

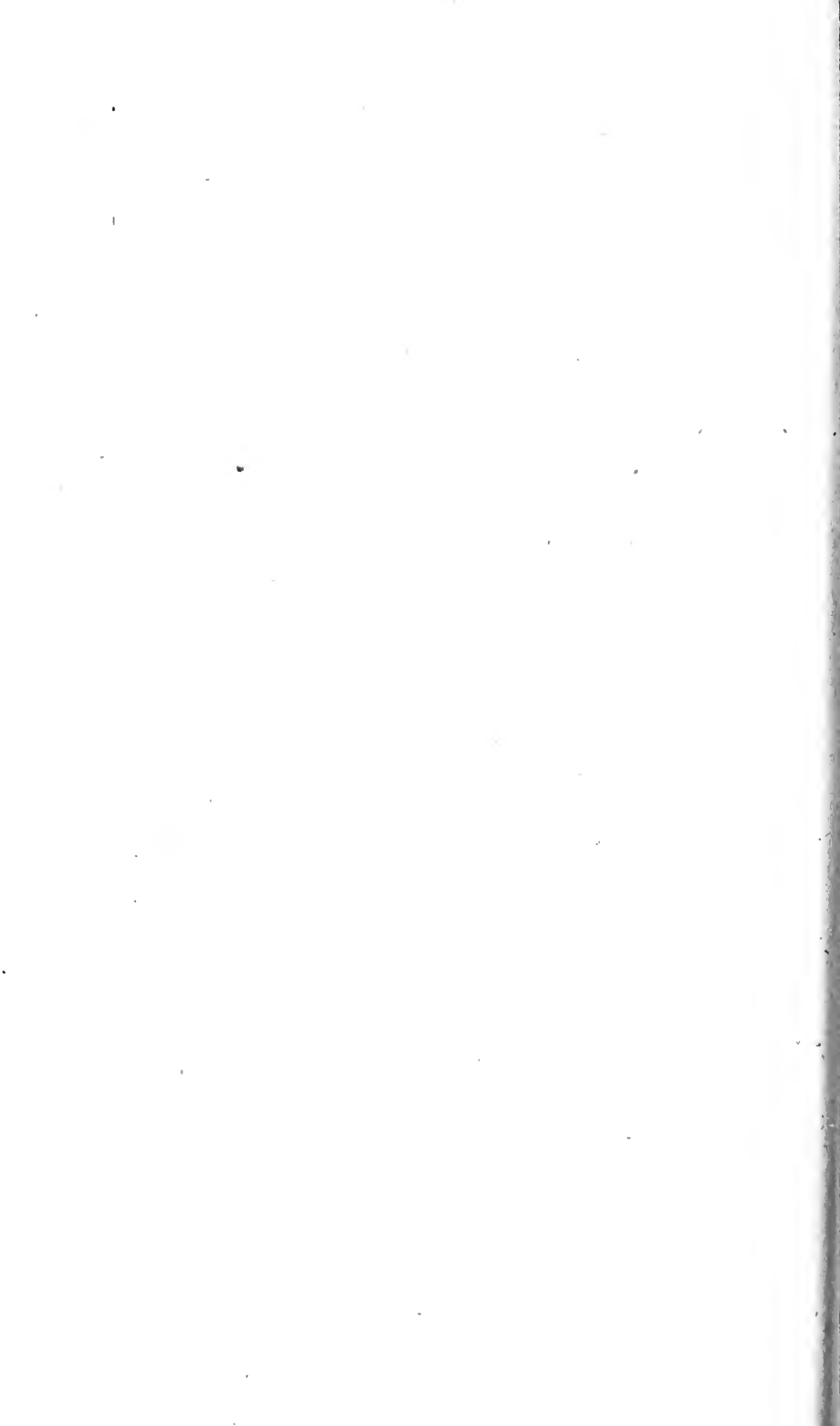
MORE REASONS
FOR THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION,
AND
NO REASON AGAINST IT:

OR,

A SECOND APPENDIX TO THE REASONS OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

BEING

- I. An Answer to a Letter from an unknown person, charging the Holy Scriptures with contradiction.
- II. Some Animadversions on a 'Tractate de 'Veritate,' written by the noble and learned Lord Edward Herbert, Baron of Cherbury, &c., and printed at Paris, 1624, and at London, 1633; resolving Twelve Questions about Christianity.



TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

SIR HENRY HERBERT, KNT., &c.

SIR,

THE reasons are many which induced me to presume to direct these papers first to you, and to tell the world how much I honour you ; first, my personal, ancient obligations to you ; secondly, principally, your approved wisdom and moderation, and taking part with the ways of charity and peace, in your most public capacity, in these trying times ; thirdly, your relation to the noble author, on whose writings I here animadvert ; which, as it is your honour to be the brother of so learned and ingenious a lord, and the brother of so excellently holy, as well as learned and ingenious a person, as Mr. George Herbert, orator to the university of Cambridge, and a faithful pastor in the English church ; so it obligeth me the more to give you an account of this animadversion. It is long since I sought after the book, as provoked by the title and the honour of the author's name, and received it from you as your gift. The premised letter from an unknown person of the same name, occasioned me to review it : the sad case of many of my acquaintance, and the increase of infidelity of late, especially among debauched, sensual gallants, and the danger of England hereby, and the temptations against which the best of Christians have need of help, were the reasons of my presumption ; it being my calling to propagate and vindicate the

christian faith. I am so far from writing against his whole book, that I take most of his rules and notions, *de veritate*, to be of singular use; and had so great a wit had but the internal conditions due to such an intellectual apprehension, as his and your holy and excellent brother had, no doubt but our supernatural revelations and verities would have appeared evident to him, and possessed his soul with so sweet a gust, and fervent, ascendant, holy love, as breatheth in Mr. G. Herbert's poems; and as would have made them as clear to him in their kind, as some of his *notitiæ communes*. The truth is, as he was too low to us, who number not our divine revelations with the *veresimilia*, but with the certain verities; so he was too high for the atheistical sensualists of his age: and I would they would learn of him, that the being and perfections of God, the duty of worshipping him, and of holy conformity and obedience to him, and particularly all the Ten Commandments, the necessity of true repentance, and the rewards and punishments of the life to come, with the soul's immortality, are all *notitiæ communes*, and such natural certainties, as that the denial of them doth unman them. To know this, and to live accordingly, would make a great alteration in our times; and Christianity could not be disrelished by such that so know and do. I may well suppose that your approbation of the cause I plead for, will make it needless for me to apologise for my boldness in meddling with such an author, while I do it with all tenderness of his deserved honour. I remain,

Your obliged servant,

RICHARD BAXTER.

Jan. 17, 1671.

MORE REASONS
FOR
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

I. IN ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN PERSON,
CHARGING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES WITH CONTRADICTION.

THE LETTER.

SIR,

I WAS right glad when I first heard that you had written and put to print a book of the reasons of the christian religion, and I did immediately buy the book, hoping, that in the reading and perusing of it, I might have received satisfaction as to any doubt or scruple, and an answer satisfactory to all objections that in reason may be raised against the grounds of the said christian religion; because I did think you to be as able to say and write as much as any man in that thing, having, as I thought, studied it as much as any that I had heard of; but, in the reading and perusing it, I, contrary to my expectation, found it to be short of giving me satisfaction.

For the greatest occasion of any doubt or scruple in any thing tending or relating to the christian religion, that I at any time had or have, were from that variousness and contrariety, if not contradictions, which are, or at least seem to be, in the writings of the apostles and evangelists, and other books received for Scripture.

But you, in answer to that objection, p. 412, say, "Nothing but ignorance maketh men think so; understand once the true meaning, and allow for the errors of printers, transcribers, and translators, and there will no such thing be found."^a

But you neither tell me which are those errors, nor yet how I may know them.

1. Therefore, I humbly pray you, in writing, to tell me, whether that which is written in the first chapter of Matthew's

^a Page 317 of the present volume.

Gospel, ver. 8, 9, where Matthew writes, "That Joram begat Ozias, and Ozias begat Joatham," be any error of the transcribers, translators, or printers, or the contrary to it, which is written in the second book of the Kings, and in the books of the Chronicles; if not, how may they be understood? for in those books it is written, "That Joram was father to Ahaziah, and Ahaziah was father to Joash, and Joash was father to Amaziah, and Amaziah was father to Azariah, and Azariah was father to Joatham;" by the account of which books, there is above an hundred years between the death of Joram, the son of Jehosaphat, and Joatham.

2. And, secondly, whether that which is written by Luke in his Gospel, chap. xxiv., ver. 9, 10, 22, 23, where Luke writes, "That Mary Magdalene, and other women, told the disciples, that they had seen a vision of angels, which said, that Jesus was risen from the dead, and was alive;" whether this be any error of the transcribers, translators, and printers, or any of them; or the contrary, which is written by St. John in his Gospel, for he writes, chap. xx., v. 2, "That Mary Magdalene told two of the disciples, and said to them, They (I suppose meaning the adversaries) have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."

If not, how may I understand them to be both true testimonies or reports, for it seemeth by Luke, ver. 11, 12, 23, and 24, of his 24th chapter, that Mary and the other women had told those things of their seeing the angel, which said that Jesus was risen and alive, before that Peter ran or went to the sepulchre.

3. And, thirdly, whether that which is written by Matthew, in the 28th chapter of his Gospel, that the angel said to Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, "Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified; he is not here, for he is risen: as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall you see him; lo! I have told you."

"And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold Jesus met them." (See Matt. xxviii. 1, 5—9.)

Whether, I say, was this which is written in St. Matthew's Gospel, that I have here transcribed, said to the women, and

that the women returned from the sepulchre to tell the disciples, before that Mary Magdalene said to him that she supposed to be the gardener, "If thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away;" (John xx. 15;) or whether there be any error of transcribers, translators, or printers in those texts; if not, how may I understand them to be true reports?

Sir, I shall trouble you with no more but these few places which I have proposed in three questions or particulars, although there are several other texts, that I do not understand how they may be reconciled, but if you shall, by strength of argument grounded upon sound reason, make appear that it was nothing but ignorance hath made me to think that those testimonies agree not, but are contrary one to the other; and that they may be so understood as that no such thing will appear in them, then I shall be ready, and will with you conclude, and say so too, and for the future suppose that other places of those books which are received for Scripture, as seem to be contrary to one another, may be reconciled, though I do not understand how.

But, on the contrary, if you do not endeavour by such sound and plain arguments to make it appear that these texts here transcribed by me, may be understood so as that no contradiction is in them, I must think that it was nothing but ignorance that made you say that which you have said, in answer to that and some other objections.

Therefore, I humbly and earnestly pray and beseech you, both in defence of your own writings, as also in defence of those books in which you say you think that no one error or contradiction in any matter can be proved, to make it appear in truth and plainness.

If you judge I have erred from the truth, I hope you will endeavour to convert me from the error of my way, if any such be; which if you shall do, no doubt but it will be a good work. (See James v. ult.)

Sir, It is your advice, that in such kind of scruples, the doubtful should apply himself for satisfaction to some minister; therefore do I write to you, and if you shall not give me a gentle and plain answer, I shall be discouraged to make my scruples known to any other; therefore, in expectation of your plain answer,

I remain

Your loving Friend in the bond of Peace.

To Mr. Baxter.

THE ANSWER.

SIR,

Two sorts of persons use to trouble me and others with their objections against the christian religion. First, some papists, who profess to believe it, but in design do act the part of infidels, that they may loose men from all religion, in hopes to bring them over to theirs, when they have taken them off all other. For he that can make another man believe that he was hitherto totally misled is most likely to become the master of his faith; for men are apt to think that none can so easily and certainly show them the truth, as he that hath showed them their error. And when men once think, that according to the grounds of the reformed churches, they can have no certainty of faith, they will the more easily be brought to the way of those men, who promise them that certainty which they make them believe that others want.

Secondly, the other sort are infidels, who of late are grown numerous and audacious, and look so big, and speak so loud, as to acquaint us that it is not they that are silenced in their speaking place, nor driven five miles from every city and corporation.

Which sort you are of, I know not; I read your name, and that you are a sojourner; but finding that you write not as a tender doubter, who desireth to be concealed, but as a confident gainsayer of the christian verity, and not knowing how safely to send a letter to the place where you say you sojourn, I have thought that it will be most pleasing to you to come to you by the same way, as the book did which you except against, which was written upon the provocation of a paper scattered among the scholars of Oxford, when the Oxford oath and act were made in the time of the great plague, as by one that was unsatisfied in the grounds of Christianity; but I strongly suspected was written by a papist, it was made so suitable to their designs.

In two things you have not dealt righteously and ingenuously with me.

1. In that you have not answered the grounded proofs of the christian verity, which I have laid down, but nibble at the answer to some objections, which is not the way of a lover of the truth.

2. In that you take no notice of, or make no answer to the second part of my answer to that same objection, about supposed contradictions in the Scriptures; where I showed you

at large, that if that which you object were granted, it would not overthrow the certainty of the christian faith. Both those should have been done by an impartial man.

The method which the nature of the cause requireth me now to use, in my answer to you, shall be in the manifesting these following propositions :

Prop. 1. That if it could not by us be proved that every word of the Scripture is true, nor the penmen infallible or indefectible in every particle, yet might we have a certainty of the christian religion.

Prop. 2. That yet all that is in the Scriptures as the word of God, is certainly true ; and no error or contradiction can be proved in it, but what is in some copies by the fault of printers, transcribers, or translators.

Prop. 3. That he that first proveth the truth of the christian faith by solid evidence, may and ought to be certain of that truth, though he be not able to solve all seeming contradictions in the Scripture, or answer all objections which occur.

Prop. 4. The true method of one that would arrive at certainty, and not deceive himself and others, is to lay, first, the fundamental proofs, and examine them till he is thereby confirmed, and afterwards to try the by-objections as he is able ; and not to begin first at the answering of such by-objected difficulties, and judging of all the cause thereby. Of these I shall now speak in order.

And, whereas, you bespeak plainness and gentleness in the answer, I shall grant you the first as far as in such haste and brevity I am able ; and the second as far as the nature of the cause will bear. But if you account all Christians deceived fools, you must not expect to be called wise, or that I should flatter you, and tell you that apostasy is a state of safety ; for I, that believe Heb. vi. and x., must think that this were not gentleness but cruelty, and worse than to kill you, for fear of displeasing you.

Prop. 1. If it could not by us be proved that every word of the Scriptures is true, nor the penmen infallible or indefectible in every particle, yet might we have a certainty of the christian religion.

The reason is, because every particle in the Scripture, is not an essential part of the christian religion, no, nor any integral part, if you take the christian religion strictly, for the doctrine of necessary belief, desire, and practice ; and that part which is

indeed the essence, yea, or integrity, of Christianity, may be certainly proved and believed, without our being able to prove the certainty or truth of all the rest which is in the Scriptures.

The holy Scriptures contain all our religion, and somewhat more : that is, the accidents and appurtenances of it. As the body of a man, besides the parts essential and integral, hath its accidents ; such as are the hair and the colour, and some humours, which are for beauty and other uses, though not parts. So far are the papists from being in the right, who think that the christian religion is not all, but part, contained in the Scriptures, that there is more than all that is necessary to salvation, even the appurtenances which have an aptitude to the adorning and promoting of the rest.

To know who was the father of every person mentioned in the bible's genealogies ; to know what age each person was of, whose age is there mentioned ; to know the name of every person, and every town ; to know how far each city was from another whose distances are there expressed ; with a multitude of such-like historical, genealogical, chronological, topographical, physical, incidental passages, is but an appurtenance, and not strictly a part, essential or integral, of the christian faith, of holiness or religion.

Yet, remember, that we maintain as certain, that they are all liars who accuse God of lying ; and that, whatever some ignorantly talk to the contrary, God cannot lie. See the excellent Amesius's disputation of this question, *An falsum subesse potest fidei divinæ*, after his 'Medulla Theologiæ ;' which book, with his 'Cases of Conscience,' and Alstedius's 'Encyclopædia,' may, after the Scriptures and Concordance, make a good divine, and be a better library than the fathers of the fourth council of Carthage were acquainted with. He that thinketh God can lie, destroyeth the *objectum formale fidei divinæ*, and, therefore, can have no faith. If God could lie in one thing, we should never be sure that he revealeth the truth, unless by sense itself and after-experience. All faith goeth upon such a syllogism as this, "Whatsoever God saith is true : but this God saith, *ergo*, it is true." So that whosoever believeth every word in the Scripture to be God's word, must believe it all to be true, or he can believe none of it at all.

But, yet, it is possible for a man to believe one part of the Bible to be God's word and not another part ; which needeth no proof.

Because that many of the ancient churches, for a certain time, doubted of, yea, received not the epistle of James, Peter 2nd, the Heb. Apocal., &c., and yet were truly of the christian religion.

First, We deny not but that there are many false and wicked sayings, historically recited in the Scripture; as, the saying of Cain, Pharaoh, Gehazi, the false prophets, the devil, of Job, to Christ, &c., but the Scripture is nevertheless true, for it is true that all these untruths were spoken.

Secondly, The disciples of Christ were not absolutely, and in all things infallible, as all Christians do confess. They were not as perfect in knowledge as now they are in heaven. Either Paul or Barnabas was mistaken about the fitness of Mark to go with them.

Thirdly, There was a greater assistance of the Spirit promised them, when "two or three of them were assembled in Christ's name," than when they proceeded singly: (Matt. xviii. 18 :) but there can be nothing above perfect infallibility and impeccability to them all.

Fourthly, We confess that Christ's disciples were not indefectible or sinless. As their understandings, so their will, and lives, had still some imperfections. Mark, Paul, and Silas, did not all perfectly do their duties in the case they differed about. Peter did amiss, in avoiding the Gentile Christians, when Paul blamed him openly; (Gal. ii. ;) and Barnabas and others did not do well, in being drawn away to the same dissimulation. When Paul saith of Timothy, "I have no man like-minded," and of others, "They all seek their own," he took not all Christians that had the Spirit to be perfect: "If any man had not the Spirit of Christ, he was none of his;" (Rom. viii. 9 ;) and the very wrangling, declining Galatians had received the Spirit; (Gal. iii. 1—3 ;) and so had the wrangling Corinthians in them. (2 Cor. viii. 5.)

Fifthly, We confess that he who is either infallible or defectible, liable to error or sin, is of himself capable of being deceived, and of deceiving others. If he were infallible in respect of the knowledge of all the truth, yet while he can sin, of himself considered, he can be heedless, rash, careless, partial, and for by respects speak too little or too much. It is the devil's last method, to undo by overdoing, and so to destroy the authority of the apostles by over-magnifying them; therefore we will not use his methods, nor deny any of this.

Sixthly, Moreover, we confess that it is possible for a good Christian to doubt whether those that were evangelists, as Mark and Luke, had the same promise of the Spirit's infallible assistance with the apostles; seeing we find not that promise so expressly any where made to them: and, thereupon, he may possibly think that some errors may consist with their measure of the Spirit, as it did with many Christians who had the same Spirit.

Seventhly, And we do not believe that the extraordinary operations of the Spirit were always equally in the apostles themselves; we suppose the prophets could not always prophecy; nor those that spake with tongues use that gift at their own pleasure; nor yet those that did miracles, healed the sick, or raised the dead: but, that the Spirit wrought, as in various sorts and measures in several persons, (1 Cor. xii.,) so also, at various times, and in various measures in the same person. Whereupon, it is possible for a good Christian to doubt whether every word in Scripture was written then, when the writer had the gift of infallibility and indefectibility.

Eighthly, And, we do confess ourselves, that the apostles had not the infallible Spirit given them, for every use or thing that they had to do, but for those matters, about which they had special need of it, and use for it, to fulfil their office. The Spirit was not so necessary for them to discern those things by, which the common sense and understanding of a man was sufficient to discern. They could taste sweet from bitter, feel heat from cold, discern light from darkness, without an infallible, extraordinary Spirit. And so being eye and ear witnesses of what Christ did and said, of his words, his miracles, his resurrection, his ascension, they might infallibly know them by ordinary means. And so a good Christian may doubt whether they had the Spirit infallibly, to transcribe and cite every passage in the Old Testament, visible to all; or to relate the things which they saw done with their eyes; or to report the history of several actions which were then done: as, what was the place and power of Herod, Archelaus, Pilate, Felix, Festus, &c., and such other parts of common history.

Ninthly, And we all confess that the words are but as the body of the Scripture, and the sense as the soul; and that the words are for the sense: and there is more of the Spirit's assistance in the sense and soul of the Scripture, than in the words and body; and that there is in the phrase and method somewhat of blameless, human imperfection; and that as David

was not stronger than Goliath, nor his weapons more excellent in themselves, but God would overcome strength by the means of the more weak ; so, an Aristotle may be more accurate in method, and a Demosthenes, Varro, or Cicero, in words and phrase, than an apostle : and they may be left to the imperfections of their several gifts, diversified by nature or education, in their style. And God may hide that from the wise and prudent, which he revealeth to babes ; and by the foolishness of preaching, may save believers, and confound the wisdom of the world, and by things that are not, bring to nought things that are, that no flesh may glory in his sight ; nor do we say, that no man may seek or attain more logic, philosophy, or grammar, than he findeth in the Scriptures.

Tenthly, As protestants receive not so many books as canonical as the catholics do, so some protestants have not received so many as the rest ; and so, may possibly err, in thinking that some part of the Scripture is not the word of God ; and, consequently, may think it of more uncertain credit :

Eleventhly, Some have thought that Matthew, being at first written in Hebrew or Syriac, and after translated into Greek, that the translator being unknown, the credit of the translation must be the less certain, because they know not whether the translator was one that had the promise of infallibility, though doubtless they err who so conclude.

Twelfthly, Some think, that as certainly there are a great number of various readings, which all prove that some of the copies err ; so it is uncertain to us, whether all those which we have, may not in some words or particles differ from others which we have not, and from the autographs, seeing each scribe had not a promise of infallibility.

Thirteenthly, If some particular books of Scripture were not extant, or never known to some men, yet the rest may teach those same men all the christian religion to their salvation : therefore, if they may be Christians, and saved without knowing that particular book, they may possibly be so, without knowing that it is canonical, or of divine and certain truth.

Fourteenthly, Yea, more, no doubt but it is possible to be saved, and to be good Christians, without being certain what is contained in any one book of the Bible totally ; for he that cannot read, may possibly not hear the whole book from another, at least, so as to understand and remember it ; and yet may hear the same doctrines out of another book : yea, more,

it is past doubt that a man may, in some cases or circumstances, be a true Christian who knoweth not that there is any Scripture which is God's infallible word: for first, so all the believers of the old world were saved, before Moses wrote the law; and the christian churches were gathered, and thousands converted to Christ, many years before a word of the New Testament was written: secondly, and all the thousands and millions of Christians who cannot read, do know that there is such a book, which hath such words in it, but on the credit of other men: thirdly, and we know not but the Papists, who are too great undervaluers of the Scriptures, and lock it up from the laity, and over-magnify tradition, may keep thousands among them without the knowledge that there is a book which is God's word, and yet, may teach them the christian religion by other means, after to be mentioned. And it seemeth, by the 'Epist. Jesuit.' and Maffæus 'Histor. Indic.' and other writings, that in Japan, Congo, China, and other countries of the East; they did teach them only by creeds, catechisms, and preachings, and I remember no knowledge that they gave to most of them of the Scriptures; and yet, the most cruel torments and martyrdoms, never before heard of, which the Christians in Japan endured, (of which, see Varenius's history,) doth put all sober readers past doubt, that there were many excellent Christians. And if other means may make men Christians, who are never told of the holy Scriptures, then, those same means, with the Scriptures, may make them Christians, who are made believe, that all Scripture passages are not the infallible dictates of God's Spirit.

I have given you instances enough to prove that many may be Christians and have a certain faith, who are not certain of all things in the Scriptures; and, therefore, though all these persons are herein defective or erroneous, yet that Christianity may be otherwise known and proved: yea, though the case of the Scriptures were as these mistaking persons think. And I told you how many ways, besides Scripture, the sum and necessary substance of Christianity is delivered down from the apostles to the world: 'Reas. of Christ. Rel.' (pp. 236, 337.) First, in the very successive being of Christians and churches, who are the professors of this doctrine. Secondly, in a succession of pastors, whose office was to preach it. Thirdly, in a succession of baptism, which is that solemnizing the christian coænant, in which the sum of the Gospel is contained. Fourthly, in the three breviatees or symbols of the christian religion, the

Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Decalogue, which all the christian churches still used: yea, every one that was baptised at age, and the parent for the infant did openly make profession of the christian faith, and of religion, in all the essential particulars. Fifthly, in the church's use of catechising those who were to be baptised, that they might first know that religion which they were to enter. Sixthly, in that constant communion of all the churches in their solemn assemblies, and setting apart the Lord's day to that use, where, in their worshipping of God, they expressed and exercised their religion. Seventhly, in the constant preaching of the Gospel by the pastors. Eighthly, in the constant celebration of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, wherein the sum of the Gospel was recited and expressed. And the custom was also to repeat the profession of their belief. Ninthly, the frequent disputations of the christian pastors for their religion against all heathens, infidels, and heretics. Tenthly, the writings of the said pastors, apologies, doctrinal, historical, commentaries, devotional. Eleventhly, the confession and sufferings of the martyrs. Twelfthly, the decrees, canons, and epistles of councils or assemblies of the christian pastors. Thirteenthly, and after these, the decrees and laws of the christian princes; in all which, we have no need of any peculiar tradition of the church of Rome. Fourteenthly, yea, we may add the confessions of adversaries, who tell us part of the Christian's religion; as Pliny, Celsus, Julian, &c. All these ways set together, told men what Christianity was. Fifteenthly, but the fullest and surest discovery of it, was by the holy Scripture of itself, which was constantly read in the assemblies of the Christians. In all this, I have but told you by how many ways and means, materially, the gospel doctrine was made known.

Now the great question is, whether, by all these means, we might come to a certainty of the truth of the christian faith, in case we could not prove every word or particle of Scripture to be God's word, and so to be true. They that deny it, say, "That he that can mistake, or be deceived in one thing, may be so in another; and we cannot take his word for certain, who sometimes speaketh falsely, for we can never be sure that he speaketh the truth." But I affirm the thing questioned, and shall show the mistake of this reason of the adversaries.

First, It must be remembered that we ascribe infallibility,

primitive and absolute, to God and no other. Therefore we are certain that so much is true as is God's word.

Secondly, We are certain that all that is the word of God, which he hath set his seal or attestation to, which I have largely opened in the book which you oppose ; all that which hath the antecedent, and constitutive, and concomitant, and subsequent attestation of God there opened, we are certain is of God.

Thirdly, We are certain that the person of Christ and his own doctrine had all this four-fold divine testimony ; and therefore that Christ and his doctrine are of God, and true : and, consequently, that Christ was the Son of God, the Redeemer of the World, the Head of the Church, and whatever he affirmeth himself to be.

Fourthly, We are certain that the apostles, as preachers of this Gospel and performers of the commission delivered them by Christ, had the same attestation in kind as Christ himself had : they had the same spirit. Though the antecedent testimony by prophecy was not so full of them as it was of Christ, yet the Gospel which they preached and left in writing, first, hath in it still visibly to the eye of every truly discerning person, the image of God's power, wisdom, and goodness. Secondly, the same Gospel, as preached and delivered by them, had the concomitant testimony of abundant certain miracles, prophecies, and holy works. Thirdly, the same Gospel maketh that impression on the souls of true receivers, which is the image of God's power, wisdom, and goodness, and so proveth it to be of God. The concurrence of these three is a full and certain proof.

Now, if there be any doubtfulness in any of this, it must be, first, either what it is that these attestations prove : secondly, or whether they are really divine attestations : thirdly, or whether divine attestations are a certain proof of truth.

To begin at the last. First, if divine testimony be not a certain proof of truth, then there is no possible proof in the world ; for there is no veracity in any creature, but derivative from God ; and then it must be either because a lie is as perfect and good as truth, which humanity, reason, and all the world contradicteth, and human society abhorreth, there being no savages so barbarous as to think so, or because God is imperfect, either in wisdom to know what is true and fit, or in godness to choose it, or in power to use it ; that is, that God is not God, or that

there is no God, and, consequently, no being; for an imperfect God, an unwise and ill, an impotent being, is no God: and, verily, all our controversies with the infidel and the impious, and the persecutor, must finally come to this, whether there be a God.

II. And that these were really divine attestations, I have fully proved in the treatise. First, they are divine effects, and the divine *vestigia*, or image. Secondly, and such as none can do but God. None else can give that full, antecedent testimony of prophecy; none else could have done what Christ did, in his life, death, resurrection, and ascension; none could heal all diseases, work all miracles, raise the dead with a word; none else could do what the apostles did, in tongues, and miracles, and wondrous gifts—and these wrought by so many, before so many, for so long a time. No other doctrine could itself bear God's image of power, wisdom, and goodness so exactly, nor make such an impress of the same image on the souls of men: nay, though this same doctrine, by the Spirit of God, be adapted to such an effect, yet would it not do it, for want of powerful application, if God, by the same Spirit, did not set it home: so that the sanctification and renovation of souls is a divine attestation of this sacred Gospel. And, besides all the past testimonies of Christ's and his apostles' miracles, here is a double testimony from God still vouchsafed to all true believers to the end of the world: the one is God's image on the holy Scriptures; the other is the same image, by this Scripture, and the Spirit that indited it, printed on all true christian souls. Divine power, wisdom, and goodness, hath imprinted itself first upon the sacred word, or doctrine, and by that produceth inimitably holy life, light, and love, in holy souls. True Christians know this: they feel it: they profess it: they have this Spirit in them, illuminating their minds, sanctifying their wills, and quickening them to vital operation and execution; and this is Christ's advocate and witness still dwelling in all his members. I speak not of an immediate, verbal, or impulsive revelation in us, but of a holy, indwelling nature, principle, operation, conforming the soul to God, and proving us to bear his image. This is Christ's witness in us, that he is Christ indeed, and true; and this is our witness that we are the children of God: and it is our inherent earnest and pledge, first-fruits and foretastes of the glory which Christ hath purchased and promised. If you know no such thing in yourself as this, you

have resisted the Holy Ghost or quenched the Spirit : and if you would not have him dwell and operate in your heart, no wonder if you cannot see him in the holy word : and if you would not consent that he rule your mind and life, no wonder if you deny him also in that word which he did make to rule you.

If you question the real existence of these several testimonies of God's Spirit, first, those that were given to Christ and his apostles, I have plainly proved to you in the treatise, were delivered down to the world three ways. 1. By the most credible human testimony, to produce a human faith : 2. By such a connexion, and such circumstances, of those human testimonies, as amount to a natural infallible certainty, as we have of the wars in England, and that there was such a man as king Charles, king James, &c., and that our laws were made by the king and parliament, that London was burnt, that there is such a city, &c. even to them that see not any of these. 3. By new divine attestations to these attestations ; so that there concur, first, a full human faith : Secondly, a natural certainty : Thirdly, a divine faith to the ascertaining us, that Christ did die, rise, ascend, work miracles, give the Spirit, and by it the apostles wrought the like.

Secondly, And the other two testimonies still show themselves ; they are yet in being. The sacred Gospel is among us, and on it the life, light, love, fore-described. The believers, sanctified by this Gospel, are among us ; and have within them the impressed life, light, love. We see it, where distance, selfishness, prejudice, or malignity hindereth not, shining, though as through a lantern, and working, though imperfectly, in others ; and they that have it, may so feel it in themselves, as will preserve them against the cavils of unbelievers.

As the great Creator hath his standing testimony in the natural conscience of mankind, which, in despite of the devil, shall keep up some natural religion in the world ; and they that have not a written law, are a law unto themselves, showing that God hath a law in their hearts ; so the gracious Redeemer hath his standing witness in the sanctified, even his Holy Spirit, the divine nature, the new creature, the image of God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, dwelling in them, by divine life, light, and love, so as shall keep up a church of holy ones to Christ, in despite of all the powers of hell, even the spirits of death, of darkness, and of malignity ; and so much for the validity of God's attestation.

III. All, then, that remaineth doubtful, or further to be

spoken to, is, what it is that God hath thus attested by the Holy Ghost.

And, first, we are sure it is not nothing; it is not nothing that all this is done for: nor nothing that maketh this change on souls. Secondly, we are sure it can be no less than the truth of the person, office, and doctrine of Christ himself: he hath certainly, by this, proved his own verity and veracity; for his own miracles and resurrection were seals affixed hereunto. Thirdly, we are sure that the same Gospel spoken by himself, was confirmed also when spoken or written by his disciples. Else the same should be sure and not sure. Fourthly, we are sure that the apostles' miracles, &c., confirmed all their commissioned work. I have proved this in my 'Treatise of the Lord's-day.' Whatever Christ promised them the Spirit for, that he gave them the Spirit for. He that findeth his promise with the performance, may know that it was the promise which was performed. Therefore, our work is to find out that promise.

And, first, we find their commission, (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20,) "Go and disciple me all nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you." And the promise is: "Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world." And, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Advocate will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you. I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that he shall speak; and he shall show you things to come: he shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and show it unto you." (John xvi. 7, 12—15.) "And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, till ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke xxiv. 49.) So, (Acts i. 5, 8,) "Ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses to me, both in Jerusalem, and to all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." "I have given to them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, so I have also sent them into the world: and for their sakes I sanctify myself, that

they also might be sanctified through the truth." (John xvii. 8, 17, 18.) "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John xiv. 26.)

Add to these, the texts which mention the performance of these promises; (as John xx. 22; Acts ii.; Acts xv. 28; Heb. iii. 3, 4.) "So great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." "The things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." (1 Pet. i. 12.) "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem, and round about by Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." (Rom. xv. 19, 20.) "This only would I learn of you; received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. iii. 2.)

By all this it is evident, that the Spirit was given them, to enable them to understand the Gospel, and to preach it to the world; to remember all that Christ had taught them: to help them to deliver the covenant of grace, and draw men into it, and baptise them: to gather churches, and to teach them to observe all that Christ had commanded them, and made part of his laws. To teach them all truth, which was evangelical, or part of their ministerial office. To enable them to be most certain and full in their testimony of what they had heard from Christ, and seen him do, which was part of the Gospel. In a word, to perform all their proper office.

I do not at the present suppose you to take these texts for the word of God: for I must suppose you to be an infidel: but I only offer them as part of the certain historical evidence, concurring with all the forementioned history and evidence of the fact, to prove what it was which the apostles' miracles were used to confirm. This same Gospel they preached every where, when they wrought these miracles. And if they confirmed not the Gospel, or christian religion, they confirmed nothing. So that it being certain that this Spirit and miracles were real, and certain that they were the testimony of God, and certain that it was the truth of Christ's person, actions, doctrines, sufferings, resurrection, ascension, and covenant, and commandments,

which they attested, and all that is properly the Gospel or christian religion, what hindereth our certainty of all this? If it were a doubt whether the Spirit attested more, it is never the more doubtful, whether he attested thus much. The apostles constantly preached this Gospel; they baptised persons into the new covenant; they opened the articles of the faith to them, and caused them to profess that faith; they engaged them into the promise, and directed them in the practice of a godly, righteous, and sober life: and they confirmed all this by miracles. And is not all this then made sure? Yea, before they wrote any of the Scriptures.

And now to the objection, "He that speaketh falsely in one thing, is to be believed certainly, or as infallible, in nothing." I again answer, it is a blind objection. God only is absolutely infallible. All men are fallible in some things: we are not to believe that the apostles could err in nothing at all. Peter knew not what he said, when he talked of dwelling on the mount. They could err, and they could sin; and he that sinneth, erreth: they were not absolutely perfect; but it is in certain particulars, even in the declaration of the Gospel, that God would not suffer them to err or to deceive. Those words which the Holy Ghost did by inspiration dictate to them, it is certain that all those words the same Holy Ghost attested: that is, to all the word of God.

And thus much being past doubt, what if we were now at a loss about some appurtenances of the Gospel, whether there were any of the Spirit's dictates, or any part of the word of God; or any proper part of that which the apostles were commissioned for, and spiritually enabled to teach? What if, in some points, which they could know by common sense infallibly as well as other men, any one should think that they were left merely to that certainty of sense? What if one be uncertain which are the parts, and which but the appurtenances of the Gospel, in some things which salvation is not laid on; or were uncertain whether the Spirit did determine the speaker's tongue or pen about every such appurtenance; what is this to the invalidating of any of the rest? If, indeed, when they speak by the Spirit's revelation, they speak falsely at any one time, we could never be sure that they spake true. But when we are sure that all is true which they spake by the Spirit, and sure that they spake the Gospel, or delivered the christian religion by the Spirit, and are only not sure whether every word in genealogy, or by

circumstances, were spoken by the Spirit, nothing will follow hence, but that every word of God is true, and every word of the apostles which was a word of God : and it is perverseness to argue, they may err when they speak their own words as men ; therefore, they may err when they speak God's words by the Spirit.

First, The testimony of the internal sanctifying Spirit is infallible. And so much as this Spirit attesteth to me is true ; and I am sure that this Spirit attesteth the truth of the Gospel in me ; for the substance of the Gospel is imprinted on my heart, and by the impression I know the seal : but what if I find on me no part of God's image which was made by the name of Joram's father or son ; what if I feel no testimony of the Spirit in me, which tells the age of such or such a man there named ; nor can I prove, by the Spirit in me, how far Bethany was from Jerusalem ? What if the mention of Paul's cloak and parchments did not sanctify me ; must I be uncertain of that which did ?

Secondly, What if I read a promise in the Scripture that God will never fail me nor forsake me ; but will preserve me in safety to his kingdom ? If I were uncertain whether this promise extended to every hair of my head, so that none of them should perish, or to the preservation of my colour, and such like accidents ; will it follow that I cannot be sure that I myself, my soul, my person, shall not be forsaken ?

What if have a promise that all things shall work together for my good ; and I am uncertain whether sins or my own follies, or rashness, or the creeping of every worm in the world, or the shaking of every leaf, be numbered with those "all things ;" must I be uncertain, therefore, whether any thing shall work for my good, or whether sufferings for Christ shall do it ?

Thirdly, What if I be uncertain, whether the vegetative faculties, or soul in man, be material or immaterial ; must I be as uncertain whether a man have an immaterial, or incorporeal soul ? And whether the intellectual powers be such or not ?

Fourthly, What if I be in doubt, when the law doth summon a man to any place, or command him any office, whether it is meant that he shall not change his clothes, or leave them off, nor cut his hair or nails, but bring all with him ; doth it follow, that I must be as uncertain whether the person himself must come or not ?

Fifthly, What, if I be disputing whether a tree be wood, and

I cannot tell whether the leaves, their ribs, or stalks, be truly wood or not ; must I therefore be uncertain of all the rest ?

Sixthly, What, if we dispute whether all the king's officers are to be obeyed, and it be a doubt to me, whether a prelate or an apparitor be the king's officer ; can I therefore be assured of no others ?

Seventhly, When a witness sweareth to any writing, that it is true, or to any interrogatories, if I be uncertain whether it be the true spelling, or syntax of the words, or the propriety of every phrase or every circumstance of the matter which he attesteth ; must I therefore be uncertain whether he attest any thing at all ?

This one consideration may show the unreasonableness of such conclusions ; that all systems, physical and moral, have their great essential, or principal parts, and their smaller integrals, and their accidents, which are no proper parts. And the great, and principal parts, are few, plain, discernible, and necessary to the being, or the greatest ends ; the integrals are numerous, small, hardly discernible, and necessary only to perfection ; the accidents are, some of them, yet of a lower nature, less necessary, and less discernible. At the master trunks, it is easy to know which is a vein, and which an artery, and which a nerve, and what is their number ; but when you go to their extremities, they will appear innumerable, small, and scarcely discernible. I can know many grand trunks, or boughs, a tree hath, when I cannot know the number of the thousands of sprigs at the extremities, nor just where the woody nature ceaseth, and the leaves or frutex doth begin. So I can easily know in the frame of grace, that faith, hope, and love are the fruits of the Spirit, and so is every true part of holiness : but, to know of every particular thought, whether it be the fruit of the Spirit, and a real part of holiness or not, is not so easy.

Even so in our present case we can easily prove that all that is God's word, and uttered and sealed by his Spirit, is true. But to come to a full certainty of every book, whether it be truly canonical, and every copy that varieth in some readings from others, or of every genealogical, chronological, topographical, or historical word ; every phrase, location, order of sentences, citation of the prophets, whether it were certainly all done by the infallible inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is a thing that requireth more knowledge than every true Christian hath, as not having the same clearness and notoriety of evidence as the Gospel, or substance of Christianity hath. Not but that all

God's word is true, and all truth is equally truth, it having not a *magis et minus* ; but all truth is not equally notorious or evident.

Prop. 2. Yet all that is in the Scriptures expressed as God's word, is certainly true ; and no error or contradiction is in it, but what is in some copies, by the failing of preservers, transcribers, printers, or translators.

The reason why I have premised the former propositions is, first, for your own sake ; secondly, for the sake of many infidels that now have the same misapprehensions ; thirdly, and for the sake of many thousand weak, dark, and tempted Christians ; that you may not think that you may renounce Christianity, if you could prove a contradiction or mistake in the Scriptures ; there being greater certainty of our religion, than of every single word in the Bible. And that every Christian may not think that he must needs doubt as much of Christianity itself, and of all the Gospel, as he doth whether such a text be God's word, or have any contradiction to another ; and that he can have no more certainty of the gospel, than he hath of Joram's son, or whether Matthew did rightly apply the prophecy that Christ should be called a Nazarene, (Matt. ii. 23,) or the name of Jeremy, (Matt. xxvii. 9,) or whether Jude be canonical, and the epistle to Laodicea, and Clemens Rom. ad Cor. not canonical ; or whether Enoch's prophecy, cited by Jude, be divine ; with many such like. We need not spread the sails so wide to the temptations of Satan, as if we must let go all, if we doubt of the divine authority of any one word.

But yet that indeed every word is divine and sure, which is delivered as God's word, I now assert.

My meaning in that limitation is this : there are some passages (as I said) spoken only historically, and contain the narration of some words of the devil, as to Job, Christ, and, as most think, to Saul at Endor, &c. ; and some words of wicked men, and some words of weak and common persons ; and all these are not mentioned as the words of God ; as the words of Job's friends, which God reprov'd ; the words of the old prophet that lied in the name of the Lord to the young prophet to his destruction ; the words of Jonas, " I do well to be angry ; " and the words of Christ's enemies, persecutors, &c. Yea, the mention of the old prophet remembereth me, that all words spoken as in God's name, and that by a pretended, yea, by a real prophet, are not, therefore, the words of God ; Micaiah only may

say true, while Zedekiah, and all the rest of Ahab's prophets, may lie, as in the name of the Lord. Balaam, and the afore-said old prophet, and many such, may say true, when God's Spirit doth inspire them, and yet lie at another time in God's name. And what Paul meaneth, by his "Not the Lord, but I," I leave to consideration. Whether, in 1 Cor. xiv., all those that he correcteth for a disorderly using even the miraculous gifts of tongues and prophesying, &c., had their timing and ordering of their gifts from the same Spirit that gave them the gifts, you may judge. And some Protestant expositors have doubted whether James and the rest were guided by the Spirit, when they persuaded Paul to go into the temple, to show the Jews that he observed their law; though I think that counsel was of the Spirit, because Paul concurred in obeying it. But one instance I more doubt of myself, which is, when Christ and his apostles do oft use the Septuagint in their citations out of the Old Testament, whether it be always their meaning to justify each translation and particle of sense as the word of God and rightly done; or only to use that as tolerable, and containing the main truth intended, which was then in use among the Jews, and therefore understood by them; and so best, as suited to the auditors. And so whether every citation of numbers or genealogies from the Septuagint, intended an approbation of it in the very points in which it differeth from the Hebrew copies; such plain exceptions being premised, I assert, that all that is said in the Bible as by the Spirit of God, by men that had the promise of his Spirit, and especially by the apostles, is certain truth, and hath no contradiction in its parts.

Before I give you my reasons, I think it meet to remove all ambiguity of the words 'infallible or certain,' that I may be rightly understood.

First, the consent of all sober divines and philosophers teaching us to distinguish between objective and subjective certainty, that is, the certain truth of the thing, and the certainty of our own apprehension of it.

Secondly, the word certain, when applied to the apprehension, sometimes signifieth an infallible apprehension, and sometimes a clear and strong apprehension, excluding both deceit and doubts; and by some abusively to a strong apprehension, which excludeth doubts, but not deceits. Thirdly, in the object, infallibility sometimes signifieth nothing but verity, which whoever believeth is not deceived; and sometimes it signifieth also

such clear evidence, as is, in its kind, sufficient to banish all considerable doubting. And now I conclude :

First, Whatever is true, is objectively certain and infallibly true ; so far as that no man in believing it true, is therein deceived or mistaken. All truth is certain, infallible truth in itself.

Secondly, Few truths in the world are so evident, as that a blinded, prejudiced, indisposed person, may not be ignorant of them, or err about them.

Thirdly, All truths in the Scripture have not equal evidence that they are the word of God, though all that is known to be the word of God, if equally so known, have equal evidence in the formal reason of faith, that they are true.

Fourthly, All known truth is infallibly known : that is, he that knoweth it is not deceived, nor can possibly be deceived, by taking it to be true : so that, as infallibility signifieth not being deceived, all true knowledge is subjectively infallible and certain ; that is, it is true.

Fifthly, No man can know that infallibly, which is not objectively certain : that which is not true, cannot be known to be true. The strongest, and most confident belief of a falsehood, is a false belief, and more than fallible or uncertain.

Sixthly, All God's word being equally true and infallible, the belief of it is also equally true and infallible. But being not all equally intelligible, evident, (to be his word), and necessary, the understanding and belief of every part is not equally easy, strong, past doubting, or necessary.

Seventhly, There is a superficial belief of divine revelations, even the Gospel, which a natural man may have by extrinsic means. And there is a more clear apprehension which a more common sort of grace may produce : but that belief which is so clear and powerful, as truly to sanctify and save the soul, must be the effect of the special operation of the Holy Ghost, who yet hath a course of appointed means in which we must receive it.

Eighthly, The reason of this necessity of the Spirit's operation of faith, and then by faith, is not because the Gospel wanteth due ascertaining evidence, or an aptitude to convince and sanctify a soul, for it is highly rational, though mysterious, and good. But because, by corruption and pravity, the mind of man is so indisposed to know, believe, and love truths of such a nature, as that there is need of a special, internal,

higher operator, to set home the work as the hand of a man setteth the seal upon the wax, and to do that by it, which the bare word alone, with the most excellent preacher, cannot do.

Ninthly, Yet is no wicked infidel excusable, that saith, " If I cannot believe it, I will not believe it ;" because, first, it is his pravity which is his disability ; secondly, he is more able for a common, superficial belief, than for a special, effectual belief ; thirdly, and if he did by the help of that common belief do what he might, and God appointeth him in the use of means to obtain a special faith through grace, he should find that God hath commanded no man to labour and seek after grace in vain ; and if any man have not that grace and power, which is of necessity to his faith and salvation, it is along of himself, who useth not his more common power and grace as he might use them. And so much to prevent misunderstanding.

Now, my reasons why I take every history, chronology, genealogy in Scripture as certainly true, and every other word which is spoken by a true prophet and apostle as by the Spirit, and not disowned by the Scripture itself, but especially such as you accuse in the Gospel, are these.

First, *à priori*, because it seemeth to me that the writing of the whole books of the New Testament by them, was done in the discharge of the commission given them by Christ ; and he promised his apostles his Spirit for the performance of all their commissioned office work. This writing is part of the preaching which Christ sent them for. And no doubt but the Spirit did cause them to write all the substantial part ; and therefore we have reason to think that the smallest parts are from the same author, and that he assisted them in the least as well as in the greatest. Yea, the very accidents may have a perfection in their place, though less perfect in themselves. Though all the evangelists use not the same method, or order, nor repeat Christ's sayings in the same terms, yet in respect to the whole frame, it may be best that there should be that diversity of words and order, to preserve and declare the same sense and things. And even their plain and less accurate style and method may be best, as fittest to its use and end.

Secondly, *à posteriori*, there is no caviller that yet hath proved any falsehood or contradiction in any passages of the Scripture ; though the clearing of some of them require more than vulgar knowledge.

Thirdly, Saving the controversies about the few questioned books, and some few sentences, and words, the church, which received the Scriptures as God's word, did receive the whole as his word, and as certainly true in every part.

Fourthly, Because that spirit of miracles in the apostles, and that spirit of holiness in us, which attesteth the christian religion, doth receive it, and attest it as found in the sacred Scripture, though not as there alone; and it putteth no exception against any part of the sacred record: therefore, while it particularly attesteth the chief parts, it inferreth an attestation to the smallest. (For that word or line, which is not strictly a part but an accident of the christian religion, is yet a part of the Bible, which containeth it.)

Fifthly, And though all the reasons, which I have given, prove that the truth of the christian religion may be certainly proved, though we could not prove every by-expression in the Scripture to be true; and though we deny not but the penmen manifested their human imperfections in style and method; yet if each passage were not true, it would be so great a temptation to the weak, and make it so difficult to know in some points what is true, in comparison of what it would be, if all be true, that we have no reason to imagine this difficulty to ourselves, while it is unproved.

And having said this, I am here in order to answer your objections; which yet you should not have expected from me, whilst so great a number of books are already written, which have done it; and why should you bid me write that again, which is written already, unless you had confuted what is written? If you understand Latin, you may find a multitude of such seeming contradictions reconciled, in Sharpius, Magrius, Althamer, Cumeranus, but most fully in abundance of commentators; if you understand not Latin, you may read enough in Dr. Hammond, and many other annotators and commentaries, Mr. Cradock's 'Harmony,' &c. And you may have enough that understand Latin to translate you the solutions, as out of Spanhemii Dub. Evangel. Grotius, Jansenius, Chemuitius, and such others. And whereas you tell me that I invite men to go to some minister for satisfaction, I do so; but if I had invited all men in England to seek to me, you may imagine how many of them I must fail, though they should never so much resolve to be infidels, and to perish unless I satisfy them.

But you greatly encourage me to a particular answer, by

promising me, that “you will trouble me with no more but these few places,” and that if I clear these from your imputation of contradiction, you “will conclude” as I do, and suppose the other places reconcilable.

First, Your first case is of “Joram begat Ozias, &c.” Matt. i. 8, 9. Answ. Here are two difficulties to be resolved; first, whether Joram begat Ozias (called also, Azarias). Secondly, why Matthew leaveth out Ahazariah, Joas, and Amaziah.

And for the first, is it not strange that you should number this with contradictions? Are we not all called the children of Adam; and Abraham called the father of the Jews? Is there not a mediate as well as an immediate generation and progeny? Is not *causa causæ, causa causati*? Did not your great-grandfather beget you *in causa*, while he begat him who begat him who begat you immediately? What more common among the Hebrews, than to call posterity the children of their ancestors. Even Christ is called the son of David? And use is the master and expositor of words. And you were born too late, to teach either God or the world, in what sense to use words so many hundred years ago. This language was well understood by them who used the like.

And secondly, For the next question you must understand the scope of an author and his undertaking, if you will understand his words. Matthew’s design was not to name every person in all these periods of time, from whom Christ descended; but first to show, for memory’s sake, how the line of Christ’s progenitors may be mentioned by three fourteens in three several periods of time; one from Abraham to David, and one from David to the captivity, and one from thence to Christ: therein commemorating as many as God was pleased hereby to make memorate, to their honour, and to show the truth of the descent of Christ from Abraham and David. Secondly, and God is not bound to give us a reason, why he omitteth any of their names; but this probability is obvious, that seeing Matthew would for memory keep himself to the number of fourteen, none were fitter to be left out than the posterity of Athalia, and so of Ahab and Jezebel; which God hath foretold should be blotted out or abolished. (1 Kings xxi. 21, 22.) And, therefore, he that would have the names of the wicked to rot, would not here honour them with a place among the progenitors of Christ: and yet the second commandment limiting God’s visiting the sins of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation, it

is no wonder that the omission doth extend no further ; and so suitable is God's word to his providence, that these three men were all cut off by the sword, whose memory is here cut off by Matthew.

II. As to your second pretended contradiction : first, remember that it was none of the purpose of any of the evangelists to say all that could be said, even of the sayings and doings of Christ himself, much less of any others ; and, therefore, if that be said in one, which is not said in another, it is no wonder : and you must remember what Dr. Hammond hath noted of Luke, that (Luke i.) professing that he received his knowledge from others, though directed by the Holy Ghost, he delivered the things themselves, with less respect to the time and order, when every thing was said and done, than the other did observe, it being not his design to tell the time and order of each.

These things premised, set them all together and you will find that, first, Mary Magdalene, Johanna, Maria Jacobi, and Salome, having bought spices, and going to anoint the body of Jesus, said, "Who will roll away the stone for us?" And when they came they found the stone rolled away by an angel that sat upon it. Secondly, that angel, with another, speaks to the women, saying, "Fear not; I know you seek Jesus that was crucified; why seek ye the living among the dead? he is not here, he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord was laid," &c. Thirdly, then the women run and tell the disciples, "They have taken away the Lord, and we know not where they have laid him." Fourthly, Peter and John ran to the sepulchre, and saw the clothes and returned. Fifthly, Mary Magdalene being come back, stood weeping at the door of the sepulchre, and looking in, she saw two angels, one at the head, another at the feet of the place where Jesus lay; who say, "Woman, why weepest thou? She said, They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Sixthly, having said this, she looked behind her and saw Jesus, not knowing him, who said, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She thinking him to be the gardener, answered, If thou hast taken him away, tell me where thou hast laid him," &c. "Jesus said unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended, &c. But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to," &c. Seventhly, Mary runs and tells this to the disciples, that she had seen the Lord, and what he said to her: but they believed her not. Eighthly,

either at the same time before Mary was gone, or, perhaps, after she had overgone them to tell the disciples, Jesus met the rest of the women, and said to them, "All hail: and they laid hold upon his feet, and worshipped him. And Jesus said to them, Fear not, go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me." Take all the evangelists, and tell me, first, whether here be any more than all set together say? Secondly, whether in all this there be any contradiction?

But if you should take Dr. Hammond's shorter supposition: First, that Mary and the women came to the sepulchre, and find that, before they came, the stone was rolled away by an angel, who had affrighted the keepers. Secondly, they go in and miss the body. Thirdly, Mary runs and tells Peter and John. Fourthly, they run and satisfy themselves, and return to the rest. Fifthly, the woman staying at the sepulchre seeth the angels; first one, on the stone, and on the right side of the monument; and then two, one at the head, and another at the feet of it. Sixthly, the angels speak all that the evangelists mention; and Mary to them. Seventhly, she turneth back and seeth Jesus, who speaketh to her, and to the rest, what is recorded. Eighthly, then she goes and telleth all to the disciples. If this order be supposed, what contradiction is here?

Where you say, in Luke, the women told the disciples of the angels first, before Peter went, I answer: first, whether we suppose that they first told them of the words of the angels that were without the sepulchre before Peter went, and, after, of the angels within the sepulchre, which might be the same angels, but not the same apparition; or whether you only suppose Luke, as in Christ's doctrine, so in these by-matters of fact, to intend only to deliver the matter, and not to tell just the time and order: there is no untruth nor contradiction in either supposition.

III. Your third question is fully answered in the answer of the former. According to the first harmony or supposition, Matthew only mentioneth one of the apparitions of the angels, and one of Mary's goings to the disciples; and so this written in Matthew was partly before Mary's seeing Christ, viz., the angel's first appearance; and partly after, viz., her going the second time, upon the second appearance of the angels, to tell them.

According to the second harmony, Mary's speech to Christ was after the angels' appearance, even as they were turning away from the angels to go tell the disciples the second time; Jesus met them, and Mary, at first, took him for the gardener;

but quickly knew him, and had from him the words which you recite.

And, now, consider whether you deal reasonably with Christ, and with your own soul, upon such poor cavils as these, to argue against the christian faith, and plead for apostasy; when the Gospel hath all the divine attestations and evidences, which I have opened in my treatise, and you are not able to confute them; which leadeth me to my third proposition.

Prop. 3. He that first proveth the truth of the christian faith by solid evidence, may, and ought to be certain of the truth, though he be not able to solve all seeming contradictions in the Scriptures, or answer all objections which occur; yea, certain of every particle thereof.

This I prove by these following arguments:

Arg. 1. From the consent of all mankind; who are forced thus to conclude, in all arts and sciences: there being none of them so plain and sure, but somewhat may be said against them, which few, if any man, can answer; and *incommodum non solvit argumentum* must be their reply.

Arg. 2. From the nature of objects, and the imperfection of man's knowledge. If we could be sure of nothing till we can answer all objections against it, we must come to Zanchez's 'Nihil scitur:' nothing in all the world can be sure. Can no man be sure that there is any such thing as motion, till he can answer the objections that would first prove no vacuity, and then no penetrability, and then an impossibility, till a cession begin at the extremity of natural beings, and continue unto the supposed mobile? Shall we say that a wheel cannot possibly turn round, because no one part first giveth place to the other to succeed it? Will you be able to answer all the difficulties tossed in the schools, or but those mentioned in Mr. Glanvil's 'Scepsis Scientifica,' before you will be sure of any thing of those matters, where these difficulties are found?

He that can answer all objections, first, is supposed not only to know, but to know the matter in some perfection; and can none know certainly but those, who be they, that know in such perfection? Secondly, yea, they are supposed to know all other matters which may any way relate to the matter in hand; and shall no man know any thing certainly, till he knoweth all things? For instance,

First, What if the question be, 'Whether there be a God, the Creator of all;' cannot I be sure of this till I can answer Aris-

totle's objections of the world's eternity, and all the rest which every atheist will allege?

Secondly, What if the question be, 'Whether God be most wise;' cannot I be sure of it by the notorious effects of his wisdom, till I can answer him that saith, 'he that maketh fools, and permitteth so much madness and confusion in the world, and leaveth mankind in so great ignorance, is not perfectly wise?'

Thirdly, What if the question be, 'Whether God be perfectly good;' cannot I be sure of it till I can answer all their objections, who say 'perfect goodness would make all things perfectly good, and would not let the world lie in so much wickedness, nor so many tormenting diseases to afflict us, nor the innocent horse and ox to be laboured, tired, tormented, and killed by us at our pleasure?' &c.

Fourthly, What if the question were, 'Whether God be almighty;' cannot I know it till I answer them who say, that 'he that cannot make an infinite world, is not infinite in power; he that hath a will which men can violate; he that endureth all the sin in the world, which he hateth, and the ruin and misery of so many millions, whom he loveth, is not Almighty?'

Fifthly, What if the questions, 'Whether man be a rational creature; whether he have any free will; whether brutes have reason; whether plants and stones have sense;' can I know none of these till I can answer all the objections of the somatists against the soul; and all the objections of Hobbs against free will; and all the objections of Chambre for the reason of beasts; and all that Campanella hath said *de sensu rerum*?

In a word, what shall we know in the world if we can know nothing till we can solve all difficulties and objections? therefore I add,

Prop. 4. The true method of one that would arrive at certainty, and not deceive himself and others, is to begin at the bottom, and discern things in their nearest, intrinsical, and most certain evidences; and, afterwards, to try the by-objections as he is able; and not to pore first upon the objected difficulties, and judge of all the cause by those.

The plain truth and case of Christians is, that if God had not done more for them by giving them his Spirit by the Gospel, and experience of its truth in the effects, than their teachers have done by a right instructing them in the evidences of faith, or

than the reason of the most doth in a clear discerning of those evidences in the thing or word itself, it were no wonder if apostates were more numerous than they are, when so many build on the sand, and are strangers to the true foundation, and will never see the evidences of the christian verity in itself; no wonder if poor objections shake them, that never understood the nature and reasons of their own religion. If the tree grow all in top, which exposeth it to the winds, and little in the roots, which must hold it fast, no wonder if it be overthrown. When men never know the great, clear evidences of the christian religion, but take it up by custom, education, and on the credit only of the time and place in which they live, no wonder if every seeming weakness, error, or contradiction in Scripture, make them doubt.

First, Look to all learning, arts, and sciences. Do not learners that would know, begin at the elements and foundation? Do we not begin in grammar with our letters, syllables, words, and chief rules, and in all arts and sciences, with the elements and principles?

Secondly, And reason telleth us that the points that are most necessary, clear, and certain, must be held accordingly with a more clear, assured confidence, than those that are unnecessary and dark: and that uncertainties must be reduced to certainties, and not certainties to uncertainties: and that all arguing should be *à notiore*, and not *à minus notis*. And as I said before, as the trunks of the tree, the veins, the arteries, the nerves are few and visible, and easily and surely known, when the thousands of little branches are hardly visible or numerable; so is it with the schemes of truths. He, therefore, that will begin at these numerous small branches, will dote rather than know or learn.

As in the former instances. First, When I see with my eyes the effects of power, wisdom, and goodness in all the visible works of God, I am sure that it is perfect power, wisdom, and goodness, which is the cause of this. I am certain that nothing can give that which *formaliter*, or *eminenter*, it hath not to give, nor can the effect exceed the total cause. I am certain that he from whom all creatures, power, wisdom, and goodness doth proceed, must needs himself be more great, and wise, and good, than all the world of creatures set together, which he hath made. To this fundamental certainty, therefore, I must hold if

I will not dote, whatever little objections or prattlings may be used against it.

Secondly, Eternity is a thing incomprehensible, which quite swalloweth up my understanding; and many little things be said against it. But I am certain that nothing can make nothing; and if ever there had been nothing there never would have been any thing: and to this certainty I will hold.

Thirdly, A holy life hath a great many of cavilling objections raised against it by corrupted nature. And shall I there begin to make my trial of it? No, I am first sure that a rational free-agent and subject of God, is bound to obey him, and that the greatest good should be the greatliest loved, and that we are totally our Creator's own, and should be totally devoted to him. I am sure I cannot love the infinite good too much, nor be too good, nor do too much good to others in the world, nor make too sure of my own felicity, nor too much seek my ultimate end. And shall not this assurance hold me fast against all the snarlings and prattlings of the doting, drunken world?

So here, I have in the Treatise opened those grounds on which we may be certain of the necessity of this holiness, of the life to come, and of the truth of the christian faith and hopes. And because God in mercy hath not put off the world with the skeleton of a bare creed, but also given them the complete body of sacred Scriptures, to be a full, perpetual record of this truth, shall I turn his mercy to a snare and sin, and question all, even the articles of the faith, because in the Scriptures there are some things accidental to religion, and some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unskilful wrest to their destruction? This is but to be devils to ourselves, and foolish enemies of our own peace and comfort: as Cicero speaks against them that pleaded for the soul's mortality, as if it were a desirable thing.

You have nothing else that suiteth the nature and interest of a man, and agreeth with the nature and interest of God, to set against the christian religion in competition. If you would have no religion, you would have no hopes, no safety, no business or comfort, but bestial, in this world, and you would be no men. If you would have nothing but nature, and the holiness which nature clearly calleth for, you would have health in an unhealed body, and health without the physician and his means. The Mediator is the way to the Father, and if you would love

God and be happy in his love, and have the pardon of your sins, you have little reason to reject him that cometh to procure, reveal, and communicate that love and pardon, which must win your hearts to the love of God. And if you would not die in desperation, but have the hopes and foresight of a better life, you have little reason to quarrel with a messenger from heaven, which bringeth life and immortality to light. As bad as Christians are, if personal quarrels and malignity blind you not, and if you will not take the enemies and persecutors of Christianity for Christians, merely because they assume the name, you may easily see that serious Christians, who live according to their profession, are persons of another kind of excellency than all the unbelieving world.

I know that from some self-conceited, ignorant, well-meaning persons, I must look to be reviled and called a betrayer of Christianity, because I plead not for it in their way, and give you any other answer to your objections, than ‘That when God giveth you the Spirit, you shall know that the Scripture hath no contradictions, and that Christianity is the true religion: till then you cannot know it, nor must I give you reasons for it.’ But I do my work, and let who will wrangle and revile.

How far the sayings of some are true or false, ‘That the Scripture is the only means of faith, or saving knowledge of God; that it is *principium indemonstrabile*, as first principles of knowledge are in nature; that (as others say) it hath evidence of credibility, but not evidence of certainty, as if evidence of divine credibility or faith, were not evidence of certainty; that faith hath not evidence, but evidence evacuateth faith, or the merits of it,’ with such like, a man of understanding may gather from what is said: and I must not be so tedious as particularly here to resolve them, having done it in preface to the second part of the Saint’s Rest, edit. 2, &c., long ago. And though I have written nothing here which some men cannot make an ill use of, and some men will not turn to matter of cavil and reproach, I will not therefore leave it out whilst I expect that the good, which truth is fitted to, is greater than the evil, which by accident and abuse will follow it.

And because you seem confident, and think me bound to answer you, and consequently all others, not knowing how many hundreds may trouble me in the like kind, I send you this in print, that other men’s mistakes and infidelity also may have

the same remedies. But I shall conceal your name and dwelling, lest the shame of your sin should hinder your patient application of the remedy, save only by telling you that it is long ago since I read a noble and learned lord, who in a Latin book *De Veritate (contra Veritatem)* said much against the certainty of faith: but it was all but learned froth and vanity. I rest

A servant of Christ,
And desirer of your faith and salvation,

R. BAXTER.

December 28th, 1671.

THE
SECOND PART
OF THIS
APPENDIX,
BEING

SOME ANIMADVERSIONS ON THE FORESAID TREATISE, *DE VERITATE*, RESOLVING SEVERAL QUESTIONS THERE INCLUDED OR IMPLIED.

HAVING let fall the mention of that noble author's Treatise, it came into my mind, that it, having never been answered, might be thought unanswerable, and so the more considerable. Therefore I adjoin so much of my animadversion, as the case in hand requireth.

And, first, I must give the author the honour of his great learning and strength of wit. Secondly, I must confess that the teachers of the church have been too often such, as have given him the scandal which he so often expresseth, as more regarding their interest than truth, and not making clear the truth which they have taught, and often wronging it by their omissions, or additions, or unsound explications. Thirdly, I confess the body of his Treatise containeth many very considerable things, in order to the disquisition of truth; especially about the suitableness of the faculties to the object, the conditions requisite to a true apprehension, and somewhat about the nature of truth itself; though that which he calleth *veritas apparentiæ*, I had rather call *evidentiâ veritatis rei*. And I am not willing to think that I have as many different faculties as there are different plants in my garden, or books in my study, or sentences in those books; and in several things I miss that accurateness which he pretendeth to: but these I shall pass by.

He saith, (p. 217,) "An vero aliud (præter pœnitentiam) et quidem convenientius detur medium, unde justitiæ divinæ fit factum satis non est hic in animo exponere, ———— Hoc solummodo dicimus, (quicquid in adversam partem à quibusdam sug-

geratur) quod nisi sola pœnitentia et fide in Deum, vitia et scelera quæcunque eliminari possint, et justitiæ divinæ bonitas divina adeo sit *λύτρον* ut non sit ulterius quo provocetur, nullum universale ita patere, vel olim patuisse remedium, ut fuerit quo confugeret misera ex peccati sensu languentium turba, vel haberet unde gratiam et pacem illam internam conciliaret; et tandem in id deveniendum sit, ut quosdam, immo longe majorem hominum partem inscios nedum invitos, et creaverit et damnaverit Deus Opt. Max. Quod adeo horrendum, et providentiæ, bonitati immo et justitiæ divinæ incongruum sonat, ut mitiori immo et æquiori sententia dicendum sit, totum humanum genus ex pœnitentia semper habuisse media unde Deo acceptum esse potuit; quibus si exciderit, non jam ex Dei bene placito, sed ex proprio hominum peccato, perditionem uniuscujusque extitisse nec per Deum stetisse quo minus salvi fierent." The first question then is,

Quest. 1. Whether, if Christ, and not only our repentance and belief in God, be taken for a sacrifice, and price given to God for man's redemption, it will follow, that most of the world are damned by God's will, without any remedy to which they could have recourse for salvation?

Ans. First, It is strange that men should be left remediless, if Christ, and not only their repentance, be the remedy. Surely if Christ had given sinners nothing, yet he hath taken nothing from them.

Secondly, We all confess the universal necessity of repentance; but this is partly co-ordinate, as the end, and partly subordinate, as an effect, and therefore not contrary to the necessity of a Redeemer. Repentance is our conversion, and our begun recovery from sin; and will it follow that the physician is unnecessary, because health and recovery are necessary? yea, and sufficient in their kind.

Thirdly, How doth it follow that the remedy was not universal, when redemption by Christ was universal? Christ so far died for all men, as by his death he procured them any grace. But he procured grace, though not equal grace, for all: you confess an universal grace, and yet an inequality of benefits: we say, that grace was procured by Christ: do we narrow it at all, by saying Christ procured it?

Fourthly, I perceive some men's misexplication of these things was your snare and scandal. First, We distinguish between Christ's procurement of our pardon and salvation by his sacrifice

and merit with God, and Christ as the object of man's faith, or as believed in by man. We do not make the latter so universally necessary as the former. For we hold that infants are saved, that believe not. But we hold, that no one is saved for whom Christ did not satisfy God's justice, and merit salvation. Secondly, And that thus much causelessly offend you not, we say, that this satisfaction and merit consisteth not in an identity or gradual proportion of Christ's pains or sufferings to all mankind, but in an aptitude of his sacrifice and righteousness to attain the ends of God, the Sovereign of the world, the demonstration of his truth, holiness, and righteousness, together with triumphant love and mercy, better than the remediless damnation of all the sinning world would have done. Read but Mr. Truman's 'Great Propitiation,' which showeth you the true ends of the sacrifice of Christ, and this unjust offence will vanish. Thirdly, And we maintain, as is said, that the merit and propitiation wrought by Christ, is not to make our repentance needless, but to procure it, and to make it effectual to its ends. He giveth us repentance, and remission of sins. You confess that we may and must make a new covenant with God upon our repentance: in that covenant God promiseth us grace, as we consent to be his servants and children. Now if Christ did procure, and, as God's general Administrator, give us that promise of pardon and salvation to the truly penitent, doth not this more oblige us to repentance, and not less? And the merit of repentance, if you will so call it with the ancients, is quite of another order, rank, and nature, than the merit of Christ. It is one thing for the innocent Son of God to merit repentance and pardon to all that will repent, and another thing by repenting, through his grace, to perform the condition of the further grace of pardon or salvation. Fourthly, And yet further to heal your unjust offence, we do not hold that Christ maketh God more merciful than he was, or that his redemption is the first cause of our recovery and salvation, causing God to be willing, who was unwilling before; but that God's love and mercy and his own good will is the first cause, which gave us Christ for a Redeemer as a second cause, an effect of his love, and the head of all the means of our recovery; and the true meriting cause of that grace and salvation which God will give us. Nor so meriting as to change God, but so meriting as to remove the impediments of his grace as to the communication, and as to become the fittest instrument of the Father's love and mercy,

by whom to govern the lapsed world, and to communicate grace and life to sinners. Fifthly, And yet more fully to satisfy your objection, we hold, that all mankind is brought by Christ under a covenant of grace, which is not vain, or repealed by God ; but as their abuse of the grace of the covenant may cast them out. For as a covenant of entire nature, or innocency, was made with all mankind in innocent Adam, so a covenant of grace was made with all mankind in lapsed Adam, (Gen. iii. 15,) in the promised seed, and renewed again with all mankind in Noah. No man can prove either a limitation of this covenant to some, (till the rest, by violating it, became the serpent's seed, at least,) nor yet that ever God did abrogate it, as it was made to all the world. Sixthly, And we further acquaint you, that it was not the existent humanity of Christ that procured grace and life to the world, for those about four thousand years before his incarnation. The mere decree and promise did serve for man's salvation all that time, without the existence of his humanity. Seventhly, Therefore, when you grant a necessity of believing in God, as merciful, you must needs include Christ in his divine subsistence, for you must needs grant that the eternal *λογος*, or wisdom of God, must be the fountain and determiner of all those means by which his love and mercy would communicate recovering grace and life to man. You will not divide God as the object of our faith, and leave out the wisdom that must manage all. Eighthly, And yet further to remove your scandal, we maintain that the Jews themselves were not bound to believe many that are now articles of our faith, that Christ "was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, descended to *hades*, and rose again the third day ;" and that his very death and resurrection were not believed by his own apostles till he was risen. Nor understood they the article of the Holy Ghost. So that before a more general belief in the Messiah did serve the Jews themselves : that all this is so, we are satisfied by this evidence. First, By the silence of the Old Testament in the matter, giving us no proof that ordinary, much less, all believers, had such a particular knowledge of the office of Christ ; and what is not revealed is not to be believed. Secondly, From Heb. xi., where faith is described, as in its latitude, to be the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for, and a believing that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and a looking for a better country, and for

a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God ; and a believing the word and faithfulness of God, &c. And the Holy Ghost, when he purposely described the faith which the ancients had been saved by, would never have left out the chief, or any essential part. The same I say of Rom. iv., and 2 Cor. iv. 18, and v. 1, 6, 7 ; James ii., &c. Thirdly, The text expressly telleth us, first, of Christ's death and resurrection, and, consequently, the offering himself a sacrifice for sin, and ransom for the world, and dying for us, that the apostles themselves were ignorant of it till after his resurrection. When Christ told them that he must be killed and raised again the third day, Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, " Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee." (Matt. xvi. 21, 22.) " The Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men : but they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not." (Luke ix. 44, 45.) Again, " All things written in the prophets, concerning the Son of Man, shall be accomplished, for he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spit on, and they shall scourge him, and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." (Luke xviii. 31—34.) So, " We trusted this had been he that should have redeemed Israel—O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken ; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself." (Mark ix. 32 ; Luke xxiv. 21, 25, 26.) Here you see that they knew not that he must die for our sins, rise again, and ascend to glory ; and that it is no proof that all that were justified before understood these things, because that Moses and the prophets had foretold them, for the apostles themselves understood it not in Moses and the prophets. Secondly, They understood not aright the doctrine of his intercession, and that he must go to the Father, and then be their High Priest, and that they must come to God by him, and ask in his name : for it is said, " Now I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou ? but because I have said these things to you, sorrow hath filled your hearts—but it is expedient for you that I go away." (John xvi. 5—7.)

“Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name.” “At that day ye shall ask in my name.” (John xvi. 24, 26.) As for them that say that the apostles knew that they were to come to God only by a Mediator, as all the faithful did of old; but yet they knew not that they must come to him by Christ, and in his name. First, There was no mediator existent but God before the incarnation, though there was to be a mediator after. Secondly, This implieth that the apostles knew not Jesus to be the Christ, and that they went to God by some other mediator, which are both false. Thirdly, And if by mediation be meant the satisfactory price of his sacrifice, they knew not that he was to die, and to be a sacrifice for sin. Fourthly, And it is plain that they understood not rightly the nature of his spiritual kingdom and reign, but had got an opinion of an earthly kingdom for the Jews’ deliverance and exaltation: that Christ abideth for ever, (John xii. 34,) in opposition to his heavenly abode, was then a common opinion. “We hoped this had been he that should have redeemed Israel:” (Luke xxiv:) one would have sat on his right hand, and another on his left; and they strove who should be greatest. “Lord, wilt thou, at this time, restore the kingdom of Israel?” (Acts i.) When the Advocate was to be sent, he was to teach them all things, and to testify of Christ, and to convince the world of the sin of their unbelief, and of the righteousness and truth of Christ, and of his judgment or kingdom and power, as consisting, (*quoad exercitium,*) in the debellation or dejection of the kingdom of Satan, and destroying the works of the devil. (John xvi.) By all which, and much more, it appeareth that the apostles, though then in a state of justification, had a very general and defective knowledge of the office of Christ; and that, though his prophetic office was ordinarily believed, (John iv.,) the Samaritan woman could say, When the Messiah cometh, he will tell us all things, and a temporal kingdom expected; yet his spiritual kingdom, and especially his priestly office, by his sacrifice, death, resurrection, heavenly intercession, (for all the old types and sacrifices,) was little understood by the disciples. Yea, he sometimes forbade them and others to tell men that he was the Christ, because the great evidences of his resurrection, ascension, and Spirit, by which it was to be evinced, were yet to come. And we believe not that all that were saved before had more knowledge than the apostles, so that all the faithful Jews believed in the promised seed, the Messiah, as one that was to be sent to be their Deliverer

and Saviour, yet it was by a faith that was very general, and far from that distinctness which, after the resurrection of Christ, was required of all to whom the Gospel was promulgate, which I have said the more of to you, lest you think that we hold what we do not, and so take occasion to err by supposing us to err. Clemens Alexandrinus, Justin Martyr, Arnobius, Lactantius, and other old Christians, do go yet further than yet I have conceded to you.

And our very learned Dr. Twisse doth argue that God could have saved the world without a Redeemer, if he had pleased, because he saved the faithful under the Old Testament without any existent mediator, except God himself, or any existent sacrifice, or merit, or intercession of him, and because he saveth infants without faith. But for the first, I take it to be, at best, too great temerity or audacity to dispute whether God could have done things better or otherwise, which he has done so well (of which I said more in my premonition before my treatise, called 'The Unreasonableness of Infidelity;' though I know that Wallæus and many learned protestants say the same). And as for infants, they are not saved without the sacrifice and grace of the Redeemer, though they know him not; nor are they in the covenant, without the faith of their parents or owners, which is as their own. And if the spirit of the prophets be called the Spirit of Christ, (1 Pet. i. 11,) and the reproach of Moses was the reproach of Christ, (Heb. xi. 26,) we may much more conclude of the ordinary believers before his coming, that Christ's interest and his Spirit's operations and help, extended much further than men's understanding of him, his undertaking and his future work. No doubt but the eternal $\Delta\gamma\omega\gamma$ that had undertaken man's redemption, and thereupon was our Lord Redeemer, gave even to Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, Antonine, Epictetus, Plutarch, &c., what light and mercy they had, though they understood not well from whom or upon what grounds they had them.

Ninthly, And also we hold that the Jews were not the whole of God's kingdom, or church of redeemed ones in the world, as I have fully proved elsewhere, but that as the covenant was made with all mankind, so amongst them God had other servants besides the Jews; though it was they that had the extraordinary benediction of being his peculiar sacred people. Tenthly, And we hold that as the Jews had by promises, prophecies, and types, more means to know God, and the Messiah to come, than other

nations, so they were answerably obliged to more knowledge and faith than other nations were, that had not, nor could have, their means.

If, then, all the world be under the first covenant of grace, and if you confess this to proceed from the wisdom and goodness of God, and that men are bound so to believe, and if Christ since his incarnation hath diminished none of the mercies of God to the world, but rather greatly increased them, and so where the Gospel is not preached, nor cannot be had, they that refuse it not are in no worse case than they were before, how can you say that they are remediless, if Christ be the Ransom and Remedy?

We know that all men partake of a great deal of mercy from God, after the notorious demerit of their sin. We know that this mercy telleth them aloud, that God dealeth not with them according to the first law of innocency; they see he pardoneth them, they feel that he pardoneth them in part; that is, he useth them not as they deserve. We know that all his mercies oblige them to hope that he will yet be further merciful; and to repentance, obedience, thankfulness, and love. We know that the heathen are not left as the devils, without remedy, but all the nations are under divine obligations, to use certain means, which have a tendency to their recovery: and we know that God biddeth no man to use his means in vain.

Fourthly, Let us, therefore, first, debate this case with any unbeliever that hath your objections, whether you have any fault to find with the christian doctrine of the way of man's salvation, for the first four thousand years, before the incarnation of our Lord? If you have, First, Is it with the author? Secondly, Or with the terms and conditions of life? First, The author then was none but God. The eternal $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, Wisdom, and Word, did interpose to prevent the execution of strict justice, by resolving to glorify love and mercy. Do you deny the being of God's eternal Wisdom or Word? Do you deny him to be God himself; or a divine subsistence, and dream that it is but some accident in God? No, your fair description of God (p. 210), dischargeth you from the imputation of so gross an error.

You will say that the divine Power and Goodness interposed as well as the divine $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, Wisdom, and Word. True: *Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*: but so that each hath an eminency in his own work, though not as separated or a solitary principle or cause. The Father, and divine vital active power, was emi-

nently glorified in the creation ; the Son, and divine Wisdom, is eminently glorified in the making of the remedying medicine; and the divine love and Spirit is eminently glorified in the operation of it, to the health and salvation of the soul. The Son, and the Wisdom or Word, doth not finish all the work himself, but with the Father and divine power, sendeth the Holy Spirit, and communicateth to man the love of God : and all together will be glorified in our glorification.

Secondly, And if it be the terms of life that do offend you, First, It is either the terms of satisfying the justice of God ; Secondly, Or the terms of conveying the benefits to man.

First, For the first, there is nothing in it, to give offence. For we dream not of any extrinsical agent or action, much less that which was not existent till four thousand years after, having any proper casuality to change God's mind or will ; the sum of the christian doctrine, about the interposition and redemption by the Son for man upon his fall, is but this : as if God should say, I will not destroy or damn sinful man remedilessly, according to the strict terms of the law of innocency, which he hath broken ; but will give him a remedying covenant of grace ; because I will, in the fulness of time, provide better for the glorifying of my truth and holiness, wisdom and goodness, justice and mercy, than the remediless destruction of mankind would do, even by the incarnation, doctrine, sacrifice, merits, &c., of the eternal Word. So that this grand work of God is the cause of his subordinate works ; but not the cause of any real, but only relative or denominative mutation in himself. This all sound Christians are agreed in ; and can this offend you ?

Secondly, And for the terms of communication of grace to man, it is either, First, The new covenant as a gift of pardon and life : Secondly, Or the conditions which it requireth of man.

First, The former you neither do find fault with, nor can do, that God should give the world a recovering and pardoning law. Secondly, The second is all that is here liable to your exception. And what do you think amiss in that ? First, Not that repentance is one of the conditions of further grace ; for that you plead for. Secondly, Not that *fides in Deum misericordem*, (faith in God's revealed mercy, as pardoning sin,) is required of man ; for that also you plead for.

But you would have his goodness and mercy to be a sufficient satisfaction to his justice. Answ. First, I hope you will not exclude his wisdom, because you abhor atheism as folly.

Secondly, And I hope you will distinguish between the prime satisfying cause, and the satisfying means ; these plainly differ. The prime satisfying cause is God's wisdom, contriving and determining of the fittest way to communicate his love and Spirit ; but the prime satisfying means is Jesus Christ, who was to do that which was fittest to attain the aforesaid ends.

But that which you will except against is, that the belief in Christ's future incarnation was made then necessary to salvation. Answ. First, See that you feign not the christian doctrine to say more of this than indeed it doth, which I have opened to you before. I told you how narrow the apostles' own faith was before Christ's resurrection. We know that all the believing Jews knew not so much as they, nor so much as the prophets, and more illuminated men ; and we know that the rest of the world had not so full a revelation as the Jews. But we know that all that had the notice of his promise, were to believe the truth thereof ; and those that had not the word of promise made known to them, had the possession of many such mercies as that promise gave, and as intimated much of the same grace, which the promise did ; therefore, none could be bound to less than to believe that God, of his mercy, would pardon sin, and save penitent believers, by such a means of securing the honour of his holiness, truth, and justice, as his infinite wisdom should provide. This much you cannot deny. And that the promise of the victorious seed, though it seem too obscure to bind men to so distinct a faith as ours is, was, by tradition, told to Adam's posterity ; and that they had a general belief of such an expiation for some time, seemeth intimated in the early and almost universal use of sacrificing, of which I shall speak more anon. Hitherto, then, I have vindicated the christian doctrine of man's salvation, for the first four thousand years.

Secondly, And is there any thing since which should make it more offensive to you ? First, As to the person of Christ, I have said enough in my treatise, 'The Reason of Christian Religion.' Verily, I think it far harder to confute those that feign all the world to be animated by God, as the universal soul, and to conceive how God, who is most intimate to all things, in whom we live, and move, and are, should not be as nearly united to all things as Christians believe him to be to the human nature of Christ, though undoubtedly it is not so, than that he should have that near union with his human nature.

Secondly, And as to Christ's work, I have so largely showed

you the necessity, the reasonableness, and the harmonical congruities, that I will not repeat them. In a word, the New Testament is the doctrine of the eternal $\Lambda\gamma\omega\varsigma$, Wisdom, or Word of God incarnate, to communicate the divine Spirit and love to man, to be a sacrifice for sin, the conqueror of Satan, death, and sin, the head over all things to the church, the author of redemption, the grand administrator of the new covenant, the reconciler and restorer of man to God, the teacher, ruler, and high priest of the church, in order to this our restoration and salvation.

Thirdly, But if it be the time of his coming that doth offend you, I have answered that, and further add. First, What is there in foolish man that should encourage him to dream that he better knoweth the fittest season for God's works than God himself. Secondly, Man was not all the while before without the benefits of this designed and undertaken redemption: he was still under a covenant of grace. Thirdly, Consider well that God did not intend to give mankind, that had so heinously sinned, by preferring the devil's word before his, a present and a perfect pardon, but only to give a new law and covenant, which should be a conditional gift of pardon, to be obtained in full perfection in time, and by degrees we had made ourselves voluntarily the slaves of Satan, and God would not deliver us all at once: we had forfeited the heavenly assistance of the Holy Spirit, and God would not give it us all at once. Man's time of healing the wounds of his own sin, is the time of this life; and the perfect cure will not be done till our entrance into the perfect world. And as it is with individual men, so it is with the world of all mankind. Grace imitateth nature, and doth all by degrees; darker revelations were meeter for the infancy of the world, and clearer at noon-day; and riper knowledge fitter for its maturity. And when Satan, by divine permission, had played his part, and seemed to triumph over the sinful world, it was time for Christ to come, by power, wisdom, and goodness, meanly clothed, to cast down his temples and altars, to subdue his kingdoms, and to triumph over the triumpher.

Fourthly, But if it be the present conditions of the new covenant since Christ's resurrection that offend you, viz., that the world is required to believe in him, I have answered that, and now add: First, Remember what I said before, that no man's condition is made worse by Christ than it was before his incarnation. They that neither have nor could have the covenant of grace in the last edition, are under it as they were before

in the first edition, further than as their after sins have deprived them of any of its benefits. Therefore, the coming of Christ hath not narrowed the church, nor repealed or diminished any grace that before was given; but added much more. Secondly, When there was more grace to be given, it was needful that the condition should be suited to it. Would you rather be without the graces and benefits, than be obliged to believe? Would you be cured by one that you would not believe, nor take for your physician? Would you be taught by one that you will not believe or take for your teacher? Would you be ruled by one that you will not believe is your ruler? And I have proved to you that God biddeth no man believe either without a meet object or meet evidence of the credibility; yea, the certain verity of that which he is commanded to believe. And the belief required of us is but a means to our love of God, and our belief of the everlasting glory; and, consequently, is needful to our further duty, to our perfection, and our felicity. Do you not think, yourself, that the greatest demonstrations of the divine love are fittest to breed love in us to God; and is not this wonderful work of man's redemption, a wonderful demonstration of God's love? If you say that it is incredible because wonderful and incomprehensible, I answer you, it is the more credible, because so wonderful. I cannot believe that any thing is a work of God, especially one of his great transcendent works, which mortal man can comprehend. The work of the Father, and of Omnipotency in creation, is wonderful: will you, therefore, say that there is no world? The work of the Holy Ghost, in regeneration, is wonderful, &c., especially in our perfection in glory: and will you say, therefore, that there is no sanctification or glorification? So the work of the Son, and divine Wisdom and Word incarnate, is wonderful; and it is the fitter to be thought a work of God.

And would you not say yourself, that if God should send an angel from heaven, to tell you his will, and tell you what is good and evil, and to tell you the certainty of the life to come, and the joys thereof, would it not be a singular help to your belief of all these things revealed, if he did but give you sufficient proof that he is sent of God? What perverseness is it, then, to quarrel with God's greatest mercy as incredible, merely because it is wonderful and great, and therefore fit for God to give. Therefore, observe here the error of those men that overlook the benefit, and taking all duty for a burden, dispute against the

necessity of the duty : whereas all our duty is our benefit, like the duty of feasting, rejoicing, receiving money, or honour when given us. And the true state of our question should be, whether all they that, by the Gospel, have the offer of a Saviour and salvation, and all those treasures of mercy, which are brought to mankind by Christ above what they had before his incarnation, are bound to believe that procurement and offer, and to accept so great a gift? When the same men that question this can be willing to accept of wealth and honours, without disputing whether they may not live without them, and will say *quis nisi mentis inops oblatum respuit aurum?* And he that can make a sorry shift with a candle, will not dispute whether it be his duty to open his windows, and let in the light of the sun : it is riches of mercy which all they dispute against, who think they speak against the necessity of some difficult duty.

Thirdly, And remember again, that yourself confess an inequality of God's benefits, and that he is not bound to give them to all alike, though there were no inequality of demerit in the receivers. If, then, he give more to the church by Christ incarnate, than he did before his incarnation, or more than he giveth to the world that never hear the Gospel, their eye should not be evil, because he is good ; much less ours, who receive the benefit.

Fourthly, And I am glad that all that you require of God for all the world, is but that their salvation or damnation may be brought to their own free choice, and not their perdition be a thing unavoidable by God's mere will, without their culpable mischoosing. And all this we maintain as well as you : and you can never prove that the christian religion doth deny it. Nay, tell me if you can what mercy your doctrine giveth to all the world, which ours giveth them not? Do you say that they are not under the mere law of innocency made with Adam, but under the law of grace, which after was given him? So do we. But you say, that this law of grace is the law of nature. Let not names abuse us : it is not the law of innocent nature. But it is so fitted to man's lapsed state, and doth also so fitly express the gracious nature of God, and also hath such evidences in God's merciful providence, and dealing with the sinful world, that in all these respects, if you call it the law of lapsed and reprieved nature under its reparation, we will not contend about the name.

But you say, that all men may be saved if they reject not their salvation : so say we, that all should be judged according to

that means and law that is given them, their consciences accusing or excusing them in the day when Christ shall judge the world, as the Gospel telleth us. And none perish now for the mere sin of Adam, nor merely for want of the innocency required by the first law; but for the refusing and abusing some mercy purchased by Christ, which had an apt tendency to their repentance and recovery,

But you lay the main stress on this, that all men may be saved by true faith in God, and true repentance, without believing in a crucified Christ. And we say that no man in the world shall perish that hath true faith in God, and true repentance; for all such do love God as God, and do devote themselves to his glory, to obedience and love: and do hate sin as sin, and so are holy. And God cannot cast that soul into hell that loveth him and beareth his image. Holiness hath so much of God and heaven in it, that this would be to cast heaven and God's image into hell, and to jumble heaven and hell together. Do we not, then, grant you as much as you can reasonably desire? Tell us but what heathens or Mahometans are holy, truly penitent for all sin, and devoted to God in obedience and love, and we will grant you that they shall all be saved.

But you were aware that we would tell you that this repentance and holiness is not a thing which sinful man is so easily brought to: and therefore the question must be whether really these heathens do truly repent, and love God as God, or not?

Answ. First, Here you may perceive that though before you did but require that salvation be brought down to the sinner's choice, yet now that will not serve the turn: yea, though faith in God, and true repentance were the terms that, you were satisfied, should be imposed on all, yet now you are loth to stand to that, unless we grant that all these men have the power so to believe and repent. Well, if by power you mean a natural faculty, we grant that they have the power of intellection and volition. And if it be the object that is in question, we grant that the object of that faith and repentance, which you mention yourself, is certain and existent. And if it be the evidence of the object that is in question, we grant that the being, power, wisdom, goodness, holiness, truth, justice, and mercy of God, are revealed to mankind by an evidence sufficient in its kind, if their souls be but rightly disposed to receive it: and that sin to be repented of is discernible in themselves, is doubtless. Amyraldus largely laboureth to prove, that as God bindeth no man

to natural impossibilities, that is, to any act without, First, A faculty that can do it; Secondly, An object; Thirdly, Evidence of that object. As not to see, First, Without an eye; Secondly, That which is not in being; Thirdly, Or that which is a thousand miles off, or in the dark, without light: so that all heathens have, First, The natural faculty; Secondly, An object which would save them if truly believed in and loved; that is, God; Thirdly, A revelation of this object: and that τὸ γνωστὸν τῷ Θεῷ is such an object as would procure their felicity, if duly apprehended. See also Mr. Truman's 'Treatise of Natural and Moral Impotency.'

But, indeed, when all is done, the wit of man that is offended with God, as if he gave not all men a power to be saved, will not be satisfied if that be granted, unless also he actually save them. Should we grant you all the rest, if some yet are damned, when God could have saved them, it will not satisfy them that will be above God, and will judge their judge.

But because you seem satisfied with less, suppose all the question come to this, Whether or no those that never had the Gospel, do ever come without it to true faith in God, and true repentance, and so to be saved?

Ans. First, And when we have granted you what you first desired, that none perish but those that are wilfully impenitent, and believe not truly in God, why must the controversy be carried to men's hearts and acts? I can read God's law, but I cannot know or read the hearts of millions whom I never saw. Must I be obliged to know the thoughts of every man in China, Tartary, Japan, or the antipodes? Secondly, What number is it that you put the question of, and whose repentance you assert? Is it all or but some? If all, he must be mad that believeth it, that all men are true penitent believers in God. If but some, First, Would not your wit quarrel still with God for damning all the rest? Secondly, And must it be the greater part or the lesser: or would you know on what number, or where to find satisfaction? And what have we to do to judge another's servants? To their own master they stand or fall.

Secondly, And methinks you should easily grant, at least, First, That repentance and holiness is far easier to them that have the Gospel, than to them that never heard it. Secondly, And that they are far more common. And so that far more Christians are holy and saved than of others. For, First, Tell me, if God should send an angel from heaven as aforesaid, with

miraculous evidence of his mission, to call men to repentance and belief in God, and glory, would it not be easier for those men to repent, than for others? Nay, would not you the more easily believe in Christ yourself, if you had but such an angel to confirm you? Why, then, should not the word of Christ, who by his miracles, resurrection, and the donation of such a Spirit to his servants, proved his mission from the Father, be a help to our faith and repentance? Especially when his word hath a self-evidencing light also in the image and superscription of God upon it. Secondly, You will not deny but that the difference of common, lower means, doth make repentance much easier or harder to one than another. Take one man that is born in Brazil, or Soldania, or among any other savage people; or that is bred up in a tavern, alehouse, or whorehouse, or gaming-house, among those that make a scorn of godliness; and take another that is bred up to learning, labour, and godliness, among them that by doctrine and example do honour and command a godly, righteous, sober life, and hath not one of these abundance more hinderances to his repentance than the other? Thirdly, And will not sense and experience make you certain that the christian part of the world hath more such helps than all the rest? Is there not more reason, learning, sobriety, doctrine, all sorts of teaching there than among the rest? Were it but that Christianity hath furnished the world with more helps to repentance and holiness, the case were clear. Fourthly, And a little acquaintance with the world, and the history of it, may fully satisfy you, that, *de facto*, there are actually far more knowing, penitent, holy persons among Christians, than among any others. When, therefore, the fact itself is undeniable, and we see that more souls are healed by Christ in the church, than in the world without, what need we any greater evidence?

And if there were no more in it than this, that the actual knowledge or belief of Christ incarnate, doth make so great an addition to the helps and hopes of sinners, and maketh conversion from sin to God, and salvation so much more easy and common, (as Aquinas Cont. Gent. argueth,) should not this be received with the greatest thankfulness, rather than with irreverent, arrogant contradiction?

But I proceed to overthrow your fundamental error, "That repentance alone with the mercy of God, is a sufficient satisfaction for our sins to divine justice."

First, If it be but proved that, *de facto*, God hath required and provided another sacrifice for satisfaction, then you cannot call repentance alone sufficient. But this is proved fully.

Secondly, If the great work of our redemption by Christ, have all these blessed ends, tendencies, and effects, and bring all those benefits to mankind, which in the treatise fore mentioned I proved. If it was so actual a demonstration of God's wisdom and love, of his holiness and truth, his justice and mercy, as is there manifested and proved ; if it have brought men such helps to repentance and holiness as are forementioned, how perverse will it be then to say, that our repentance was sufficient without the sacrifice and merit, and intercession, and administration, which did procure and bestow it ! How absurd it is to say, that the cure of our disease is sufficient for us, without the physician, the medicine, the apothecary, the application, which we see, by certain experience, are the things that work this cure ! And which you yourself cannot deny, but that they effect this cure of repentance or holiness, far more easily and commonly than it is ever wrought without them. Nay, it is certain that the grace of Christ is absolutely necessary to repentance and holiness in any one in the world, whatsoever be thought of the necessity of the knowledge of Christ incarnate.

II. Quest. Whether the *notitiæ communes* be not many more than this learned and noble writer doth enumerate, viz : First, That there is one only God, at least supreme, whom he very well describeth by his attributes. Secondly, That this God is to be worshipped and prayed to, religion being *ultima hominis differentia* (p. 214). Thirdly, That the due conformity of our faculties (that is, their holiness and rectitude) is the chief part of God's worship ; especially gratitude. Fourthly, That all vices and crimes must be expiated by repentance. Fifthly, That after this life there is another life of rewards and punishment.

Answ. All these are excellent concessions, as being not only truths, but such *notitiæ communes* without which a man is scarcely a man, but unmanned. Except that the fourth doth erroneously assert the fore-disproved sufficient satisfactoriness in our repentance. And that this is not a *notitia communis*, I further thus manifest :

First, By all human laws and justice, no king will make such a law as this, 'Let all the subjects be traitors, murderers, oppressors, perjured never so long, and repent at any time before they die, and all shall be forgiven.' Mere repentance will not

save such persons from the gallows. Secondly, And as to more private justice, no man giveth his children and servants such a law, ‘Disobey me, burn my house, seek my death, and do all the mischief you can, and repent at last, and you shall be forgiven.’ Therefore, mere repentance is not sufficient satisfaction, according to the *notitiæ communes* of mankind. Thirdly, The reason of the thing doth prove it: because it is not sufficient to secure the ends of government. Should such a law alone be made, that men shall be forgiven all the villanies of their lives, if they will but repent at last. First, It would encourage the most in the world to live in all manner of wickedness: if the hearts of men are fully set in them to do evil, because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, but delayed; how much more, if they were sure it should never be executed? Secondly, The laws and lawgiver would be contemned, and lose their ruling power. Thirdly, The common good would be prostituted, and cast away utterly, and no man should live in safety and peace, because of the dominion of wickedness.

Object. Doth not Christianity then introduce these evils, which giveth pardon to all the penitent?

Answ. No: First, Because that only Christianity doth acquaint us of a further satisfaction to justice than man’s repentance, by which all these ends of government may be obtained better than by our perdition. Secondly, Because it giveth us no assurance of life and time of repentance, but calleth us to be always penitent and ready. Thirdly, Because it telleth us of the blindness of the mind, the power of sin, and hardness of the heart, by which repentance becometh so great and hard a work, that without God’s grace it will not be done; and his grace is to be diligently sought in the use of means; and is so little at our command, as that the resisting of the Holy Ghost may cause us to be forsaken of God, and given over to our own hearts’ lusts, to walk in our own councils. (Psalm lxxxi. 11, 12.) Fourthly, Because God doth not totally and perfectly pardon all sin, when he doth pardon the everlasting punishment, though some in their ignorance will say so, and revile those that will not be as ignorant. He pardoneth not temporal chastisements and death: he remitteth not the sad penalties, of a temporary and partial desertion by his Spirit; horrors of conscience and fears of hell: he remitteth not the temporal punishment by magistrates, but commandeth justice to be done even on the penitent, even to

loss of life itself. Fifthly, And his mercy is so great, that through Christ he will forgive the eternal punishment, and will judge men as he findeth them, and not as they have been before conversion : so that without Christ you cannot imagine how God should neither send one to hell or misery that loveth him, and hath his image ; nor yet expose his government, laws, and the common good, to so much mischief, as the proclamation of a pardon to all villanies that are but repented of at last, alone would cause.

Object. But if the king must not save a traitor or murderer, because Christ died and satisfied for him, why should you say that God doth so ?

Answ. First, Because Christ's sacrifice and merits were not to satisfy the king, but God. Secondly, Because that God who is satisfied by them, hath told us how far and with what exceptions he is satisfied : not so far as to excuse men from the laws of men, or temporal justice, chastisement, or death ; but to save them from everlasting misery, and procure them everlasting happiness, and to sanctify their unremitted, castigatory penalties, to the furtherance of these ends.

And that there are more *notitiæ communes* about religion than the five fore-named is easily manifested. It is as common a truth that all men are sinful and depraved, even from the first, (however it came to pass,) that they are indisposed to the certain duties and ends, which their nature was formed for. That God is the universal Governor of man, by moral means ; that he is just and true ; that God only can make known to us what is pleasing to himself, and what reward or punishment he will retribute ; that man's darkness is so great, that he learneth all this from nature alone, with great imperfection, doubtfulness, and dissatisfaction : That, therefore, a further supernatural revelation, which is sure, would be a great confirmation and satisfaction to men's minds. And, therefore, almost all the world do hearken after oracles, prophecies, visions, or some such further revelation, as conscious of the unsatisfactoriness of their natural light. That all God's revelations are certainly true. That whatever revelation hath, First, On the doctrine of it, no contradiction to natural truth, but the clear impress of divine power, wisdom, and goodness, as its self-evidence. Secondly, And maketh the same impress by divine co-operation on men's souls in sanctifying them. Thirdly, And was attested by a multitude of evident uncontrolled miracles, resurrection, raising the dead,

giving to multitudes a spirit of miracles, &c.; this revelation hath God's seal and witness, and can be from none but God. These, and many more, which I have recited in my treatise are naturally known verities : as you very well confess all the Ten Commandments to be (going a little further than I see myself, while you make one day in seven, as separated to God's worship to be such, which elsewhere I have delivered my mind, how far it is a natural or supernatural notice.)

III. Quest. Whether the *notitiæ communes* are the only certainties in religion ?

Ans. No : can you possibly deny all certainty of discourse and conclusions ? *Ex vero nil nisi verum sequitur.* Will you condemn the judge as condemning a malefactor upon uncertainty, when he thus argueth : All wilful murderers must be put to death ; this is certain in the law. This man is a wilful murderer, proved certainly by confession, evidence, and witness ; therefore this man must be put to death. So I argue, whatever doctrine is attested by a multitude of certain uncontrolled miracles, and by the divine impress on itself, and the divine image wrought by it on all that truly receive it, is attested by God himself, and is certainly true. But the doctrine of Christianity was so attested ; *ergo*, it is attested by God himself, and true.

The major is a *notitia communis*, or naturally known truth. The minor was known by sense itself to the first witnesses ; and that was as natural a notice as any man is capable of, and as sure, whatever the papists say against it for transubstantiation : nothing can be sure, if all sound men's senses, with their just objects and conditions, are not sure in their perceptions ; and how sure the distant believers are, I have largely opened in the treatise ; therefore the conclusion must be sure.

Object. But, say the misinformed believers, that which all mankind believeth, or knoweth, hath its evidence in nature itself ; but beliefs of pretended revelations, oracles, and visions, are as various as countries almost, and therefore uncertain.

Ans. First, To the last part, First, I answer, in your converse with men, you will think him unnatural, unsociable, mad, that will either believe all things or believe nothing. There is credible truth, and there is incredible falsehood : and will you believe that either God saith all that every liar fathereth on him, or else that he never revealeth his will to mankind, any otherwise than by his common works. When God hath made a revelation of

his will to the world, the devil's usual way of hindering the belief of it is by imitation, and by putting such names and colours on falsehood, by false prophets, as God doth on the truth. Shall we therefore conclude, that either all, or none, is the word of God ; or that God saith not true, unless the devil say true also ?

Secondly, And will you mark the gross error of such reasoners about the *notitiæ communes* ? First, It is certain that no actual knowledge, conceptive or intellectual verity, is born in man ; infants know not these common notions at all. As the eye is not born with the actual species of all things afterward seen, but only with a seeing power and disposition, so these are called common notions, because man's intellect is so able and disposed to know them, as that they will be known easily upon the first due evidence or notification of the object, and therefore almost all men know them. Secondly, It is certain, that this knowing faculty in man, as this noble lord saith, requireth its proper conditions for its true apprehension of the object. Now, some men's understandings have the help of these conditions far more than others have (he nameth to you the conditions himself). Thirdly, It is certain, that the understanding performs not all its apprehensions at once, or at first, but by degrees, and in time, as the objects are duly presented. As an infant seeth not the first day all that ever he must see, nor a scholar learneth not the first day all that he must learn. Fourthly, It is certain, that the latter apprehensions are as sure, if not inore clear, than the first ; as he that lived twenty years at home, and afterwards travelleth to London, doth as certainly then see London, as before he did his father's house ; so a scholar doth afterwards as certainly understand Horace, Virgil, or Homer, as at first he understood his primer. Fifthly, It is certain, that as particular notices are multiplied, *quoad actus*, in time by use and information, so the knowing disposition of the faculty is increased ; and the notice of a thousand truths doth so advance the understanding, and befriend other truths not yet received, that such a man can know more afterwards in a day, than an ignorant man can learn in a year. Sixthly, By all which it is a most evident thing, that to make common notions to be the only certainties, is a weakness below a rational man ; and it is to make the intellect of an infant to be the standard or measure of all certain, intellectual verities, and to make the scholar, even before he goeth to school, as wise, as to certainties, as his

master, and to make a new-born child to have seen as many objects as Drake, or De Noort, or Sandys, or Ludovicus Romanus, in all his travels. In a word, the *notitiæ communes*, being the very lowest degree of knowledge, are thus equalled with the wisdom of the greatest philosopher, or divine, or judge: was this learned lord, when he wrote this book, sure of nothing but these common notions in religion? Seventhly, To which I might add, that even in men's natural capacities, there is a wonderful difference: as idiots know little, so dullards not much: and must the wisest go no higher than these? Eighthly, And will lawyers, statesmen, physicians, philosophers, make this consent of all mankind the test of all their certainties? If not, why should we do so in our search after the greatest verities, which are most worthy of all the study of our lives?

Nothing visible is so analagous to man's soul as fire; the nature of which is to be ever of an active, illuminative, and calefactive faculty; but doth exercise it in such various degrees as the fuel doth occasion. There is fire in a flint or steel, yea, in all things; but is it the best way to know what fire is and can do, by judging of it only as it is in a stone? No: but take your steel, and strike the flint, and add the combustible fuel, and that which is in a stone can set a city on fire. And, *nil agit quod agere non potest*, whatever act is produced, proveth an antecedent power. So, if you would judge what man's soul is, and can do, and what truth is in the intellect, it is not in fools, but in the wise, that you must discern it.

And by this, those may see their error, who are tempted to think that man's soul is but highly sensitive and imaginative, or not made for heavenly and holy employments, because so many ignorant and wicked people are otherwise disposed: whereas the power, and so the nature of man's soul, is certainly gathered from what the wisest do attain: because nothing can act beyond its power. And if the attainments and acts of some men's souls do prove such a power in them, all souls of men are of the same species, and therefore the rest might attain it, if they had the same objects, evidences, excitations, and improvements. I think all this is plain truth.

Ninthly, And if, by believing, you will heartily give up your souls to Christ and his Spirit, you will find that there is yet a more excellent addition of knowledge and certainty to be obtained, than by all other means could be procured: at least, as

to the intention and clearness of the act, if not as to the extension of it to more objects.

IV. Quest. Whether the aforesaid common notices do make up all the religion of the catholic church? And, whether the catholic church be all the world believing these common truths?

Answ. The question is either, *de nomine ecclesiæ*, or, *de re*. As to the name, the word is not used in God's word for any but the society of believers, as separated from the unbelieving and ungodly world. As for men themselves, every one may use this and other words in what sense he please. But how aptly you may judge.

Quoad rem, I have told you before, how far all the world are capable of salvation; if that be the question: and I add: the 'kingdom of God,' is a word of a larger sense, but the 'church of God,' properly so called, is narrower, being *cætus evocatus*. The 'kingdom of God,' signifieth, First, All that, *de jure*, are obliged to subjection and obedience; and so all mankind on earth are of his kingdom, even rebels: Secondly, Or it signifieth all that consent to subjection and obedience, and profess it: and these are, First, Such as profess subjection to God under some lame, defective, false conception; as one that alloweth them to worship idols under him, or to live in wickedness: or one that governeth not the world by a law, or will not make a retribution hereafter; or as one that will pardon and save men, only for their superstition, or without a Saviour: and thus, almost all heathens and infidels are of God's consenting kingdom, *secundum quid, eatenus*, so far as this cometh to, and no more. Secondly, Or such as profess subjection and love to God, as truly described, and as reconciled to man, and saving them by Christ our Mediator: and these are *quoad actum*; First, But *oral*, or unsound, not cordial professors; and such are hypocritical Christians, who are, *simpliciter*, of the visible church: Secondly, Or sincere consenters, who are, *simpliciter*, of the essential, mystical church of the regenerate. Now, when we thus open the case as to the thing, there remaineth, besides the controversy *de nomine*, no more than, how far heathens are under a covenant of grace, and how far they are capable of salvation, of which I have said enough before.

V. Quest. Whether all revelation for religion must be but *notitiarum communium symbolum*, a creed containing these common notices or truths, as is asserted, p. 221.

Answ. I have said enough against this before. First, What need God send a prophet or an angel to tell the world that which they all certainly knew before? Secondly, Full experience assureth us, as I have proved in the treatise, that mankind hath need of more. Thirdly, More tendeth to perfect man's understanding, and consequently, his will and life: this is undeniable: and man's perfection is his felicity and end; and therefore, more than those common notices is needful to his end. Fourthly, Else, as is said, you will reduce all the world to the measure of that part which is the lowest, the unwisest, and the worst. You would not, in wealth, or health, be equalled with the basest, poorest, or the sickest; nor yet in wit, and knowledge of other matters, with the most foolish; and why, then, in the knowledge, love, and practice of holiness?

VI. Quest. Whether, as some others say, all supernatural revelations be to be tried by the common notions known by nature.

Answ. First, It is supposed that all that pretend to prophecy and revelation, are not to be believed, and therefore that we must try the spirits, whether they be of God; and that all trial of things unknown must be made by some fore-acknowledged principles, if it be a conclusion that must be known. Secondly, It must, therefore, next be understood, whether the truth of the Gospel be to be known as a simple term, or a self-evident proposition, or as a true conclusion: First, The first kind of knowledge only apprehendeth the words and sense, but not the verity: it is the truth of the doctrine that we inquire of. Secondly, Many divines assert the second way, and say, it is *principium indemonstrabile*, like *est vel non est*. Doubtless, this is not true, as to the natural evidence of the proposition, principle, or doctrine; but I think, that in the very hearing or reading, God's Spirit often so concurreth, as that the will itself shall be touched with an internal gust or savour of the goodness contained in the doctrine, and at the same time, the understanding with an internal irradiation, which breedeth such a sudden apprehension of the verity of it, as nature giveth men of natural principles; and I am persuaded, that this, increased by more experience, and love, and inward gusts, doth hold most Christians faster to Christ than naked reasoning could do: and, were it not for this, unlearned, ignorant persons were still in danger of apostasy, by every subtle caviller that assaulteth them: and I believe, that all true Christians have this kind of

internal knowledge, from a suitableness of the truth and goodness of the Gospel to their now quickened, illuminated, sanctified souls. Thirdly, But yet, I believe, that this is not all the knowledge of the truth of the Gospel which we have. There is a common belief of its truth by other means, which most usually goeth before this generative, spiritual reception and belief; usually, they that are converted to holiness by the Gospel, are such as had some belief of it before, and not such as took it to be false to that moment. And after conversion, it is to be known as a certain demonstrable conclusion, and so the faith of wise and settled Christians is most rational; and they are thus made capable to defend it against temptations and adversaries, and to preach it rightly to unbelievers.

Thirdly, The premises from which this conclusion is proved, 'The Gospel is true,' are both of them the truths of infallible evidence, viz., whatsoever doctrine is attested by so many and such miracles extrinsically, by the self-evidencing impress of divine power, wisdom, and goodness intrinsically, and by the effecting the like impression in holy life, light, and love, on the souls of all sincere receivers, is certainly true, being attested by the Spirit of God: but such is the doctrine of the Gospel: *ergo*, it is true, as attested by the Spirit of God. I said before, the first is a natural verity. The second proposition is partly of sense, and partly of internal, and partly external experience, as is largely manifested.

Now, as to the question, First, No doubt but our natural faculties must be used in trying supernatural truth.

Secondly, No doubt, he that disputeth with, or preacheth to an unbeliever, so as to prove what he delivereth to be true, must deal with him upon some common principles which both parties are agreed in, or else there is no room for proof or for dispute.

Thirdly, But some persons are so ignorant of those certain principles which infer the truth of Gospel revelation, that they need first to be convinced of them; which must be done by inferring them from the first truths, or some principles which they do confess. Fourthly, And as a man would convince others, by the same method and arguing, he must convince himself, and try the truth which he is in doubt of.

Fifthly, But if any should mean, First, That nothing is true in the Gospel but these common principles of nature; Secondly, Or that nothing else can be proved true; Thirdly, Or that it

would prove any pretended prophecy, vision, or revelation true, so be it they do not contradict the common truth. All these are palpable untruths.

VII. Quest. Whether these common verities infer not the truth of Christianity?

Ans. This is sufficiently answered in the last. Perhaps the few verities mentioned by the author are not enough to prove Christianity by: but that it hath true evidence in sense and reason is manifested heretofore: and I believe that he that will, by just argumentation, follow on the christian cause with an unbeliever, if he can hold him to the point without rambling, and suppose him capable of historical evidence, may drive him to yield, or to deny common principles; yea, to deny that God is God, and that man is man; and consequently, that there is any being. But the evasion will be by denying notorious matter of fact, which, therefore, must be proved by its proper evidence.

IX. Quest. Whether they are necessary conditions of the certain knowledge of a divine revelation. First, That it be made immediately to myself. Secondly, And that I feel a divine afflatus in the reception, as is said, page—.

Ans. No: a revelation made to others, may be certainly notified to me; else, if an angel from heaven should appear to all men in the town and country save one, or if all save one saw a thousand miracles to confirm a revelation, yet that one could not be sure of it. But I have, by abundance of arguments in a peculiar disputation in a treatise called 'The Unreasonableness of Unbelief,' long ago fully proved the negative. And, again, in my 'Reasons of the Christian Religion;' therefore, I will not weary the reader with repetitions.

X. Quest. Whether any concurrence of moral evidence, at least such as Gospel revelation hath, do truly amount to natural or certain evidence? De Rev. et Verisim.

Ans. This question, too, I have plainly decided in the 'Reasons of the Christian Religion.' I now add, First, The name of moral evidence is here taken by those that use it, for that which dependeth on the credit of a voluntary agent as such: and the name of natural evidence signifieth that which dependeth on the nature of the object in itself considered. But I somewhat doubt whether all that use the distinction do commonly understand the difference, or what they say.

Secondly, Note that the act or effect of a voluntary agent,

hath, nevertheless, a natural evidence when it is done or existent. If I voluntarily speak, or write, or go, my action is naturally evident to those that see and hear it, as present sensitive witnesses of it. If I freely build a house, it is, nevertheless, naturally evident when it is built. All things existent in the universe were made by God as a Free-agent, and yet are, nevertheless, naturally evident.

Thirdly, Every thing that is, when it is, if corporeal, is naturally evident to those that have their faculties in those conditions that are necessary, and have the object in its necessary magnitude, cogitation, detection, site, distance, medium, and abode.

Fourthly, The judgment that is made upon sense itself faileth, as this noble author hath well opened, when either the object, the evidence, the sense, or the intellect, want their necessary conditions or qualifications, else not.

Fifthly, The fountain of all freedom and morality is the will of God; and yet the moral evidence of truth, which is in God's word, when known to be his word, is as sure as any natural evidence of the thing, there being the surest natural evidence, *ab effectis*, at least, that there is a God most perfect, that cannot lie.

Sixthly, The essences of all things are but imperfectly evident to us; the existences of corporeal things that are present and duly qualified, are fully evident. The existence of things absent beyond the reach of sense, is evident only to the discursive intellect; not by the immediate, natural evidence of the things themselves, but by a borrowed evidence from causes or signs; discourse improving the fundamental common truths, for the knowing of the rest, by proving a certain connexion between them. The preterition of things, and the futuration, are both, like the distant existence, unknown to sense, and the immediate apprehension of the intellect, and therefore must both be known also by collection as conclusions in discourse, or not at all.

Seventhly, Man was not born to know only things present in their existence by sense, but also to know things absent, things as past, and things as future. And herein he chiefly differeth from a brute.

Eighthly, Though the understanding is most confident of things sensible and present, yet about things absent, past, and future, it often doubteth more, and is less satisfied in its own conclusions from natural principles than from moral. Because some-

times the natural principles themselves, though not the first, yet the second or third, may be so obscure as to leave the mind unsatisfied. Secondly, And the connexion among many particulars may be obscure and doubtful. Thirdly, And in the long series of collection or arguing, the understanding suspecteth its own fallibility: so that when conclusions are far-fetched, though from natural principles, the mind may be still in doubt about them: and, on the contrary, when in the way of revelation, the grounds are clear, and the understanding hath fewer collections to make, and a shorter journey to go, it may be far better satisfied of the truth.

Ninthly, Man's own necessity is the reason why God doth give us supernatural revelation, and call us to know by the way of believing: for, First, Most men are naturally dull. Secondly, Few have leisure, by learning, to improve their intellects. Thirdly, And fewer have leisure and disposition to exercise them by long searches and argumentation upon every thing that they should know. Fourthly, And therefore where revelation was not, few were wise or virtuous; and the philosophers themselves were all to pieces among themselves; and their disagreements and doubtfulness tended to the gulf of utter scepticism. Now, as nothing is more necessary than religion, as you well profess, so religion consisteth very little in the sensible apprehension of present existences, but in the knowledge of things absent, or insensible things past, and especially things to come, the happiness to be attained, and the misery to be escaped. Now, if all the poor, unlearned men and women in the world, must have known all these things only by natural discourse, how little religion would have been in the world, when the philosophers knew so little themselves! And though your learning and understanding made the immortality of the soul so clear to you, and the rewards and punishments of another life, as that you number it with the common notices; yet were not the old philosophers themselves so commonly agreed on it as they should have been, much less all the common people. And if you say that now almost all the world believeth it, I answer it is God's great mercy that it is so. But consider whether it be not more by the way of believing, than of natural instinct or knowledge: for all the Christians, and all the Mahometans, who believe the words of Moses and Christ also, take it by the way of believing: and so do most of the heathens. The Japonians have their Amida and Zaca: the Chinese, the In-

dians, the Siamenses, the Peguans, &c., have all their prophets; and the very savages of all the West Indies, or America, have their idols, oracles, or wizards, whom they far more depend on than their natural discourse about things invisible, past, or future. So that, really, if commonness go with you for a proof that any point is of natural instinct and certainty, as a *notitia communis*, this will be one of the chief of them, that 'religion consisting in the notice of, and due respect to, things absent, invisible, past and future, is to be maintained in the world by divine revelation and faith, and not by the immediate evidence of things, nor by mere discursive collections from things so evident.' So that man's weakness, with the quality of the objects, maketh revelation so necessary, that without it the vulgar, who are the main body of the world, would have next to no religion; and, on the contrary, how easy and pleasant, and satisfactory, is it, for all these poor people, yea, to the most learned, to have these mysterious truths brought by revelation to their hands? Now, through God's mercy, all our common people, women, and children, servants and day-labourers, may know more with ease, than ever Democritus, Epicurus, Antisthenes, Zeno, yea, Socrates, Plato, or Aristotle, could reach by all their studies to the last; more, I say, of religious, necessary knowledge.

Tenthly, And this being so necessary, and so great a mercy to mankind, I wonder that you put it not among your common notices, that God being perfect in love and wisdom, and having made man purposely to be religious here, and happy hereafter, will certainly provide for his religion and happiness, so necessary and so excellent a means as revelation is, God being the Father and Lover of light and of souls, and the devil being the prince and friend of darkness. Consider whether you may not strongly infer from the very nature of God, and the nature and necessity of man, and the other communications of God's mercies to the world, that he will certainly give them this great mercy also.

Eleventhly, It is certain that God hath ways of communicating light to man's understanding immediately, and not only by extrinsic, sensible objects. The Father of spirits, who communicateth so much to the corporeal world, is not further from souls, nor more out of love with them; but, if there be any difference, may rather be thought to hold a nearer, more immediate communion with them than with bodies, and to be himself to the mind, what the sun is to the eye, and more.

Twelfthly, It is certain that God can give the standers-by, that have no revelation immediately themselves, a fully satisfactory attestation or proof, of the truth of another man's revelations. He that denieth this, maketh God to be impotent.

Thirteenthly, It is certain that the attestation which I described in the 'Reasons of the Christian Religion,' was such, supposing that such were given, viz., in the antecedent testimony of fulfilled prophecy, the constitutive testimony of God's Spirit apparent in the effects on Christ's person, and on his Gospel, and the concomitant testimony of all his miracles, and resurrection and ascension. And the subsequent testimony of the Spirit, on the apostles' miracles and doctrine, and on the souls of all serious Christians to the world's end. These are things, set all together, First, Which none but God could do. Secondly, And which God would not do to deceive the world. Thirdly, Yea, which God would not permit to be done to deceive them in so high a matter; because he is the omnipotent, omniscient, gracious Governor of the world; and if these testimonies were not of God, it were impossible to know any testimony to be of God; and seeing we can have no surer, it would be man's duty to believe and obey, and be ruled by a lie. And if it be our duty to believe God to be so defective either in power, wisdom, or goodness, holiness, truth, justice, or mercy, as to rule the world, and the best of the world, in the greatest matters, by lying and deceit, as if he wanted better means: what wit can devise any remedy against such deceit as shall be so attested as aforesaid? or, if deceit can be perceived, how can it be man's duty to believe it, seeing man's intellect is naturally made for truth, and abhorreth falsehood: and how can it be good to obey deceit and lies; and, when the devil is the father of lies, what blasphemy is it to charge them on God? By this it will be apparent, that the question must be, in the upshot, whether there be a God or no God? And so, whether there be any thing or nothing.

Fourteenthly, There is some moral, historical evidence of the truth of things past, which is as certain, and much more satisfactory than the natural evidence of conclusions, raised by a long series of argumentation: yea, some which is truly a natural evidence, though it depend on the credit of free-agents. The proof and reasons I have given in the treatise. First, The will, though free, is *quædam natura*, and hath its natural propensity to known good, as the understanding also is, and hath

its natural propensity to truth. And the understanding is not free of itself, but acteth *per modum naturæ*. Secondly, There are some of the acts of the will itself, which are so free as yet to be necessary: as to will good, *sub ratione boni*; to will our own felicity, and will our own misery; to will life and pleasure, with a simple complacency, though not always by election: to will all that is fully discerned to have *omnimodam rationem boni*, and will all that is discerned to have *omnimodam rationem mali*: now it often falls out, that historical narratives shall proceed from some of these necessary acts. Salvation, life, and goodness, and the necessary means of all, may be the motives. Thirdly, There are other acts of the will which, though they are not absolutely necessary, are yet so near to necessary, that they always go one way, except in some very rare, extraordinary case. As, for example, it is not of absolute necessity that a man feed or clothe himself, or that he murder not himself; but yet he will ordinarily do the first, and forbear the latter, because he is necessarily a lover of himself and life, and therefore will not cast himself away, nor destroy himself, without some conceived cause. Fourthly, There are no causes extant, *in rerum natura*, for the commonness of some such actions: therefore it is certain they will not be done, because there can be no effect without its cause; and the turning of the will to a man's known corporeal destruction, is an effect which hath no common cause. Therefore it is a point of more natural evidence and certainty, than many conclusions from natural premises are, that all the people of Europe or England will not to-morrow kill themselves, nor go naked, nor famish or wound themselves, &c. And, consequently, that formerly all never did so, since it was notoriously so much their interest to do otherwise: for, there was no cause to produce such an effect.

If it must be a miracle, *rebus sic stantibus*, which should make all the Europeans or the English to go naked to-morrow, or to kill themselves, when it is natural to them to do the contrary, or not to do this, for a miracle is the overpowering of nature. But the antecedent is evident to reason from experience; *ergo*, &c. There may be causes for one man's actions, which can never fall out to all, or to very many.

All the physicians in England never did persuade all men against physic, nor all the lawyers against law; nor all the covetous men in England, the labourers, or beggars, were never against receiving meat, drink, and money; because there never

was a cause of such effects : and as it must be a great, powerful common cause, that must do this ; so, also, if the question be, whether ever there were a parliament in England ; whether ever they made laws with the kings ; whether our statutes were made by such kings and parliaments as they are ascribed to ? &c. There is such a concurrent consent of competent witnesses as could not be to it, were it false, because it would be an effect without a sufficient cause. Yea, against the tendency or disposition of man's nature, which would have caused the wills of some to contradict it, except a miracle had hindered them. For, among so many, there are cross interests notorious. Some men's interest is against the thing, while other men's is for it : and to make multitudes go against their apparent interest, and friends and enemies of the event to agree, must be done by the power of truth, or by a miracle : supposing the case such as they could not be all deceived in.

Fifteenthly, But there is yet a fuller natural evidence of the truth of some reports ; even when, besides the report, there remain some visible, inimitable effects of the reported actions, which could be caused by nothing else. As if their fathers told the grandchildren of Noah of the deluge, they might see such effects of it, as might assure them that it was true. If the parents of the man born blind (John ix.) were told by him that his eyes were cured, when they saw it in the effects they must believe it : if uncontrolled history tell our children that London was burnt and new-built, that St. Paul's church was burnt, &c., that multitudes died of the plague the year before, &c. When they see the city, the church, the graves, the change of the inhabitants, the proved testaments of the deceased, besides uncontradicted testimony, here is a natural evidence to assure it.

Sixteenthly, Though some half-witted philosophers boast much of the certainty of their physics in comparison of morality, the truth is, the most of physics are mere uncertainties, and the wisest see it, and busily pull down others' doctrines, but confess they are yet but searching and groping by extrinsic effects and experiments to know what to set up in the stead ; and so did others before them : and long may they so search before they find. Whereas, there is a more satisfying evidence in much of morality, as being natural to mankind, and such as will no sooner cease to be believed, than man will cease to be man ; whereon all the affairs of the world are turned, and converse, societies, and all the private comforts of nature are

maintained : God hath made known to us what pleased him, according to his own wisdom, and not at our direction or choice. And he hath chosen that for us which is most useful : it is more useful to us to know how to live well, and how to be happy, and how to please and glorify God, and do good to one another, than to know God's skill or mysteries in his works ; to know what is in the centre of the earth, or how the active nature doth operate on the passive, whether cold be a privation or positive, what is the cause of the continued *motus projectorum* ? whether light and heat be bodies or substances ? whether they penetrate other bodies ? &c. As it is more useful for me to know how to keep my clock in order, than how to make one, to know how to plough, sow, eat, drink to my health, than to know by what mysterious operations the corn or other things do grow, and my food is digested, &c. Therefore, this learned lord doth truly and wisely enumerate his *notitiæ communes* in morality and religion as certainties, the denial whereof doth unman us. God hath left such instincts, powers, inclinations, and conscience in human nature, as shall naturally, though with some degree of freedom in the exercise, be an insuperable witness in the world to himself, and to our common principles and duties.

Seventeenthly, The historical evidence of the Gospel of Christ is such as hath all the advantages before described, in its kind. He lived and preached, and wrought his miracles frequently, before thousands, friends and foes : his miracles were never controlled, as Moses did the magicians', by greater, nor by any certain truth which they contradicted : the eye-witnesses themselves were unbelieving, till forced by cogent evidence : they delivered his doctrine, miracles, resurrection to the world, not only by credible report, and to the ruin of their worldly pleasures and interests, with the loss of their lives, and all this merely for the hopes of a reward in heaven, from God, that well knew whether all were true or not ; but also they did all in the power of the same Spirit which Christ did work by, doing such miracles as Christ had done : and this not a few, nor in a corner, but in many countries of the world, and that by many thousand Christians in one kind or other, tongues, healing, prophecy, or the like, as well as the apostles. The certainty of which fact is attested by the very existence of all the churches converted by it, with all their baptisins, professions, and the rest of the tradition before named. No Christian of all this multitude, by any terrors, death, time, was brought at the last

to repent and say, that he had deceived the world by a lie. Many apostates falling off for fear of sufferings, but none with any such recantation: no adversary confuting the history, but commonly confessing most of it with more such evidence, which I have opened in the treatise, and must not often repeat lest I be tedious. And that which is still the natural evidence is, that there is still existent, First, On the sacred Gospel; Secondly, On the souls and lives of all serious Christians by its impress, the inimitable image of the divine power, wisdom, and goodness, life, light, and love, as the divine attestation. Only as this noble author requireth to all true conceptions and intellections, so do we to this, that there be but the necessary conditions in the mind of the receiver.

And whereas he saith, that, commonly miracles are reported a hundred years after; here it was otherwise: the Jews were enraged by them for fear of the Romans. The apostles and others wrought them openly; Matthew and John, that wrote Christ's history, lived with him, and saw what they wrote: so did Peter and James: Paul wrote what he saw and heard from heaven; Luke wrote the acts of Paul which he saw, being his companion in travels. The thousands were converted, and churches in many countries planted, not by bare words, but by the conviction of the miracles of the apostles themselves: so that every church and Christian was a history of them. And all this they were moved to, with the hopes of heaven, where truth is known, to deny the world, and mortify the flesh, and suffer whatever the Gospel would inflict, to preserve their hopes and comforts founded in this word of faith.

XI. Quest. Whether the common custom of sacrificing throughout the world in all generations, were not their actual confession that the sinner deserved death, and that God's justice required punishment or satisfaction? And proceeded not from divine revelation in the beginning, when God had newly made the covenant of grace? And so was delivered down by tradition? For my part, it cannot come into my understanding, why else men should think that God is pleased or appeased by the creature's death; or how this should become so common throughout the world? And the two exceptions confirm this to be truth: First, Some savages in America use no sacrifices; but they are such as know not God, or so savage as to have lost all ancient tradition.

Secondly, All the Mahometans and Christians use no bloody sacrifice. But that is because, First, Christians believe that sacrifices were but types of Christ, and that he put an end to them by his perfect sacrifice. Secondly, And Mahometans received it from Christ, being but Christians degenerate first into Arians, and then into Mahometans, and still professing to take Christ for the Word and Son of God, and his word as true; only hating the Christians for saying that he is very God. But of this, instead of writing after so many, I only refer you to their writings, and especially to Dr. Owen's Latin *Tractate* on this subject.

XII. Quest. Whether interest make the judgment of divines, in the cause of faith, more suspicious or contemptible than other men's? I put this question, with respect to those words in the preface. "Sed neque auspiciores ubique posterioris istius seculi Scriptores dicendi sunt. Fit ita ut pro regionum et fidei diversitate in id potissimum incumbant, ne illos domi male multet inopia, adeoque non tam quid in se verum, quam quid sibi ipsis utile exquirant. Non est igitur à larvato aliquo vel stipendioso Scriptore, ut verum consummatum opperiaris. Illorum apprime interest, ne personam deponant, vel aliter quidem sentiant. Ingenuus et sui arbitrii, ista solummodo præstabit author."

Answ. First, It is not to be denied that there are multitudes of such carnal pastors in the churches, that are Christians for the ease, honour, and wealth. Secondly, But that this should be so with all, I shall disprove; and prove that none on earth are so credible in this case as divines. First, Because they have made it the business of their lives to search out the truth; and, therefore (some of them), must be supposed have the greatest advantages to know it. So that, for ability, they have no sort of men that, are competitors; for diligence and helps are the improvers of understanding: and all men are found best at their own profession; lawyers in the law, physicians in medicine, philosophers in philosophy, &c. And for yourself, your next words are, "Nobis tamen ad alia omnia fere quam literarum studia (uti oportuit) exequenda, otium fuit. Partim armis in diversis regionibus, partim quinquennali legatione, partim negotiis tum publicis tum privatis, vacavimus." And snot this your disadvantage? Who is a good linguist, lawyer, physician, &c., that hath had but little leisure for his studies?

Secondly, And as for will and interest, it is notorious that

thousands of the ministry have so little set by worldly interest, as that it is upon the terms of greatest self-denial to the flesh that they take up and exercise their office, being moved only by the great interest of their own and others' souls: their voluntary, diligent labours, their holy lives, their contempt of the world, may convince any of this, that are not blinded by prejudice or malice. There are few learned men in the reformed churches but might far better use their studies and labours, if they took that for best which is most profitable, advancing, or pleasing to the flesh.

Thirdly, You had a brother of your own, so holy a man, as his sincerity was past exception, and so zealous in his sacred ministry, as showed he did not dissemble; and, I suppose, had it been necessary, you would have so maintained him, that he should not have fled from truth for fear of poverty.

Fourthly, What can you think of all those that gave up their lives for the christian faith and hopes? Did they go upon such carnal grounds as you mention?

Fifthly, The revolutions of states, and the diversity of sentiments, and especially the interests of the carnal part, do bring it to pass, by God's overruling of all, that usually the most serious Christians and pastors are the sufferers of the age they live in: so that how much hath God done hereby, to confute such suspicions and accusations! There are now in England learned and worthy men, in church preferments, which doubtless do not so love them, as to buy them with the loss of truth, and that to keep up a religion against their consciences. But if you did so accuse them, surely the many hundred silenced ministers now in England, that live in poverty, and many of them want bread, when they might have preferment as well as others, do live out of the reach of this accusation: I write not this at all as meddling with their cause, but as answering your exception. I have myself got no more for preaching the Gospel these nine years, than if I had been a layman; I mean I have preached for nothing, if the success on men's souls were not something, and God's acceptance, so far as I did preach; and more than that, I would offer any man my most solemn oath to satisfy him, that I believe and profess the christian doctrine for its proper evidence, and for the hopes of the blessedness promised thereby, which, if they prevailed not with me above all the riches, preferments, and pleasures of this world, I would never have been a preacher or a Christian, nor would continue

in my calling and profession one day, much less on the self-denying terms, as I now do.

But, O my Lord, thou hast been to me a faithful Saviour, a happy Teacher, a supporting Comforter, in my greatest dangers, distress, and fears ; thy service hath been sweet and good ; thy word hath been a powerful light, a quickening, a changing, an elevating, a guiding, a comforting word. So far am I from repenting that I am thy disciple, or thy servant, that, now I am not far from my departure from this world, I do vehemently protest, that I beg no greater mercy of thee in this world, than that I may believe in thee more firmly, and hope in thy promises more confidently, and by thine intercession receive more of thy Holy Spirit, by which I may have nearer access to God, and that by thy blood and merits I may be justified and cleansed from the guilt of all my sins, and that by thee I may be taught to know the Father, and to love him as his love and goodness hath manifested itself in thee, and in the gracious works of man's redemption ; that thou wilt be the undertaker for my soul and body through my life, and that at death I may commend my spirit into thy hands, in a strong, well-grounded faith and hope, and come to thee in the fervent desire of divine and heavenly love. And I ask for no greater felicity hereafter, than to be with thee where thou art, to behold thy glory, and to see the glory of the blessed Deity, and live in the perfect knowledge, and love, and praise of God.

Sixthly, And I may add, that it is not only clergymen that are Christians ; besides them, the most learned men in the world have defended, or adhered to the christian faith : I need not name to you either men of your own rank, such as the two Mirandulas, the great Du Plessis, Marnixius de Aldegonde, Anhaltinus, a prince, though a divine, Bacon, and many a worthy nobleman of these kingdoms, and of many others ; nor such laymen as the Scaligers, Salmasius, Grotius, Causabon, Thuanus, and multitudes more. Were all these, *larvati vel palliati*, biassed by price or fleshly interest ? He that is not a Christian for spiritual and eternal interest, taking up his cross and following a crucified Christ, on terms of self-denial, even to the forsaking of all for him, not excepting life itself, and doth not by his cross, even crucify the flesh and the world, which is the provision for its lusts, is, indeed, no Christian at all.

I had thought to have said somewhat to your pp. 220, 221.
 “ In omni religione, immo et conscientia, sive ex natura sive ex

gratia, media sufficientia dari unde Deo accepti esse possint, ultro credimus——.” But I have been long enough, and the answer may be gathered from what is said before.

The Lord save this land and the darker world from infidelity and its fruits; and give us more of that Spirit which is Christ’s agent and witness in us, effectually to plead and maintain his cause. Amen.

Jan. 16, 1672.

Cæs. Baronius. Annal. ad An. 411.

But because we are discoursing of such matters, reader, I entreat thee to suffer me, like the good householder in the Gospel, who bringeth out of his treasury things new and old, to add some things new, or later, to these of elder date; for what I shall briefly say will much delight thee: for I will not report unproved things, but what I know to be confirmed by the assertion of very many learned men, yea, and by all religious men oft told the people in their sermons: and, for my part, I will bring forth the author, of whom I received it, and that is Michael Mercatus Miniatensis, Prothonotary of the S. R. church, a man of most entire fidelity, and of eminent knowledge and honesty of life. He told me of his grandfather, of the same name with himself, Michael Mercatus, senior, between whom and Marsilius Ficinus, a man of a most noble wit, there was an intimate friendship, contracted and increased by philosophical studies, in which they both were followers of Plato. It happened on a time that, as they used, they were gathering from Plato, but not without doubting, how much, or what of man, remained after death; which platonic documents, where they failed, were to be underpropped by the sacraments of the christian faith; for of that argument there is extant a learned epistle of Marsilius to this Michael Mercatus, of the immortality of the soul and God: and in their discourse when they had long disputed, they thus concluded it; and giving each other their right hands, they covenanted, that which ever of them first died, if he could do it, he should certify the other of the state of the other life. And having thus covenanted and sworn to each other, they departed. And after a considerable space of time, it fell out that Michael, senior, being early in the morning at his philosophical studies,

unexpectedly he heard the noise of a horse swiftly running, and stopping at his door, and, withal, the voice of Marsilius, crying out, "O Michael! O Michael! those things are true." Michael, marvelling at the voice of his friend, rose up, and opening the window, he saw him whom he heard, with his back toward him, in white, riding away on a white horse, and called after him, "Marsilius, Marsilius!" and looked after him; but he vanished from his sight. He being struck with admiration at the strangeness of the case, took care to inquire what was become of Marsilius, (who lived in Florence, where he died,) and found that he died that same hour in which he heard and saw him. And what did he hereupon? Though he had been a man of approved honesty, and had lived a life harmless and profitable to all, as it became a true philosopher, yet from that time, bidding farewell to philosophical discipline, and becoming a forward lover, or follower, of the true christian philosophy only, as more eminent than the rest, he lived the rest of his time as dead to the world, only for, or to, the life to come, being an example of a most absolute Christian, who before had been famous among the philosophers of his time in praise, as second unto none. So far Baronius: the same is reported by abundance of other writers.

END OF TWENTY-FIRST VOLUME.