses, should not continue above three years and an half. Now we have no cause to wonder at this, when we consider what Daniel hath written concerning this, and how blessed a thing it should be to live at that time when Antichrist should be proclaimed to the world and revealed, Dan. 11. For then nothing remained to be looked for but the blasting of him with the breath of the Lords mouth, and the utter abolishing of him by the brightness of his comming. The reconciling of Ezekiels measures of new Jerusalem with Johns measures in the Revelations, is a great mystery, and held to be desperate, yet now it is made feasible, nor so onely, but cleared throughout. So the number of the Beast 666. how long hath the Christian world groped after the meaning of it, as a blind man after his way? What various notions hath the investigation hereof produced in mens brains, after that of Irenicus accommodated to the word Amen, and at length for want of a better the best Students in these mysteries driven to come back thither again. But now the vanity thereof newly discovered, and that at full, even by every Text calling us expressly to calculate this, which is not to rest in this
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this number, but by Calculation of this to finde out another number, which will notably decipher unto us that Beast: And indeed the number of the Beast 666. is opposed to the number of Christs Church, 144. and the number most momentous arising by the Calculation thereof, is the number 17. the root thereof, and no other Calculation belongs to a single number than that which is called the extraction of roots, and the number 25. found to be the root of 666. so far as it comes to be said in the usual way of Arithmetick, to have a root, discovering strange mysteries concerning the delineating of that Beast the body of Antichrist in a wonderfull manner.

No marvell if these mysteries were hidden from the Prophets themselves, who wrote those Prophecies, for first the knowledge of them was nothing necessary to their salvation. 2. God had appointed a certain time when the light of them should break forth to irradiate his Church with unspeakable consolation, when they stood most in need thereof, the accomplishment of those Prophecies drawing near.

Christ spake in parables to some, not to all, yet some of his parables were understood by them even against whom they were spoken in particular: Those that were not understood by the multitude, our Saviour revealed to his Disciples as often as they sought it, yea, and other mysteries too, namely the signs fore-going the destruction of Jerusalem, his own coming, and the end of the world, Mat. 24.

It is true the Scriptures contain the mysteries of godliness, which are not apprehended according to their condition, but by the Rege-

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The Scripture, it is quite of another nature, (which this Author considers not) and is incident to a reprobate, yea, in such a measure as to make him an able Doctor in the Church, and Orthodox throughout, which may tend to the edification of others, when in the mean time such a one shall fall short of the salvation of his own soul. The secrets of the Lord which he reveals to them that fear him, is the secret of his Covenant, Psal. 25. There is a secret also in Faith-Catholike, and in all the mysteries of godliness, which is peculiar to the Regenerate only, and it is to discern the wisdom of God, and the power of God in them which have true Faith. A reprobate may believe the same things by a natural faith onely, yea believe it, and carry themselves like good scholars too while they instruct others therein.

Still we say, that the Scripture is

Resolved, &c. is plain and clear enough, as touching all things necessary to salvation, and all this discourse is plausible onely through distinction, and to deny the Scripture to be fairly intelligible to one that is desirous to know the meaning of it, is a great disparagement to the Word of God, and dishonor to God himself, disparaging either his goodness that would not, or his wisdom that he knew not how to order it, so that by searching the Scriptures they might have eternal life.

If before the Law men had a light whereby they might finde the truth more clearly than we, then the former times were times of greater light and grace than the later; but this is contrary both to the generall judgment of the Christian world, and to universal experience. For as light naturally increaseth more and more untill it

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be perfect day, so it hath been with light spirituall; yet the Sun the fountain of light naturall, hath sometimes gone backward ten degrees, not to the sun of rigteou-
ness; men have gone backward, I confess, in the course of their obe-
dience, but God hath gone for-
ward rather than backward in the course of administration of his grace. We do not say there was a meer blindness, or blindness at all in Gods children, (although in present discourse not of mans blindness, but of Gods progress in causings the irradiation of his light), but this we say, that the word of the Prophets was a most sure word, to which our fore-fathers did well to take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place: but now a long time day hath dawned, and the Gospell is the day-star that ariseth in our hearts, 2 Pet. 1.19. For that God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness

Resolved, &c.

darkness, is he which hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4.6. And in these dayes of grace, we all behold as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord with open face, and are changed into the same Image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3.18.

To say, that though all things be not necessary to be known, yet nevertheless there may be had a certain and infallible way of interpreting, whereby the most and most necessary Controversies may be decided, is to represent a shew of Antithesis where there is none. But that is little materiall, but here is a declination to the contrary extreme: hitherto the clearness of Scripture hath been opposed, here an infallibility of interpreting is introduced; but Medio inutissimus ibis, and vertue usually consists in
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a mediocrity, which Horace calls auream Mediocritatem. Since the Apostles days the true Church of Christ challengeth to her self no infallible authority of interpreting Scripture, 'tis enough that in things necessary to salvation the Lord assures us by his Spirit that we are not deceived, that is sufficient for the state of grace, and as for infallibility, let us be content to have that condition reserved for the state of glory. I nothing doubt but by study and care and pains, most Controversies may be so clearly decided, as shall be sufficient either for the converting of a capable Hearer, to the imbracing of it, or for the convicting him of obstinacy in withstanding it; but I little looked that the beginning of this discourse would have so unsuitable an end. Mr. Dury (as I remember) is occupied about some such method as this, I wish heartily...
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not that which I would have, I enquire
how a man may be sure, not of his own
opinion, but of the truth. Now if I
believe and determine that such a
thing is true, this is my opinion, yet
is not therefore the truth, seeing truth
and opinion have nothing in them al-
like, and stedfast persuasion changeth
not the essence of the thing whereof a
man is persuaded; for then should
melancholick persons, whose opinion
is unmoveable, work miracles, and
make all their conceits essentiall. The
nature of true knowledge is this, so be
demonstrable not to me, or some men,
but to all, and to win a consent from
any man, at two and three make five.
A thing controverted, and which some
understand one way, and some anoth-
er, can never make me certain and
free from doubt, whether I have the
truth or no; and he that knowes no
other than what he determines, may
be excused of malice and hypocrify:
But this reasoning, I and my follow-
er

Resolved, &c. 99

er are sure of this thing, therefore
it is true, is unreasonable reason-
ing.

Consld. Surely if I am in a right
way, it is enough for me to be assu-
red of the truth; for me, it is for
my salvation; yet because I am
bound to seek for the salvation
of others also, No man must imita-
tate Cain, in saying, am I my bro-
thers keeper? yet that which is e-
nough for me to be assured of the
truth which I maintain, may be e-
nough for another also, to bring
him to be assured of the same
truth: For if this sufficiency I speak
of be in the way of rationall dis-
course out of the Word of God,
if it is it self sufficient, it is suffici-
cent for the satisfaction of any that
is capable thereof, and all such
light being light naturall, and in
the way of discourse, is of a com-
municable nature to all rationall
creatures by a rationall discourse:
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But true faith is wrought by spiritual illumination, which is not in my power to communicate unto any other, onely the Spirit of God can do this, enlightening whom he will, while others are suffered to sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. And this is the onely saving way to be sure of Truths Theological. It is true, that which I believe (whatsoever it be, and in what kinde soever it be believed) is not therefore truth, because I believe it; but if I believe by illumination divine, it is therefore truth, because I believe it after such a manner, though this I cannot communicate to another, or make another hereby either be persuaded of it himself, or be persuaded that I am after such a sort persuaded of it. Light naturall I may communicate unto another, light spirituall I cannot, and light naturall either in way of naturall discourse

Resolved, &c. 101
discourse is communicative of itself from commonly-known principles by the light of nature, or from principles on both sides agreed, as namely, that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Now when the Spirit of God enlightens me, the thing I imbrace is not my opinion, but my faith, and my persuasion herein is steadfastness, and nothing inferior to natural knowledge, but superior rather, light spirituall and divine being superior to light naturall, like as knowledge by sense is superior to knowledge by reason, rational knowledge depending upon knowledge sensitive: For generall principles doe arise from experience and enumeration of particulars. And as I remember, Theologia is said to be non argumentativa, to wit as it is supernaturall, and compared rather to sensitive knowledge, as to the sense of seeing.
pen mine eyes that I may see the wonderfull things of thy Law; and to the sense of hearing, He that hath an ear let him hear; for it is one thing to hear the voice of a man, another thing to hear the voice of God; one thing to see a work wrought, another thing to behold the hand of God in it; one thing to discern the meaning of a Scripture-passage, another thing to discern the wisdom of God, and the power of God in it. So it is compared to the sense of smelling, 2 Cor. 2.14. We are a sweet savour unto God in Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; and where the body is, there will the Eagles bee gathered together: Sometimes to the sense of tasting, as 1 Pet. 2.1. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby, if ye have tasted that the Lord is bountifull: So Halensis profeith, that the things of God are apprehended per modum gustus. The sense of feeling doth fairly represent the knowledge of God by his works, Acts 17.27. That they should seek the Lord, if so be they might have groped after him and found him, though doubtless he be not far from every one of us. This Author seems to take no notice hereof, no more than the Socinians doe in these dayes; and that is the foul spot I finde in Master Shillingworth Book: And bee pleased, I pray, to put a difference between melancholike persons, and the children of God, who because they are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into their hearts; remember that of the Apostle, This persuasion is not of God; plainly giving to understand, that the persuasions of Christian Faith are of God; yet I confess, this Faith is grounded alwayes upon Gods Word, wherein they should befo expert, as to be ready thence at all...
all times to render a reason of their faith to any that should demand it.

But that may an unregenerate person be able to do as well, yea and many times better too.

When the faith, the nature of true knowledge is demonstrable, this is true of knowledge natural, not of knowledge Christian, which is grounded only on God's Word, and it was never known that to prove a thing out of Scripture was called demonstration. Aristotle denies that Morall Philosophie is capable of demonstration, it proceeds only by perswasion: but it may bee for the evidence of the Scripture aptly alleged, he calls it demonstration καταδιπτικας, yet consider, no deduction out of Scripture can be so clear, as to be exempted from all cavillings; but never was it known that any man cavilled with a truth as clear as this, that two and three makes five.

If we can never be free from doubt if the thing be controverted, as for instance a passage of Scripture, some understanding it one way, and some another, what certainty can I have of any point of Faith I maintain in opposition to Papists, to Socinians, to any Heretike? yet I should not look that the thing controverted should free me from doubt, it is enough that I have good evidence for it, though all the world ran a madding in controverting that which I believe. Now no evidence of truths Theologicall, and saving truths, is comparable to the evidence which proceeds from the illumination of the Spirit, giving me new eyes (as it were) and opening the eyes of my understanding, that I may see and discern the things of God, and that holy Spirit is able to free me from all doubt, yet there is another knowledge, which is natural, partly:
partly derived from naturall principles, and partly from a dextrous interpretation of Scriptures, which we shall bee able to make good against all Cavillers to their confusion, and upon sober consciences to their assent; but this is inferior to the illumination of the Spirit. I can hardly think any Christian to be so simple or wilfull to reason thus, I and my follower are sure of this thing, therefore it is true; if they should, I see no reason but they might proceed one step further, and say, I my self alone think this to be true, and therefore it is true; but the Spirit of illumination is given onely to satisfie them that have it, not to boast of it, (but to comfort themselves with it rather) much less to obtrude it upon others, onely light naturall is communicable unto others by rationall discourse, light spirituall is not. I cannot more comminicate that to another than my seeing or hearing, or smelling, or tasting.

Disc. Lastly, If we build our Religion only upon the Scriptures, the learned shall have a great prerogative above the unlearned in the matter of Faith and Religion, and shall be more engaged in thankfulness unto God than they, and so Religion shall favor and cleave to good wits.

Also many have their senses exercised in the Scriptures, or are more inventive than others; therefore if a man could by disputing and reasoning confute some Thesis, and as it were take away a mans opinion from him, and become conqueror, he should also take away his Religion, and the other should be constrained either to take up his Conquerors Religion, or against his conscience to keep his own.

Nor will that Answer serve the turn, Our Divines and Pastors can answer you, though I cannot: for then should I believe with another mans
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man's faith; but faith must be mine, not another man's, else should salvation also be another man's. If Religion be the service of God, certainly it is necessary that I should understand that service which I must perform to my Lord. Seeing God will not reckon another man's service for mine, and cannot be served by a substitute, it remains that we conclude, Controversies are to be left to learned men, and are not so very necessary. It may be answered, Then also Religion is to be left to learned men, for Controversies are our very Religion, for (saving the consideration of them) there is no difference, but Papists are Protestants, and Protestants are Papists; lo, how much a man knows of Controversies, so much doth he know of his own Religion. The state of a man's salvation is such as his Religion and his Faith. Now there is but one salvation

Resolution, &c. 109

...tion and but one faith: But if Controversies belong to the learned only, wherefore have Lay-men endured so many afflications, distresses, nay and death itself for these controversies sake? I know indeed that a Calvinist Doctor, one Doctor Bergius, a Preacher at Breme, affirms in his late published Sermons, that Controversies are not meerly necessary to salvation, that the Scripture is plain and clear about those things which are necessary to salvation and that there was never any contrariety between the Religious themselves. At which also the Leipsich-Collation between the Lutherans and the Calvinists seems to aim.

Consider. In all professions, whether liberal or mechanical, the learned have a prerogative above the unlearned, and what inconvenience is there if it be so in Christian Religion also? Doth not St. Peter tell us that the unlearned pervert the Scripture to their own destruction,
that Religion which is by faith naturall, be accompanied with better naturall wits; yet an idle wit, be it never so good will hardly prove learned, and be it never so learned if it be without grace; such a mans Religion will prove but vain, and though he be able to worst another in disputations, yet shall he never pull true Religion in any childe of God (be he never so weak and unlearned) out of socket, because our Faith and Religion consists not in wisdom of words, but in the power of the Spirit, as S. Paul speaks, saying, My word and my preaching stood not in the enticing speech of Mans wisdom, but in plain evidence of the Spirit and Power; That your Faith should not bee in the wisdom of Men, but in the power of God, 1 Cor. 2.4.5. Nay, were my Faith only naturall, and I had good evidence out of the Scripture for it, though that
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that knowledge be no other than such as is annexed to the common profession of Christianity; yet the Philosopher tells me, that I must not be beaten out of my hold in such a case, because I am not able to answer every Sophism or Argument that is brought against it: Nay, the Philosopher in his Ethicks teacheth me, that some are, as tenacious of their opinions, for which they have but weak reasons, as others are of their opinions which they hold confirmed with great strength of Argument; so that every way it is an insinuate fiction, that the most learned must always conquer the Faith and the Religion of the unlearned without flying to any such sculking hole, as to say, Our Divines and Pastors can answer you though I cannot. But I wonder much that any sober Christian upon any pretence should dispute against the building of our Religion.

Resolved, &c.

on onely upon Scripture, unless with Papists, hee would bring in Traditions, or rely on the Church, or on the decision of the Pope: For if we fly from the Word of God, we must rest either upon the word of Man, or upon natural reason. A Christian, I conceive, should think the Scripture sufficient to direct us in the Service of God: Our Saviour directs the Jews to the searching of Scripture for the discerning of him.

And if Controversies be left to learned men, yet there is no cause why our Religion should, but one ly the defence of it controversially, maintaining it by variety of Arguments and deductions out of holy Scripture, and solving contrary Arguments brought against it in any particular point of Faith; but the profession of it surely shall belong to him that sits at Gamaliel's feet, as well as to Gamaliel himself, nor
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nor only to such as sit at his feet, but to such also as follow the plow-tail, yea, and to the weaker sex of women, and to children too; for even to such belongeth the Kingdom of God. And were there no book at all written, or Sermon preached in any point of Controversies or difference between us, yet Papiists should be Papiists still, and not Protestants, and Protestants should be Protestants still, and not Papiists, and the Whore of Babylon should bee the VVhore of Babylon still, and no Spouse of Christ, and Antichrist a false Prophet still, and no true Prophet. For the faith and profession of a Papist makes him a Papist, whether he writes Controversies or no, the smallest part of them being able to perform the task; so the Protestants profession and protestation against the corruptions of the Church of Rome, makes him a Protestant, tho' he never set pen to paper to contend for the Faith once given to the Saints; though this be a duty, I confess, but no common duty belonging unto all, but peculiarly appertaining to the man of God, able not only to exhort with wholesome doctrine, but also to convince them that say against it. For Articles of Faith and their profession of them, Lay-men have suffered with great constancy and patience, but not for controversies, though they have been ready to give a reason of their Faith to all that asked it, and witness a good confession of it, as our Saviour did before Pilate, as the Book of Acts and Monuments recordeth of them, and S. Paul of our blessed Saviour. Doctor Bergius is acknowledged to say as much, confessing the Controversies are not very necessary to salvation, which I interpret thus, not necessary to the being G
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of the Church, but only to her well-being, when the Christian Faith is oppugned by Heretics: Between Lutherans and Calvinists we acknowledge there is no difference in fundamentals, as appeareth sufficiently at the Conference at Leipsic.

Dilect. This I am persuaded is very true; that had the Holy Ghost judged those Controverted Questions necessary to salvation, it would have expressed and propounded them in the holy Scripture clearly and plainly, seeing those Epistles were sent to simple and Lay-men especially. Nor doth it seem likely to be true, that ever there were so many Articles of Faith drawn out of them as are now to be read in the Catechisms, Common-places, and Compounds of Divines; As yet there is no certain number of them determined, seeing some Divines have proposed more, and some fewer, and

Resolved, &c.

and some Religions have in process of time, either added or abated whole Articles, and after many miseries endured for the defence of some of them, entering a way of moderation, they have determined that for tolerable and indifferent, which before they thought damnable: But howsoever, there are so many of them, that a man may deservedly call in question the precise necessity of them. And this seems the best solution to disintangle and appease perplexed, doubtful, and erring Consciences.

Consider. It is a very uncouth speech, proceeding from a wilde conceit, to say, that God would have expressed and appointed Controverted Questions plainly and clearly, if they had been necessary. It is not the proposition of Controverted Questions, though never so plainly and clearly delivered, that sets an end to Controversies, but the clear and substantial
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giving us to understand, that they came with corrupt minde to the reading of God's Word, and so pervert it as Peter speaks, and thereby pervert themselves first, and afterwards they speak dissegu. things to the corrupting of others, and hinder them from that to be found in the faith, 11. 13.

S. Peter exhorts us to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 3. 18. And S. Paul would not have us stand at a stay, but grow forward unto perfection. There is a plerophory and fulness of faith that we should strive unto, and of knowledge as well as of holiness: For this life is our way to heaven, and still we must draw neerer thitherwards, by knowing all that we can know by the Word, Deut. 29. 29. It is revealed to that purpose, and it is able to make the man of God per-
fect to every good work, 2 Tim. 3. last. Add unto vertue knowledge, faith Peter, 2 Pet. 1. 5. and Paul prays on the behalf of the Colossian, that they might be fulfilled with the knowledge of God's Will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, Col. 1. 9. that they might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, v. 10. Why then should we take offence at the multiplying of Articles? In all professions men that delight in knowledge are never satisfied, nothing is more congruous to our intelligent natures than light of knowledge, while we live here on earth we shall never come to ripeness of age in Christ, therefore we must be growing still, and edifying our selves, and one another in our most holy faith, the body of Christ must be edified till we come to fulness of age; and as we must increase in knowledge, so being obnoxious to error, it behoves us to labour for the discovery of it more and more. That error in taking the number of the Beast 666, to denote only 222 & hath induced ever since the days of Irenæus, that is from the next age after the Apostles; and it is now lately discovered, and the true meaning substituted in the place thereof, as never the like before; and it is commendable for men to see their former errors, much more to confess them. Of all Athanas works there are none more tending to his honour and renown than his Retractions, wherein he retracts the errors of his Faith, and his Confessions, where he acknowledges the errors of his life, and this is most Christian ingenuity, and I think never was any man more renowned in this kinde than he. It is necessary for every Christian to strive for—
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... forward unto perfection, necessitate Precepti, by necessitie of Commandment, but if he fail through negligence, this is a very pardonable sin upon our confession of it. As for things necessary to salvation, they are but few, but the knowledge of God and the things of God is so sweet to a regenerate taste, having already tasted how bountiful the Lord is, that he will be carried as naturally to desire the sincere milk of the Word, that he may grow thereby, as new born babes do desire the milk of their mothers breasts, 1 Pet. 2.1. As for perplexed and doubting, and erring Consciences, men may perplex themselves, and raise doubts causibly, and erre in this, and this error will be the greater, when after all this they pretend perplexity and doubts made unto them, when they are onely the mists which themselves have raised to bear their own eyes, and such a work, I think, is never more inauspiciously performed than when they set their wits on work to dispute themselves out of the Lords verge, and circle, within the compass whereof alone he useth to charm all his Elect, after they have run their wilde race and compass, and bring them home like the prodigal child to his father, so them to their heavenly father, and therewithall to the sobriety of their wits, and integrity of their senses, that they may say, Oh, what love have I to thy Law! all the day long is my study in it; the Law of thy mouth is dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver; by this I have more understanding than my Teachers. Indeed the Law of the Lord is a perfect Law converting the soul, the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom to the simple, &c., and such wisdom as maketh wise
124 The Doubting Conscience unto salvation, and what should we desire more? 

Disc. But could so many Di-vines of former Ages be ignorant of this? Have there not so many Wars been undertaken for, this cause? Could those learned men suffer so many thousands of men to run headlong, both by doing and suffering, into the hazard of body and soul, for Religion's sake? and so many unspeable mischiefs to arise, when as it is possible for a man to be saved without the Controversies of Religion? But if this be the command of God under the pain of temporall and everlasting punishment, to fight for those Controversies, how can we excuse those shuffling arguments of Faith, Religion, and Gods Worship? A Servant may not abate any thing of his Lords due.

Consider, be ignorant of this, of what? That Controversies are not necessary to salvation; how doth that
them by faith, but though they imbrace the truths of the Gospel in some particulars, yet they resist it in others, or pretending to imbrace it, they pervert & wrest it by corrupt interpretation. In this case are not the Orthodox driven to hold their own, and (as S. Jude exhorts them) to contend earnestly for the faith once given to the Saints, and to indue your to kill error, rather than to suffer error to strangle the holy truth of God, open the truth of God which is according unto godliness; rather to root out weeds, than to suffer them to over-grow the good corn. Thus we are cast upon Controversies whether we will or no, yet this is not a duty that belongs to all, many, yea most shall be saved without it; like as when an enemy invades us we gather an Army against them to oppose them and drive them out, the rest pray for their fellow-brothers, but
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too as expert in war, and in this holy war they will be content to hazard their life, as S. Paul professeth, saying, and now I go bound to Jerusalem in the Spirit, not knowing what things shall come unto me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every like saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me, but I past not for these things, neither is my life deare unto me, so I may fulfill my course with joy, and the Ministration which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.

As for the shuffling Arguments here spoken of, when I know them I shall upon due consideration pass my judgement on them as I see cause. A man may sophisticate I confess, in making Arguments, but shuffling courses commonly have place in shifting them off by an undue solution: Wee know what Pauls course was, he fought with Beasts.

Resolved, &c. 129
Beasts at Ephesus, and Stephenes fortunes too, when certain of the Synagogue which were called Libertines and Cyrenians, disputed with Stephen, did not he also dispute with them? The Text faith expressly, they were not able to resist the wisdom of the Spirit by which he spake; If I am offered up (faith Paul) upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice therein, and will joy.

Diss. Let this thing be considered, seeing it is so intricate, and leads me and many others into disquiet of mind, for which perplexities of Conscience, none will deny that a remedy is to be sought as the hands of those that have Christian fellow-feeling, and might be found if all the Diviners of those sides that have left Popery, would wouchsafe to afford me a wise, mild, and solid answer in writing, not favouring of partiality, prejudice, or passion.
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Resolved, &c.

plexity, which of them he preferred according whereunto to order his faith, that Martialists resolution of the doubt might have been congruous enough: But only concerning the Scripture-doubts are here proposed how a man should ground his faith thereupon; what he is, I know not, and whether this be res gesta, or ficta, I am to seek, for the present world is full of jugling. But when we make such doubts unto our selves, do we well consider the goodness and wisdom of God in giving us his holy Word to direct us in the ways of everlasting life? if still there were just caufe to complain of a perplexed condition, whereinto we were cast, not knowing whether we shall take hold of it, or run away from it, as Moses did from his rod when it was turned into a Serpent. But do we finde any the like Metamorphosis here? yet

Consider. When Bofe was taken by the States, there was seen in the wall a Bishop sometimes of that town, painted with Christ and his blood on the one side, and the Virgin Mary and her breasts sprouting milk on the other side, and the devout Bishop was represented there in the gesture of a man in great perplexity and ambiguity, not knowing well which to prefer, whether Christ's blood before Mary's milk, or Mary's milk before Christ's blood, and this expressed in Latine Verses, and one of the Martialists (as it were) to put him out of his mood and perplexity, Why thou Sott (quoth he) get thee to Gott. Who, I pray, was the cause of this man's perplexity, was it not his own extreme superstition most abominable? If the Author of this Discourse had proposed any thing on the other side to the Scripture, and pretended ambiguity and perplexity,
yet when the Lord bid Moses take the Serpent by the tail, he was bold to do it; surely God's Word is no Serpent, but we rather, and his Word alone hath power to charm us, and make us vomit all our poison of erroneous and unholy ways, and the Lord Christ hath bid us to take hold of them, saying, *Search the Scriptures*; yet if any thing in this my Answer seem amis, and not answerable to the Authors expectation, but favouring (as hee thinks) of partiality, prejudice, or passion, I confess prejudice against such discourses as these, accomplishing them most vile, and nothing becoming an understanding and godly Christian; but as for the rest, let him impute it to my ignorance, that know not so much as what is the way of his passion, for he seems to me to be neither Lutheran nor Calvinist, and would not seem to bee a Papist, though I am most prone to conceive it to be the trick of some Papist; least of all doe I know his person or Country.

But let every sober Christian consider well, and inquire, whether that since the beginning that God's Word was committed to writing, there were at any time any such questions moved, till this last and worst Age of the world, when Cæsæran the Cardinall, a great School-Divine, first encountered with Martin Luther, and found that no Authority prevailed with him but Scriptureall, hereupon hee was moved to study Scripture, and wrote Commentaries upon it in his old age. But Silvester Prioreus of Rome, he thought that way too far about, and therefore took a shorter course, and maintained that the Scriptures contained not all things necessary to salvation, and therefore the rule of faith to be made compleat must be pieced up with the
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the unwritten Word added to the written Word, which unwritten Word they called Traditions. Since that the Papists have strengthened themselves with the Authority of the Church, yet confess the true Church cannot be known to be a true Church, nor the Authority thereof known, but by the Scriptures, and the issue of the resolution of the Church must bee the resolution of the Pope concerning the true interpretation of Scripture, shamefully intruding upon us that we make the resolution of our faith into our own private spirit, whereas we to the contrary extend the testimony of the spirit onely to each private mans best satisfaction, and teach no other herein than the Papists themselves acknowledge to be most true, as touching the resolution physical of our faith, as I am able to prove by variety of pregnant evidences.

Resolved, &c.

dences ready at hand without any more ado than the bare transcribing of them. Now this light being not of a nature communicable unto others, we meddle not with it in disputing upon any other point of Divinity with Papists or any other. But therein walk in all our disputations by way of Resolution Logical, either into some confessed principles as concerning the Attributes Divine, or into express passages of holy Scripture, the meaning whereof if it be excepted against, we are ready to justify it by rationall discourse against any adversary, nothing doubting but we shall either convict him of obstinacy in shutting his eyes against the clear evidence of truth, and make him condemned in his own conscience, or at least in the conscience of all sober Christians, being well assured that whatsoever resifteth the
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the evidence of God's Word upon pretence of inevidence, that Word shall be found of evidence enough to judge him at the last day.

"This Jesuitical Question was sent out of Germany when the Assembly of Divines were sitting at Westminster, and was translated out of High-Dutch."

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**FINIS.**