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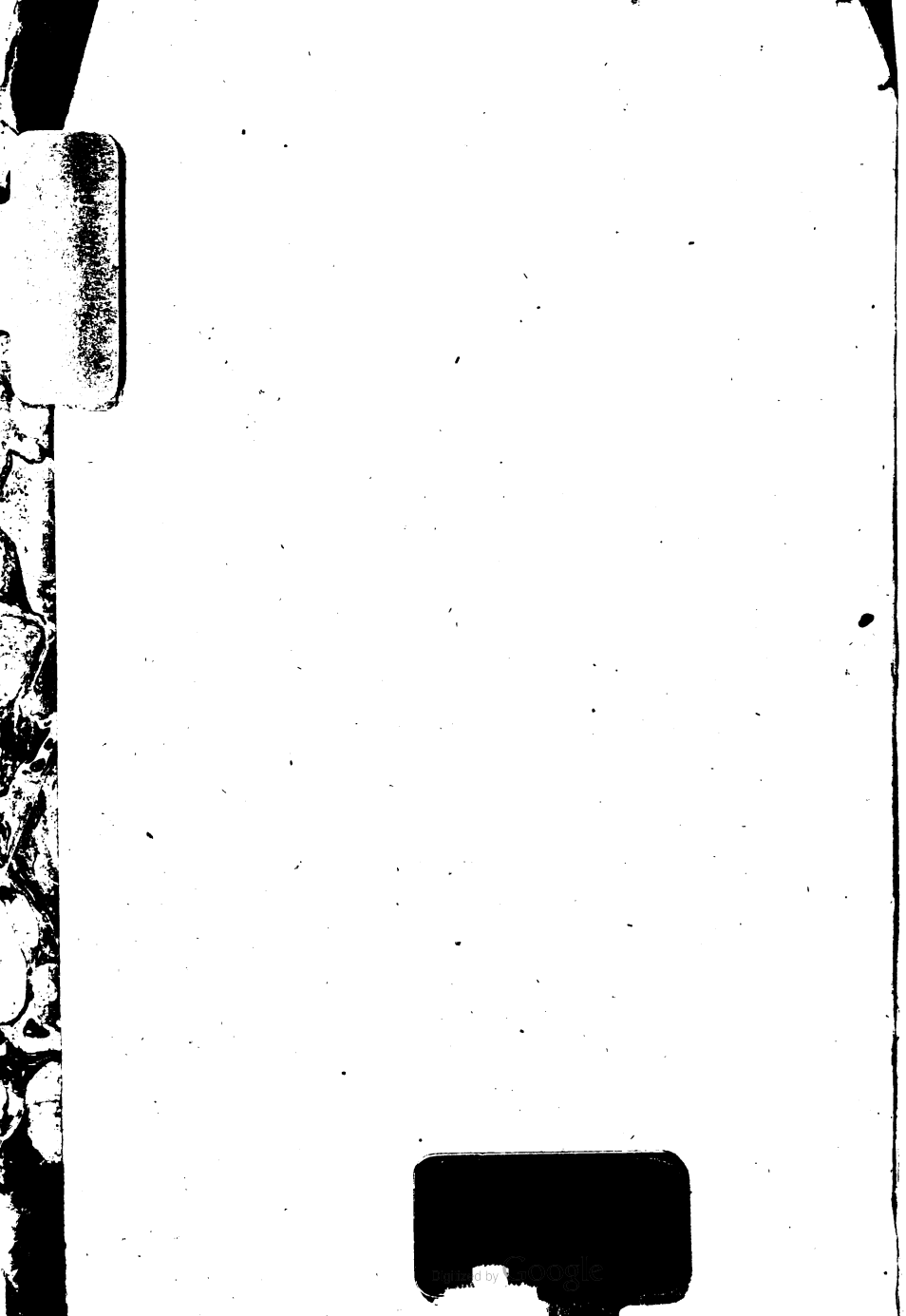
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James Gates.

4532.aaa.3.







Primitive  
Christianity.  
in 3 parts

Learn of me Math. 11. 29

I have said to you, and you have not believed; now I say to you, and you believe not, because you do not love me, nor believe what I say.





Primitive Christianity :  
OR, THE  
RELIGION  
OF THE  
Ancient Christians  
In the First AGES of the  
GOSPEL.

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In Three PARTS.

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By WILLIAM CAVE, D. D.

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Ὅτι οὐκ ἐν λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας Θεοσεβείας πράγματα. Just. Mart. Parænes. ad Græc. p. 33.

*Nos non habitu Sapientiam, sed mente præferimus :  
Non eloquimur magna, sed vivimus.*

Min. Fel. Dial. p. 31.

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The Seventh Edition.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WALTHOE, J. and J. KNAPTON,  
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MDCCLXXVIII.



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TO THE  
 Right Reverend Father in GOD,  
**NATHANAE L,**  
*Lord Bishop of OXFORD,*  
 AND  
 Clerk of the Closet to his MAJESTY.

My LORD,

**W**HEN I first designed that these Papers should take Sanctuary at Your Lordship's Patronage, the Hebrew Proverb presently came into my Mind, Keep close to a great Man, and Men will reverence thee. I knew no better way (next to the Innocency, and, if it may be, Usefulness of the Subject I have undertaken) to secure myself from the Censures of Envy and Ill-nature, than by putting myself under Your Protection, whose known *εὐφροία*, the Sweetness and Obligingness of whose Temper, is able to render Malice itself candid and favourable. Encouraged also by this Consideration, I hardened myself into the Confidence of this Address, which I had not otherwise attempted, but that Your Lordship's Kindness and Generous Compassion, and the mighty Con-

דבוק  
 לשחון  
 ישתחון  
 ל  
 Beresch.  
 Rab. c.17.  
 ap. Druf.  
 Adag. E-  
 braic. De-  
 cur. 6.  
 Adag. 8.

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*descension wherewith You were always pleased to treat me, (while I had the Happiness of Your Lordship's Neighbourhood) did at once invite and oblige me to it. I say no more, lest I should affront that Modesty that is so innate to Your Temper, or come within the least Suspicion of Flattery, so repugnant to my own.*

*One thing only there is, which I cannot but remark, the great Honour which Your Lordship has done, not to the Episcopal only, but to the whole Ministerial Order, that a Person of Your Rank and Education would stoop to an Employment so little valued and regarded in this Unthankful and Degenerate Age. And herein Your Lordship has been a happy President; Your Example being already followed by some, and will shortly by more, Persons of Noble Descent and Pedigree; a thing for which the Church of England was never more Renowned since the Reformation, than it is at this Day.*

My LORD,

*There was a Time within the Compass of our Memory, when the Bishops amongst other things were accused (by one of the House of Peers, tho' one that had not the most Reason to bring in a Charge of that Nature) to be in respect of their Parentage, De face Populi, of the very Dregs and Refuse of the People; (Malice will play at small Games rather than not at all.) A Charge as false as it was spiteful; tho', had it been true, it had been impertinent, seeing the very Order is enough to derive Honour upon  
the*

Church  
Hist. lib.  
v. 1. p. 183.

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*the Person, even when he cannot (as Your Lordship) bring it along with him. And indeed, so Honourable an Order has Episcopacy ever been accounted, even when there have been no visible Advantages either of Riches or Grandeur to attend it, (as there were not in the more early Ages of Christianity) that Persons of the greatest Birth and Fortunes have not thought it below them to exchange the Civil Tribunal for the Bishop's Throne, and to lay down the publick Rods and Axes, to take up the Crosier, and the Pedum Pastorale. If we may credit that Catalogue of the Bishops of Constantinople, recorded by Nicephorus, we find Dometius, Brother to the Emperor Probus, and after him his two Sons, Probus and Metrophanes, successively sitting in that Chair; as afterwards Nectarius, S. Chrystom's Predecessor, was of a Senator made Bishop of that See. Thalassus became Bishop of Cæsarea when he was a Senator, the Præfectus Prætorio (or the Emperor's Lieutenant, one of the highest Places both of Trust and Honour in the Roman Empire) of Illyricum, and rising to greater Dignities, being design'd by the Emperor for the Government of the East. S. Ambrose (whose Father was an Illustrious Person, the Præfect of France) was made Governor of Liguria and Æmelia, and sent thither with Consular Power and Dignity; during which Employment he was made Bishop of Milan. Petronius Bishop of Bononia is said to have been first a Præfectus Prætorio, and to descend*

*of*

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*of the Family of Constantine the Great. Sidonius Apollinaris, descended for many Generations of Noble and Illustrious Parents, his Father the Præfectus Prætorio of Gaul, himself Son-in-Law to Avitus, (a Person of Extraordinary Honour and Employment, and afterwards Consul and Emperor) and yet in the midst of this disdained not to become Bishop of Clermont in France. More such Instances I could give, not to speak of Multitudes that were in the middle and later Ages of the Church, especially in our own Nation. But I return.*

My LORD,

*I beheld Religion generally laid waste, and Christianity ready to draw its last Breath, stifled and oppressed with the Vices and Impieties of a Debauched and Profligate Age; to contribute towards the Recovery whereof, and the reducing things (if possible) to the Ancient Standard, is the Design of the Book, that is here offered to You. The Subject, I assure myself, is not unsuitable either to Your Lordship's Order, Temper, or Course of Life; if my ill Managery of it has not rendred it unworthy of Your Patronage. However, such as it is, it's humbly presented by him, who is*

Your Lordship's

Faithfully devoted Servant,

**WILLIAM CAVE.**

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T H E  
P R E F A C E  
T O T H E  
R E A D E R.

**I** Know not whether it may be any Satisfaction to the Curiosity of the *Reader*, to understand the Birth and Original of these *Papers*; if it be, let him take this Account. No sooner did I arrive at Years of capable Discerning, but I began to enquire into the Grounds of that Religion into which I had been baptized; which I soon found to be so Noble and Excellent, in all its *Laws* so Just and Rational, in all its *Designs* so Divine and Heavenly, so Perfective of the *Principles*, so Conducive to the *Happiness* of Human Nature, a Religion so *worthy* of God, so *advantageous* to Man, built upon such firm and uncontroulable Evidence, back'd with such proper and powerful Arguments, that I was presently convinced of the Divinity that resided in it, and concluded with myself (and I thought I had Reason so to do) that surely the Disciples of this Religion must needs be the most Excellent Persons in the World. But alas! a few Years Experience of the World let me see, that this was the Conclusion of one that had conversed only with Books, and the Reasonings of his own Mind. I had not been long an Observer of the Manners of Men, but I found them generally so Debauched and Vicious, so Corrupt and Contrary to the Rules of this Holy Religion, that if a modest and honest *Heathen* was to estimate Christianity by the Lives of its Professors, he would certainly  
pro-



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proscribe it as the vilest Religion in the World. Being offended hereat, I resolv'd to *stand in the ways and see, and enquire for the good old way, the Paths wherein the Ancient Christians walk'd.* For I could not think that this had always been the unhappy Fate and Portion of *Christianity*; and that if the Footsteps of true Christian Piety and Simplicity were any where to be found, it must be in those Times, *When* (as *S. Hierom* notes) *the Blood of Christ was yet warm in the Breasts of Christians, and the Faith and Spirit of Religion more brisk and vigorous.*

*Quando Domini nostri adhuc calebat cruor, & fervebat recens in credentibus fides.*  
Hier. ad Demet. p. 68. tom. 1.

In pursuance of this Design, I set myself to a more close and diligent Reading of the first Fathers and ancient Monuments of the Church than ever I had done before, especially for the *three or four first Centuries*, for much lower I did not intend to go, because the Life and Spirit of Christianity did then visibly decline apace; nothing as I went along whatever contributed to my Satisfaction in this Affair. Had I consulted my own Ease and Quiet, I might have gone a nearer way to work, and have taken up with what I could have pick'd up of this nature in *Baronius*, the *Centuries*, &c. But I could not satisfy myself (and I presume it would as little have satisfy'd the *Reader*) with Shreds, with things taken upon trust and borrowed at the second hand. For the same Reason I made little Use of *The Lives of the Saints*, (especially in such Instances whereof there was the least Cause to doubt) and the Spurious and Supposititious Writings of the Fathers, seldom making use of any but such as are of unquestionable Credit and Authority. And because the Testimony of an Enemy is ever accounted of great Moment and Regard, I have been careful to add the Testimonies that have been given to Christians and to their Religion by the known and professed Adversaries of the Christian Faith; such as

*Pliny,*

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*Pliny, Lucian, Porphyry, Julian, &c.* more whereof we might have been furnished with, had those Writings of theirs against the Christian Religion been extant, which the Zeal of the first Christian Princes industriously banished out of the World. What other Authors of later Date I have borrowed any Light from in this Discourse, I have faithfully produced in the Margin. Two Books indeed I met with, which at first Sight I well hoped would have wholly saved me the Labour of this Search; the one written by a Person of our own Nation; the other by a *Florentine* of great Name and Note; but my Hopes were very much frustrated in both. For the first, I no sooner looked into it, but found myself wretchedly imposed upon by the Title, his *elder times and Christians* (not to say any thing of his Intermixtures of things nothing to his purpose) seldom reaching any higher than the *middle Ages* of the Church, little or nothing being remark'd of the *first Ages* of Christianity, the only thing I aimed at. For the other (which I met not with till I had almost finished this Search) I found it miserably thin and empty, containing little else but short Glosses upon some few Passages out of *Tertullian*, from whence I did not enrich myself with any one Observation, which I had not made before. There is indeed an Epistle of *Fronto's*, the Learned Chancellor of the *University of Paris*, concerning this Affair; but it contains only some general Intimations, and seems to have been designed by him (as appears from that and some other of his Epistles) as the Ground-work of a larger and more particular Discourse. But his Death happening some Years after the Date of that Epistle, cut off all Hopes

*A modest Discourse of the Piety, Charity, and Policy of elder Times and Christians, &c.* By Edw. Waterhouse, Esq; London, 1655.

*Paganin. Gaudentius de vita Christianorum ante tempora Constant. Florent. 1639. quarto.*

*De vita & moribus Christianorum, &c.* Par. 1660. quarto.

# P R E F A C E.

Hopes of prosecuting so excellent a Design. These are all that I know of, who have attempted any thing in this Subject, none whereof coming up to the Curiosity of my Design, I was forced to resume the Task I had undertaken, and to go on with it thro' those ancient Writers of the Church; the Result of which Search is laid together in this Book.

Whether I have discharged myself herein to the Satisfaction of the Reader, I know not; sure I am, I have endeavour'd what I propounded to myself, viz. *A Specimen of Primitive Christianity*, in some of the most considerable Branches and Instances of Religion. Here he will find a *Piety* Active and Zealous, shining thro' the blackest Clouds of Malice and Cruelty; Afflicted *Innocence* triumphant, notwithstanding all the powerful or politick Attempts of Men or Devils; a *Patience* unconquerable under the biggest Persecutions; a *Charity* truly *Catholick* and unlimited; a *Simplicity* and upright Carriage in all Transactions; a *Sobriety* and *Temperance* remarkable to the Admiration of their Enemies; and in short, he will here see the Divine and Holy Precepts of the Christian Religion drawn down into Action, and the most Excellent *Genius* and *Spirit* of the Gospel breathing in the Hearts and Lives of these Good Old Christians. Here he will find a real and evident Confutation of that senseless and absurd *Calumny* that was fastned upon Christianity, as if it required no more than an *easy* and *credulous* Temper of Mind; as if under a Pretence of Kindness and Indulgence to Sinners, it ministred to all Vice and Wickedness. *Celsus* confidently begins the Charge. \* *There be some amongst the Christians* (says he) *that will nei-*

\* Φησὶ δὲ  
τινας  
μηδὲ βε-  
λομένους  
διδόναι  
ἢ λαμβά-  
ναι

ναι λόγον περὶ ὧν πιστεύουσι, χρῆσθαι τῷ μὴ ἕξταξε, ἀλλὰ πίσειον.  
Καὶ, ἢ πίσις σε σώζει σε. Καὶ, κακὸν ἢ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ σοφία, ἀγαθὸν  
δ' ἢ μωρία.

Orig. adv. Cels. l. 1. p. 8. vid. lib. 6. p. 282.

they

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*they give nor receive a Reason of their Faith, who are wont to cry out, Don't examine, but believe; and, Thy Faith will save thee; The Wisdom of this World is evil, but Foolishness good and useful.* Julian carries on the Charge somewhat higher, as if the Christian Religion were not only content with a naked and an empty Faith, but gave Encouragement to Sin, by assuring its most desperate *Profelytes* of an easy Pardon. In the Conclusion of his *Cæsars*, after he had assigned the Roman Emperors their particular *Tutelar Deities*, he delivers over *Constantine* the Great, the first Christian Emperor, to the *Goddeſs of Pleaſure*, who having effeminately trick'd and dress'd him up, brought him to the *Goddeſs Aſotia*, or Intemperance, where he finds τὸν υἱὸν, his Son, *Conſtantius*, probably, (for the Paſſage is a little diſturbed and obſcure, for which Reaſon, probably, the Translator paſſed it by, and took no Notice of it) making this univerſal Proclamation; *Whoever is an Adulterer, or a Murderer, whoever is an impure proſtigate Wretch, let him come boldly; for I declare, that being waſhed in this Water, [Baptiſm] he ſhall immediately be cleanſed: Nay, although he again commit thoſe Sins, let him but knock his Breſt, and beat his Head, and I will make him clean.* Much to the ſame purpoſe *Zoſimus* (as good a Friend to Chriſtianity as either of the former) ſpitefully charges it upon *Constantine* the Great, that being haunted with the Conſcience of his prodigious Villanies, and having no Hopes given him by the *Gentile Prieſts* of the Expiation of his Crimes, embraced Chriſtianity, being told, that in the Chriſtian Religion

Ὅστις φθορεὺς, ὅστις μιαιφόνος, ὅστις ἐναγῆς κ' ἡβδελιεύς, ἴτω θάρρῶν, ἕκτα φανῶν ἢ αὐτὸν τέλει παρ' ὑδασιλέσας, αὐτίκα καθαρεύ. Κὰν πάλιν ἐνοχῶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς γίνῃαι, δάσω τὸ σῆθος πληξάντι, κ' ἤ κεφαλῶν παλάξαντι, καθαρῶ γίνεσθαι.

*Julian. Cæsares. p. 53.*

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Πάσης ἀμαρτίας ὅτι ἀ-  
 ναιρέσι μὴ εἶναι ἢ τῆ χει-  
 ρισμῶν διαβεβαιώσασθαι δό-  
 ξαν καὶ τὸτο ἔχειν ἐπάγ-  
 γελμα, τὸ τῆς ἀσεβείας  
 μεταμένοισι αὐτῆς, πεί-  
 σης ἀμαρτίας ἔξω παρ-  
 χήμα καθίστασαι.  
*Zosim. Hist. l. 2. p. 534.*

*Religion there was a Promise of clean-  
 sing from all Sin, and that as soon as  
 ever any closed with it, Pardon would  
 be granted to the most profligate Offen-  
 ders. As if Christianity had been  
 nothing else but a Receptacle and San-  
 ctuary for Rogues and Villains, where  
 the worst of Men might be wicked  
 under Hopes of Pardon. But how*

*false and groundless (especially as urged and in-  
 tended by them) this impious Charge was, appears  
 from the whole Design and Tenour of the Gospel,  
 and that more than ordinary Vein of Piety and  
 Strictness that was conspicuous in the Lives of its  
 first Professors, whereof we have in this Treatise  
 given abundant Evidence.*

*To this Representation of their Lives and Man-  
 ners, I have added some Account concerning the  
 Ancient Rites and Usages of the Church; where-  
 in if any one shall meet with something that does  
 not jump with his own Humour, he will I doubt  
 not have more Discretion than to quarrel with me  
 for setting down things as I found them. But in  
 this Part I have said the less, partly because this  
 was not the thing I primarily designed, partly be-  
 cause it has been done by others in just Discourses.  
 In some few Instances I have remarked the *Corrup-  
 tion and Degeneracy of the Church of Rome*, from the  
*Purity and Simplicity of the Ancient Church*; and more  
 I could easily have added, but that I studiously  
 avoided Controversies, it being no Part of my De-  
 sign to enquire what was the Judgment of the Fa-  
 thers in Disputable Cases, especially the more Ab-  
 struse and Intricate Speculations of Theology, but  
 what was their Practice, and by what Rules and  
 Measures they did govern and conduct their Lives.  
 The Truth is, their *Creed* in the first Ages was *short*  
 and*

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and *simple*, their Faith lying then (as *Erasmus* observes) not so much in *nice* and *numerous* Articles, as in a *good* and an *holy* Life. At the End of the Book I have added a Chronological *Index* of the *Authors*, according to the Times wherein they are supposed to have lived, with an Account of the *Editions* of their Works made use of in this Treatise. Which I did, not that I had a mind to tell the World, either what, or how many Books I had; a piece of *Vanity*, of which had I been guilty, it had been no hard matter to have furnish'd out a much larger Catalogue: But I did it partly to gratify the Request of the Bookseller, partly because I conceived it might not be altogether unuseful to the Reader, for the *Index* to give some Light to the Quotations, by knowing when the Author lived, especially when he speaks of things done in or near his own Time, and which must otherwise have been done at every turn in the Body of the Book. And because there are some Writings frequently made use of in this Book, the Authors whereof in this *Index* could be reduced to no certain Date, especially those that are call'd the *Apostolical Canons* and *Constitutions*; it may not be amiss here briefly to take notice of them. And first, for the *Canons*; as I am far from their Opinion who ascribe them to the *Apostles*, so I think their great Antagonist *Mr. Daille* bends the Stick as much too far the other way; not allowing them a Being in the World till the Year 500, or a little before. The Truth doubtless lies between these two: 'Tis evident both from the Histories of the Church, and many Passages in *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and others, that there were in the most early Ages of Christianity, frequent Synods and Councils for settling the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church, tho' the Determinations under that Notion be not extant at this Day. Part of these *Synodical*

B

Decreases,

Prefat. in  
Hilar.  
oper.

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Decrees, so many of them as concern'd the Rites and Discipline of the Church, we may conceive some Person of Learning and Judgment gathered together probably about the Beginning of the Third Century, and put them (especially the first *Fifty*, for I look not upon the whole *Eighty Five* as of equal Value and Authority) if not into the same, into some such Sort or Method, wherein we now have them; styling them *Ecclesiastical* or *Apostolical* Canons, not as if they had been composed by the *Apostles*, but either because containing things consonant to the Doctrines and Rules deliver'd by the *Apostles*, or because made up of Usages and Traditions supposed to be derived from them; or lastly, because made by Ancient and *Apostolick* Men. That many, if not all, of these Canons were some considerable time extant before the first *Nicene* Council, we have great Reason to believe, from two or three Passages, amongst many others. *S. Basil*, giving Rules about Discipline, appoints a Deacon guilty of Fornication to be deposed and thrust down into the Rank of *Laicks*, and that in that Capacity he might receive the Communion; *there being* (says he) ἀρχαῖοι καὶ νῦν, an ancient Canon that they that are deposed should only fall under this kind of Punishment; the *Ancients* (as I suppose) following herein that Command, *Thou shalt not punish twice for the same Fault*. This *Balsamon* joins with the twenty fifth Canon of the *Apostles*, which treats of the very same Affair; and indeed it cannot in probability be meant of any other, partly because there was no ancient Canon (that we know of) in *S. Basil's* Time, about this Business, but that; partly because the same Sentence is apply'd as the Reason both in the *Apostolical* and *S. Basil's* Canon, *Thou shalt not punish twice for the same Fault*: Which clearly shews whence *Basil* had it, and what he understands by

*Ep. Canon.*  
*ad Am-*  
*phil.*  
*Can. 3.*

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by his *ancient Canon*. *Theodoret* records a Letter *Hist. Eccl.*  
of *Alexander* Bishop of *Alexandria*, to another of *l. 1. c. 4.*  
the same Name, Bishop of *Constantinople*, (this *p. 3.*  
Letter was written a little before the Council  
of *Nice*) where speaking of some Bishops who  
had received the *Arians*, whom he had excom-  
municated, into Communion, he tells them, *That*  
*herein they had done what the Apostolical Canons did*  
*not allow*; evidently referring to the twelfth and  
thirteenth *Canons* of the *Apostles*, which state the  
Case about one Bishop's receiving those into Com-  
munion, who had been excommunicated by ano-  
ther. To this let me add, that *Constantine*, in *De vit.*  
a Letter to *Eusebius*, commends him for re- *Const. l. 3.*  
fusing to leave his own Bishoprick to go over *c. 61.*  
to that of *Antioch*, to which he was chosen; *p. 518.*  
especially because herein he had exactly observ'd the  
Rule of *Ecclesiastical Discipline*, and hath kept the  
Commands of God, and the *Apostolical and Ecclesi-*  
*astical Canon*; meaning doubtless the fourteenth  
*Apostolick Canon*, which treats about such Re-  
moves. Nay, Learned Men, both formerly and  
of late, have observ'd divers Passages in the *Ni-*  
*cene Canons* themselves, which plainly respect  
these Canons, as might be made appear (not-  
withstanding what *Daille* has excepted against  
it) were this a proper Place to discourse of it.  
This for the Canons.

For the *Constitutions*, they are said to have been  
composed by *S. Clemens*, at the Instance and by the  
Direction of the *Apostles*. And this wild and  
extravagant Opinion has not wanted its Patrons  
and Defenders, *Turrianus*, *Bovius*, &c. But herein  
deserted by the more modest and moderate of  
their own Party; besides that their *Apostolicalness*  
(in this Sense) is by the Learned *Daille* everlast- *De Pseud.*  
ingly shatter'd and broken. But then he sets them *epigr. Ap.*  
at too wide a Distance, assigning them to the *l. 2. c. 17.*  
*p. 409.*



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latter end of the Fifth Century; when 'tis as clear as the Sun, that they were extant and in Credit with many before the Times of *Epiphanius*, (tho' somewhat alter'd now from what they were in his Time) compiled probably out of many lesser *Διδασχαι* and *Διδασχαις*. Books containing the *Doctrines* and *Rites* that had been delivered and practised by Ancient and *Apostolical* Persons, or at least venter under their Names: But whether, as some conjecture, composed by *Clemens Alexandrinus* (and thence by an easy Mistake ascribed to *Clemens Romanus*) I am not at leisure to consider. In this Class of Writers I may reckon *Dionysius the Areopagite*, absurdly enough asserted by many to be genuine, by *Dailleé* thrust down to the Beginning of the Sixth Century, but most probably thought to have been written about the Middle of the Fourth Age; as a Person amongst us, deservedly of great Name and Note, has shewn in his late *Vindication* of *Ignatius's* Epistles. These are the Principles of those Authors, who could not be fix'd upon any certain Year; the rest have in the *Index* their particular and respective times. To which I have added the Account of the *Editions*, for the more ready finding (if occasion be) of any Passage quoted out of them.

One thing indeed there is, which I cannot but take notice of, it looks so like a piece of Vanity and Ostentation: That the Margin is charged with so many *Quotations*. But whoever considers the Nature of my Design, will quickly see that it was absolutely necessary, and that it concern'd me not to deliver any thing without good Authority; the Reason why I have, where I could, brought them in speaking their own Words; tho', to avoid as much of the Charge as was possible, I omitted the citing Authors in their own Languages, and only set them down in

*English,*

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*English*, faithfully representing the Author's Sense, though not always tying myself to a strict and precise Translation. How pertinent my *Quotations* are, the Reader must judge; I hope he will find them exact, being immediately fetch'd from the Fountain-head; here being very few (if any) that have not been examin'd more than once. For the Method, into which the Book is cast, I chose that which to me seem'd most apt and proper; following *S. Paul's* Distribution of Religion, into *Piety* towards God, *Sobriety* towards ourselves, and *Righteousness* towards others; and accordingly divided the Discourse into three Parts, respecting those three great Branches of Religion, tho' the first is much larger than either of the other, by reason of some *Preliminary* Chapters, containing a Vindication of the Christians from those Crimes that were charged upon them; that so the Rubbish being clear'd and thrown out of the way, we might have a fairer Prospect of their Religion afterwards. The Book, I confess, is swell'd into a greater Bulk, than I either thought of or desired; but by reason of somewhat a confused Copy, never design'd for the Press, no certain Measures could be taken of it.

And now, if after all this it shall be enquired, why these Papers are made publick? as I can give no very good Reason, so I will not trouble myself to invent a bad one. It may suffice to intimate, that this Discourse (long since drawn up at leisure hours) lay then by me, when a tedious and uncomfortable Distemper (whereby I have been taken off from all *Publick* Service, and the Prosecution of *severer* Studies) gave me too much Opportunity to look over my Papers, and this especially, which peradventure otherwise had never seen the Light. Indeed, I must confess I was

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somewhat the easilier prevail'd with to let this Discourse pass abroad, that it might appear, that when I could not do what I ought, I was at least willing to do what I could. If he that reads it, shall reap any Delight or Satisfaction by it, or be in any measure induced to imitate these Primitive Vertues, I shall think my Pains well bestow'd: If not, I am not the first, and probably shall not be the last, that has written a Book to no purpose.

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T H E

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T H E

C O N T E N T S.

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P A R T I.

- Chap. I. **T**hings charged upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.
- Chap. II. Of the Novelty that was charged upon Christianity.
- Chap. III. Things charged upon the Christians, respecting their outward Condition.
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Primitive

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Primitive Christianity :  
OR, THE  
**RELIGION**  
OF THE  
Ancient Christians  
IN THE  
*First AGES of the GOSPEL.*

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PART I.

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CHAP. I.

Things charged upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.

*Christian Religion likely to meet with Opposition at its first setting out. Chiefly undermined by Calumnies and Reproaches. Three Things by the Heathens charged upon the Christians ; some Things respecting their Religion ; some their outward Condition ; others their Moral Carriage, and the Matters of*

## Primitive Christianity.

*of their Worship. Their Religion charged with two Things, Impiety and Novelty. The Charge of Atheism consider'd, and answer'd out of the Fathers. The Heathens excepted against as Incompetent Judges of the Affairs of Christianity. In what Sense Christians confessed themselves Atheists. The wretched and absurd Deities that were amongst the Heathens, and the impure Manner of their Worship. Atheism, properly such, disown'd and deny'd by Christians. The Account they gave of their Religion, and the God whom they worshipped.*

**N**O sooner did the SON of GOD appear in the World, to establish the most excellent Religion that ever was communicated to Mankind, but he met with the most fierce and vigorous Opposition; persecuted and devoted to Death as soon as he was born, followed all his Life with fresh Assaults of Malice and Cruelty, his Credit traduced and slandered, his Doctrine despised and slighted, and himself at last put to Death with the most exquisite Arts of Torture and Disgrace. And if they thus served the Master of the House, how much more them of the Household? The Disciple not being above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord. Therefore when he gave Commission to his Apostles, to publish this Religion to the World, he told them before-hand what hard and unkind Reception they must look to meet with; That he sent them forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves; that they should be deliver'd up to the Councils, and scourged in the Synagogues, and be brought before Kings and Governors, and be hated of all Men

*Men for his Name's sake.* Nay, so high should the Quarrel arise upon the Account of Religion, that Men should violate some of the nearest Laws of Nature, *betray their Friends and Kinsfolk; the Brother delivering up the Brother to Death, and the Father the Child; the Children rising up against their Parents, and causing them to be put to Death.* This he well foresaw (and the Event truly answered it) would be the Fate of its first appearing in the World: And indeed, considering the present State and Circumstances of the World at that time, it could not reasonably be expected, that the *Christian Religion* should meet with a better Entertainment; for the Genius and Nature of its *Doctrine* was such, as was almost impossible to escape the Frowns and Displeasure of Men: A Doctrine it was, that call'd Men off from Lusts and Pleasures, and offer'd Violence to their native Inclinations, that required the greatest Strictness and Severity of Life, obliged Men to *deny themselves, to take up their Cross,* and to follow the Steps of a poor crucify'd *Saviour*; and that upon little other Encouragement at present, than the invisible Rewards of another World. It introduced *new Rites and Ceremonies,* unknown to those of former Ages, and such as did undermine the received and established Principles of that *Religion,* that for so many Generations had governed the World; it revealed and brought to Light such Truths, as were not only contrary to the Principles of Men's Education, but many of them above the Reach of natural Comprehension, too deep for the Line of human Reason to fathom or find out.

Upon these, and such like Accounts, Christianity was sure to encounter with mighty *Prejudices* and potent Opposition; and so it did: For no sooner did it peep abroad in the World, but it was *every where spoken against*: Princes and Potentates, and the



Part I. the greatest Powers and Policies of the World, did for some Ages confederate and combine together, to extirpate and banish it out of the World; and certainly, if Arms and Armies, if Strength and Subtily, if Malice and Cruelty could have stifled it, it had been smother'd in its Infancy and first Delivery into the World. But notwithstanding all these Oppositions, it still lifted up its Head in triumph, and out-braved the fiercest Storms of Persecution; and as *Tertullian* told their Enemies, *By every exquisite Act of Cruelty, they did but tempt others to come over to the Party; the oftener they were mowed down, the faster they sprang up again, the Blood of Christians making the Church's Soil more fat and fertile.* Hereupon the great Enemy of Mankind betook himself to other Counsels, and sought to undermine what he saw he could not carry by open Assault and Battery; he study'd to leaven the Minds of Men with false and unjust Prejudices against *Christianity*, and to burden it with whole Loads of Reproaches and Defamations; knowing no speedier way to hinder its *Reception*, than to blast its *Reputation*; For this purpose all the Arts of Spite and Malice were muster'd up, and *Christians* confidently charged with all those Crimes that could render them and their Religion vile and infamous. Now the things that were charged upon the Christians were either such as respected their *Religion*, or such as concerned their *outward State and Condition*, or such as related to their *moral Carriage and Behaviour*, with some things relating to the Matter or Manner of their Worship. We shall consider them in order, and how the *Christians* of those Times vindicated themselves from these Imputations.

The Christian Religion, at its first coming abroad into the World, was mainly charged with these two things, *Impiety* and *Novelty*. For the first, it was commonly cry'd out against as a grand piece of

*Apol. c.*  
*ult. P. 40.*

of *Atheism* and *Impiety*, as an Affront to their Religion, and an undermining the very Being and Existence of their Gods. This is the Sum of the Charge, as we find it in the ancient Apologists; more particularly *Cæcilius the Heathen*, in *Minutius Felix*, accuses the *Christians* for a desperate, undone, and unlawful Faction, who by way of Contempt, did *snuff* and *spit* at the Mention of their Gods, deride their Worship, scoff at their Priests, and despise their Temples as no better than *Charnel-Houses*, and Heaps of Bones and Ashes of the Dead. For these, and such like Reasons, the *Christians* were every where accounted a Pack of *Atheists*, and their Religion **The Atheism**; and seldom it is that *Julian the Emperor* calls *Christianity* by any other Name. Thus *Lucian* bringing in *Alexander the Impostor*, setting up for an Oracle-monger, ranks the *Christians* with *Atheists* and *Epicureans*, as those that were especially to be banished from his mysterious Rites. In answer to this Charge, the *Christians* pleaded especially these three things.

First, That the *Gentiles* were for the most part *incompetent* Judges of such Cases as these, as being almost wholly ignorant of the true State of the *Christian Doctrine*, and therefore unfit to pronounce Sentence against it. Thus when *Crescens* the Philosopher had traduced the *Christians* as *Atheistical* and *Irreligious*, *Justin Martyr* answers, That he talk'd about things which he did not understand, feigning things of his own head, only to comply with the humour of his seduced Disciples and Followers; that in reproaching the Doctrine of *Christ*, when he did not understand it, he discovered a most wicked and malignant Temper, and shewed himself far worse than the most Simple and Unlearned, who are not wont rashly to bear witness and determine in things not sufficiently known to them :

Chap. I.

*J. Martyr. Ap. 1. p. 47. Athenag. Legat.*

*p. 4. Arnob. l. 1. p. 7. Min. Fel. p. 7.*

*Pseudo-mant. p. 888. Tom. 2.*

*Just. Mart. loc. laud.*

Part I. them: Or if he did understand its *Greatness* and *Excellency*, then he shewed himself much more base and disingenuous, in charging upon it what he knew to be false, and concealing his inward Sentiments and Convictions, for fear lest he should be suspected to be a *Christian*. But *Justin* well knew, that he was miserably unskilful in matters of *Christianity*, having formerly had Conferences and Disputations with him about these things; and therefore offer'd the *Senate* of *Rome* (to whom he then presented his *Apology*) if they had not heard the Sum of it, to hold another Conference with him, even before the *Senate* itself; which he thought would be a Work worthy of so wise and grave a Council: Or if they had heard it, then he did not doubt but they clearly apprehended how little he understood these things; or, that if he did understand them, he knowingly dissembled it to his Auditors, not daring to own the Truth, as *Socrates* did in the face of Danger; an evident Argument, that he was  $\delta \phi \iota \lambda \acute{\omicron} \sigma \omicron \phi \omicron$ , ἀλλὰ φιλόδοξος, not a *Philosopher*, but a Slave to popular Applause and Glory.

*J. Mart.*  
*Ap. 2. (seu*  
*verius 1.)*  
*p. 56, &*  
*p. 55.*

Secondly, They did in some sort confess the Charge, That according to the vulgar Notion which the *Heathens* had of their *Deities*, they were *Atheists*, i. e. *Strangers and Enemies to them*; That the Gods of the Gentiles were at best but *Dæmons*, impure and unclean Spirits, who had long imposed upon Mankind, and by their Villanies, Sophistries, and Arts of Terror, had so affrighted the common People, who knew not really what they were, and who judge of things more by Appearance than by Reason, that they called them Gods, and gave to every one of them that Name, which the *Dæmon* was willing to take to himself: And that they really were nothing but Devils, fallen and apostate Spirits, the *Christians* evidently manifested at every turn, forcing them

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to the confessing it, while by Prayer, and invoking the Name of the true God, they drove them out of possess'd Persons; and therefore they trembled to encounter with a *Christian*, as *Octavius* triumphingly tells *Cæcilius*: That they entertained the most absurd and fabulous Notions of their Gods, and usually ascribed such things to them as would be accounted an horrible *Shame* and *Dishonour* to any wise and good Man; the Worship and mysterious Rites of many of them being so brutish and filthy, that the honest and severer *Romans* were ashamed on't, and therefore over-turned their Altars, and banished them out of the Roll of their Deities, tho' their degenerate Posterity took them in again, as *Tertullian* observes; their Gods themselves so impure and beastly, their Worship so obscene and detestable, that *Julius Firmicus* advises them to turn their *Temples* into *Theatres*, where the Secrets of their Religion may be delivered in *Scenes*, and to make their *Players Priests*, and that the common Rout may sing the *Amours*, the Sports and Pastimes, the Wantonnesses and Impieties of their Gods; no Places being so fit for such a Religion as they. Besides the attributing to them *Human Bodies*, with many Blemishes and Imperfections, and Subjection to the Miseries of Human Life, and to the Laws of Mortality; they could not deny them to have been guilty of the most horrid and prodigious Villanies and Enormities, Revenge and Murder, Incest and Luxury, Drunkenness and Intemperance, Theft and unnatural Rebellion against their Parents, and such like; of which their own Writings were full almost in every Page; which served only to corrupt and debauch the Minds and Manners of Youth; as *Octavius* tells his Adversary, where he pursues this Argument at large, with great Eloquence and Reason. Nay, those among them

Chap. I

Pag. 23.

Apol. c. 7.  
p. 7.  
De Err.  
Prof. Relig. p. 9.

Min. Fel.  
p. 19. Vid.  
Arnob.  
adv. Gent.  
l. 1. p. 7.


Part I. that were most *inquisitive* and *serious*, and that entertained more abstract and refined Apprehensions of things than the common People, yet could not agree in any fit and rational Notion of a Deity; some ridiculously affirming one thing, and some another, till they were divided into a hundred different Opinions, and all of them farther distant from the *Truth*, than they were from one another; the Vulgar, in the mean while, making Gods of the most brutish Objects, such as Dogs, Cats, Wolves, Goats, Hawks, Dragons, Beetles, Crocodiles, &c. This *Origen* against *Celsus* particularly charges upon the *Ægyptians*; *When you approach* (says he) *their sacred Places, they have glorious Groves and Chappels, Temples with goodly Gates, and stately Portico's, and many mysterious and religious Ceremonies; but when once you are entred, and got within their Temples, you shall see nothing but a Cat or an Ape, or a Crocodile, or a Goat, or a Dog, worshipped with the most solemn Veneration.* Nay, they deified senseless and inanimate things, that had no Life or Power to help themselves, much less their *Worshippers*; Herbs, Roots, and Plants; nay *unmanly and degenerate Passions*, Fear, Paleness, &c. fell down before Stumps and Statues, which owed all their Divinity to the Cost and Folly of their Votaries, despised and trampled on by the forriest Creatures, Mice, Swallows, &c. who are wont to build Nests in the very *Mouth* of their Gods, and Spiders to *perriwig* their Heads with *Cobwebs*; being forced first to *make them*, and then *make them clean*, and to *defend* and *protect* them, that they might *fear* and *worship* them, as he in *Minutius* wittily derides them; *in whose Worship there are* (says he) *many things that justly deserve to be laugh'd at, and others that call for Pity and Compassion.* And what wonder now, if the *Christians* were not in the least ashamed to be called *Atheists*, with respect

*Vid. Min. Fel. p. 15, 16.*

*Adv. Cels. l. 3. p. 121.*

*Vid. Athanas. Orat. cont. Gent.*

*Min. Fel. p. 20.*

respect to such Deities, and such a Religion, as **Chap. 13**  
this was? 

Thirdly, in the strict and proper Notion of *Atheism* they no less truly than confidently denied the Charge, and appealed to their severest Adversaries whether those who owned such Principles as they did, could reasonably be styled *Atheists*. None ever pleaded better and more irrefragable Arguments for the Existence of a Supreme Infinite Being, who made and governs all things by Infinite Wisdom and Almighty Power; none ever more ready to produce a most clear and candid *confession* of their Faith, as to this grand Article of Religion, than they. Although we profess ourselves *Atheists*, with respect to those whom you esteem and repute to be Gods (*so their Apologist tells the Senate*) yet not in respect of the true God; the Parent and Fountain of Wisdom and Righteousness, and all other Excellencies and Perfections, who is infinitely free from the least Contagion or Spot of Evil: *Him*, and his *only begotten Son* (who instructed us and the whole Society of good Angels in these Divine Mysteries) and the *Spirit of Prophecy*, we worship and adore, honouring them in Truth, and with the highest Reason, and ready to communicate these things to any one that's willing to learn them, as we ourselves have received them. Can we then be *Atheists*, who **ib. p. 60;** worship the great *Creator* of this World, not with Blood, Incense, and Offerings, (which we are sufficiently taught he stands in no need of) but exalt him according to our Power, with Prayers and Praises, in all the Addresses we make to him; believing this to be the only Honour that is worthy of him, not to consume the Creatures which he has given us for our use and the comfort of those that want, in the fire by Sacrifice; but to approve ourselves thankful to him, and to sing and celebrate **Rational Hymns and Sacrifices, pouring out our**  
**C Prayers**

*F. Mar-*  
*tyr. Ap. 13*  
*p. 36,*

Part I. Prayers to him as a grateful Return for those many good things which we have received, and do yet expect from him, according to the Faith and Trust that we have in him. To the same

*Athen. leg. pro Christian. p. 5.* purpose *Athenagoras*, in his Return to his Charge: *Diagoras* indeed (says he) was guilty of the deepest Atheism and Impiety; but we, who separate

God from all material Being, and affirm him to be Eternal and Unbegotten, but all Matter to be made and corruptible, how unjustly are we branded with Impiety? It's true, did we side with *Diagoras* in denying a Divinity, when there are so many and such powerful Arguments from the Creation and Government of the World to convince us of the Existence of God and Religion, then both the Guilt and Punishment of *Atheism* might deservedly be put upon us. But when our Religion acknowledges one God, the Maker of the Universe, who being uncreate himself, created all things by his Word, we are manifestly

*L. 1. p. 7.* wrong'd both in Word and Deed; both in being charged with it, and in being punished for it. We are accused (says *Arnobius*) for introducing Prophane Rites, and an Impious Religion; but tell me, O ye Men of Reason, how dare you make so rash a Charge? To adore the mighty God, the Sovereign of the whole Creation, the Governor of the highest Powers, to pray to him with the most obsequious Reverence; under an Afflicted State to lay hold of him with all our Powers, to love him, and to look up to him; is this a dismal and detestable Religion, a Religion full of Sacrilege and Impiety, destroying and defiling all ancient Rites? Is this that bold and prodigious Crime, for which your Gods are so angry with us, and for which you yourselves do so rage against us, confiscating our Estates, banishing our Persons, burning, tearing, and racking us to Death with such

ex.

exquisite Tortures? *We Christians* are nothing else but the Worshipers of the supreme King and Governor of the World, according as we are taught by *Christ our Master*; search, and you'll find nothing else in our Religion: This is the Sum of the whole affair, this is the End and Design of our Divine Offices; before him it is that we are wont to prostrate and bow ourselves, him we worship with common and conjoined Devotions, from him we beg those things which are just and honest, and such as are not unworthy of him to hear and grant. So little Reason had the Enemies of *Christianity* to brand it with the Note of *Atheism* and *Irreligion*.

## C H A P. II.

## Of the Novelty that was charged upon Christianity.

*Christianity excepted and cryed out against as a late Novel Doctrine. This a common Charge; continued when Christianity had been some hundred of Years in the World. Christianity greatly prejudiced by this Charge. Men loth to forsake the Religion of their Ancestors. What the Christians answered to it: Christian Religion the same in Substance and Effect with that of the ancient Jews; in that respect, by far the Oldest Religion in the World; prov'd and urg'd by Tertullian, Cl. Alexandrinus, Eusebius, &c. Its Lateness and Novelty no real Prejudice to Rational and Unbias'd Men. The Folly and Vanity of adhering to absurd and unreasonable Customs*



Part. I.



and Principles, because Ancient; and of refusing to change Opinions for the better. An Objection; If Christ and Christianity were so great Blessings to Mankind, why was it so long before God revealed them? Answered out of Arnobius.

**T**His Artifice proving weak and ineffectual, the next Charge was its Lateness and Novelty, that is, was an upstart Sect, and but of Yesterday's standing, not known in the World many Years before; whereas the Religion of the Gentiles had uncontrollably and almost universally obtained from Ages and Generations: A Doctrine newly sprung up, and come, as 'twere, from a far Country, *οὐκ ἐστὶν ἡμεῶν λόγος*, as 'tis in *Theophilus Antiochenus*; a Divorce, or rending themselves from the Institutions of their Ancestors, as *Tertullian* has it. This Charge began betimes: When *S. Paul* preached at *Athens*, we find this the first thing charged upon him, *That he was a Setter forth of strange Gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection*; and it was followed with a loud Cry in succeeding times. You are wont to object to us (says *Arnobius*) that our Religion is novel, started up not many Days ago, and that you ought not to desert your ancient way, and the Religion of your Country to espouse barbarous and foreign Rites. And *Eusebius* tells us, the Heathens were wont to reason thus: What strange Profession of Religion is this? What new way of Life, wherein we can neither discern the Rites amongst us us'd in *Greece*, nor amongst any Sect of the *Barbarians*? Who can deny them to be *impious*, who have forsaken the Customs of their Fathers, observed before in all Cities and Countries, revolting from a way of Worship which had been universal-ly

Lib. 3. p. 119. B. Ad Natio. l. 1. c. 10. p. 46.

Acts 17. 18.

L. 2. p. 40.

Prepar. Evang. l. 1. c. 2. p. 5.

ly received from all Ages, both by *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, entertained both in Cities and Villages, countenanced and approved by the common Vote and Consent of all *Kings, Law-makers, Philosophers*, and the greatest Persons whatsoever. Nay, we may observe, that after *Christianity* had been settled for some hundreds of Years in the World, and was become the prevailing Religion, and had in a manner banished all others out of Doors, and driven them into Corners, yet this Charge still continued. Thus *Julian* the Emperor, writing to the People of *Alexandria* concerning the *Galilaans* (so he was wont in scorn to call the Christians) that he wondered that any of them durst dwell amongst them, or that they would suffer these Despisers of the Religion of their Country to be in any Place amongst them; calls *Christianity*, the *new Doctrine* that had been preached to the World; the very same Title which *Lucian* had also long since bestowed upon it; where speaking of our *Saviour*, he calls him the Great Man that was crucified in *Palestine*, who introduced that *new Religion* into the World. So *Symmachus* some Years after *Julian* (a Man no less eminent for his *Parts* and *Eloquence* than for his *Power* and *Authority*, being *Chief Priest* and *Prefect* of *Rome*) confidently owns to the *Emperors* themselves, (though they were *Christians*) that he did endeavour to defend the Institutions of their Ancestors, the settled Rites and Laws of the Country, (he means those of Religion) that he design'd to settle that State of Religion, which for so many Ages had been profitable to the Commonwealth; and therefore begs of them, that what they had received when they were Children, now they were old they might leave to their Posterity; that they were to be true to the Trust that had from so many Ages been devolved upon them, and were to follow their Parents, as they had happily done their

Chap. 2.

Ep. 51.  
oper. Jul.  
part. 2.  
p. 208.

De mort.  
Peregrin.  
tom. 2.  
p. 762.

Symmach.  
ep. lib. 10.  
ep. 54. ad  
Valent.  
Theod. Arc.  
cad. A. A.  
A. p. 537.

Pag. 538.

Pag. 539.

Part. I. Ancestors, that had gone before them. So he, pleading the Cause of *Paganism* from its *Antiquity* and *Prescription*, obliquely reflecting upon the *Novellism* of *Christianity*, for more he durst not speak; the Emperors (to whom he made his Address) being themselves *Christians*. This indeed must needs be a mighty *Prejudice* against the *Christian Religion* at its first coming into the World; for all Men, as they have a natural *Reverence* for Religion, so they have a great *Veneration* for Antiquity, the Customs and Traditions of their Fathers, which they entertain as a most inestimable *Depositum*, and for which they look upon themselves as obliged to contend, as for that which is most Solemn and Sacred. What more excellent and venerable (says the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) than to entertain the Discipline of our Fore-Fathers, to solemnize that Religion which has been delivered to us; to worship those Gods, the Knowledge of whom has been infused into us by our Parents; not boldly to determine concerning the Deities, but to believe those who have been before us. To the same Purpose, *Lactantius* speaking of the Heathens, they go on (says he) most pertinaciously to maintain and defend the Religion derived down to them from their Ancestors, not so much considering what they are, as concluding them to be right and good, because the Ancients conveyed them to them; nay, so great is the Power and Authority of Antiquity, that it is accounted a kind of *Impiety* to question it, or enquire into it. Upon these Accounts the *Gemiles* bore so hard upon *Christianity*, beholding it as a *Mushroom-Sett*, sprung up of a sudden, and as an incroaching Inmate, undermining the Established Religion of the World.

Now we find two Pleas especially, which the *Christians* made to this Indictment.

First,

First, That the Charge was not wholly and uni-  
 versally true : For besides that many Principles of  
*Christianity* were the same with that of the *Law of*  
*Nature*; the *Christian Religion* was for Substance the  
 same with that of the ancient *Jews*, whose Reli-  
 gion claimed the Precedency of all others in the  
 World. That the Religion was in Substance and  
 Effect the same, is expressly asserted and proved by  
*Eusebius*. The ancient *Patriarchs* were the *Christi-*  
*ans* of the old World, who had the same Faith, Re-  
 ligion and Worship common with us, nay, the same  
 Name too, as he endeavours to prove from that,  
*Touch not mine Anointed*,  $\text{Ὁς Χριστὸν μὲν}$ , *my Christs*,  
 or *Christians*: And how far superiour in Age they  
 were to any thing that's recorded of the most *An-*  
*cient Gentiles*, to their oldest Writers, *Orpheus*, *Ho-*  
*mer*, *Hesiod*, nay to their very Gods themselves, is  
 sufficiently made good by many of the Ancient Fa-  
 thers; there being, at the easiest Computation, be-  
 tween *Moses* and *Homer*, above 600 Years: Nay,  
*Cadmus* (the first Inventor of Letters among the  
*Grecians*) was some Ages *Junior* to *Moses*. There-  
 fore *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that *Moses* and the Prophets  
 were not only more Ancient than *Plato*, but than  
*Homer* himself; yea, than the very Invention of  
 Letters among the *Grecians*, who yet were as proud  
 of their *Antiquity*, as any other Nation in the  
 World. Nay, whatever useful and excellent No-  
 tions the great *Masters* of Religion amongst the  
*Heathens* had amongst them, 'tis plain they borrow-  
 ed, or more truly, *stole* them, from the Writings of  
 the Ancient *Jews*, as is abundantly demonstrated  
 by *Eusebius* at large; as before him it had been  
 done by *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and by *Tertullian*  
 before them both; who shews, that all their *Poets*,  
 and *Philosophers* had drunk deep of the *Fountain* of  
 the Prophets, and had forced their best *Doctrines*  
 and *Opinions* from thence, tho' subtilly altering  
 and

Chap. 2  


*Demonstr. Evang.*  
 l. 1. c. 5.  
 p. 2, &c.

*Vid. Athen. leg. pro Christianis,*  
 p. 16.

*Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 1.*

*Adv. Cels. l. 6. p. 279.*

*Prepar. Evang. l. 10. tot.*

*Cl. Alex. Strom. l. 1. p. 320.*

*Tert. Ap. c. 47. Vide Theod. de curand.*

*Gr. Affect. Serm. 2. de princip.*

Part I. and disguising them, to make them look more like their own. So that upon this Consideration, the Accusation was unjust and false, and *Christianity* appears the Oldest Religion in the World.

Secondly, Admit the *Christian* Religion in a more limited and restrained Sense, to be of a far *later* Standing than the Religion of the *Gentiles*; yet they pleaded that it was infinitely reasonable, that they should change for the better, whenever it offered itself to them; that *Novel Truth* was better than *Ancient Error*, and that they ought not to be eternally bound up in old inveterate Customs and Principles, when those which were abundantly more reasonable and satisfactory were presented to them. You tell us (says *Clemens Alex.*) that you may not subvert the Customs receiv'd from your Ancestors: But if so, why then are we not content without any other *Food* than our *Mother's Milk* to which we were accustomed when we first came into the World? Why do we *increase* or *impair* our Estates, and not rather keep them at the same Pitch just as we received them from our Fathers? Why have we left off those Toys and Sports, to which we were wonted while Infants and Children, but only because Years and Discretion (altho' we had no other Tutor) would make us quit those childish and trifling Vanities? That old Age ( says S. *Ambrose* ) has true cause to blush, that is ashamed to *reform*. 'Tis not *Multitude of Years*, but the *Goodness of Manners* that makes gray Hairs worthy of Praise and Honour. No Age is too late to learn, nor is it Shame to grow better. What wilt thou do (says *Lactantius* to the Heathen) wilt thou follow *Reason* or thy *Ancestors*? If Reason, then thou must needs relinquish the Authority and Institutions of thy Forefathers, because that way only can be right, that is warranted and prescribed by Reason: But if Piety

*Admonit.  
ad Gent.  
p. 57.*

*Ambr. ep.  
2. contr.  
Symmach.  
inter Ep.  
Symmach.  
p. 562.  
Lact. loco  
supra lau-  
dato.*

Piety towards thine Ancestors sway with thee to follow them, thou must confess both that they were Fools in devoting themselves to a Religion contrary to Reason, and that thou thyself art unwise and simple in worshipping what thou art convinced to be false: Besides, that they had little Reason to boast of those goodly Ancestors, to whom they adhered so close, and upon whose Authority they did so much depend; as he goes on to demonstrate in the remaining Part of that Chapter. That you object to us the Novelty of our Religion (so *Arnobius*) may we not charge some such Fault upon the first and most ancient Ages of the World, who at first lived in a very poor and mean State; but by little and little changed it into a more liberal and splendid Course of Life? Was it any Crime that they changed their *Beasts Skins* into more comely and convenient *Garments*, or that they were no longer fond of their *thatched Cottages*, or chose to dwell like wild Beasts in *Rocks and Caverns*, when they had learnt to build better *Habitations*? 'Tis natural to all Mankind to prefer better before what is worse, profitable before what is useless, and to seek after what we are assured is more grateful and excellent. Therefore when you charge us with Apostasy from the Religion of the Ancients, you should rather consider the *Cause* than the *Action*, and not so much upbraid us with what we have left, as examine what it is we have *entertained*. For if merely to change our Opinion, and to pass from ancient Institutions to what's more late and new, be a Fault and Crime, then none so guilty of the Charge as yourselves, who have so oft changed your Manners and Course of Life, and by embracing new Rites and Customs, have condemned those that went before; which he there makes good by particular Instances. And the same Answer *S. Ambrose* gives to

*Adv. Gent.*  
l. 2. p. 40,  
41.

**Part I.** to *Symmachus* : If nothing but ancient Rites will please you, how comes it to pass that there has been a Succession of new and foreign Rites even in *Rome* itself? Of which he gives him many particular Examples. In short, *Ambrose* wittily argues thus: *Our way of Religion* (you say) *is new, and yours ancient ; and what does this either hurt our Cause, or help yours ? If ours be new, 'twill in time become old. Is yours old ? There was a Time when it was new. The Goodness and Authority of Religion is not to be valued by length of Time, but by the Excellency of its Worship ; nor does it become us to consider so much when it began, as what it is we worship.*

*Ib. p. 43.* It may not be impertinent in this place to take notice of what the Heathens objected as a Branch of this Charge ; that if God's sending *Christ* into the World was so great a Blessing, why did this *Saviour* of Mankind come no sooner to reveal this Religion, to lead Men into the Truth, to tell the World who this true God was, and to reduce us to the Adoration of him ? If so, why did God suffer him to stay so long, and to be born (as 'twere) but a few hours before, in comparison of the preceding Ages of the World ? To this *Arnobius* answers, with a great deal of *Modesty* and *Reason*, that he could not tell ; that 'twere easy to retort the same captious Question upon them : If 'twere so much to the Benefit of the World, that *Hercules*, *Æsculapius*, *Mercury*, &c. should be Gods, why were they born and deify'd no sooner, that not only Posterity but Antiquity might have reap'd Advantage by them ? If there was Reason in one Case, then there was also in the other ; but to assign proper and particular Reasons, was not possible ; it not being within the Power of such a short-sighted Creature as Man is, to fathom the Depth of the Divine Counsels, or to discover by what Ways or Methods he disposes his Affairs ; these things being known only

*Vid. Greg. Nyss. Orat. Catechet. c. 29. Tom. 2. p. 521.*

ly to him who is the grand Parent, the Sovereign Lord and Governor of all Things: That altho' we are not able to assign the Cause why a Thing comes to pass in this or that particular Manner, yet this concludes never a whit the more that the Thing is not so, or that it is less credible, when it has otherwise the most clear and unquestionable Evidence and Demonstration. More particularly he answers, that our *Saviour* cannot be said to have been lately sent in respect of God, because in respect of Eternity there is nothing late; where there is neither *beginning* nor *end*, there can be nothing *too soon*, nothing *too late*. Time indeed is transacted by Parts and Terms, but these have no place in a perpetual and uninterrupted *Series* of eternal Ages. What if that State of Things, to which he came to bring Relief, required that Season of time to come in? What if the Condition of ancient and modern Times were in this Case not alike, or called for somewhat different Methods of Cure? It may be, the great God then chose to send *Christ*, when the State of Mankind was more *broken* and *shatter'd*, and human Nature become more weak and unable to help itself. This we are sure of, that if what so lately came to pass had been necessary to have been done some thousands of Years ago, the Supreme Creator would have done it; or had it been necessary to have been done thousands of Years hence, nothing could have forced God to have anticipated the settled Periods of Time one Moment: For all his Actions are managed by fix'd and eternal Reasons, and what he has once determined, cannot be frustrated by any Change or Alteration. And thus we see how easily, and yet how satisfactorily the *Primitive Christians* wiped off that double Imputation of *Impiety* and *Novelty*, which the *Gentiles* had so undeservedly cast upon their Religion.



Things charged upon the Christians respecting their outward Condition.

*The Christians looked upon, and despised by the Heathens, as a Company of rude and illiterate Persons, Mechanicks, silly Women and Children. This Charge consider'd and largely answer'd by Origen. Christianity provides for the truest and best Knowledge; it excludes none, learned or unlearned. Christians not shy of communicating the Knowledge of their Mysteries to Men sober and inquisitive. The Efficacy of Christianity in prevailing upon Men of the acutest Parts and greatest Learning. The Christians accused for being poor and mean. This Charge (universally) false. Christianity entertained by Persons of all Sorts, of the highest as well as the lowest Rank. Several Instances of such: Fl. Clemens and Fl. Domitilla (Domitian's near Kindred) Christians; another Domitilla, Domitian's Niece, Acil. Glabrio the Consul, Apollonius the Senator, and others. Philip the Emperor proved to be no Christian; the Rise of the Story whence. Tho' Christianity had had no such Persons under its Profession, this had been no just or reasonable Prejudice. External Pomp and Grandeur not necessary to Religion. The Advantages Christians reaped from their Meanness and Contempt of the World. Of their being charged*

as

as a People useless and unserviceable to the Publick. This disown'd. The Opinion that it was not lawful for Christians to bear Arms or Offices, particular only to some Persons and in some Cases, and why. How much the World was beholden to Christians for reclaiming Men from Vice and Wickedness. The Gospel greatly instrumental that way; its general Influence upon those whom it did not convert: The Writings of Philosophers generally better after Christianity appear'd, and why. The excellent Prayer of Simplicius. Christians very useful by frequent working beneficial Miracles, curing Diseases, raising the Dead, dispossessing Devils, &c. This miraculous Power continued for several Ages in the Church. Christians farther traduced as pernicious to the World, as the Cause of all publick Evils and Calamities. This objected at every Turn. The Occasion of S. Augustine's and Orosius's writing a Vindication of it. This Charge justly retorted upon the Heathens, and they sent to seek the Cause of publick Calamities nearer home. Some few hinted by Tertullian. Christians unjustly charged with it, because the World was pester'd with such Evils before Christianity appear'd in it. The publick State better and more prosperous since Christianity than before. Its Prosperity ebb'd or increased according to the Entertainment Christianity found in the World.

## Part I.

**T**HE second sort of *Arts* which the *Enemies of Christianity* made use of, to render *Christians* vile and despicable, related to the *Circumstances of their External State and Condition in the World*; where two Things were laid to their Charge, that they generally were *a very mean and inconsiderable sort of Men*, and that they were *an uselefs and unserviceable People*, nay *pernicious and mischievous to the World*. They were looked upon as the *lowest and meanest Rank of Men*, Persons neither considera-

*Adv. Gent.*  
*l. 3. p. 49.*  
*Orig. cont.*

ble for their *Parts and Learning*, nor for their *Estates and Quality*. Inconsiderable they were accounted in respect of *Parts and Learning*: *You scorn and spit us out as rude and simple, and think that the*

*Cels. l. 3.*  
*p. 137.*

*Treasury of all Divine and Excellent Knowledge is open only to yourselves*, as *Arnobius* tells them. Thus *Celsus* objected, that amongst the *Christians* no wise and learned Men were admitted to the *Mysterics* of their Religion. Let no Man come that is learned, wise and prudent; for these Things (says he) they account evil and unlawful; but if any be unlearned, an Infant or an Idiot, let him come and welcome; openly declaring, that none but Fools, and such as are devoid of Sense and Reason, Slaves, silly Women and little Children are fit

*ib. p. 141.*

*Disciples for the God they worship*. We may observe (says he) these trifling and *Mountebank Impostors*, bragging great things to the Vulgar, not in the Presence and Company of wise Men (for that they dare not) but where-ever they espy a Flock of Boys, Slaves, and weak simple People, there they presently croud in, and boast themselves. You

*pag. 144.*

shall see (as he goes on in this Charge) *Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most rustick and illiterate Fellows, at home, when before their Elders and Betters, as mute as Fishes; but when they can get a few Children and silly Women by themselves, then*

then who so wise and learned, who so full of Talk, and so able to teach and instruct as they? Much to this purpose, *Cæcilius* discourses in *Minutius Felix*, that the *Christians* were Men of a desperate and unlawful Faction, who gathering a Company out of the very Dregs and Refuse of the People, of silly, easy, credulous Women, who by reason of the Weakness of their Sex, are easily imposed and wrought upon, combine them into a wicked Confederation; a People mute in publick, but in Corners Talkative and full of Prattle. Now to this Part of the Accusation *Origen* answers, That 'tis for the main false, and proceeds from the Spirit of Malice and Reproach. The Sum of his Answer, as he delivers it to the several Parts of the Charge, take thus: That the *Christian Doctrine* invites, and calls Men to Wisdom, as appears both from the Writings of the *Jews* of old, and the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, wherein we find many singularly eminent for Wisdom and Learning, *Moses*, *Solomon*, *Daniel*, and such like of old, and the blessed *Jesus* made Choice of such Disciples, as whom he judged fittest to communicate the Secrets of his Religion to, and privately open'd and explain'd to them, what he only deliver'd in Parables and Similitudes unto others; that he promised to send forth Prophets, wise Men and Scribes, for the divulging and propagating of his Doctrine; that *S. Paul* reckons *Wisdom* and *Knowledge* in the first Rank of the Gifts of God; and that if he any where seem to reflect severely upon Wisdom or human Learning, (which probably may be the first rise of this Charge) he only censures the Abuse, never intending to blame the thing itself; that when he prescribes the Property of a true Bishop, or Governor of the Church, he requires this as one necessary Qualification, That he be apt to teach, and able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and to convince the Gainsayers.

Chap. 3.

Min. Fel. p. 7.

pag. 137. & seq.

Mat. 23. 34.

1 Cor. 12. 8.

Tit. 1. 9.

That

Part I.

That we are so far from prohibiting any, that come who will, Wise, Learned and Prudent, provided the Rude, Simple and Unlearned be not excluded; for to them also the Gospel does promise and provide a Remedy, making them meet for God. That no Man but must confess that 'tis an excellent thing to study the best Arts and Discipline, and that Learning, the Study of Arts and Prudence, are so far from being an Hindrance to the Knowledge of God, that they mightily help it and advance it. That it's a great Calumny to compare us to *wandering Impostors*, who by our reading and expounding the Divine Oracles, do only exhort the People to *Piety* towards the great God, and to the rest of those *Vertues* which are its individual Companions; endeavouring to rescue Men from a Contempt of the Deity, and all brutish and irregular Passions; a thing which the very best Philosophers of them all could wish for. That *Christians* are so far from admitting any hand overhead, that they first pre-examine the Minds of those that desire to become their Auditors; and having privately had Trial of them, before they receive them into the Congregation, when they perceive them fully resolved to lead a pious and religious Life, then they admit them in their distinct Orders; some that are newly admitted, but not yet *baptized*; others that have given some Evidence and Demonstration of their purpose to live as becomes *Christians*; amongst whom there are *Governors* appointed to inspect and enquire into the Life and Manners of those who have been admitted, that they may expel and turn off those *Candidates* of Religion who answer not their Profession, and heartily entertain those that do, and by daily Converse build them up and make them better. That it's false to say that we apply ourselves only to *Women* and *Children*, and that in  
Corners,

*Corners*, when we endeavour what we can by all means to fill our Societies with Wise and Prudent Persons, and to such we open the more *sublime* and *recondite Principles* of Religion, otherwise accommodating our Discourses to the Capacities of meaner Persons, who stand more in need of *Milk* than *strong Meat*: That we desire that all Men may be trained up in the Word of God, and that Servants and Children may have such Instructions given them, as are suitable and convenient to them; the Ministers of our Religion professing themselves to be Debtors both to the *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, both to the *Wise* and to the *Unwise*, that as much as may be they may outgrow their Ignorance, and attain to the best kind of Wisdom: And whereas we are accused to seduce and circumvent *filly Women* and *little Children*, and to draw them away from more weighty and serious Counsels; let him produce any such, and enquire of them whether they ever heard better *Masters* than ours; or if they did, why they would leave so grave a Discipline, and suffer themselves to be seduced in a worse? But he'll find no such Thing to fasten upon us; but that, on the contrary, we reclaim *Women* from Immodesty, from falling out with their Husbands, and parting from them, from the wild Extravagancies of the Sports and Theatres, and from all Superstition whatsoever. The Youth, who are prone to Vice and Luxury, we restrain, by telling them not only how base and degenerate a thing it is to indulge their Lust, but into how much Danger they precipitate their Souls, and what Punishments the Divine Vengeance lays up for such profligate Offenders. We openly (not in *Corners*) promise Eternal Happiness to those who live according to the Rules of the Divine Law, who set God always before their Eyes, and whatever they do, endeavour to approve themselves to him: And

Part I. is this the *Discipline*, these the *Doctrines* of Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most rustick and illiterate Persons? Surely no. If at any time we refuse to produce our Instructions and Counsels before *Masters of Families*, or the *Doctors of Philosophy*, know, that if they be studious of *Vertue*, Enemies to *Vice*, and such as breathe after the best Things, before such we are most willing and ready to instruct our Youth, being well assured we shall find them favourable Judges. But if they be Enemies to Goodness and Vertue, and Opposers of sound wholesome Doctrine, then if we hold our peace, no Fault can justly be laid upon us: For in such Circumstances the Philosophers themselves would not discover the Dictates and Mysteries of their Philosophy. This is the *Substance* of the several Answers, which *Origen* pursues more at large through several Pages: Which, though very rational and satisfactory, yet we find something pleaded more direct and positive to the Charge; *viz.* That although amongst the *Christians* (as 'tis in any Society of Men) the vulgar and more common sort might not be Men of the sharpest Understanding or vers'd in the more polite Arts of Learning, yet wanted they not (and those no small Number) great *Scholars*, Men of acute Parts, and raised Abilities, such as had run thro' the whole *Circle of the Sciences*, who daily came over to them. So *Arnobius*, urging the triumphant Power and Efficacy which the Christian Faith had over the Minds of Men, Who (says he) would not believe it, when he sees in how short a time it has conquered so great a part of the World; when Men of so great Wit and Parts, *Orators*, *Grammarians*, *Rhetoricians*, *Lawyers*, *Physicians*, and *Philosophers*, have thrown up those former Sentiments, of which but a little before they were so tenacious, and have embraced the Doctrine of the Gospel? So fast did the *Christian Church* fill with

*Adv. Gent.*  
l. 2: p. 21.

with the most eminent Professors of all parts of Learning that were then known to the World: Chap. 31

Nor were the *Christians* of those times more despised upon the account of their *Weakness* and *Ignorance*, than they were for their *Meanness* and *Poverty*. They were looked upon as *de ultima face*, as the *Scum* and *Refuse* of the People, scarce a considerable Man to be found amongst them. See (says the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) the most and best of all your Party are a *poor, beggarly, hunger-starved* Generation, that have neither Riches nor Reputation to bear them out. This Charge (however impertinent, seeing the *Goodness* of any Religion depends not upon the *Greatness* of its Professors) was yet as *untrue* as 'twas *unreasonable*; the *Christians* having amongst them Persons of the choicest Place and Quality, and after some Years, the Princes and Potentates of the World, and even the *Emperors* themselves struck sail to the *Scepter of Christ*. When *Scapula*, the *President* of *Carthage*, threaten'd the *Christians* with severe and cruel Usage, *Tertullian* bids him bethink himself: What wilt thou do (says he) with so many thousands of Men and Women of every Sex, Age, and Dignity, as will freely offer themselves? What *Fires*, what *Swords* wilt thou stand in Need of? What is *Carthage* itself like to suffer, if *decimated* by thee; when every one shall find there his near Kindred and Neighbours, and shall see there *Matrons*, and Men perhaps of thine own Rank and Order, and the most principal Persons, and either the Kindred or Friends of those who are thy own nearest Friends? Spare them therefore for *your own sake*, if not for *ours*. And if there were Persons of such Quality in *Africk* (so remote and in a manner so barbarous a Province) what may we suppose there were in *Rome* itself, and other Cap. 37  
p. 303

D 2 speaking

Pag. 91

Ad Scap.  
c. 4. p. 71.



Part I.



Lib. 10.  
Ep. 97.

speaking of the vast spreading of the Party, Tho' (says he) we be Men of quite another way, yet have we filled all places among you; your *Cities, Islands, Castles, Corporations, Councils*, nay, your *Armies* themselves, your *Tribes, Companies*, yea the *Palace, the Senate, and the Courts of Justice*; only your *Temples* we have left you free. Sure I am, *Pliny*, in his Letter to the *Emperor*, tells him, That *Christianity* had not only over-run City and Country, but it had infected many of every Sex, Age, and Order of Men.

Lib. 67. in  
Domit.  
p. 776.

And indeed, it were no hard matter, out of the ancient *Histories* and *Martyrologies* of the Church, nay from the *Heathen* Writers themselves, to prove, that Persons of the highest Rank and Quality (even in those Times) embraced *Christianity*, and seal'd it with their Blood. Of which, it may suffice to give an account only of some few. Not to insist upon the *Saints*, which *S. Paul* tells us were in *Nero's* Palace, we find many considerable Persons, and some of them near a-kin to the *Emperor* under the Reign of *Domitian*, (that cruel Prince and Persecutor of *Christians*) entertaining the Profession of the *Gospel*. And first let us hear the Account which *Dion Cassius*, the famous Historian, gives us: He tells us, That about the latter end of *Domitian's* Reign he condemned many (some whereof were slain, others stripped of their Estates) and amongst the rest *Flavius Clemens* the *Consul*, his own Cousin-German, and his Wife *Flavia Domitilla*, near a-kin also to the *Emperor*, upon Pretence of *Atheism* (*ἑτερόχρηστος ἑγκλημα ἀθεΐας*) and for that they had embraced the Rites and Religion of the *Jews*. His Nephew *Clemens* he put to Death, his Wife *Domitilla* he banish'd into the Island *Pandateria*. Upon the same Account also he put to Death *Acilius Glabrio*, who together with *Trajan* had been *Consul* the year before. That

That the Persons here described were *Christians*, is plain, partly from the Charge of *Atheism* here fastened upon them, (the common and familiar Accusation, and the Title given to *Christianity* by the Heathens, as we observed before) and partly because they are said to have passed over to the Rites and Customs of the *Jews*; nothing being more ordinary in the Historians of those times, than to mistake *Christians* for *Jews*, and to call them so, because both proceeded out of the same Country; *Christ* himself and his *Apostles* being *Jews* born, and his Religion first publish'd and planted there. And that which may give some more Countenance to this is, that *Suetonius*, speaking of *Domitian's* condemning this *Fl. Clemens*, represents him as a Man *contemptissima inertia*, as a most contemptibly dull and sluggish Person; which we know was generally charged upon the *Christians*, that they were an *useless* and *unactive* People, as we shall have occasion by and by more particularly to remark. Besides this, *Flavia Domitilla*, the Wife of *Clemens*, there was another of the same Name, his Niece by the Sister's side (unless *Dion Cassius* mistook, and put down *Wife* for *Niece*, which there's no Reason to suppose, seeing both may very well consist together) who (as *Eusebius* informs us) was with many more banish'd by *Domitian* in the Fifteenth Year of his Reign into the Island *Pontia*, and there put to Death for the Profession of *Christianity*; whose Persecutions and Martyrdoms (says he) are recorded by Heathen Writers themselves: Amongst whom (I suppose) he principally intends *Brettius* or *Brutius* the Historian, whom he cites elsewhere, and out of whom he there quotes this very Passage; That under *Domitian* many of the *Christians* suffer'd Martyrdom, amongst whom was *Fl. Domitilla*, Niece by the Sister's side to *Fl. Clemens* the Consul; who for being a *Christian*

In Domitian.  
an. c. 15.  
p. 803.

Hist. Eccl.  
l. 3. c. 18.  
p. 89.

Can.  
Chron.  
ad An.  
Chr. 97.  
p. 208. &  
Chron.  
p. 80. Edit.  
Grac.

Part I. *stian* was banish'd into the Island Pontia. She is said, after a great deal of hard and tedious Usage, to have been burnt, together with the House wherein she was: Her Memory celebrated in the Roman Kalendar upon the 7th of May.

Martyr.  
Rom. ad  
7 Maii.

Besides these, we find that *Christianity* getting ground under the quiet Reign of the Emperor *Commodus*, many of the greatest Birth and Fortunes in *Rome*, together with their whole Families, flock'd over to the *Christian* Faith. Amongst whom was *Apollonius*, a Man famous for Philosophy, and all polite human Literature, who so gallantly pleaded his Cause before the *Senate*, and was himself a *Senator*, as *S. Hierom* informs us. I shall but mention one Instance more, and that is

Euseb. l. 5.  
c. 21.  
p. 189.

De Script.  
Ecccl. in  
Apol.

L. 6. c. 34.  
p. 232.

Act. Pont.  
apud Sur.  
ad 14  
Maii,  
tom. 3.

of *Philip* the Emperor, whom *Eusebius* expressly affirms to have been a *Christian*, and the first of the Emperors that was so, follow'd herein by a whole Troop both of ancient and modern Writers. Nay, we are told by some a formal Story, that this *Philip* and his Son were converted by the Preaching of *Pontius* the Martyr, and baptized by *Fabian*, Bishop of *Rome*. But notwithstanding the Smoothness of the Story, and the Number of Authorities, I must confess it seems to me scarcely probable, that a Person of so bad a Life, guilty of such enormous Villanies, as that Emperor was, should either be, or be thought a *Christian*; or if he was, that the whole World should not presently ring of it. Certain I am, that all Historians of that Time are wholly silent in the Case; nor is there the least Intimation of any such thing in any Writer, either *Heathen* or *Christian*, before *Eusebius*. Nay *Origen*, who wrote his Book in Defence of *Christianity* under the Reign of this very Emperor, and about this very Time (nay, and two Epistles, one to *Philip*, the other to his Wife *Severa*, if we may believe *Eusebius*) yet not only makes no Men-  
tion

tion of it, when it would have made greatly for his purpose, but tacitly implies there was no such thing. For *Celsus* reproving the *Boldness* and *Petulance* of the *Christians*, as if they should give out, that if they could but bring over the present *Emperors* to their Religion, all other Men would quickly be brought over; *Origen* point-blank denies the Charge, and tells him there's no need of any Answer, for that none of the *Christians* ever said so. An Answer which surely he would not have given, had the *Emperor* at that time been a *Christian*: Not to insist upon many other Intimations which might be produced out of that Book against it. Besides, *Eutropius* reports, that *Philip* and his *Son* being slain by the Soldiers, were yet *inter Divos relati, deify'd*, or advanced into the Number of their *Gods*: An Honour which 'tis certain the *Senate* would not have done them, had they either been, or but suspected to have been *Christians*. To all which I may add, that *Eusebius* himself (in whom the first Foot-steps of this Story appear) builds it upon no better a Foundation than a *καθη- χου λόγος*, a bare *Tradition* and *Report*. That which seems to have given both Birth and Colour to the Story, is this: One *Philippus*, an *Illustrious Person* under the Emperor *Severus*, was a long time *Governor* of *Egypt*; he, by the Means of his Daughter *Eugenia*, was converted to *Christianity*, under whose Shelter the *Christians* there enjoy'd great Peace and Favour; (nay the Story adds, tho' certainly without any Ground, that he was created *Bishop* of *Alexandria*) till the Emperor, being acquainted with his being a *Christian*, presently removed him, and by the Help of his Successor *Terentius*, caused him to be secretly murder'd and made away. This (if any thing) was the Rise of the Story; and that which makes it more probable is, the Honour and Excellency of that Employment, the

Chap. 3.

Adv. Cels. l. 8. p. 425.

Hist. Rom. l. 9. non longe ab init.

L. 7. c. 34.

Martyr. Eugen. apud Sur. ad 25. Dec. Tom. 6.

## Part I.

greatest of all the Offices in the *Roman Empire*, the Command and State little less than *Regal*; and therefore the Emperors, in their Letter to this *Philip*, (wherein they reproach him for *Ingratitude* and *Apostacy*) tell him, that in a manner he was made a *King*, when he was chosen *President* of *Egypt*. Accordingly the Title of the Governor of *Egypt* (as appears from the *Historians*, but especially of the *Notitii Imperii*) was *Præfectus Augustalis*: And how easy was it to mistake *Philippus Augustus*, for *Philippus Augustalis*? But enough of this, as also the Falseness of that Charge, that the *Christians* were such a *sorry inconsiderable* People.

But however, let us suppose them to have been as *mean* and *poor* as the Malice and Cruelty of their Adversaries did endeavour to make them; yet this was no real Prejudice to their Cause, nor any great hurt to them. That the most part of us are accused to be *poor* (*says Octavius in answer to Cæcilius's Charge*) 'tis not our *Dishonour*, but our *Glory*; the Mind, as 'tis dissolved by Plenty and Luxury, so 'tis strengthen'd and girt close by Indigence and Frugality: And yet how can that Man be *poor*, who *wants* not, who is not greedy of what's another Man's, who is rich in and towards God? That Man is rather *poor*, who when he has a *great deal*, desires *more*. The Truth is, no Man can be so poor, as he was when he was *born*: The *Birds* live without any Patrimony entail'd upon them, and the *Beasts* find Pastures every day; and yet these are born for our Use, all which we fully enjoy, when we do not *covet* them: Much *lighter* and *happier* does he go to Heaven, who is not *burden'd* by the Way with an *unnecessary* load of Riches: And yet did we think *Estates* so useful to us, we could beg them of God, who being the *Lord* of all, might well afford a little to us; but we had rather *despise* them than *enjoy* them, and rather



rather choose Innocency and Patience, desiring more to be *Good*, than to be *Great* and *Prodigal*. If we endure outward Sufferings and Tortures, 'tis not so much *Pain* as 'twas a *Warfare*; our Courage is increased by Infirmities, and Calamity is very often the *Discipline* of Vertue: The *Nerves* both of Body and Mind, without Exercise, would grow loose and faint; and therefore God is neither *unable* to help us, nor yet *negligent* of us, as being the Governor of the World and the *Father* of his Children; but *tries* and examines every one's Temper in an adverse State, as *Gold* is tried in the Fire. Besides, it must needs be a Sight very pleasing to God, to behold a *Christian* conflicting with Grief and Misery, preparing himself to *encounter* Threatnings and Torments, pressing in upon the very Noise of *Death* and the Horror of the Executioner, maintaining his Liberty against Kings and Princes, and only yielding to God, whose he wholly is, coming off from all the Attempts of Adversity with Victory and Triumph. So argues that *excellent Person*, (and who reads him in his *native* Language must confess it) with equal Strength of *Eloquence* and *Reason*; where he also briefly touches that *Objection* so common amongst the Heathens, That if *Christians* were so *dear* to God, why then did he suffer them to be oppress'd with so many Miseries and Troubles, and not come in to vindicate and relieve them? An Argument fully cleared by *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and other ancient *Apologists* for the Christian Faith.

But this was not all, they were charged as a very *useless* and *unserviceable* People, that contributed nothing to the Happiness of the Commonwealth; nay, as *destructive* and *pernicious* to human Society, and as the procuring Cause of all those Mischiefs and Calamities that beset the World. In Answer

*Arnob.*  
*adv. Gent.*  
*l. 2. prop.*  
*fin.*  
*Lact.*  
*l. 5. de*  
*Justit.*  
*c. 22.*

Part I.

Ap. c. 42.  
p. 33.

Ib. c. 43.

swer to the first, their being *useless* as to the common Good, hear what *Tertullian* says in the Case: How can this be (*says he*) when we live amongst you, have the same *Diet, Habit, Manner, and Way of Life*? We are no *Brachmans* or *Indian Gymnosophists*, who live in Woods, and banish themselves from all Civil Life: We are not unmindful of what we owe to our great Creator, and therefore despise none of his Creatures, tho' careful to use them with Temperance and Sobriety; wherefore we live not in the World without the Use of your *Markets, Shambles, Bathes, Taverns, Shops, Stables, your Marts*, and other ways of human Commerce; we go to Sea with you, bear Arms, till and improve the Ground, use *Merchandize*; we undergo *Trades* amongst you, and expose our *Works* to your Use: And how then we can seem *unserviceable* to your Affairs, with which and by which we live, I see not. Certainly (*says he*) if any have cause truly to complain of our being unprofitable, they are *Bawds, Panders, Pimps, Hectors, and Ruffians, Sellers of Poison, Magicians, Soothsayers, Wizards and Astrologers*; and to be *unserviceable* to these, is the greatest *Serviceableness*. But besides this, they pleaded for themselves, that their Religion was highly *beneficial* to the World, and in its own Nature contributed to the Peace and Happiness of Mankind. It cannot be deny'd, but that some of the *Primitive Christians* were shy of engaging in *Wars*, and not very forward to undergo publick Places of *Authority and Power*; but (besides that this was only the *Opinion* of some *private Persons*, and not the common and current Practice or Determination of the *Church*) it arose partly from some mistaken Passages in the *Gospel*, turning *Evangelical Councils* into *positive Precepts*; but principally because such *Offices and Employments* were usually clogg'd with such *Circumstances and Conditions*, as obliged them to **some**

some things repugnant to the Christian Law : Otherwise where they could do it, without offering Violence to their Religion and their Conscience, they shunn'd it not, but frequently bore *Arms*, and discharged such Publick Offices as were committed to them ; as cannot be unknown to any that are never so little vers'd in the *History* of the first Ages of the *Church*. Never were there better, more faithful and resolute *Soldiers*, more obedient to the Orders of their Commanders, more ready to attempt the most hazardous Enterprizes, never boggling at any thing which they could do without Sin. Of which, amongst many others, I shall instance only in that of the *Thebaean Legion*, who being commanded upon a bloody and unlawful Butchery, to destroy and cut off the *Christians*, their Brethren, meekly return'd this Answer to the Heathen Emperor or *Maximianus*, under whom they served : We offer our *Hands* against any Enemy, but count it unlawful to imbrue them in the Blood of the *Innocent*. Our Swords know how to strike a *Rebel* or an Enemy, but not to wound those who are *Citizens and Guiltless* ; we remember that we took up Arms for, not against Friends and Fellow-Citizens : We have always fought for Justice and Piety, and for the Safety of the Innocent ; these have been hitherto the Price of those Dangers that we have run upon ; we have fought for Fidelity, which how shall we be able to keep to *you*, if we do not first keep it to *our God* ? So far were the Christians of those Times from refusing to engage in the Service of their Prince. Nay, those of them who were so bound up by their private Sentiments, as not to think it lawful, yet reckoned they otherwise made *equivalent* Compensation. Thus when *Celsus* press'd the Christians to undergo publick Offices, and to help the Emperors in their Wars ; *Origen* answers, that they did so, though by a *di-*

*Martyrol.*  
*Adonis ad*  
*x. Kalend.*  
*Octob.*

*Adv. Cels.*  
*l. 8. p.*  
*426, 427.*

*wine*



Part I. *wine*, not *human* Help, by praying for their Persons, and their Prosperity and Success: Above all Men (*says he*) we fight for the Emperor, while we train ourselves in Exercises of Piety, and contend by Prayers for him. But besides these, there were several other Instances which the Christians pleaded to vindicate themselves from being *unserviceable* to the Good of Mankind, amongst which I shall at present take Notice only of these Two.

First, That they really fought to reclaim Men from *Vice* and *Sin*, to a good and vertuous Life; by which means (besides that they provided for Mens highest and nearest *Interests*, the Interest of their Souls, and their Eternal Happiness in another Life) they greatly consulted the Peace and Welfare of the Places where they lived; for vicious and wicked Men are the *Pests* and *Plagues* of human Society, that taint and infect others by their bad Examples or Persuasions, and entail Vengeance upon the Places of their Residence; whilst good Men engage the Favour and Blessing of Heaven, and both by their Counsels and Examples bring over others to Sobriety and Vertue, whereby they establish and strengthen the Foundations of Government, and the Happiness of Civil Life. And none so eminent for this, as the Christians of old; this is the great *triumphant* Argument, wherewith

*Adv. Cels. lib. 1. p. 9.* Origen at every turn, exalts the Honour of *Christianity*: This (*says he*) we find in the Multitudes of those that believe, who are delivered from that Sink of Vices, wherein before they were wont to

*ib. p. 21.* wallow: Enquire into the Lives of some of us, compare our former and our present Course, and you will find in what Filthiness and Impieties they tumbled, before they entertained the *Christians Doctrine*; but since the time that they entred into it, how gentle and moderate; how grave and constant are they become, and some so inflamed with the Love

*ib. p. 53.*

of

of Purity, that they forbear what lawfully they Chap. 3.  
 might enjoy. How largely are the Churches of God, founded by *Christ*, spread over all Nations, consisting of such as are converted from innumerable evil Ways to a better Mind ! And elsewhere vindicating the Doctrine of *Christ* from the mischievous Cavils of his Adversary, he tells us, how 'twas impossible that could be pestilent and hurtful, which had converted so many from their Vices and Debaucheries, to a Course most agreeable to Nature and Reason, and to a Life of Temperance and all other Vertues: And the same he urges frequently in other Places, and what greater Kindness and Benefit could be done to Men ? Does *Celsus* call upon us (*says he*) to bear Offices for the Good of our Country ; let him know that the Country is much more beholden to Christians than to the rest of Men, while they teach Men Piety towards God, the Tutelar Guardian of the Country, and shew them the way to that heavenly City that is above, which they that live well may attain to, tho' here they dwell in the smallest City in the World. Nor do the Christians thus employ themselves, because they shun the publick Offices of the Civil Life ; but only reserve themselves for the more divine and necessary Services of the Church, in order to the Good and Happiness of Men ; for this they think very just and reasonable, that they should take care of all Men ; of them of their own Party, that they may every Day make them better ; of others, that they may draw them to the Belief and Practice of Piety and Religion, that so worshipping God in Truth, and doing what they can to instruct others, they may be united to the Great God, and to his Blessed Son, who is the Wisdom, Truth, and Righteousness, and by whom it is that every one is converted to a pious and a religious Life.

Lib. 2. p.

78.

\* Theo-

## Part. I.

\* De cur-  
van. Græc.  
affectib.  
Serm. 9.  
de Leg.  
p. 128.

\* *Theodoret* discoursing against the *Gentiles*, of the Excellency of the Laws of *Christ*, above any that were given by the best Philosophers or wisest Men amongst the Heathens, gives them Instances of whole Nations whom Christianity had brought off from the most brutish and savage Manners: He tells them of the *Persians*, who by Laws given them by *Zarada*, lived in incestuous Mixtures with their own *Mothers*, *Sisters*, and *Daughters*, looking upon it as a lawful and warrantable Practice; till entertaining *Christianity*, they threw off those abominable Laws, and submitted to that Temperance and Chastity which the Gospel requires of us. And whereas before they were wont to cast out the Bodies of their Dead to be devoured by Beasts and Birds of Prey; since they embraced the *Christian* Religion, they abstained from that Piece of Inhumanity, and decently committed them to the Earth; from which they could not be restrained, either by the Laws of their Country, or the Bitterness of those Torments which they underwent. The *Massagetes*, who thought it the most miserable thing in the World to die any other than a violent Death, and therefore made a Law, that all Persons arrived to old Age should be offered in Sacrifice and eaten; no sooner submitted to *Christianity*, but abhorred those barbarous and abominable Customs. The *Tibarens*, who used to throw aged Persons down the steepest Rocks; left it off, upon their Embracing of the Gospel. Upon the same Account the *Hircani* and the *Caspians* reformed their Manners; who were formerly wont to keep Dogs on purpose to devour the Bodies of the Dead. Nor did the *Scythians* any longer, together with their Dead, bury those alive, who had been their nearest Friends and Kindred. So great a Change (*says my Author*) did the Laws of *Christ* make in the Manners of Men, and so easily were the

the most barbarous Nations persuaded to entertain them; a thing which *Plato*, tho' the best of all Philosophers, could never affect amongst the *Athenians*, his own Fellow-Citizens, who could never induce them to govern the Commonwealth according to those Laws and Institutions which he had prescribed to them.

Nay, where the Gospel did not produce this Effect to reclaim Men from their Vices and Vanities, and to bring them over to the Religion of the crucified *Saviour*; yet had it this excellent Influence upon the World, that it generally taught them better Lessons, refined their Understandings, and filled their Minds with more useful and practical Notions about Religion, than they had before. To which purpose it's mainly observable, that those *Philosophers* who lived in the Time of *Christianity*, after the Gospel publicly appeared in the World, wrote in a much more *Divine Strain*, entertained more honourable and worthy Sentiments about God and Religion, and the Duties of Men in their several Capacities, than those of their Sect that went before them. Of which I conceive no Account can be given so satisfactory as this, that the *Genius* and Spirit of the Gospel began then to fly abroad, and to breathe in a free Air, and so could not but leave some Tincture and Savour upon the Spirits of Men, tho' its most inveterate Enemies. Besides that many of them did more nearly converse with the Writings of *Christianity*, which they read either out of *Curiosity*, or with a Design to confute and answer them. This doubtless sharpened the Edge of their Understandings, and furnished them with better Notions, more useful Precepts and Rules of Life, than are to be met with in any of the old Philosophers; Witness those excellent and uncommon Strains of Piety, that run thorow the Writings of *Seneca*, *Epictetus*, *Antonine*, *Arrian*,

Μετὰ δὲ  
τῆ σωτη-  
ριᾶς ἡμῶν  
ἐπαράνοι-  
αν ἔτοι,  
ἡρόδοτος  
ἡ Κλεισα-  
νικῆς θεο-  
λογίας  
πολλὰ  
τοῖς οἰκεί-  
οις ἀνέμι-  
ξαν λό-  
γοις.  
Theod. de  
cur. Grac.  
Aff. Serm.  
2. de prin-  
cip. p. 33.

Plu-

Part I. *Plutarch, Hierocles, Plotinus*, and the rest that lived in those First Ages of the Gospel; of which I could give considerable Instances, were it necessary to my Purpose. I shall only, as a *Specimen*, set down that *Prayer* wherewith *Simplicius* (Enemy enough to *Christianity*) concludes his Comment upon *Epictetus*; and thus he makes his Address to God:

Page 331.

Ἰκετεύω σε, Δέσποτα, ὁ πατήρ καὶ ἡγεμὼν τῶν ἡμῶν λόγων, ὑπομνησθῆναι ἡμᾶς τὴν ἐαυτῶν ἐυθυμείας ἢς ἡξιώθημεν ἡδὲ σου συμπρέξαι δὲ ὡς αὐτοκινήτοις ἡμῖν πρὸς τε καθαρσιν τῶν σώματων καὶ τῶν ἀλύγων παθῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ὑπέρχειν καὶ ἀρχειν αὐτῶν, καὶ ὡς ὀργάνοις κενεῖσθαι καὶ καθαροῦσθαι τέρπον. Καὶ πρὸς διορθωσιν ἀκερῶν τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν λόγων, καὶ ἐνωσιν αὐτῶν πρὸς τὰ ὄντως ὄντα διὰ τοῦ ἀληθείας φωτός. Καὶ τὸ τρίτον, τὸ σωτηρεῖα ἱκετεύω, ἀφελεῖν τελείως τῶν ἀχλὺν τῶν ψυχικῶν ἡμῶν ὀμμάτων, Ὁρα γινώσκουμεν δὲ (καὶ τὸ Ὀμπερον) ἢ ἢ θεῶν, ἢ δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπων.

I beseech thee, O Lord, thou that art the Father and Guide of our Rational Powers, grant that we may be mindful of those Noble and Generous Natures with which thou hast invested us; and assist us, that as Persons endued with self-moving Principles, we may cleanse ourselves from all bodily and brutish Passions; that we may subdue and govern them, and in a due and decent Manner use them, only as Organs and Instruments. Help us through the Light of thy Truth, accurately to correct our Reason, and unite it to those Things that have a real Existence. And in

the Third Place, I beseech my Saviour, that he would perfectly dispel the Mist that is before the Eyes of our Minds, that, according to that of the Poet, we may rightly understand what belongs either to God or Man.

Besides the Matter of this Prayer, which is very sublime and spiritual, the Manner of its Composure is considerable, consisting of Three Parts, and those

those addressed as it were to *Three Persons*, answerable to those in the *Blessed Trinity*, the Lord (or *Father*) the *Saviour* (or *Christ*) and the *Light of Truth* (which even in Scripture is a common *Periphrasis* of the *Holy Spirit* : ) Whether he intended this, I will not say ; sure I am, it looks very like it. But enough of this.

Secondly, That they ordinarily wrought such *Miracles* as were incomparably *beneficial* to the World, in curing *Diseases*, raising the *Dead*, and rescuing possessed Persons from the merciless Rage and Cruelty of the *Devil* : We may observe that in those *primitive* Times, there were innumerable Multitudes of possessed Persons, beyond what were in the Ages either before or since ; the Divine Providence doubtless permitting it to be so, that by this means there might be a fairer Occasion of commending *Christianity* to the World ; and there is nothing which we more commonly meet with in the Writings of the ancient Fathers, than Testimonies concerning their triumphant Power over *evil Spirits*. *Justin Martyr* discoursing of the End of *Christ's* coming into the World, for the Salvation of Men, and the Subversion of Devils, tells the *Senate* ; That these things are so, you may know by what is done before your Eyes, for many that were possessed by Devils, throughout the whole World, and even in *this City* of yours, whom all your *Inchanters, Sorcerers, and Conjurors* were not able to cure, many of us *Christians* adjuring them by the Name of *Jesus Christ*, who was crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, have perfectly cured, and do still cure, disarming and driving out of Men those *Demons* that had seized upon them : And the same he affirms more than once and again in his Discourse with *Trypho* the Jew. *Iraeneus* arguing against the Hereticks, tells us, that the true Disciples of *Christ* did in his Name many strange things for the

Chap. 3.

Apol. 1.  
p. 45.Ado. He<sup>1</sup>  
ref. lib. 2.  
c. 57.  
p. 218.

E

good

**Part I.** good of others, according as every one had received his Gift; some so signally expelling Devils, that those out of whom they were cast came over to the Faith; others foretelling future Events; others curing Men of the most grievous Distempers, by putting their Hands upon them, and restoring them to their former Health: Many that have been raised from the Dead, and afterwards lived many Years amongst us. And indeed, innumerable (says he) are the Gifts which God has every where bestowed upon his Church, whereby, in the Name of the crucified *Jesus*, many and great Miracles are daily done, to the great Advantage of the World.

*Ad Scap.*  
c. 2. p. 69. *Tertullian* appeals to the Heathens, as a thing commonly known amongst them, that they daily restrained the *Power of Devils*, and cast them out of Men. And he tells *Scapula* the *President*, that he might be satisfied of this from his own *Records*, and those very *Advocates* who had themselves reaped this Benefit from *Christians*: As for instance, a certain *Notary*, and the *Kinsman* and *Child* of another; besides divers other Persons of Note and Quality (not to speak of the meaner sort) who had been recovered either from Devils or from desperate Diseases. Nay, *Severus* the Father of *Antoninus*, having been cured by being anointed with Oil by *Proculus* a Christian, he kept him in his Palace till his Death; whom *Antininus* knew well, having been himself nursed by a *Christian*. And in his *Apology* he challenges the Heathens to produce any possessed Person before the Publick Tribunals, and the evil Spirit being commanded by any *Christian* shall then as truly confess himself to be a *Devil*, as at other Times he falsely boasts himself to be a *God*. And elsewhere putting the Case that the *Christians* should agree to retire out of the *Roman* Empire, he asks them what Protection they would then have left against the secret and invisible

*Ib. c. 4.*  
p. 71.

*Apol. c. 37.*  
p. 30.



ble Attempts of Devils, who made such Havock both of their Souls and Bodies, whom the Christians so freely expelled and drove out? That it would be a sufficient Piece of Revenge, that hereby they should leave them open to the uncontrollable Possessions of those Evil Spirits. 'Twere endless to produce all the Testimonies of this nature, that might be fetch'd from *Origen*, *Minutius Felix*, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, *Eusebius*, and all the old Apologists for the Christian Religion, (some whereof I have briefly noted in the Margin) who constantly pleaded this as a mighty and uncontrollable Argument of the Truth and Divinity of their Religion, and of their great Usefulness to Mankind. Nay, this Miraculous Power continued in the Church some considerable Time after *Constantine* and the World was become *Christian*, as appears from *S. Basil*, *Nazianzen*, and others: And though I do not give heed to all the Miracles which are reported by *S. Hierom* in the Lives of *Hilarion*, *Paulus*, and some others; or by *Palladius* in his *Historia Lausiaca*; yet doubtless many of them were very true and real: God withdrawing this Extraordinary Power, as Christianity gained faster Footing in the World, and leaving the Church to those standing Methods by which it was to be managed and governed to the End of the World.

And yet notwithstanding the Case was thus plain and evident, how much the World was beholden to *Christians*; yet were they looked upon as the *Pests* of Human Society, counted and called the *common Enemies of Mankind*, as *Tertullian* complains; that they were the Causes of all Publick Calamities, and that for their Sakes it was, that Vengeance did so often remarkably haunt the *Roman Empire*. This was the common Out-cry: If the *City* be besieged, (says *Tertullian*) if any thing happen ill in the *Fields*, in the *Garrisons*, in the *Islands*, presently

*Orig. cont.*  
*C. l. 1. p.*  
 5, 7, 53. *l.*  
 3. p. 124.  
*l. 7. p.*  
 334, 376.  
*Cypr. ep.*  
*ad Donat.*  
 p. 3. *ad*  
*Demetri-*  
*an. p.*  
 201, 206.  
*Min. Fel.*  
 p. 23.  
*Arnob.*  
*adv. gent.*  
*l. 1. p. 13.*  
*Lact. de*  
*error. l. 2.*  
*c. 15. p.*  
 220.  
*Euseb. de*  
*monstr. E-*  
*vang. l. 3.*  
*p. 132.*  
*Naz. Or. 1.*  
*Apol. p. 35.*  
*Aug. de C.*  
*D. l. 22.*  
*c. 8. p.*  
 1339.  
*Greg. Nyss.*  
*Or. in su-*  
*am ordi-*  
*nat. tom.*  
*1. p. 876.*  
*Athanas-*  
*de incarn.*  
*ver. p. 74.*  
*Ap. c. 37.*  
*p. 30. lb.*  
*c. 1. p. 2.*



Part I. they cry out, 'Tis because of the Christians. They conspire the Ruin of good Men, and thirst after the Blood of the Innocent; patronizing their Hated with this vain Pretence, That the *Christians* are the Cause of all publick Misfortunes and Calamities. If *Tiber* overflow the Walls, if the *Nile* do not (as 'tis wont) overflow the Fields, if the *Heaven* do not keep its accustomed Course, if an *Earthquake* happen, if a *Famine*, or a *Plague*; presently the Cry is, *Away with the Christians to the Lions*. Thus *Demetrian* the Proconsul of *Africk* objected to *S. Cyprian*, that they might thank the *Christians*, that Wars did oftner arise, that *Plagues* and *Famines* did rage so much, and that immoderate and excessive *Rains* hindred the kindly Seasons of the Year. The same, *Arnobius* tells us, the *Heathens* were wont to object at every turn, and to conclude it as sure as if it had been dictated by an *Oracle*, that since the *Christians* appeared in the World, the World had been well-nigh undone, Mankind has been over-run with infinite kinds of Evils; and the very Gods themselves had withdrawn that solemn Care and Providence, wherewith they were wont to superintend Human Affairs. Nay, so hot and common was this Charge amongst the *Pagans*, that when the *Goths* and *Vandales* broke in upon the *Roman Empire*, *S. Augustine* was forced to write those excellent Books *De Civit. Dei*, purposely to stop the Mouth of this Objection; as upon the same Account and at his Request, *Orosius* wrote his Seven Books of History against the *Pagans*. Omitting some of the *Answers* given by the *Fathers*, (as being probably less solid, and not so proper in this Case) such as, That it was no Wonder if *Miseries* happened, and things grew worse in this *old Age* of Time, the World daily growing more feeble and decrepit; and that these things had been foretold by *God*, and therefore must necessarily come to pass; two Arguments


Cyp. ad  
Demetr.  
p. 197.

Arnob.  
Adv. Gent.  
l. 1. p. 1.

Aid. Re-  
tractat. l.  
2. c. 43.  
tom. 1. p.  
52. P. Oros.  
Præf. ad  
Lib. Hist.  
ad D. Aug.

ments largely and strongly pleaded by S. Cyprian, Chap. 3.  
 that those Evils were properly resolvable into  
 natural Causes; and that every thing is not pre-  
 sently *evil*, because it crosses our Ease and Inte-  
 rest, as *Arnobius* answers. Passing by these, I shall  
 take Notice only of two things, which the *Chri-*  
*stians* pleaded in this Case. Ad Demet.  
p. 198,  
199.  
Arnob. ut  
supra p. 4.

First, That the *Gentiles* should do very well to  
 seek the *true Causes* of these things nearer home,  
 and to enquire whether 'twas not for their own  
 Sakes, that the Divine Providence was thus offend-  
 ed with them, there being very just Reasons to  
 think so. *Tertullian* points them to such Causes as  
 these: First, their horrible *affronting* their *Natural*  
*Notions* of God, that *when they knew God, they glo-*  
*rified him not as God, neither were thankful, but*  
*became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish*  
*Heart was darkned, and they changed the Glory of the*  
*Uncorruptible God into an Image made like to Corrupti-*  
*ble Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beasts, and*  
*creeping things*; as *S. Paul* had told them long before.  
 And that therefore 'twas reasonable to suppose,  
 that God was more angry with them, who instead  
 of him, worshipped Pieces of *Wood* and *Statues*, or  
 at best *Genii* and *Devils*, than with those who sin-  
 cerely paid their Adorations to him alone. Ap. c. 40.  
p. 33.  
Rom. 1.  
21, 22, 23.  
 Secondly, passing by God the great Master of all  
 Goodness and Innocence, and the severe Revenger  
 of all Impiety, they tumble themselves in all man-  
 ner of Vice and Wickedness; and what Wonder  
 if the Divine Justice followed close at their Heels?  
 You are angry (says *Cyprian*) that God is angry,  
 as if in living *ill* you deserved *well*, and as if all  
 that has happened to you were not *less* and *lighter*  
 than your Sins. And thou *Demetrian*, who art a  
 Judge of *others*, be in this a Judge of *thyself*, in-  
 spect the Retirements of thy Conscience, and be-  
 hold thyself now, who shalt one Day be seen na-  
 ked Ap. c. 41.  
vid. Ar-  
nob. l. 1.  
p. 6, 7.  
Ut supra  
p. 199,  
200.

Part I.  ked by all ; and thou wilt find thyself enslaved and led captive by some Sins or other : And why then shouldst thou wonder that the Flames of the Divine Anger should rise higher, when the Sins of Men do daily administer more Fuel to it ? An Answer which he there prosecutes to very excellent Purpose. Thirdly, their prodigious Unthankfulness to God for all the former Blessings they had received from him. So far as they were *ingrateful*, they were highly *guilty*, and God could not but punish them. Had they sought him, whom in part they could not but know, and been observant of him, they would in this Case have found him a much more propitious than an angry Deity, as *Tertullian* tells them. Upon these and such like Accounts, they might well conclude it was, that the Vengeance of God did press so hard upon them, and that therefore they had no true Reason to lay the Fault at any other Door but their own.

Secondly, As to the thing itself, as 'twas charged upon them, they point-plank denied it to be true ; and that for two Reasons especially.

First, Because the World had been sadly and frequently *pestered* with such *Evils* and *Miseries* long before the *Christian Religion* appeared in it. I pray (says *Tertullian*) what Miseries did overwhelm all the World, and even *Rome* itself, before the times of *Tiberius*, *i. e.* before the coming of *Christ* ? Have we not read of *Hierapolis*, and the Islands of *Delos*, and *Rhodes*, and *Cos*, destroyed with many thousands of Men ? Does not *Plato* speak of the greatest Part of *Asia* and *Africk* *swallowed up* by the *Atlantick* Sea ? An Earthquake drank up the *Corinthian* Sea, and the Force of the *Ocean* rent off *Sicilia* from *Italy*. Not to ask where were the *Christians*, the great Contemners of your Gods ; but where were *your Gods* themselves when the Flood over-ran the World ? *Palestine* had not yet received the *Jewish* Nation

Ap. c. 40.  
p. 32.

Nation out of *Egypt*, much less had the *Christians* sat down there, when *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the adjacent Parts, were burnt up by a Shower of *Fire* and *Brimstone*, of which the Country smells to this Day. Nor could *Tuscia* and *Campania* complain of the *Christians*, when a Fire from Heaven destroyed the *Vulfinii* and the *Pomprii*. None as yet worshipped the True God at *Rome*, when *Hannibal* at *Cannæ* made such a Slaughter of the *Romans*, that the very *Rings* that he took (*which were the Honourable Badges of none but Roman Knights*) were measured by the *Bushel*. They were all your Gods that then had the general Worship, when the *Gauls* took the *Capitol* itself. So smartly doth that grave Man retort their own Arguments upon themselves. *Ar-*<sup>Lib. 1.</sup>  
*nobius* fully and elegantly pursues this, that *in this*<sup>p. 2, 3.</sup>  
*respect* the former Times were no better than these, which they so much complained of, and bids them run over the *Annals* and *Records* that were written in all Languages, and they would find, that all Nations had frequently had their common Miseries and Devastations. The Clearing of which was likewise the great Design *Orosius* proposed to himself, *Præfat. ut*  
in drawing down the History of the World through<sup>Supra, p. 2.</sup>  
all the Ages and Generations of it.

Secondly, Because since the coming of *Christianity*, the World had been in a better and more prosperous State than it was before; especially whenever the Christian Religion met with any Favour and Encouragement. The Reason of it *Tertullian*<sup>Apol. c.</sup>  
gives: Although we should compare present with<sup>40. P. 33.</sup>  
former Miseries, yet they are much lighter now, since God sent *Christians* into the World; for since then Innocency has balanced the Iniquities of the Age, and there have been many who have interceded with Heaven. The Author of the *Que-*<sup>Qu. 126.</sup>  
*stions and Answers* in *Justin Martyr* (for that it<sup>p. 474.</sup>  
was not *Justin* himself, I think no Man can doubt,  
that

## Part I.

that reads him, the Man betraying himself openly enough to have lived in the Times of *prevailing Christianity*) putting this Question, Whether *Paganism* was not the better Religion, forasmuch as under it there was great Prosperity and Abundance; whereas 'twas quite otherwise since *Christianity* came in fashion? he answers among other things, That (besides that Plenty was no Argument of the Goodness of any Religion, Christians being to be judged of rather by the *Holiness* than the *Prosperity* of their Religion) there was so much the more Abundance in these Times of *Christianity*, by how much there were fewer Wars, than was while *Paganism* governed the World. Never were Wars more successfully managed, never was Prosperity more triumphant, than when Christians met with kind Entertainment. *Melito*, Bishop of *Sardis*, in an *Oration* which he presented to the Emperor *M. Antoninus* in Behalf of the Christians (part whereof is yet extant in *Eusebius*) tells him, that *Christianity* commencing under the Reign of *Augustus*, was a good *Omen* of the Prosperity of the Empire, and that ever since the *Majesty* of the *Roman Empire* had increased. Of whom he being the Heir and Successor, he could not better assure it to himself and his Son, than by protecting that Religion that had been born and bred up together with the Empire, and for which his Ancestors amongst other Religions had had an Esteem and Honour. That there could be no better Argument that this Religion contributed to the Happiness of the Empire, (with which it began and had grown up) than that since the Reign of *Augustus* no Misfortune, but on the contrary (according to all Mens Wishes) every thing had happened to be Magnificent and Prosperous. \* Hence *Eusebius* notes once and again, that the Affairs of the Empire commonly flourished while *Christianity* was pro-

*Euseb.*  
*Ecc. Hist.*  
l. 4. c. 26.  
p. 148.

\* *Vid. lib.*  
l. 7. c. 1.  
l. 8. c. 13.  
*De Martyr.*  
*l. 1. c. 3.*  
p. 322. ad  
*Demet. p.*  
200.

protected, but when that was persecuted, Things began to go to rack, and their ancient Peace and Prosperity could not be retrieved, till Peace and Tranquillity was restored to the Christians: Therefore *Cyprian* tells the *Proconsul*, that their Cruelty to the Christians was one of those crying Sins that had provoked God to inflict so many heavy Miseries upon them, not only refusing to worship God themselves, but unjustly persecuted those innocent Persons that did, with all the Methods of Rage and Fierceness. So little hand had the Christians in entailing Vengeance upon the World, that their Enemies rather wilfully pulled it down upon their own Heads.

## C H A P. IV.

The Charges brought against them respecting their Life and Manners.

*The Primitive Christians accused of the grossest Sins, Sacrilege, Sedition, Treason, Incest, Murder, &c. The particular Consideration of these referred to their proper Places. What they offer'd in the general, for their Vindication, consider'd. They openly asserted their Innocency, and appeal'd to the known Piety of their Lives. None accounted Christians, however eminent in Profession, unless their Lives answerable. Their abstaining from Appearance of Evil, or doing any thing that symbolized with the Idolatrous Rites of the Heathens. Their being willing to be brought to the strictest Trial, and to be severely punished, if found guilty of those Crimes. Their*

Com-



*Complaints of being (generally) condemned merely for bearing the Name of Christians. They greatly glory'd in that Title. This Name prohibited by Julian, and Christians commanded in Scorn to be called Galileans. The Christians appealed for their Vindication to the Consciences of their Impartial Enemies, and by them acquitted. The Testimonies of Pliny, Ser. Granianus, Antonius Pius, M. Antoninus, Trypho the Jew, and Apollo's Oracle, to this purpose. The Excellency of Christians, if compared with the best of Heathens. All such disown'd for Christians, as did not exactly conform to the Rule and Discipline of Christianity.*

**A**LL the Attempts that had been hitherto made against the Honour and Reputation of Christians, seem'd but like the *first Skirmishings* of an Army, in respect of the main *Battalia* that was yet behind, the Charge that was made against their *Moral Carriage and Behaviour*; and here they were accused at every turn of no less than *Sacrilege, Sedition, and High Treason*; of *Incest* and *promiscuous Mixtures*; of *Murder*, and *eating the Flesh of Infants* at their Sacramental Feasts. These were sad and horrid Crimes, and (had they been true) would justly have made Christianity stink in the Nostrils of all sober and considering Men; but they were as *false*, as they were *black* and *hellish*. The particular Answers to these Charges (together with some things relating to matters of Worship) shall be consider'd hereafter, according as they fall in their more proper Places: I shall only at present take notice of the general Vindication which the Christians made of themselves,  
from

from these Indictments which were brought in Chap. 4.  
 against them; and the Sum of what they pleaded,  
 lies especially in these three Things.

First, They did openly assert and maintain their *Innocency*, and shew by their *Lives* as well as their *Apologies*, that they were Men of quite another Make and Temper, than their Enemies did generally represent them. Their Religion and Way of Life was admired by all. Who (says *S. Clement* to the *Corinthians*) did ever dwell amongst you, that did not approve of your excellent and unshaken Faith? that did not wonder at your sober and moderate Piety in Christ? You were forward to every good Work, adorned with a most vertuous and venerable Conversation; doing all things in the Fear of God, and having his Laws and Commands written upon the Tables of your Hearts. They placed Religion then, not in *talking finely*, but in *living well*. Amongst us (says *Athenagoras*) the meanest and most mechanic Persons, and old Women, altho' not able to *discourse* and *dispute* for the Usefulness of their Profession, do yet demonstrate it in their Lives and Actions: They don't indeed critically weigh their *Words*, and recite elegant *Orations*, but they manifest *honest* and *vertuous* Actions; while being buffeted, they strike not again; nor sue them at Law, that spoil and plunder them; *Liberally give to them that ask, and love their Neighbours as themselves*. And this we do, because we are assured that there is a God that super-intends human Affairs, who made both us and the whole World: And because we must give to him an Account of all the Transactions of our Lives; therefore we choose the most moderate, human, and benign, and (to many) the most contemptible Course of Life; for we reckon that no Evil in this Life can be so great, tho' we should be called

*Clem. ep.  
ad Corint.  
p. 2, 4.*

*Leg. pro  
Christ.  
p. 12.*



Part I. called to lay down our Lives, which ought to be esteemed little and of no Value in Comparison of that Happiness which we hereafter look for from the great Judge of the World, promised to those who are of an humble, benign, and moderate Conversation. *Clemens of Alexandria* gives us this short Account of them : As the fairest Possession, we give ourselves to God, entirely loving him, and reckoning this the great Business of our Lives. No Man is with us a *Christian*, or accounted truly rich, temperate, and generous, but he that is pious and religious ; nor does any farther bear the Image of God, than he speaks and believes what is just and holy. So that this in short is the State of us who follow God : Such as are our *Desires*, such are our *Discourses* ; such as are our *Discourses*, such are our *Actions* ; such as are our *Actions*, such is our *Life* : So universally good is the whole Life of *Christians*. Certainly none were ever greater Enemies to a naked Profession, and the covering a bad Life under the Title of *Christianity*. Do any live otherwise than *Christ* hath commanded ? 'tis a most certain Argument they are no *Christians*, tho' with their Tongues they never so smoothly profess the Christian Doctrine ; for 'tis not mere Professors, but those who live according to their Profession, that shall be saved, as *Justin Martyr* declares before the *Emperors*. Let no Man (says *Basil*) impose upon himself with inconsiderate Words, saying, Tho' I be a *Sinner*, yet I am a *Christian*, and I hope that Title will be my Shelter. But hearken, *Sinner*, all wicked Men shall be bundled up together, and in the great Day of the Divine Vengeance shall be indifferently thrown into those merciless and devouring Flames.

*Admonit.*  
*2. ad genu.*  
*Pag. 76.*

*Ap. 2.*  
*p. 63.*  
*Comment.*  
*in c. 1.*  
*Esai. 60. 2.*  
*p. 28.*

Nay, so careful were they to avoid all Sin, that they stood at a wide Distance from any thing that (tho' lawful in itself) yet seem'd to carry an *ill Colour* with it. This, *Origen* tells *Celsus*, was the Reason why they refused to do any Honour to an Image, lest thereby they should give Occasion to others to think that they ascribed Divinity to them. For this Reason they shunn'd all Community with the Rites and Customs of the Heathens; *abstaining from things strangled*, or that had been offer'd to *Idols*, from frequenting the *publick Baths*, or going to the *Sights* and *Shews*, because they seem'd to owe their Original to *Idolatry*, and were the Occasion of many gross Enormities. They refused to wear *Crowns of Laurel*, lest they should seem to patronize the Custom of the *Gemiles*, who were wont to do so in their sacred and solemn Rites; as appear'd eminently in the Solemnities of the Emperors *Severus* and *Caracalla*: When the *Tribune* deliver'd the *Donative* to the Soldiers, and all came to receive it with Crowns upon their *Heads*, one of them brought his in his Hand, and being demanded the Reason, answer'd that he was a Christian, and could not do it. Which was the Occasion of *Tertullian's* Book *De Corona Militis*, wherein he sets himself to defend it.

Secondly, They were willing to put themselves upon the *strictest* Trial, and to undergo the *severest* Penalties, if found guilty of those Crimes that were charged upon them. So their *Apologis* speaks the *Emperors*: We beseech you (says he) that those things that are charged upon the *Christians* may be enquired into, and if they be found to be so, let them have their deserved Punishment; nay, let them be more severely punish'd than other Men; but if not guilty, then 'tis not reasonable that innocent Persons should suffer merely upon Report and Clamour. And speaking of those that

only

Part I.



Leg. pro  
Christian.  
p. 3.

only took Sanctuary at the Name of *Christians*, he adds, that those who lived not according to the Laws of *Christ*, and were only called by his Name, they begg'd of them that such might be punish'd. To the same purpose, *Athenagoras*, in his *Embassy*, taking Notice how their Enemies laid wait for their Lives and Fortunes, loaded them with Heaps of Reproaches, charging 'em with Things that never so much as enter'd into their Minds, and of which their Accusers themselves were most guilty, he makes this Offer: Let but any of us be convict of any Crime, either small or great, and we refuse not to be punish'd, nay, are ready to undergo the most cruel and heavy Penalty: But if we be only accused for our Name (and to this day all our Accusations are but the Figments of obscure and uncertain *Fame*, no Christian having ever been convict of any Fault) then we hope it will become such *wise, gracious, and mighty* Princes as you are, to make such Laws as may secure us from those Wrongs and Injuries. But alas! so clear was their Innocency, that their bitterest Adversaries durst not suffer them to come to a fair open Trial. If you be so certain that we are guilty (says *Tertullian* to the Heathens) why then are we not treated in the same Nature with all *Malefactors*, who have Leave both by themselves and their *Advocates* to defend their Innocency, to answer and put in Pleas; it being unlawful to condemn any before they be heard, and have Liberty to defend themselves? Whereas *Christians* only are not permitted to speak any thing that might clear their Cause, maintain the Truth, and make the Judge able to pronounce righteous Sentence. 'Tis enough to justify the publick *Odium*, if we do but confess ourselves *Christians*, without ever examining of the Crime; contrary to the manner of Procedure against all other Delinquents, whom 'tis not enough barely to charge to

Ap. c. 2.  
p. 2.

be *Murderers, Sacrilegious, or Incestuous, or Enemies* Chap. 4.  
 to the *Publick* (the *Titles* you are pleased to bestow upon us) unless they also take the Quality of the *Fact*, the *Place*, *Manner*, *Time*, *Partners*, and *Accessories* under Examination. But no such Favour is shewn to us, but we are condemn'd without any *Inquisition* pass'd upon us. And good Reason there was that they should take this Course, seeing they could really find nothing to condemn them for, but for being *Christians*. This one would think strange, especially amongst a People so renown'd for *Justice* and *Equity* as the *Romans* were, and yet in these Times nothing more ordinary. Therefore when *Urbicius*, the *Presect of Rome*, had condemn'd *Ptolemaeus* merely upon his confessing himself a Christian, one *Lucius*, that stood by, cry'd out, *What strange Course is this! What infamous Misdemeanour is this Man guilty of, that when he's no Adulterer, Fornicator, no Murderer, no Thief, nor Robber, thou should'st punish him only because he calls himself a Christian? Certainly Urbicius, such Justice as this does not become the Piety of the Emperor, or the Philosophy of Cæsar his Son, or the Sacred and Venerable Senate.* And *Tertullian* tells us, 'twas the common Accusation they had in their Mouths: *Such or such a one is a good Man, only he is a Christian; or I wonder at such a one, a wise Man, but lately turn'd Christian.* So *Cyprian*, I remember, reduces his Adversary to this unavoidable *Dilemma*; Choose one of these two Things, To be a Christian either is a Fault, or 'tis not; if it be a *Fault*, why dost thou not kill every one that confesses it? if it be *not*, why dost thou persecute them that are innocent? Hence we find nothing more common in the old *Apologists*, than Complaints concerning the Unreasonableness of being accused, condemn'd, and punish'd merely for their *Name*; this being the first and great Cause of all that Hatred and Cruelty that was exercised

f. *Mar-*  
 tyr. *Ap.* 1.  
 p. 43.

*Ap.* c. 3. p. 4.

*Ad Demot.*

p. 200.

*Vid. Tert.*

*Ap.* c. 1, 2,

3.

*Just.*

*Mart.*

*Ap.* 2. p. 54.

68. 69.

*Athen. leg.*

*pro Christi.*

p. 3, 4.

**Part I.** exercised towards them; 'twas the innocent Name that was hated in them; all the Quarrel was about this Title; and when a Christian was guilty of nothing else, 'twas this made him guilty, as *Tertullian* complains at every turn. The Truth is, they mightily glory'd in this Title, and were ambitious to own it in the Face of the greatest Danger.

*Emf. Hist.*  
*Eccles. l. 5.*  
*c. 1. p. 162.*

Therefore when *Attalus*, the famous *French Martyr*, was led about the *Amphitheatre*, that he might be exposed to the Hatred and Derision of the People, he triumph'd in this, that a *Tablet* was carry'd before him with this Inscription, **THIS IS ATTALUS THE CHRISTIAN.** And *Sanctus* (another of them) being oft ask'd by the *President* what his Name was, what his City and Country, and whether he was a Free Man or a Servant? answer'd nothing more to any of them, than that he was a *Christian*; professing this Name to be Country, Kindred, and all things to him. Nay, so great was the Honour and Value which they had for this Name, that *Julian* the Emperor (whom we commonly call the *Apostate*) endeavour'd by all ways to suppress it, that when he could not drive the Thing, he might at least banish the Name out of the World; and therefore did not only himself constantly call Christians *Galileans*, but made a Law that they should be called only by that Name.

*Ib. p. 158.*

*Naz. Invest. in*  
*Julian. l. 1.*  
*p. 81.*

But to return, the Sum is this; the Christians were so bouyed up with the Conscience of their Innocency, that they cared not who saw them, were willing and desirous to be scanned and searched to the bottom, and to lie open to the View of all; and therefore desire no other Favour than that the

*Ap. l. p. 51.*

*Apology*, which *Justin Martyr* presented to them, might be set out with the Decree of the *Senate*, that so People might come to the true Knowledge of their Case, and they be deliver'd from false Suspicions, and those Accusations, for which they had been

been

been undeservedly exposed to so many Punishments. Chap. 4.

Thirdly, They appealed for their Vindication to the Judgment and Conscience of their more sober and impartial Enemies, and were accordingly acquitted by them, as guiltless of any heinous Crimes. *Pliny* the younger, being commanded by the Emperor *Trajan*, to give him an Account of the *Christians*, tells him, That after the best Estimate that he could take, and the strictest Inquisition that he could make by Tortures, he found no worse of them than this; That they were wont to meet early for the Performance of their solemn Devotions, and to bind themselves under the most sacred Obligations to commit no Vice or Wickedness; and that their Religion was nothing else but an Untoward and Immoderate Superstition. This is the *Testimony* which that great Man (who being *Proconsul* of *Bithynia*, was capable to satisfy himself, and who was no less diligent to search into the Matter) gives concerning them. Next after him, *Serenus Granianus* (the *Proconsul* of *Asia*) writes to the Emperor *Adrian*, *Trajan's* Successor, to represent to him how unjust it was to put *Christians* to Death, when no Crime was duly laid to their Charge, merely to gratify the tumultuous Clamours of the People: To whom the *Emperor* answers, That they should not be unjustly troubled; that if any thing was truly proved against them, he should punish them according to the nature of the Fault; but if done out of Malice or Spite, he should then accordingly punish the Accuser as a Calumniator. Next to *Adrian*, *Antoninus Pius*, (if he be not mistaken for his Successor *Marcus*) in his Epistle to the *Commons* of *Asia*, tells them, That they had traduced the *Christians*, and had objected those Crimes to them which they could not prove; that they were more firm and undaunted

Ep. l. 10.  
Ep. 97.

Euseb. Eccl.  
Hist. l. 4.  
c. 8, 9.  
p. 122,

Just.  
Mart.  
Ap. 2.  
p. 100.

Part. I. ed in their \* Profession than themselves, and had a greater Freedom and Confidence towards God ; and that therefore he resolved to ratify and follow the Determination of his Fathers. After him comes *M. Antoninus*, who having obtained that famous and signal Victory against the *Quades* in *Germany*, confesses in his Letter to the Senate, (which Letter, tho' I know 'tis question'd by some Learned Men, as now extant, whether true and genuine ; yet that there was such a Letter, is evident enough from *Tertullian*, who himself lived within a few Years of that Time, and appeals to it) that it was clearly gotten by the Prayers of the *Christian Legion* which he had in his Army, and therefore commands that none be molested for being Christians ; and that if any accuse a Christian for being such, without a sufficient Crime proved against him, he shall be burnt alive for his Accusation : That a Christian confessing himself to be one, shall be safe and secure, and that the *Governor* of the *Province* shall not drive him to renounce his Profession ; and this he commands to be confirmed by the Decree of the *Senate*. So clear did the Christians appear to their greatest Enemies, especially in their more calm and sober Intervals. Nay, *Trypho* the *Jew* (and that very Notion speaks him Enemy enough) yet confesses them clear of those foul Aspersions : For when the *Martyr* had asked him, whether he disliked the Christians Manners and Way of Life, and whether he really believed that they eat Mens Flesh, and putting out the Candles ran together in promiscuous Mixtures ; the *Jew* answer'd, That those things whereof they were accused by many were unworthy of Belief, as being so extremely abhorrent to Human Nature ; and that the Precepts which are commanded in their Gospel (which his Curiosity had prompted him to read) were so, great and admirable,

\*'Εὐπαρ-  
πίστας ὁ-  
τεροί.  
Ib. p. 101,  
102.

Ap. c. 5.  
p. 6. & ad  
Sca. c. 4.  
p. 71.

Just.  
Martyr.  
Dial. cum  
Tryph.  
p. 227.



Euseb. de  
vit. Const.  
l. 2. c. 50;  
§1. p. 467.

Lib. 3;  
p. 128;  
129.

Pag. 19;

mirable, that he supposed no Man could be able to keep and obey them. And, to instance in no more, the *Heathen Oracle* itself pronounced in favour of the Christians; for *Apollo* giving forth his Oracles, not as he was wont by human Voice, but out of a dark and dismal *Cavern*, confessed it was because of *just Men* that lived upon the Earth: And when *Dioclesian* enquired who those *just Men* were, one of the *Heathen Priests* that stood by answer'd, That they were the *Christians*. This *Constantine the Great* tells us he himself heard, being then a young Man, and in Company at that time with the Emperor *Dioclesian*, and he there solemnly calls God to witness for the Truth of the Story.

From all which it appears, how innocent the Christians were of those things which the *Gentiles* charged upon them, how infinitely strict and unblamable in their Lives, and therefore triumphed over the *Heathens* in the Purity and Innocency of their Conversations. *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that the Churches of God which had taken upon them the Discipline of *Christ*, if compared to the common Societies of Men, were amongst them like Lights in the World. For who (says he) is here, but he must needs confess that the worser Part of our Church is much better than the popular Assemblies? As for instance; the Church of God at *Athens* is meek and quiet, as endeavouring to approve itself to the great God; whereas now the popular Assembly of *Athens* is seditious and tumultuous, and no ways to be compared with the Church of God in that City. And the same may be said of the Churches of God, and the vulgar Assemblies which are at *Corinth* or *Alexandria*. So *Minutius Felix*; Should we Christians be compared with you, altho' our Discipline may seem somewhat inferior, yet we should be found infinitely to transcend you. You forbid Adultery, and then practise it; we keep entirely



Part I. to our own Wives. You punish Wickedness when committed, with us even a wicked *Thought* is Sin ; you stand in Awe of those who are *conscious* of your Crimes, we of nothing but our *Consciences*, without which we cannot be. And last of all, 'tis with your *Party* that the Prison is filled and croud- ed ; no *Christian* is there, unless such a one as is either a Shame to his Religion, or an Apostate from it. And a little after, he tells his Adver- sary, how much they exceeded the best Philoso- phers, who were filthy and tyrannical, and only eloquent to declaim against those Vices, of which themselves were most guilty : That we Christians do not measure Wisdom by Mens Habits, but by their Minds and Tempers, and do not speak great Things, but live them ; having this to boast of, that we really attain to those things which they earnest- ly sought, but could not find. Thus *Lactantius* having excellently discoursed of the prodigious Debaucheries and Wickednesses of the Heathens ; but which of these Things (says he) can be object- ed to our People, whose whole Religion is to live *without Spot or Blemish* ? From whence they might easily gather, had they any Understanding, that Piety is on our side, and that they themselves are vile and impious. And *Eusebius* tells us, that in his time the Christian Faith had by Gravity, Sin- cerity, Modesty, and Holiness of Life, so con- quer'd all Opposition, that none durst bespatter it, or charge it with any of those Calumnies which the ancient Enemies of our Religion used to fasten upon it. What Religion (says *Arnobius*) can be truer, more useful, powerful, just, than this ? Which (as he elsewhere notes) renders Men Meek, Speakers of Truth, Modest, Chaste, Cha- ritable, Kind, and Helpful to all, as if most near- ly related to us. And indeed, this is the genuine and natural Tendency of the Christian Doctrine,

and

Pag. 31.

*De justit.*  
l. 5. c. 9.  
p. 485.

*Hist. Eccl.*  
l. 4. c. 7.  
p. 121.  
*Vid. Con-*  
*stant. Or.*  
*ad coetum.*  
S. S. c. 23.  
p. 599.  
*Adv. gent.*  
l. 4. p. 67.

and which it cannot but effect where-ever 'tis kindly embraced and entertained. So true is that which *Athenagoras* told the *Emperors*, that no *Christian* could be a bad Man, unless he were an *Hy-pocrite*. And *Tertullian* openly declares, That when Men depart from the Discipline of the Gospel, they so far cease amongst us to be accounted *Christians*. And therefore when the Heathens objected, That some that went under that Name were guilty of great Enormities, and enquired, how comes such a one to be a Cheat, if the Christians be so righteous; how so cruel, if they be merciful? he answers, That by this very Thing they bore witness, that they who were real Christians were not such; that there's a vast Difference between the *Crime* and the *Name*, the *Opinion* and the *Truth*; that they are not presently Christians that are called so, but cheat others by the Pretence of a Name; that they shunn'd the Company of such, and did not meet or partake with them in the Offices of Religion; that they did not admit *those* whom mere Force and Cruelty had driven to deny *Christianity*, much less such as voluntarily transgressed the Christian Discipline: And that therefore the Heathens did very ill to call them *Christians*, whom the Christians themselves did disown, who yet were not wont to deny their own Party.

Chap. 4.

Leg. pro  
Christian.  
p. 4. Ap.  
c. 46. p. 36.  
Ad Nar.  
J. 1. c. 5.  
p. 42.

## C H A P. V.

Of the Positive Parts of their Religion ;  
and first, of their Piety towards God.

*The Religion of the ancient Christians consider'd, with respect to God, themselves, and other Men. Their Piety seen in two things ; their Detestation of Idolatry, and great Care about the Matters of Divine Worship. What Notion they had of Idolatry ; their Abhorrency of it. Their refusing to give Divine Honour to Angels and created Spirits: This condemned by the Laodicean Council. Their denying any thing of Divine Honour to Martyrs and departed Saints. The famous Instance of the Church of Smyrna, concerning S. Polycarp. S. Augustine's Testimonies to this Purpose. Their mighty Abhorrence of the Heathen Idolatry. The very making an Idol accounted unlawful. Hatred of Idolatry one of the first Principles instill'd into new Converts. Their affectionate bewailing any that lapsed into this Sin. Several severe Penalties imposed by the ancient Council of Illiberis, upon Persons guilty of Idolatry: They were willing to hazard any thing, rather than sacrifice to the Gods. Constantius's Plot to try the Integrity of his Courtiers. A double Instance of the Christian Soldiers in Julian's Army ; their active Zeal in breaking the Images of the Heathen Gods, and assaulting Persons while doing Sacrifice*

*Sacrifice to them; this, whether justifiable.* Chap. 5.  
*Notwithstanding all this, the Christians accused by the Heathens of Idolatry; of worshipping the Sun; whence that Charge arose. Of adoring a Cross. Of worshipping an Ass's Head. Christians called Asinarii. The absurd and monstrous Picture of Christ mention'd by Tertullian. The Occasion of this ridiculous Fiction, whence.*

**H**AVING thus seen with how much Clearness the ancient Christians vindicated themselves from those unjust Aspersions, which their spiteful and malicious Adversaries had cast upon them; we come now to take a more direct and positive View of their Religion, which, according to S. Paul's Division, we shall consider as to their *Piety* Tit. 2. 12. towards God, those *Vertues* which more immediately concerned *themselves*, and those which respected their Behaviour and Carriage towards *others*. Their *Piety* towards God appear'd in those two main Instances of it, a serious and hearty Detestation of *Idolatry*, and a religious Care about the Concerns of *Divine Worship*.

*Idolatry* in those Times was the prevailing Sin of the World, *the principal Crime of Mankind*, De Idol. *the great Guilt of the Age, and the almost sole Cause* lat. c. 1. *of Mens being brought into Judgment; as what in a* p. 85. *Manner contains all Sins under it, as Tertullian begins his Book upon that Subject; a Crime of the first Rank, and one of the highest sorts of Wickedness, as 'tis called by the most ancient Council in Spain. They looked upon it as a Sin that* Conc. III- *undermined the very Being of the Deity, and* berit. Can. *ravished the Honour of his Crown. Before we* I. *proceed any farther, we shall first enquire what was the Notion they generally had of Idolatry;*

**Part I.** and they then accounted that a Man was guilty of Idolatry, when he gave *Divine Adoration* to any thing that was *not God*; not only when he worshipped a *material Idol*, but when he vested any *Creature* with that religious Respect and Veneration that was only due to God: Idolatry (says *Tertullian*) robs God, denying him those Honours that are due to him, and conferring them upon others, so that at the same time it does both *Defraud* him and *Reproach* him. And

*Ut supra*  
c. 11.

*Ib. c. 15.*  
p. 95.

*Greg. Naz.*  
*Orat. Pa-*  
*neg. in Na-*  
*tivit. Chri-*  
*sti. Or. 38.*  
p. 620.

a little after he expressly affirms, That whatever is exalted above the Standard of *Civil Worship*, in Imitation of the Divine Excellency, is directly made an Idol. Thus *S. Gregory*, for his solid and excellent Learning call'd *The Divine*, (a Title never given to any besides him, but to *S. John the Apostle*) defines Idolatry (which, says *he*, is the greatest Evil in the World) to be the *Translation of that Worship, that is due to the Creator, upon the Creature*. Accordingly we find them infinitely zealous to assert Divine Adoration as the proper and incommunicable Prerogative of God alone, and absolutely refusing to impart religious Worship to any, though the best of Creatures: Surely if any, one would think, *Angels*, the first Rank of *created Beings*, Creatures of such sublime Excellencies and Perfections, might have challenged it at their Hands; but

*Cont. Cels.*  
*1.8. p. 415,*  
416.

hear what *Origen* says to this; We adore, says *he*, our Lord God, and serve him *alone*, following the Example of *Christ*, who when tempted by the Devil to fall down and worship him, answer'd, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*; which is the Reason why we refuse to give Honours to those Spirits that *preside* over human Affairs, because we *cannot serve two Masters*, to wit, *God and Mammon*:

As

As for these *Demons*, we know that they have no Administration of the Conveniences of Man's Life; yea, tho' we know that they are not *Demons* but *Angels*, that have the Government of Fruits and Seasons, and the Productions of Animals committed to them; we indeed speak *well* of them, and think them *happy* that they are intrusted by God to manage the Conveniences of Man's Life; but yet do not give them that Honour that is only due to God: for this neither does God allow of, neither do they desire it; but equally love and regard us when we do not, as if we did sacrifice to them. And when *Celsus* a little before had smartly pressed him to do Honour to *Demons*, he rejects the Motion with great Contempt: Away, says he, with this Counsel of *Celsus*, who in this is not in the least to be hearkened to; for the Great God only is to be adored, and Prayers to be delivered up by none but his only begotten Son, the *First-born of every Creature*, that, as our *High Priest*, he may carry them to his Father and to our Father, to his God and to our God. 'Tis true, that the Worship of *Angels* did (and that very early, as appears from the *Apostles* Caveat against it in his *Epistle* to the *Colossians*) creep into some Parts of the Christian Church, but was always disowned and cried out against, and at last publicly and solemnly condemned by the whole *Laodicean Council*: It is not lawful (says the thirty fifth Canon of that Council) for Christians to leave the Church of God, and to go and invoke *Angels*, and to make prohibited Assemblies: If therefore any one should be found devoting himself to this private Idolatry, let him be accursed; forasmuch as he has forsaken the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and has delivered up himself to Idolatry. From which nothing can be more clear, than that it was the Sense of these *Fathers*, that the *Worshipping of Angels* was not only

Chap. 5.



Pag. 395.

Part. I. ly downright *Idolatry*, but a plain *Apostasy* from the Christian Faith.

Nor were they more peremptory in denying Divine Honour to *Angels*, than they were to *Martyrs* and *departed Saints* : For tho' they had a mighty Honour and Respect for *Martyrs* (as we shall take Notice afterwards) as those that had maintained the Truth of their Religion, and sealed it with their Blood, and therefore did what they could to do Praise and Honour to their Memories ; yet were they far from placing any thing of Religion or Divine Adoration in it : Whereof it will be enough to quote one famous Instance. The Church of *Smyrna*, writing to the Churches of *Pontus*, to give them an Account of the Martyrdom of *Polycarpus* their Bishop, tells them, That after he was dead, many of the Christians were desirous to have gotten the *Remains* of his Body, to have given them decent and honourable Burial, but were prevented in it by some *Jews*, who importuned the *Proconsul* to the contrary ; suggesting, that the Christians leaving their *crucified Master*, might henceforth worship *Polycarpus* ; whereupon they add, that this Suggestion must needs proceed from Ignorance of the true State of Christians : *This they did* (say they) *not considering how impossible it is, that ever we should either forsake Christ, who died for the Salvation of Mankind, or that we should worship any other. We adore him as the Son of God ; but the Martyrs, as the Disciples and Followers of our Lord, we deservedly love for their eminent Kindness to their own Prince and Master, whose Companions and Fellow-Disciples we also by all means desire to be.* This Instance is so much the more valuable in this Case, not only because so *plain* and *pertinent*, but because so *ancient*, and from Persons of so great *Authority* in the Church : For this is not the Testimony of any one private Person, but of the whole Church of

*Euseb.*  
*Hist. Eccl.*  
*l. 4. c. 15.*  
*p. 134.*

of *Smyrna*, according as it had been trained up under the Doctrine and Discipline of *Polycarpus*, the immediate Disciple of *S. John*. This was the Doctrine and Practice of Christians then; and it held so for some Ages after, even down to the Times of *S. Augustine*; when yet, in many other things, the Simplicity of the Christian Religion began to decline apace: We set apart, *says he*, no *Temples*, nor *Priests*, nor *Divine Services*, nor *Sacrifices to Martyrs*, because they are *not God*, but the same who is theirs, is our God: Indeed we honour their *Memories* as of holy Men, who have stood for the Truth, even unto Death, that so the true Religion might appear, and those which are false might be convinced to be so; but who ever heard a *Priest* standing at the *Altar*, built for the Honour and Worship of God over the Body of the holy *Martyr*, to say in his Prayers, *I offer Sacrifice to thee Peter, or Paul, or Cyprian?* for in such Commemorations we offer to that God, who made them both Men and Martyrs, and has made them Partners with holy Angels in the heavenly Glory; and by these Solemnities we both give Thanks to the true God for the Victories which they have gain'd, but also stir up ourselves by begging his Assistance, to contend for such Crowns and Rewards as they are possessed of: So that whatever Offices religious Men perform in the *Places of the Martyrs*, they are only *Ornaments* to their Memories, not *Sacrifices*, or *Divine Services* done to the Departed, as if they were Deities. More to the same Purpose we may find in that Place, as also in infinite other Places of his Works; where (were it worth the while) I could easily shew, that he does no less frequently than expressly assert, 'That tho' the Honour of Love, Respect and Imitation, yet no religious Adoration is due either to *Angels, Martyrs, or departed Saints*.

But

*Aug. de Civ. Dei*  
l. 8. c. 27.  
p. 49. vid.  
l. 22. c. 10.  
col. 1355.



## Part I.

But the great Instance wherein the Primitive Christians manifested their Detestation of Idolatry, was in respect of the *idolatrous Worship* of the Heathen World, the denying and abhorring any thing of Divine Honour that was done to their Gods. They looked upon the very *making* of Idols (tho' with no Intention to worship them) as an unlawful Trade, and inconsistent with *Christianity*:

*De Idololatri.* l. 6. p. 188.

*How have we renounced the Devil and all his Angels, (says Tertullian, meaning their solemn Renunciation in Baptism) if we make Idols? nor is it enough to say, tho' I make them, I do not worship them; there being the same Cause not to make them, that there is not to worship them, viz, the Offence that in both is done to God; yet thou dost so far worship them, as thou makest them that others may worship them.* And there-

*Cap. 11. p. 92. vid. c. 9, 10.*

fore he roundly pronounces, that no *Art*, no *Profession*, no *Service* whatsoever, that is employed either in *making* or *ministring* to Idols, can come short of Idolatry. They startled at any thing that had but the least *Shadow* of symbolizing with them

*Can. 7.*

in their Idolatry; therefore the *Ancyran Council* condemned them to a two Years Suspension from the *Sacrament*, who sat down with their *Heathen Friends* upon their solemn Festivals in their *Idol Temples*, altho' they brought their own Provisions along with them, and touched not one Bit of what had *been* offered to the Idol. Their first Care in instructing new Converts, was to leaven them with

*Adv. Cels.* l. 3. p. 120.

the Hatred of Idolatry: *Those that are to be initiated into our Religion (says Origen) we do before all things instil into them a great Dislike and Contempt of all Idols and Images, and lift up their Minds from worshipping Creatures instead of God, to him who is the great Creator of the World. If any thro' Weakness chanced at any time to lapse into this Sin, how*

*Inter Epist. Cypr. Ep.* 20. p. 32.

*pathetically did they bewail it? So Celerinus, in his Epistle to Lucian, giving him an Account of a Woman,*

man,

man, that to avoid Persecution, had done Sacrifice, Chap. 5. and thereby fallen from *Christ*, he bewails her as *dead*; tells him, that it stuck so close to him, that tho' in the time of *Easter*, a time of Festivity and Rejoicing, yet he wept Night and Day, and kept Company with Sackcloth and Ashes, and resolved to do so, till by the Help of *Christ*, and the Prayers of good Men, she should by Repentance be raised up again. The better to prevent this Sin (wherein weaker *Christians* were sometimes ensnared in those times of Cruelty and Persecution) the Discipline of the ancient Church was very severe against it; of which we can have no better Evidence, than to take a little View of the Determinations relating to this Case of that ancient Council of *Illiberis*, held some Years before the time of *Constantine*; there we find, that if any *Christian* after Baptism took upon him the *Flaminship*, or Priesthood of the *Gentiles*, (an Office ordinarily devolved upon the better Sort, and which *Christians* sometimes either made suit for, to gain more Favour with the People, or had it forced upon them by the Laws of the Country; so that they must either undergo it, or fly and forfeit their Estates) such a one, no not at the Hour of *Death*, was to be received into the *Communion of the Church*. The Reason of which Severity was, because whoever underwent that Office, must do *Sacrifice* to the Gods, and entertain the People with several kinds of Sights, Plays and Sports; which could not be managed without Murders, and the Exercise of all Lust and Filthiness, whereby they did *double and treble* their Sin, as that Council speaks. If a *Christian* in that Office did but allow the *Charges* to maintain those Sports and Sights (altho' he did not *actually sacrifice*, which he might avoid, by substituting a *Gentile Priest* in his room) he was indeed to be taken into *Communion* at last, but was to undergo a very severe *Penance* for

Concil. Illiber. Can. 2. vid. Not. Albaspin. p. 5. & de Tit. Eccl. Obs. 22.

Vid. Can. 3. p. 8.

Part I. for it all his Life. Nay, altho' he did neither of  
 the former, yet if he did but wear a *Crown* ( a  
 thing usually done by the Heathen Priests) he was  
 to be excluded from Communion for *two Years* to-  
 gether. If a Christian went up to the *Capitol*  
 (probably out of Curiosity) only to see the Sacri-  
 fice of the *Gentiles*, and did not see them, yet he  
 should be as guilty as if he had seen them; his  
 Intention and Will being the same, as the learned  
*Albaspine* (and I think truly) understands the *Ca-*  
*non*. And in such a Case, if the Person was one of  
 the *Faithful*, he was not to be received till after *ten*  
*Years* Repentance. Every Master of a Family was  
 commanded to suffer no *little Idols* or *Images* to be  
 kept in his House, to be worshipped by his Chil-  
 dren or Servants: But if this could not be done  
 without Danger of being betrayed and accused  
 by his Servants (a thing not unusual in those  
 times) that then at least he himself should abstain  
 from them, otherwise to be thrown out of the  
 Church. Being imbrued with such *Principles*, and  
 trained up under such a *Discipline* as this, 'tis no  
 Wonder if they would *do* and *suffer* any thing  
 rather than comply with the least Symptom of Ido-  
 latriy. They willingly underwent Banishment and  
 Confiscation, amongst several of which sort, *Cald-*  
*onius* tells *Cyprian* of one *Bona*, who being violently  
 drawn by her Husband to sacrifice, they by Force  
 guiding her Hand to do it, cried out and protested  
 against it that it was not *she* but *they* that did it, and  
 was thereupon sent into Banishment. They freely  
 laid down their greatest Honours and Dignities,  
 rather than by any *idolatrous* Act to offer Vio-  
 lence to their Consciences; whereof *Constantius*  
 the Father of *Constantine*, made this wise Experi-  
 ment: He gave out that all the Officers and  
 Great Men of the *Court* should either do sacri-  
 fice to the Gods, or immediately quit his Service,  
 and

Can. 55.  
p. 69.

Can. 59.  
p. 71.

Can. 41.  
p. 57.

Ep. 18.  
p. 30.

Euseb. de  
Vit. Const.  
l. 1. c. 19.  
p. 117.

and the Offices and Preferments which they held under him; whereupon many turned about, while others remained firm and unshaken. Upon this the prudent and excellent Prince discovered his Plot, embraced, commended and advanced to greater Honours those who were faithful to their Religion and their Consciences; reproaching and turning off those who were so ready to acquit and forfeit them. Thus *Jovianus*, a Man of considerable Note and Quality, and an Officer of great Place in *Julian's* Army, when the Emperor sent out his Edict, That all the Soldiers should either sacrifice or lay down their Arms, presently threw away his *Belt*, rather than he would obey that impious Command; tho' the Emperor at that time, for Reasons of State, would not suffer him to depart. And after the Death of *Julian*, when by the unanimous Vote of the whole Army he was chosen Emperor, he utterly refus'd it, till the Army had renounced their *Pagan* Idolatry and Superstition. And tho' it is true that *Life* is dearest to Men of all things in this World, yet how chearfully did they choose rather to shed their Blood, than to defile their Consciences with Idolatry; of which *Eusebius* gives us many Instances: And indeed this was the common Test in those times, Either *sacrifice* or *die*. *Phileas* Bishop of *Thumis*, in a Letter to his People, giving them an Account of the Martyrdoms that happened at *Alexandria*, tells them, that many, after having endured strange and unheard of Torments, were put to their Choice, whether they would sacrifice and be set at Liberty, or refuse and lose their Heads; whereupon all of them, without any Hesitation, readily went to embrace Death; knowing well how the Scripture is, *That whoever sacrifices unto strange Gods shall be cut off*: And again, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me*. And in the next Chapter, *Eusebius* tells us of a whole City

*Socr. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 22. p. 195.*

*Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 8. c. 10. p. 304.*

of .

**Part I.** of Christians in *Phrygia*, which, together with all the Men, Women, and Children, was burnt to Ashes, for no other reason, but because they universally confessed themselves to be *Christians*, and refused to obey those that commanded them to worship Idols: Instances of which kind there are enow to be met with in the *Histories* of the Church.

And so fixed and unmovable were they in this, that no Promises or Hopes of Reward, no Fear or Threatning could either tempt or startle them; a memorable Passage or two that we meet withal to this Purpose: It was a Custom amongst the *Romans* to shew some Respect and Honour, not only to the *Emperors* themselves, but even to their *Statues* and *Images*, by bowing the Body, or some other Act of external Veneration. Now *Julian* the Emperor (whose great Design was to reduce all Men, but especially his Army, back to Paganism and Idolatry) made use of this crafty Project; he placed the Pictures of *Jupiter*, and other Heathen Gods, so close to his own *Statues*, that they could not bow to the one but they must also to the other: Politickly reducing them to this Strait, that either they must refuse to pay Civil Honour to their Prince (which had been a sufficient Crime against them) or seem at least to do Honour unto the Gods. With this Device the less Wary and Cautelous were intrapped; but others, that were more pious and prudent, chose rather to deny the Prince that Civil Homage, and fall into the Hands of Martyrdom, than by such an ambiguous Adoration to seem to patronize Idolatry. At another time he fell upon this Stratagem: Upon a solemn Day, when the Emperors were wont to bestow *Largesses* upon the *Soldiers*, he caused the Army to be called before him, sitting then in great Pomp and Splendor, and a large *Donative* of Gold to be laid on the one Side

*Naz. Orat. Invec.*  
*1. in Julian. Or. 13.*  
 p. 90.  
*Vid. Sozom. Hist.*

*Ecc. 1. 5.*  
*c. 17.*  
*Naz. ib.*  
 p. 84.

Side, and an Heap of Frankincense by it on the other: Proclamation being made that they that would sacrifice the *one*, should have the *other*. By this means many of the Christian Soldiers were ensnared, performed the Sacrifice, received the Donative, and went home jolly and secure. But being at Dinner with their Companions, and drinking to each other (as the Custom was) with their Eyes lift up, and calling upon *Christ*, and making the *Sign of the Cross* as oft as they took the Cup into their Hands; one at the Table told them, he wondered how they could call upon *Christ* whom they had so lately abjured. Amazed at this, and asking how they had abjured him, they were told, that they had *sacrificed*, which was all one as to *deny Christ*. Whereupon starting up from the Table, they ran up and down the Market-Place in a furious and frantick Manner, crying out, *We are Christians, we are Christians in Heart and Truth*, and let all the World take Notice that there is but *one God*, to whom we *live*, and for whom we'll *die*. We have not broken the Faith which we swore to thee, *O Blessed Saviour*, nor renounced our Profession. If our *Hands* be guilty, our *Hearts* are innocent. 'Tis not the *Gold* has corrupted us, but the Emperor's *Craftiness* hath deceived us. And with that, running to the Emperor, they threw down their *Gold* before him, with this Address; *We have not, Sir, received a Donative, but are condemned to die. Instead of being honoured, we are vilified and disgraced. Take this Largest, and give it to your Soldiers; as for us, kill us, and sacrifice us to Christ, whom alone we own as our highest Prince. Return us Fire for Fire, and for the Ashes of the Sacrifice reduce us to Ashes. Cut off those Hands which we so wickedly stretched out, those Feet that carried us to so great a Mischief. Give others the Gold, who may have no Cause to repent on't; for our part, Christ is enough*

G

for,

Part I.

for us, whom we value instead of all Things. With this noble and generous Resolution, tho' the Emperor was highly intraged; yet because he envied them the Honour of *Martyrdom*, he would not put them to Death, but banished them, and inflicted other Penalties which might sufficiently evidence his Rage against them.

Nay, with so warm a Zeal were they acted against Idolatry, that many of them could not contain themselves from falling foul upon it, wherever they met it, tho' with the immediate Hazard of their Lives. So *Romanus* (Deacon and Exorcist of the Church of *Cæsarea*) seeing great Multitudes of People at *Antioch* flocking to the Temples, and doing Sacrifice to the Gods, came to them, and began very severely to reprove and reproach them; for which being apprehended, after many strange and cruel Usages he was put to Death with all imaginable Pain and Torture. Thus *Ap- phianus* (a young Man) when the Criers by Proclamation summoned all the Inhabitants of *Cæsarea* to sacrifice to the Gods; the *Tribunes* particularly reciting every Man's Name out of a Book, to the great Terror of all that were Christians; privately and unknown to us (says *Eusebius*, who lived at that time in the same House with him) stole out, and getting near *Urbanus* the *President* (who was then compassed about with a *Guard* of Soldiers) just as he was about to offer Sacrifice, caught hold of his Right Hand, which he grasped so fast, that he forced him to let fall the Sacrifice, gravely admonishing him to desist from such Errors and Vanities: *Clearly shewing, says the Historian, that true Christians are so far from being drawn from the Worship of the True God, that by Threatnings and Torments they are rather heightened into a greater and more ingenious Freedom and Boldness in the Profession of the Truth.* For this Fact the young Man was, almost

*Euseb. de Mart. Pac. c. 2. p. 320.*

*Ib. c. 4. p. 324.*

most torne in Pieces by the Soldiers, whose Rage and Fierceness could scarce suffer him to be relieved for acuter Tortures, which were exercised towards him with all possible Cruelty; and when all could do no good upon him, he was thrown half dead into the Sea. The like we read of Three famous Christians at *Merum*, a City in *Phrygia*; where, when the Governor of the Province under *Julian* the *Apostate*, had commanded the Heathen Temple to be opened, they got by Night into the Temple, and broke to pieces all the *Statues* and *Images* of the Gods. Whereupon when a general Persecution was like to rise against all the *Christians* of the City, that the *Ignorant* and *Innocent* might not suffer, the Authors of the Fact came of their own Accord to the Judge, and confessed it; who offered them Pardon if they would sacrifice, which they rejected with *Disdain*, and told him they were much readier to endure any Torments, and Death itself, than to be defiled with sacrificing: And accordingly were first treated with all sorts of Torments, and then burnt upon an *Iron Grate*, retaining their Courage to the last, and took their Leave of the Governor with this *Sarcasm*; *If thou hast a Mind, Amachius, to eat roast Meat, turn us on the other side, lest we be but half roasted, and so prove ungrateful to thy Taste.* So mightily did a restless Passion for the Divine Honour possess the Minds of those Primitive Christians; and tho' it is true, such Transports of Zeal are not ordinarily warrantable (for which Reason the Council of *Illiberis* justly prohibited those who were killed in the defacing and demolishing Idols, to be reckoned in the Number of *Martyrs*) yet do they sufficiently shew what a Spirit of Eagerness and Activity ruled in those Times against the false Religions of the World.

By all this we may see how unjustly the Christians were traduced and accused for *Idolaters*. Three things

Socr. Hist.  
Ecc. l. 3.  
c. 15.  
p. 186.



**Part I.** things were commonly charged upon them; that they worshipped the *Sun*, the *Cross*, and an *Ass's Head*. For the first, their Worshipping the *Sun*,

*Apol. c. 16. p. 16.* *Tertullian* answers, That the Mistake arose from a double Cause, partly that the *Christians* of those times did generally pray towards the *East* and the *Sun-rising*, which the *Heathens* themselves also did, tho' upon different Grounds: And partly because they performed the Solemnities of their Religion upon the *Day* that was dedicated to the *Sun*, which made the *Gentiles* suspect that they worshipped the *Sun* itself. They were next charged with worshipping *Crosses*, a Charge directly

*Min. Fel. p. 24.* false. As for *Crosses* (says *Octavius*) we neither desire nor worship them; 'tis you who consecrate wooden Gods, that perhaps adore wooden *Crosses* as Parts of them: For what else are your *Ensigns*, *Banners* and *Colours*, with which you go out to War, but *Golden* and *Painted Crosses*? The very *Trophies* of your Victory do not only resemble the Fashion of a simple Cross, but of a Man that is fastened to

*Loc. supra citat.* it. The very same Answer which *Tertullian* also returns to this Charge. The Occasion of it no doubt was the *Christians* talking of, and magnifying so much their *crucified* Master, and their almost constant Use of the *Sign of the Cross*, which (as we shall see afterwards) they made use of even in the most common Actions of their Lives. But for paying any Adoration to a *material* Cross, was a thing to which those times were the greatest Strangers. Otherwise understanding the Cross for him that hung upon it, they were not ashamed (with the Great Apostle) to glory in the Cross of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and to count it the matter of their highest Joy and Triumph. But the absurdest Part of the Charge was, that they worshipped the *Head of an Ass*. I hear (says the *Heathen* in *Minutius Felix*) that being seduced by I know not what fond Persuasion,

suasion, they worship the consecrated Head of an *Chap. 5.*  
*Ass*, one of the filthiest Creatures; a Religion fitly  
 calculated for Persons of such a *dull* and *stupid*  
 Disposition. Hence *Tertullian* tells us, that *Christi-*  
*ans* were called *Afinarii*, *Ass-Worshippers*, and  
 that *Christ* was painted and publicly exposed by  
 the bold wicked Hand of an Apostate Jew, with  
*Ass's Ears*, one of his *Feet hooped*, holding a *Book*  
 in his Hand, and having a *Gown* over him, with  
 this Inscription :

DEUS CHRISTIANORUM  
 ONONYCHITES;

*The Ass-hooped God of the Christians.*

A most ridiculous Representation, and the Issue  
 of the most foolish Spite and Malice. *When I saw*  
*it* (says he) *I laughed at both the Title and the Fa-*  
*shion.* This, *Octavius* tells his Adversary, was the  
 Result and Spawn of lying Fame, begot and nou-  
 rished by the Father of Lyes: For who, says he,  
 can be so silly as to worship this? or who can be  
 so much more silly, as to believe it should be wor-  
 shipped? unless it be that you yourselves do conse-  
 crate whole Asses in the Stable with your Goddess  
*Epona*, and religiously adorn them in the Solemnities  
 of *Isis*, and both sacrifice and adore the Heads of  
 Rams and Oxen, and make Gods of a Mixture  
 of a *Goat* and a *Man*, and dedicate them with the  
 Faces of *Dogs* and *Lions*. More he has there to  
 the same Purpose, as *Tertullian* also had answer-  
 ed the same thing before him. The true Ground  
 of this ridiculous Charge (as *Tertullian* observes)  
 was a fabulous Report that had been a long time  
 common amongst the Heathens, That the *Jews*,  
 when wandering in the Wilderness, and almost rea-  
 dy to die of Thirst, were conducted by wild Asses  
 to a Fountain of Water; for which great Kindness  
 they formed the Shape of an Ass, and ever after

Onony-  
 chites. ]  
 De variis  
 hujus vocis  
 lectionibus  
 vid. Ri-  
 galt. in  
 loc. &  
 Voss. de  
 Idol. l. 3.  
 c. 75.  
 p. 565.  
 Pag. 23.

Vid. etiam  
 ad Nation.  
 l. 1. c. 11.  
 p. 49.

**Part. I.** worshipped it with Divine Honours. This is confidently reported both by *Tacitus* and *Plutarch*, as it had been many Years before by *Apio* the *Alexandrian*, in his Books against the *Jews*. And by this means the Heathens, who did frequently confound the *Jews* and *Christians*, came to form and fasten this Charge upon them, when it was equally false in respect of both. For as *Tertullian* observes, the same *Tacitus*, who reports this, tells us in another Place, that when *Pompey*, at the taking of *Jerusalem*, presumptuously broke into the *Holy of Holies* (whither none but the *High Priest* might enter) out of a Curiosity to pry into the most hidden Secrets and *Arcana* of their Religion, he found no Image at all there; whereas (says *Tertullian*) had they worshipped any such thing, there had been no likelier Place to have met with it; and therefore brands him with the Charge of *the most lying Historian in the World*. And thus we see how the ancient *Christians* manifested and maintained their Love and Piety towards God by a most vigorous and hearty Opposition of that Idolatry, that reigned so uncontrolably in the Heathen World.

*Tacit.*  
*Hist.* l. 5.  
c. 4.  
*Plut.*  
*Sympos.*  
l. 4.  
*Quest.* 5.  
p. 670.  
*Apol.* c. 16.

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## C H A P. VI.

### Of Churches and Places of Publick Worship in the Primitive Times.

*Place, a Circumstance necessary to every Action. The Piety of Christians in founding Places for the Solemnities of Religion. They had distinct and separate Places for their Publick Assemblies, even in the Apostles times. This proved out of the New Testament, as also in the succeeding Ages, from the Testimonies of the Fathers*

thers and Heathen Writers. The common Objection of the Gentiles, that Christians had no Temples, considered and answered. Churches increased as Christianity met with favourable Entertainment: Restored and Repaired by Dioclesian, Maximinus, Constantine. The Fashion of their Churches oblong, built towards the East. The Form of their Churches described. The Vestibulum, or Porch. The Narthex, and what in it. The Nave or Body of the Church. The Ambo, or Reading-Pew. The Station of the Faithful. The *ιερατεῖον*, or Chancel. The Altarium, or Lord's Table. The Bishops Throne, and Seats of the Presbyters. The Diaconian what. The Prothesis. Christians then beautified their Churches. Whether they had Altars in them. Decent Tables for the Celebration of the Divine Offices. Those frequently by the Fathers styled Altars, and in what Sense. They had no such gaudy Altars as the Heathens had in their Temples, and the Papists now in their Churches. Altars when begun to be fixed and made of Stone. Made Asylums and Places of Refuge, and invested with many Privileges by Christian Emperors. No Images in their Churches for above four hundred Years, produced out of the Fathers. Pictures in Churches condemned by the Council of Illiberis. An Account of Epiphanius's tearing the Picture of Christ in the Church of Anablatha; and the great Force of the Argument thence against Image-worship. Christian Churches when first



formerly consecrated. The *Encoenia* of the ancient Church. Our *Wakes* or *Feasts* in memory of the *Dedication* of particular Churches. What *Incomes* or *Revenues* they had in the first Ages. Particular Churches had some standing *Revenues*, even under the *Heathen Emperors*. These much increased by the *Piety* of *Constantine* and the first *Christian Princes*; their *Laws* noted to that Purpose. Their *Reverence* shewed at their going into Churches, and during their *Stay* there, even by the *Emperors* themselves.

**T**HE Primitive *Christians* were not more heartily zealous against the idolatrous *Worship* of the *Heathen Gods*, than they were religiously observant of whatever concerned the *Honour* and *Worship* of the true, as to all the material *Parts* and *Circumstances* of it; as will easily appear, if we consider what *Care* they had about the *Place*, *Time*, *Persons*, and both the *Matter* and the *Manner* of that *Worship* that they performed to *God*. Under each of which we shall take *Notice* of what is most considerable, and does most properly relate to it, so far as the *Records* of those times give us an *Account* of it.

*Place* is an unseparable *Circumstance* of religious *Worship*; for every *Body*, by the natural *Necessity* of its *Being*, requires some determinate *Place* either for *Rest* or *Motion*. Now the *Worship* of *God* being in a great part an external *Action*, especially when performed by the joint *Concurrence* of several *Persons*, does not only necessarily require a *Place*, but a *Place* conveniently capacious of all that join together in the same publick *Actions* of *Religion*. This Reason put all *Nations*, even by the *Light* of

of Nature, upon erecting *publick Places* for the Honour of their Gods, and for their own Convenience in meeting together to pay their religious Services and Devotions. But my present Enquiry reaches no farther than the *Primitive Christians*, not whether they met together for the Discharge of their common Duties, (which I suppose none can doubt of) but whether they had *Churches* fix'd, and appropriate Places for the joint Performance of their Publick Offices. And that they had, even in those early Times, will, I think, be beyond all Dispute, if we take but a short Survey of those first Ages of *Christianity*. In the Sacred Story, we find some more than probable Footsteps of some determinate Places for their solemn Conventions, and peculiar only to that Use. Of this nature was that *ἄνωρον*, or *Upper Room* into which the *Apostles* and Disciples (after the Return from the Ascension of our Saviour) went up, as into a Place commonly known and separate to that use, there by Fasting and Prayer to make Choice of a new Apostle; and this supposed by a very ancient Tradition to have been the *same Room* wherein our Saviour, the Night before his Death, celebrated the Passover with his Disciples, and instituted the *Lord's Supper*. Such a one, if not (which I rather think) the same, was that *one Place*, wherein they were all assembled with one Accord upon the Day of *Pentecost*, when the Holy Ghost visibly came down upon them. And this the rather, because the Multitude (and they too, *Strangers of every Nation under Heaven*) came so readily to the Place upon the first Rumour of so strange an Accident; which could hardly have been, had it not been commonly known to be the Place where the *Christians* used to meet together. And this, very Learned Men take to be the Meaning of that, *Acts 2. 46. They continued daily with one Accord in the Temple,*

*Acts 1. 13.*

*Acts 2. 1.*

Part I. *Temple, and breaking Bread, καὶ ὄνον*, not as we render it, from *House to House*, but at *Home*, as 'tis in the *Margin*, or in the *House*; they eat their *Meat with gladness and singleness of Heart*, i. e. when they had perform'd their daily *Devotions at the Temple*, at the accustom'd *Hours of Prayer*, they used to return home to this *Upper Room*, there to celebrate the *Holy Eucharist*, and then go to their ordinary *Meals*. This seems to be a clear and unforced *Interpretation*, and to me the more probable, because it immediately follows upon their assembling together in that one *Place at the Day of Pentecost*; which *Room* is also called by the same *Name of House*, at the *2d Verse* of that *Chapter*. And 'tis no ways unlikely (as *Mr. Mede* conjectures) but that when the first *Believers sold their Houses and Lands, and laid their Money at the Apostles Feet*, to supply the *Necessities of the Church*, some of them might give their *Houses* (at least some eminent *Room* in them) for the *Church* to meet, and perform their sacred *Duties*. Which also may be the *Reason* why the *Apostle*, writing to the particular *Christians*, speaks so often of the *Church that was in their House*: Which seems clearly to intimate, not so much the particular *Persons* of any private *Family*, living together under the same *Band of Christian Discipline*, as that in such and such a *House* (and more especially in this or that *Room* of it) there was the constant and solemn *Convention of the Christians* of that *Place*, for their joint *Celebration of Divine Worship*. And this will be further clear'd by that famous *Passage of S. Paul*, where, taxing the *Corinthians* for their *Irreverence and Abuse of the Lord's Supper*, one greedily eating before another, and some of them to great *Excess*; *What* (says he) *have you not Houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the Church of God? Where, that by Church is not meant the Assembly meeting,*

1 Cor. II.  
22.

meeting, but the *Place* in which they used to assemble, is evident, partly from what went before ; for *their coming together in the Church*, *verse 18.* is expounded by *their coming together into one Place*, *verse 20.* plainly arguing, that the Apostle meant not the Persons, but the Place ; partly from the Opposition which he makes between the Church and their own private Houses. If they must have such irregular Banquets, they had Houses of their own, where 'twas much fitter to do it, and to have their ordinary Repast, than in that *Place* which was set apart for the common Exercises of Religion, and therefore ought not to be dishonour'd by such extravagant and intemperate Feastings ; for which cause he enjoins them, in the *Close* of that *Chapter*, *that if any Man hunger, he should eat at Home.* And that this Place was always thus understood by the Fathers of old, were no hard matter to make out ; as also by most Learned Men of later times ; of which it shall suffice to intimate two of our own, Men of great Name and Learning, who have done it to great satisfaction.

Chap. 6.  


Nic. Full.  
 Miscell. S.  
 l. 2. c. 9.  
 M. Mede.  
 p. 405.

Thus stood the Case during the *Apostles Times* ; for the Ages after them, we find that the *Christians* had their fix'd and definite Places of Worship, especially in the second *Century* ; as, had we no other Evidence, might be made good from the Testimony of the Author of that *Dialogue in Lucian*, (if not *Lucian* himself, of which I see no great cause to doubt) who lived under the Reign of *Trajan*, and who expressly mentions that *House* or *Room* wherein the *Christians* were wont to assemble together. And *Clemens* (in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*) assures us, That *Christ* did not only appoint the Times *when*, the Persons by *whom*, but the Places *where* he would be solemnly served and worshipped. And *Justin Martyr* expressly affirms, That upon *Sunday* all *Christians* (whether in

Philopatry.  
 tom. 2.  
 p. 1007.

pag. 52.

Ap. 2. p. 98.

Town



**Part I.** Town or Country) used to assemble together in *one Place*; which could hardly be done, had not that Place been fixed and settled. The same we find afterwards in several Places of *Tertullian*, who speaks of their coming into the Church and the House of God, which he elsewhere calls the *House of our Dove*, i. e. our Innocent and Dove-like Religion; and there describes the very Form and Fashion of it. And in another Place, speaking of their going into the Water to be baptized, he tells us, They were wont first to go into the Church to make their solemn Renunciation before the Bishop. About this time, in the Reign of *Alexander Severus*, the Emperor, (who began his Reign about the Year 222.) the Heathen Historian tells us, That when there was a Contest between the *Christians* and the *Vintners*, about a certain publick Place which the Christians had seized and challenged for theirs; the Emperor gave the Cause for the *Christians* against the *Vintners*, saying, 'Twas much better that God should be worshipped there any ways, than that the *Vintners* should possess it. If it shall be said, that the Heathens of those Times generally accused the Christians for having no Temples, and charged it upon them as a piece of *Atheism* and *Impiety*; and that the *Christian Apologists* did not deny it; as will appear to any that will take the Pains to examine the Places alledged in the Margin: To this the Answer in short depends upon the *Notion* which they had of a *Temple*, by which the Gentiles understood the Places devoted to their Gods, and wherein their Deities were inclosed and shut up; Places adorned with Statues and Images, with fine Altars and Ornaments. And for such Temples as these, they freely confessed they had none, nor ought to have; for that the true God did not (as the Heathens supposed theirs) dwell in Temples made with Hands, nor either

*De Idolol.*  
c. 7. p. 88.  
*Adv. Valentin.* c. 3.  
p. 2, 51.

*De Corona*  
*Mil.* c. 3.  
p. 101.

*Lamprid.*  
*in vit. Alex.*  
*Sever.* c. 49.  
p. 575.

*Min. Fel.*  
p. 8. to 26.  
*Arnob. adv.*  
*Gent.* l. 6.  
p. 83.  
*Lact. de*  
*Orig. error.*  
l. 2. c. 2.  
p. 141.

ther needed nor could possibly be honoured by them: And therefore they purposely abstained from the Word *Temple*, and I do not remember that 'tis used by any Christian Writer for the Place of the Christians Assemblies, for the best Part of the first three hundred Years. And yet those very Writers who deny *Christians* to have had any Temples, do at the same time acknowledge that they had their Meeting-places for Divine Worship, their *Conventicula*, as *Arnobius* calls them, and com-  
Lib. 4. p. 67.  
 plains they were furiously demolish'd by their Enemies. If any desire to know more concerning this, as also that *Christians* had appropriate Places of Worship for the greatest part of the three first Centuries, let them read a Discourse purposely written upon this Subject by a most learned Man of our own Nation: Nor indeed should I have said so much as I have about it, but that I had noted most of these things before I read his Discourse upon that Subject.  
Mr. Jos. Mede's Discourse concerning Churches, Op. part 2. l. 2.

Afterwards their Churches began to rise apace, according as they met with more quiet and favourable times; especially under *Valerian*, *Gallienus*, *Claudius*, *Aurelian*, and some other Emperors: Of which Times *Eusebius* tells us, That the *Bishops* met with the highest Respect and Kindness, both from People and Governors. And adds, But who shall be able to reckon up the innumerable Multitudes that daily flock'd to the Faith of *Christ*, the Number of Congregations in every City, those famous Meetings of theirs in their *Oratories* or sacred Places; so great, that not being content with those old Buildings which they had before, they erected from the very Foundations more fair and spacious Churches in every City? This was several Years before the times of *Constantine*, and yet even they had their Churches of *ancient-Date*. This indeed was a very serene and Sun-shiny Season, but alas!  
 it

Part I. it began to darken again, and *the Clouds returned after the Rain*: For in the very next Chapter he tells us, That in the Reign of *Dioclesian* there came out Imperial Edicts, commanding all *Christians* to be persecuted, the Bishops to be imprison'd, the Holy Bible to be burnt, and their Churches to be demolish'd and laid level with the Ground; which how many they were, may be guessed at by this,

*De Schism. Domat.* That (as *Optatus* tells us) there were about this time above forty *Basilicæ* or Churches in *Rome* only. Upon *Constantine's* coming into a Partnership of the Empire, the Clouds began to disperse and scatter;

*Euseb.* and *Maximinus* (who then govern'd the *Eastern* Parts of the Empire) a bitter Enemy to *Christians*, was yet forced by a publick Edict to give *Christians* the free Liberty of their Religion, and leave to repair and rebuild τὰ κτεῖνα τὰ ὀικῆα, their Churches; which shortly after they every where set upon, raising their Churches from the Ground to a vast Height, and to a far greater Splendor and Glory than those which they had before; the Emperors giving all possible Encouragement to it by frequent Laws and Constitutions; the Christians also themselves contributing towards it with the greatest Cheerfulness and Liberality, even to a Magnificence comparable to that of the *Jewish* Princes towards the Building of *Solomon's Temple*; as *Eusebius* tells them, in his *Oration* at the Dedication of the famous Church at *Tyre*. And no sooner was the whole Empire devolved upon *Constantine*, but he publish'd two Laws; one to prohibit *Pagan* Worship, the other commanding Churches to be built of a nobler Size and Capacity than before: To which purpose he directed his Letters to *Eusebius*, and the rest of the Bishops to see it done within their several Jurisdictions; charging also the Governors of the Provinces to be assisting to them, and to furnish them with whatever was necessary and con-

convenient: Inſomuch that in a ſhort time the World was beautify'd with Churches and ſacred Oratories, both in Cities and Villages, and in the moſt barbarous and deſart Places; called *Kvetaxa*, ſays the *Hiſtorian*, (from whence our *Kirk* and *Church*) the *Lord's Houſes*, becauſe erected not to Men, but to the Honour of our *Lord* and *Saviour*. 'Twere needleſs to inſiſt any longer upon the Piety of Chriſtians in building Churches in and after the time of *Conſtantine*, the Inſtances being ſo vaſtly numerous; only I cannot omit what *Nazianzen* reports of his own Father, who (tho' Biſhop of a very ſmall and inconfiderable Dioceſe, yet) built a famous Church almoſt wholly at his own Charge.

Chap. 6.  
Orat. de  
laud. Con-  
ſtant. c. 7.  
p. 660.

Or. funeb.  
in laud.  
Patr. Or.  
19. p. 313.

Thus we have ſeen, That from the very Infancy of the Goſpel, the Chriſtians always had their ſettled and determinate Places of Divine Worſhip. For the Form and Faſhion of their Churches, it was for the moſt part *oblong*, to keep (ſay ſome) the better Correſpondence with the Faſhion of a *Ship*, the common Notion and Metaphor by which the Church was wont to be repreſented, and to put us in mind that we are toſſed up and down in the World as upon a ſtormy and tempeſtuouſ Sea, and that out of the Church there's no ſafe Paſſage to Heaven, the Country we all hope to arrive at. They were generally built *towards the Eaſt*, (towards which alſo they performed the moſt ſolemn Parts of their Worſhip, the Reaſons whereof we ſhall ſee afterwards in its due Place) following herein the Cuſtom of the Gentiles, tho' upon far other Grounds than they did; and this ſeems to have obtain'd from the firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*; ſure I am, 'twas ſo in *Tertullian's* time, who oppoſing the plain and ſimple Way of the *Orthodox* Aſſemblies, to the *ſkulking and clancular* Conventicles of the Hereticks, who, *Serpent-like*, crept about in Holes and Corners; ſays he, *The Houſe*

Conſtit. A-  
poſt. l. 2.  
c. 57. p.  
875.

Adv. Va-  
lentin. p.  
251.

of

**Part I.** *of our Dove-like Religion is simple, built on high and in an open View, and respects the Light as the Figure of the Holy Spirit, and the East as the Representation of Christ.* It cannot be thought that in the first Ages, while the Flames of Persecution raged about their Ears, the *Christian Churches* should be very stately and magnificent, but such as the Condition of those Times would bear; their Splendor increasing according to the Entertainment that *Christianity* met withal in the World; till the Empire becoming Christians, their Temples rose up into *Grandeur and Gallantry*; as amongst others, may appear by the particular Description which *Eusebius* makes of the *Church of Tyre*, mention'd before; and that which *Constantine* built at *Constantinople*, in honour of the Apostles; both which were incomparably sumptuous and magnificent.

*De vita  
Const. l. 4.  
c. 58, 59.  
p. 555.*

I shall not undertake to describe at large the exact Form, and the several Parts and Dimensions of their Churches, (which varied somewhat according to different Times and Ages) but briefly reflect upon such as were most common and remarkable. At the Entrance of their Churches (especially after they began to arrive at more Perfection) was the *Vestibulum* (called also *Atrium* and *νεβυδορ*) the *Porch*, in greater Churches of somewhat larger Capacity, adorned many times with Cloisters, Marble-Columns, Fountains, and Cisterns of Waters, and covered over for the Conveniency of those that stood or walked there. Here stood the lowest Order of *Penitents*, begging the Prayers of the Faithful as they went in. For the Church itself, it usually consisted of three Parts: The First was the *Narthex* (which we have no proper Word to render by) it was that Part of the Church that lay next to the great Door by which they entred in; in the first Part of it stood the *Catechumens*, or first Learners of Christianity; in the Middle the *Euergu-*

*Energumeni*, or those who were possessed by Satan; and in this Part also stood the *Font* or Place of *Baptismal* Initiation; and towards the upper End was the Place of the Hearers, who were one of the Ranks of *Penitents*. The second Part contain'd the middle or main Body of the Church, (called by the *Greeks*  $\text{Ναὸς}$ , by the *Latins* *Navis*, from whence our Term the *Nave* of the Church, comes) where the *Faithful* assembled for the Celebration of Divine Service; where the Men and the Women had their distinct *Apartments*, lest at such times unchaste and irregular Appetites should be kindled by a promiscuous interfering with one another: Of which pious and excellent Contrivance, mention is made in an ancient *Funeral Inscription* found in the *Vatican Cœmety* at *Rome*; such a one bury'd *SINISTRA PARTE VIRO RUM*, on that *Side* of the Church where the *Men sat*. In this Part of the Church, next to the entering into it, stood the *Class* of the *Penitents*, who were called  $\text{ὑποπίπτοντες}$ , because at their going out they fell down upon their *Knees* before the *Bishop*, who laid his *Hands* upon them. Next to them was the *Ambo*, the *Pulpit*, or rather *Reading-Desk*, whence the *Scriptures* were read and preached to the *People*. Above that were the *Faithful*, the highest Rank and Order of the *People*, and who alone communicated at the *Lord's Table*. The third Part was the  $\text{βῆμα}$  or  $\text{ἰσσητήριον}$ , separated from the rest of the Church by neat *Rails*, called *Cancelli*, whence our *English* Word *Chancel*, to denote that Part of the Church to this day: Into this Part none might come, but such as were in *Holy Orders*, unless it were the *Greek Emperors* at *Constantinople*, who were allow'd to come up to the *Table* to make their *Offerings*, and so back again. Within this Division the most considerable thing was the  $\text{Θυσιαστήριον}$ , the *Altar*, (as they metaphorically called it, because there

H

they

Chap. 6.

Const. A.  
post. l. 2. c.  
57. p. 875.Roma sub-  
terran. l. 2.  
c. 10. num.  
23. p. 204.

Part. I. they offer'd the *Commemorative Sacrifice* of Christ's Body and Blood) or the *Communion-Table* ( $\eta$  *Αγία τράπεζα*, as 'tis frequently stiled by the *Greek Fathers*) behind which, at the very upper end of the Chancel, was the *Chair* or *Throne* of the Bishop (for so was it almost constantly called) on both sides whereof were the *σύνθρονοι*, the *Seats* of the *Presbyters* (for the *Deacons* might not here sit down.) The Bishop's Throne was raised up somewhat higher from the Ground, and from thence I suppose it was, that he usually deliver'd his Sermons to the People. Therefore *Socrates* seems to note it as a new Thing in *Chrysostom*, that when he preached he went to sit ἐν τῷ ἀμβωνῷ, upon the *Pulpit* (he means that in the Body of the Church, for so *Sozomen* tells us that he sat in the *Reading-Desk* in the Middle of the Church) that by reason of his low Voice he might be better heard of the People. Adjoining to the Chancel on the *North side*, probably, was the *Diaconicon*, mention'd both in the *Laodicean Council* (tho' I know both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon*, and after them the learned *Leo Allatius*, will have another thing to be meant in that Place) as also in a Law of *Arcadius* and *Homorius* against *Hereticks*, and probably so called either because peculiarly committed to the *Deacon* of the Place, or (as the great Commentator upon that Law will have it) because set apart ἡ ἱερὴ διακονία, to some Sacred Services. It was in the Nature of our modern *Vestries*, the *Sacristy*, wherein the Plate, Vessels and Vestments belonging to the Church, and other Things dedicated to Holy Uses, were laid up, and where (in after times) *Reliques* and such like Fopperies were treasured up with great Care and Diligence. On the other side of the Chancel was the *Prothests* or Place where things were prepared in order to the Sacrament, where the Offerings were laid, and what remain'd of the Sacramental Elements,

*Hist. Eccl.*  
*l. 6. c. 5.*  
*p. 334.*  
*Lib. 8. c. 5.*  
*p. 764.*  
*Can. 21.*  
*De Templ.*  
*Grac. num.*  
*14. p. 25.*  
*C. Th. l. 16.*  
*tit. 5. l. 29.*  
*ubi vid.*  
*Fac. Gothofr. Com.*

ments, till they were *decently* disposed of. And Chap. 6.  
 this may serve for a short View of the Churches  
 of those first Times, after they began to grow up  
 into some Beauty and Perfection.

But tho' the Christians of those Times spared no convenient *Cost* in founding and adorning Publick Places for the Worship of God, yet were they careful to keep a decent Mien between a sordid *Slovenliness*, and a too curious and over-nice *Superstition*. In the more early Times, even while the Fury and Fierceness of their Enemies kept them low and mean, yet they beautify'd their Oratories and Places of Worship; especially if we may believe the *Author of the Dialogue in Lucian* (whom we mentioned before, and who lived within the first Age) who bringing in one *Critias*, that was persuaded by the Christians to go to the Place of their Assembly, (which by his Description seems to have been an *ἄψιδον*, or *Upper Room*) tells us, that after they had gone up several Stairs, they came at last into an *House or Room that was overlaid with Gold*, where he beheld nothing but a Company of Persons with their Bodies bowed down, and pale Faces. I know the Design of that Dialogue in part is to abuse and deride the Christians, but there's no Reason to suppose he feign'd those Circumstances which made nothing to his purpose. As the Times grew better, they added more and greater Ornaments to them; concerning two whereof there has been some Contest in the Christian World, *Altars* and *Images*. As for *Altars*, the first Christians had no other in their Churches than *decent Tables* of Wood, upon which they celebrated the Holy *Eucharist*: These, 'tis true, in Allusion to those in the *Jewish Temple*, the Fathers generally called *Altars*; and truly enough might do so, by reason of those Sacrifices they offer'd upon them, *viz.* the Commemoration of *Christ's Sacrifice* in the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacri-



Part. I. *fice of Prayer and Thanksgiving, and the Oblation of Alms and Charity for the Poor (usually laid upon those Tables) which the Apostle expressly styles a Sacrifice. These were the only Sacrifices (for no other had the Christian World for many hundreds of Years) which they then offer'd upon their Altars, which were much of the same kind with our Communion Tables at this day. For that they had not any such fix'd and gaudy Altars (as the Heathens then had in their Temples, and Papists still have in their Churches) is most evident, because the Heathens at every turn did charge and reproach them for having none, and the Fathers in their Answers did freely and openly acknowledge and avow it; asserting and pleading that the only true Sacred Altar was a pure and holy Mind, and that the best and most acceptable Sacrifice to God was a pious Heart, and an innocent and religious Life. Hæc nostra sacrificia, hæc Dei sacra sunt: These (say they) are our Oblations, these the Sacrifices we owe to God. This was the State of Altars in the Christian Churches for near upon the first three hundred Years; till Constantine coming in, and with him Peace and Plenty, the Churches began to excel in Costliness and Bravery every day, and then the wooden and movable Altars began to be turn'd into fix'd Altars of Stone or Marble, tho' used to no other purpose than before; And yet this too did not so universally obtain (though severely urged by Sylvester Bishop of Rome) but that in very many places Tables or movable Altars of Wood continued in use a long time after, as might easily been made appear from several Passages in Athanasius and others, yea, even to S. Augustine's time, and probably much later, were it proper to my Business to search after it. No sooner were Altars made fix'd and immovable, but they were compassed in with Rails to fence off Rudeness and Irreverence, and Persons began to regard them*

Vide Clem. Alex. Stromat. l. 7. p. 117.  
Orig. adv. Cels. l. 4. p. 383.  
Min. Fel. p. 8. --- 26.  
Arnob. adv. gent. l. 6. p. 83. Lat. l. 2. c. 2.

Athan. ad Orthodox. p. 728. so. 1. Ep. ad solit. vit. agent.

them with mighty Observance and Respect; which soon grew so high, that they became *Asylums* and Refuges to protect innocent Persons and unwitting Offenders from immediate Violence and Oppression; an Instance whereof *Nazianzen* gives us in a Christian Widow, a Woman of great Place and Quality, who flying from the Importunities of the President, who would have forced her to marry him, had no other way but to take Sanctuary at the Holy Table in *S. Basil's Church* at *Cæsarea*. She was demanded with many fierce and terrible Threatnings, but the Holy Man stoutly refused, altho' the President was his mortal Enemy, and sought only a Pretence to ruin him. Many such Cases may be met with in the History of the Church. Nor was this a Privilege merely founded upon Custom, but settled and ratify'd by the Laws of *Christian Emperors*; concerning the particular Cases whereof, together with the Extent and Limitation of these *Immunities*, there are no less than six several Laws of the Emperors *Theodosius, Arcadius, and Theodosius junior*, yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*. But how far those *Asyla's* and *Sanctuaries* were good and useful, and to what Evil and pernicious Purposes they were improved in After-times, is without the Limits of my present Task to enquire.

But if in those Times there was so little Ground for Altars (as used in the present Sense of the *Church of Rome*) there was yet far less for *Images*; and certainly might things be carry'd by a fair and impartial Trial of Antiquity, the Dispute would soon be at an end; there not being any one just and good Authority to prove, that *Images* were either *worshipped* or *used* in Churches, for near upon four hundred Years after *Christ*; and I doubt not but it might be carry'd much farther, but that my Business lies mainly within those first

Chap. 6!  
 Aug. quest.  
 E. & N. T.  
 quest. 101.  
 Et alibi  
 saepe.  
 Orat. 20. in  
 laud. Ba-  
 zil. p. 353.

Lib. 9. tit.  
 45. de his  
 qui ad  
 Ecclesias  
 confugi-  
 unt.

Part I. Ages of Christianity. Nothing can be more clear, than that the Christians were frequently challenged by the Heathens, as for having no *Altars* and *Temples*, so that they had no *Images* or *Statues* in them, and that the Christian *Apologists* never deny'd it, but industriously defended themselves against the Charge, and rejected the very Thoughts of any such thing with Contempt and Scorn; as might be abundantly made good from *Tertullian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Minutius Felix*, *Arnobius*, and *Lactantius*, many of whose Testimonies have been formerly pointed to. Amongst other things *Origen* plainly tells his Adversary (who had objected this to the Christians) that the Images that were to be dedicated to God were not to be carved by the Hand of *Artists*, but to be form'd and fashion'd in us by the *Word of God*, viz. the *Vertues* of Justice and Temperance, of Wisdom and Piety, &c. that conform us to the Image of his only Son. *These* (says he) *are the only Statues form'd in our Minds, and by which alone we are persuaded 'tis fit to do Honour to him who is the Image of the invisible God, the Prototype and Archetypal Pattern of all such Images.* Had Christians then given Adoration to them, or but set them up in their Places of Worship, with what Face can we suppose they should have told the World, that they so much slighted and abhorr'd them; and indeed what a hearty Detestation they universally shew'd to any thing that had but the least Shadow of Idolatry, has been before proved at large. The Council of *Illiberis*, that was held in *Spain* some time before *Constantine*, expressly provided against it, decreeing, that *no Pictures ought to be in the Church, nor that any thing that is worshipped and adored should be painted upon the Walls*: Words so clear and positive, as not to be evaded by all the little Shifts and Glosses which the Expositors of that *Canon* would put upon

Lib. 8.  
p. 389.

Can. 36.  
p. 50.

upon it. The first Use of Statues and Pictures in publick Churches was merely Historical, or to add some Beauty and Ornament to the Place, which After-ages improved into Superstition and Idolatry. The first that we meet with upon good Authority (for all the Instances brought for the first Ages are either false and spurious, or impertinent and to no purpose) is no older than the Times of *Epiphanius*, and then too met with no very welcome Entertainment, as may appear from *Epiphanius's* own Epistle, translated by *S. Hierom*; where the Story in short is this: Coming (says he) to *Anablatha*, a Village in *Palestine*, and going into a Church to pray, I espy'd a Curtain hanging over the Door, whereon was painted the Image of *Christ*, or of some Saint; which when I looked upon, and saw the Image of a Man hanging up in the Church *contrary to the Authority of the Holy Scriptures*, I presently rent it, and advised the Guardians of the Church rather to make use of it as a Winding-Sheet for some poor Man's burying. Whereat when they were a little troubled, and said, 'Twas but just that since I had rent that Curtain, I should change it, and give them another; I promised them I would, and have now sent the best I could get; and pray intreat them to accept it, and give command that for the time to come no such Curtains, being *contrary to our Religion*, may be hung up in the Church of *Christ*; it more becoming your Place solicitously to remove whatever is offensive to, and unworthy of the Church of *Christ*, and the People committed to your Charge. This was written to *John* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, in whose Diocese the thing had been done; and the Case is so much the more pressing and weighty, by how much the greater Esteem and Value *Epiphanius* (then Bishop of *Salamine* in *Cyprus*) for his

Chap. 6.  
*Inter opera  
 Hierom. to.  
 2. p. 161.*

Part I. great Age and excellent Learning, had in the Church of God. This Instance is so home and pregnant, that the Patrons of *Image-Worship* are at a mighty Loss what to say to it, and after all are forced to cry out against it as *supposititious*. *Bellarmino* brings no less than nine Arguments (if such they may be called) to make it seem probable; but had he been ingenuous, he might have given one Reason more true and satisfactory than all the rest, why that Part of the Epistle should be thought forged and spurious, *viz. Because it makes so much against them*. More might be produced to this purpose, but by this I hope 'tis clear enough, that the honest Christians of those Times, as they thought it sufficient to pray to God without making their Addresses to *Saints* and *Angels*, so they accounted their Churches fine enough without *Pictures* and *Images* to adorn them.

*De Eccl. Triumph.*  
l. 2. c. 9.  
col. 776.

Their Churches being built and beautify'd (so far as consisted with the Ability and Simplicity of those Days) they sought to derive a greater Value and Esteem upon them by some peculiar *Consecration*; for the Wisdom and Piety of those Times thought it not enough barely to devote them to the Publick Services of Religion, unless they also set them apart with solemn Rites of a formal *Dedication*. This had been an ancient Custom both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as old as *Solomon's Temple*, nay, as *Moses* and the *Tabernacle*. When 'twas first taken up by Christians, is not easy to determine; only I do not remember to have met with the Footsteps of any such thing in any approved Writer (for the *Decretal Epistles*, every one knows what their Faith is) till the Reign of *Constantine*. In his time Christianity being become more prosperous and successful, Churches were every where erected and repair'd; and no sooner were so, but (as *Eusebius* tells us) they were solemnly

*Hist. Eccl.*  
l. 10. c. 3.  
p. 370.

solemnly consecrated, and the Dedication celebrated with great Festivity and Rejoicing: An Instance whereof he there gives of the famous Church of Tyre, at the Dedication whereof he himself made that excellent *Oration* inserted into the Body of his History. About the thirtieth Year of his Reign he built a stately Church at *Jerusalem*, over the *Sepulchre* of our *Saviour*, which was dedicated with singular Magnificence and Veneration; and for the greater Honour, by his Imperial Letters he summoned the Bishops, who from all Parts of the *East* were then met in Council at *Tyre*, to be present and assisting at the Solemnity. The Rites and Ceremonies used at these Dedications (as we find in *Eusebius*) were a great Confluence of Bishops and Strangers from all Parts, the Performance of Divine Offices, Singing of Hymns and Psalms, Reading and Expounding of the Scriptures, Sermons, and Orations; Receiving the Holy Sacrament, Prayers, and Thanksgivings, liberal Alms bestowed on the Poor, and great Gifts given to the Church; and in short, mighty Expressions of mutual Love and Kindness, and universal Rejoicing with one another. What other particular Ceremonies were introduced afterwards, concerns not me to enquire; only let me note, that under some of the Christian Emperors, when *Paganism* lay gasping for Life, and their Temples were purged and converted into Christian Churches, they were usually consecrated only by placing a *Cross* in them, as the venerable Ensign of the Christian Religion; as appears by the Law of *Theodosius* the younger to that purpose. The Memory of the Dedication of that Church at *Jerusalem*, was constantly continued and kept alive in that Church; and once a Year, to wit, on the 14th of *September*, on which Day it had been dedicated, was solemnized with great Pomp and much Confluence of People from all Parts; the Solemnity usually lasting

Chap. 6.

De vita  
Const. c.  
42, 43.Cod. Theod.  
l. 16.  
tit. 10. de  
Pag. Sa-  
crific. &  
Templis.  
leg. 25.  
ubi vid.  
Com. Gothofr.  
Niceph.  
Cal.  
Ecll. Hist.  
l. 8. c. 50.  
p. 633.

eight

**Part. I.** eight Days together. Which doubtless gave birth to that Custom of keeping *anniversary Days* of Commemoration of the Dedication of Churches; which from this time forwards we frequently meet with in the Histories of the Church, and much prevailed in after-Ages: Some Shadow whereof still remains amongst us at this day, in the *Wakes* observed in several Counties, which in Correspondence with the *Encœnia* of the ancient Church, are annual Festivals kept in Country Villages in Memory of the Dedication of their particular Churches.

And because it was a Custom in some Ages of the Church, that no Church should be *consecrated* till it was *endowed*, it may give us Occasion to enquire what *Revenues* Churches had in those first Ages of *Christianity*. 'Tis more than probable, that for a great while they had no other publick Incomes, than either what arose out of those common Contributions which they made at their usual Assemblies, every one giving or offering according to his Ability or Devotion, which was put into a common Stock or Treasury; or what proceeded from the Offerings which they made out of the Improvement

**Can. 3, 4.** of their Lands, the *Apostolick Canons* providing that their First-Fruits should be partly offered at the Church, partly sent home to the *Bishops* and *Presbyters*. The Care of all which was committed to the *President* or *Bishop* of the Church; (for who, says **Can. 41.** the Author of the fore-cited *Canons*, is fitter to be trusted with the *Riches* and *Revenues* of the Church, than he who is entrusted with the *precious Souls* of Men?) and by him disposed of for the Maintenance of the *Clergy*, the Relief of the Poor, or whatever Necessities of the Church. As Christianity increased, and Times grew better, they obtained more proper and fixed Revenues, Houses and Lands being settled upon them; for such 'tis certain they had, even during the times of Persecution: For so

we

we find in a Law of *Constantine* and *Licinius*, where giving Liberty of Religion to *Christians*, and restoring them freely to the Churches which had been taken from them, and disposed of by former Emperors; they further add, And because (say they) the same *Christians* had not only Places wherein they were wont to assemble, but are also known to have had other Possessions, which were not the Property of any single Person, but belonged to the whole Body and Community: All these by this Law we command to be immediately restored to those *Christians*, to every Society and Community of them, what belonged to them. And in a Rescript to *Annulinus* the *Proconsul*, about the same matter, they particularly specify whether they be *Gardens* or *Houses*, or whatever else belonged to the Right and Property of those Churches, that with all Speed they be universally restored to them: The same which *Maximinus* also (though no good Friend to *Christians*, yet either out of Fear of *Constantine*, or from the Conviction of his Conscience, awakened by a terrible Sickness) had ordained for his Parts of the Empire. Afterwards *Constantine* set himself by all ways to advance the Honour and Interests of the Church. Out of the Tributes of every City, which were yearly paid into his Exchequer, he assigned a Portion to the Church and Clergy of that Place, and settled it by a Law; which (excepting the short Reign of *Julian*, who revoked it) was, as the Historian assures us, in force in his time. Where any of the Martyrs or Confessors had died without Kindred, or been banished their native Country, and left no Heir behind them, he ordained that their Estates and Inheritance should be given to the Church of that Place; and that whoever had seized upon them, or had bought them of the Exchequer, should restore them, and refer themselves to him for what Recompence should be made them. He took

Chap. 6.

Euseb.

l. 10. c. 5.

p. 389.

Lib. 9. p.

364.

Sozom.

Hist. Ecc.

l. 1. c. 8.

p. 411.

Ib. l. 5. c. 5.

p. 600.

Euseb. de

Vit. Const.

l. 2. c. 36.

p. seq.



Part I. took away the Restraint which former Emperors had laid upon the Bounty of pious and charitable Men, and gave every Man Liberty to leave what he would to the Church. He gave Salaries out of the publick Corn, which (though taken away by *Julian*) was restored by his Successor *Jovianus*, and ratified as a perpetual Donation by the Law of *Valentinian* and *Marcianus*. After his time the Revenues of Churches increased every Day; pious and devout Persons thinking they could never enough testify their Piety to God, by expressing their Bounty and Liberality to the Church.

I shall conclude this Discourse, by observing what *Respect and Reverence* they were wont in those Days to shew in the Church, as the solemn Place of Worship, and where God did more peculiarly manifest his Presence: And this certainly was very great. They came into the Church as into the *Palace* of the *Great King* (as *Chrysostom* calls it) with Fear and Trembling; upon which Account he there presses the highest Modesty and Gravity upon them. Before their going into the Church, they used to wash, at least their Hands, as *Tertullian* probably intimates, and *Chrysostom* expressly tells us, carrying themselves, while there, with the most profound Silence and Devotion. Nay, so great was the Reverence which they bore to the Church, that the *Emperors* themselves, who otherwise never went without their Guard about them, yet when they came to go into the Church, used to lay down their Arms, to leave their *Guard* behind them, and to put off their *Crowns*; reckoning that the less Ostentation they made of Power and Greatness there, the more firmly the Imperial Majesty would be entailed upon them: As we find it in the Law of *Theodosius* and *Valentinian*, inserted at large into the last Edition of the *Theodosian Code*. But of this we may probably speak more, when we come to treat of the Manner of their publick Adoration.

C H A P.

*Ep. ad Heb. in c. 9. Hom. 15. tom. 10. p. 1862. Tert. de Orat. c. 11. p. 133. Chrysost. Hom. 52. in Matth. p. 463. Hom. in Joan. 72. p. 371.*

*Lib. 9. tit. 45. leg. 4. vid. Chryf. Orat. post vedit. ab exil. tom. 4. p. 850.*

## C H A P. VII.

## Of the Lord's Day, and the Fasts and Festivals of the ancient Church.

*Time, as necessary to religious Actions, as Place. Fixed Times of Publick Worship observed by all Nations. The Lord's Day chiefly observed by Christians. Styled Sunday, and why. Peculiarly consecrated to the Memory of Christ's Resurrection. All kneeling at Prayer on this Day forbidden, and why. Their Publick Assemblies constantly held upon this Day. Forced to assemble before Day, in Times of Persecution; thence jeered by the Heathens, a Latibrosa & Lucifugax Natio. The Lord's Day ever kept as a Day of Rejoicing; all Fasting upon it forbidden. The great Care of Constantine, and the first Christian Emperors, for the Honour and Observance of this Day. Their Laws to that Purpose. Their constant and conscientious Attendance upon Publick Worship on the Lord's Day. Canons of ancient Councils about absenting from Publick Worship. Sabbatum or Saturday kept in the East as a religious Day, with all the Publick Solemnities of Divine Worship. How it came to be so. Otherwise in the Western Churches; observed by them as a Fast, and why. This not universal. S. Ambrose his Practice at Milan, and Counsel to S. Augustine in the Case. Their solemn Fasts, either Weekly or Annual: Weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays, held till*

till Three in the Afternoon. Annual Fast, that of Lent how ancient. Upon what Account called Quadragesima. Observed with great Strictness. The Hebdomada Magna, or the Holy Week, kept with singular Austerity, and the Reason of it. Festivals observed by the Primitive Christians. That of Easter as ancient as the times of the Apostles. An Account of the Famous Controversy between the Eastern and Western Churches, about the keeping of Easter. The intemperate Spirit of Pope Victor. Irenæus his moderate Interposal. The Case finally determined by the Council of Nice. The Vigils of this Feast observed with great Expressions of rejoicing. The Bounty of Christian Emperors upon Easter-Day. The Feast of Pentecost how ancient. Why styled Whitsunday. Dominica in Albis, why so called. The whole Space between Easter and Whitsuntide kept Festival. The Acts of the Apostles, why publickly read during that time. The Feast of the Epiphany anciently what. Christmas-Day, the ancient Observation of it. Epiphany in a strict Sense what, and why so called. The Memorix Martyrum, what; when probably first begun. The great Reverence they had for Martyrs. Their Passions styled their Birth-Day, and why. These Anniversary Solemnities kept at the Tombs of Martyrs. Over these magnificent Churches erected afterwards. What religious Exercises performed at those Meetings. The first Rise of Martyrologies. Oblations for Martyrs.

*tyrs. How understood in the ancient Writers of the Church. These Festivals kept with great Rejoicing, mutual Love and Charity. Their συμπόσια or common Feasts. Markets held for that Purpose in those Places. The ill Use which after-times made of these Memorials.*

Chap. 7.

**T**IME is a Circumstance no less inseparable from religious Actions, than Place; for Man consisting of a Soul and Body, cannot always be actually engaged in the Service of God; that's the Privilege of Angels, and Souls freed from the Fetters of Mortality. So long as we are here, we must worship God with respect to our present State, and consequently of Necessity have some definite and particular Time to do it in. Now, that Man might not be left to a floating Uncertainty, in a Matter of so great Importance; in all Ages and Nations Men have been guided by the very Dictates of Nature, to pitch upon some *certain Seasons*, wherein to assemble and meet together, to perform the Publick Offices of Religion. What, and how many were the publick *Festivals* instituted and observed, either amongst *Jews* or *Gentiles*, I am not concerned to take Notice of. For the ancient Christians, they ever had their peculiar Seasons, their solemn and stated Times of Meeting together to perform the common Duties of Divine Worship; of which, because the *LORD'S-DAY* challenges the Precedency of all the rest, we shall begin first with that. And being unconcern'd in all the Controversies, which in the late Times were raised about it; I shall only note some Instances of the Piety of Christians, in reference to this Day, which I have observed, in passing through the Writers of those Times. For the Name of this Day of Publick Worship, it is sometimes (especially by *Justin Martyr* and

**Part I.** and *Tertullian*) called *Sunday*; because it happened upon that Day of the Week, which by the Heathens was dedicated to the Sun; and therefore, as being best known to them, the Fathers commonly made use of it in their Apologies to the Heathen Governors. This Title continued after the World became Christian; and seldom it is, that it passeth under any other Name in the Imperial Edicts of the first Christian Emperors. But the more proper and prevailing Name was *κυριακή*, or *Dies Dominica*, the *Lord's Day*, as 'tis called by *S. John* himself; as being that Day of the Week, whereon our Lord made his triumphant Return from the Dead.

*Rev. I. 10.* *Ap. 2. p. 99.* This, *Justin Martyr* assures us, was the true Original of the Title: Upon *Sunday* (says he) we all assemble and meet together, as being the first Day, wherein God, parting the Darkeness from the rude *Chaos*, created the World, and the same Day whereon *Jesus Christ*, our Saviour, rose again from the Dead; for he was crucified the Day before *Saturday*, and the Day after (which is *Sunday*) he appeared to his Apostles and Disciples: By this means observing a *kind* of Analogy and Proportion with the *Jewish Sabbath*, which had been instituted by God himself. For as that Day was kept as a Commemoration of God's *Sabbath*, of resting from the Work of Creation; so was this set apart for religious Uses, as the solemn Memorial of *Christ's* resting from the Work of our Redemption in this World, completed upon the Day of his Resurrection. Which brings into my Mind that Custom

*Ap. 2. p. 98.* of theirs, so universally common in those Days; that whereas at other times they *kneeled* at Prayers, on the Lord's Day they always prayed *standing*, as is expressly affirmed both by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*: The Reason of which we find in the *Author* of the *Questions and Answers* in *Justin Martyr*. It is (says he) that by this means we may  
be

be put in mind both of our Fall by Sin, and our Resurrection or Restitution by the Grace of Christ: Chap. 7.  
 That for six Days we pray upon our Knees, is in Ap. 2. p. 98.  
 token of our Fall by Sin; but that on the Lord's- De Coron.  
 Day we do not bow the Knee, doth symbolically c. 3. p. 102.  
 represent our *Resurrection*, by which, through the Resp. ad  
 Grace of Christ, we are delivered from our Sins, Qu. 115.  
 and the Power of Death. This, he there tells us, p. 468.  
 was a Custom derived from the very times of the  
 Apostles, for which he cites *Irenæus*, in his Book  
 concerning *Easter*. And this Custom was maintain-  
 ed with so much Vigour, that when some began to  
 neglect it, the great Council of *Nice* took Notice Can. 20.  
 of it, and ordained, That there should be a con-  
 stant *Uniformity* in this case, and that on the Lord's-  
 day (and at such other times as were usual) Men  
 should stand when they made their Prayers to God.  
 So fit and reasonable did they think it to do all pos-  
 sible Honour to that Day, on which Christ rose  
 from the Dead. Therefore we may observe all  
 along in the Sacred Story, that after Christ's Re-  
 surrection, the Apostles and Primitive Christians  
 did especially assemble upon *the first Day of the Week*.  
 And whatever they might do at other times, yet  
 there are many Passages that intimate, that the first  
 Day of the Week was their more solemn Time of  
 meeting. On this Day it was, that they were met  
 together when our Saviour first appeared to them,  
 and so again the next Week after. On this Day they  
 were assembled, when the Holy Ghost so visibly  
 came down upon them, when *Peter* preached that  
 excellent Sermon, converted and baptized three  
 thousand Souls. Thus when *S. Paul* was taking his  
 Leave at *Troas*, upon the *first Day of the Week*, when 1 Cor. 16.  
 the Disciples came together to *break Bread*, i. e. as 1, 2.  
 almost all agree, to celebrate the Holy Sacrament;  
 he preached to them, sufficiently intimating, that  
 upon that Day it was their usual Custom to meet

**Part I.** in that manner. And elsewhere giving Directions to the Church of *Corinth* (as he had done in the like Case to other Churches) concerning their Contributions to the poor suffering Brethren, he bids them lay it aside upon the first Day of the Week, which seems plainly to respect their religious Assemblies upon that Day; for then it was that every one, according to his Ability, deposited something to the Relief of the Poor, and the Uses of the Church.

After the Apostles, the *Christians* constantly observed this Day, meeting together for Prayer, expounding and hearing of the Scriptures, Celebration of the Sacrament, and other publick Duties of Religion. Upon the Day called Sunday (says *Justin Martyr*) all of us that live either in City or Country, meet together in one Place; and what they then did, he there describes, of which afterwards. This doubtless *Pliny* meant, when giving *Trajan* an Account of the *Christians*, he tells him, That they were wont to meet together to worship Christ *stato die*, upon a set certain Day, by which he can be reasonably understood to design no other but the Lord's Day; for though they probably met at other times, yet he takes Notice of this only, either because the *Christians*, whom he had examined, had not told him of their meeting at other times, or because this was their most publick and solemn Convention, and which in a manner swallowed up the rest. By a violent Persecution of those times, the *Christians* were forced to meet together before Day; so *Pliny*, in the same Place, tells the Emperor, that they assembled before Day-light to sing their Morning-Hymns to Christ. Whence it is that *Tertullian* so often mentions their nocturnal Convocations; for putting the Case that his Wife after his Decease should marry with a *Gentile* Husband, among other Inconveniences he asks her, whether she thought he

*Ad uxor.*  
l. 2. c. 4.  
p. 168.

he would be willing to let her rise from his Bed to go to their *Night-meetings*? And in the case of Persecution he tells *Fabius*, That if they could not celebrate *Dominica Solennia*, their Lord's-day Solemnities in the Day-time, they had the Night sufficiently clear with the *Light* of Christ. This gave Occasion to their spiteful Adversaries to calumniate and asperse them. The Heathen in *Minutius* charges them with their *Night-Congregations*, upon which Account they are there scornfully called *Latebrosa & lucifugax Natio*, an obscure and sculking Generation. And the very first thing that *Celsus* objects, is, That the *Christians* had private and clancular Assemblies or Combinations: To which *Origen* answers, That if it were so, they might thank them for it, who would not suffer them to exercise it more openly; that the Christian Doctrine was sufficiently evident and obvious, and better known through the World than the Opinion and Sentiments of their best Philosophers; and that if there were some Mysteries in the Christian Religion which were not communicated to every one, 'twas no other thing than what was common in the several Sects of their own Philosophy. But to return.

They looked upon the *Lord's-day*, as a Time to be celebrated with great Expressions of Joy, as being the happy Memory of Christ's Resurrection, and accordingly restrained whatever might savour of Sorrow and Sadness; Fasting on that Day they prohibited with the greatest Severity, accounting it utterly unlawful, as *Tertullian* informs us. It was a very bitter Censure of *Ignatius* (or whose soever that Epistle was, for certainly it was not his) that whoever fasts on a *Lord's-day* is a *Murderer of Christ*; however 'tis certain, that they never fasted on those Days, no not in the time of *Lent* itself. Nay, the *Montanists*, though otherwise great Pretenders to Fasting and Mortification, did yet abstain from it

Chap. 7.  
De fug. in persecut. c. 14. p. 543.

Min. Fel. p. 7.

Orig. adv. Cels. 1. p. 4. ----- 7:

De coron. mil. c. 3. p. 102.  
Ep. ad Philip. p. 112.



## Part I.

on the Lord's Day. And as they accounted it a joyful and good Day, so they did whatever they thought might contribute to the Honour of it. No sooner was *Constantine* come over to the Church, but his principal Care was about the *Lord's-day*; he commanded it to be solemnly observed, and that by all Persons whatsoever; he made it to all a Day of *Rest*, that Men might have nothing to do but to worship God, and be better instructed in the Christian Faith, and spend their whole Time, without any thing to hinder them, in Prayer and Devotion, according to the Custom and Discipline of the Church. And for those in his Army, who yet remained in their Paganism and Infidelity, he commanded them upon *Lord's-days* to go out into the Fields, and there pour out their Souls in hearty Prayers to God. And that none might pretend their own Inability to the Duty, he himself composed and gave them a short *Form of Prayer*, which he enjoined them to make use of every *Lord's-day*. So careful was he, that this Day should not be *disbourned* or *mis-employed*, even by those who were yet *Strangers* and *Enemies* to *Christianity*. He moreover ordained, That there should be no *Courts of Judicature* open upon this Day, no *Suits* or *Trials at Law*, but that for any Works of Mercy, such as the *emancipating* and setting free of Slaves or Servants, this might be done. That there should be no *Suits* or demanding *Debts* upon this Day, was confirmed by several *Laws* of succeeding Emperors; and that no *Arbitrators*, who had the *Umpirage* of any Business lying before them, should at any time have Power to determine or take up litigious Causes, Penalties being entailed upon any that transgressed herein. *Theodosius* the Great (*An. 386.*) by a second Law ratified one which he had passed long before, wherein he expressly prohibited all publick *Shews* upon the *Lord's-day*, that the Worship of God

*Enseb. de vit. Const. l. 4. c. 18. 19, 20. p. 534.*

*Cod. Jus. l. 3. tit. 12. de feriis, l. 3.*

*Cod. Theod. l. 2. tit. 8. de feriis, l. 1. lib. 1. tit. 8. l. 3. Ib. l. 15. tit. 4. de spec. l. 2.*

God might not be confounded with those prophane Solemnities. This Law the younger *Theodosius*, some few Years after, confirmed and enlarged, enacting, That on the Lord's-day (and some other Festivals there mentioned) not only *Christians*, but even *Jews* and *Heathens* should be restrained from the Pleasure of all *Sights* and *Spectacles*, and the *Theatres* be shut up in every Place. And whereas it might so happen, that the *Birth-day* or *Inauguration* of the Emperor might fall upon that Day, therefore to let the People know, how infinitely he preferred the Honour of God before the Concerns of his own Majesty and Greatness, he commanded that if it should so happen, that then the Imperial Solemnity should be put off, and deferred till another Day.

I shall take Notice but of one Instance more of their great Observance of this Day, and that was their constant *Attendance* upon the Solemnities of publick Worship. They did not think it enough to read, and pray, and praise God at *Home*, but made Conscience of appearing in the *publick Assemblies*, from which nothing but Sickness and absolute Necessity did detain them: And if sick, or in Prison, or under Banishment, nothing troubled them more, than that they could not come to Church, and join their Devotions to the common Services. If Persecution at any time forced them to keep a little close, yet no sooner was there the least Mitigation, but they presently returned to their open Duty, and publickly met all together. No trivial Pretences, no light Excuses were then admitted for any one's Absence from the Congregation; but according to the Merit of the Cause, severe Censures were passed upon them. The Synod of *Illiberis* provided, That if any Men dwelling in a City (where usually Churches were nearest at Hand) should for Three *Lord's-days* absent

## Part I.

Can. 21.  
p. 28.

Soz. l. 3. c.  
14. p. 521.

Council.  
Gangr.  
Can. 4. 5.

Can. 31.  
Conc. Antioch.  
Can. 5.

himself from the Church, he should for some time be suspended the Communion, that he might appear to be corrected for his Fault. They allowed no separate Assemblies, no Congregations but what met in the publick Church. If any Man took upon him to make a Breach, and to draw People into Corners, he was presently condemned, and a suitable Penalty put upon him. When *Eustathius* Bishop of *Sebastria* (a Man pretending to great Strictness and Austerity of Life) began to cast off the Discipline of the Church, and to introduce many odd Observations of his own; amongst others, to condemn Priests that were married, to fast on the Lord's-day, and to keep Meetings in private Houses, drawing away many, but especially *Women* (as the Historian observes) who leaving their Husbands, were led away with Error, and from that into great Filthiness and Impurity: No sooner did the Bishops of those Parts discover it, but meeting in Council at *Gangra*, the *Metropolis* of *Paphlagonia*, about the Year 340, they condemned and cast them out of the Church, passing these two *Canons* amongst the rest; *If any one shall teach that the House of God is to be despised, and the Assemblies that are held in it, let him be accursed. If any shall take upon him out of the Church privately to preach at home, and making light of the Church, shall do those things that belong only to the Church, without the Presence of the Priests, and the Leave and Allowance of the Bishop, let him be accursed.* Correspondent to which, the *Canons* called *Apostolical*, and the Council of *Antioch* ordain, That if any *Presbyter*, setting light by his own *Bishop*, shall withdraw and set up *separate* Meetings, and erect another *Altar* (*i. e.* says *Zonaras*, keep unlawful *Conventicles*, preach privately, and administer the Sacrament) that in such a Case he shall be *deposed*, as ambitious and tyrannical, and the People

com-

communicating with him be *excommunicate*, as being factious and schismatical; only this not to be done till after the third Admonition. After all that has been said, I might farther shew what Esteem and Value the first Christians had of the Lord's-day, by those great and honourable things they have spoken concerning it, of which I'll produce but two Passages; the one is, that in the Epistle *ad Magnesios*, which, if not *Ignatius's*, must yet be acknowledged an ancient Author: *Let every one* (says he) *that loves Christ keep the Lord's-day Festival, the Resurrection-day, the Queen and Empress of all Days, in which our Life was raised again, and Death conquered by our Lord and Saviour.* The other that of *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, who speaks thus; *That both Custom and Reason challenge from us that we should honour the Lord's-day, and keep it Festival, seeing on that Day it was that our Lord Jesus Christ completed his Resurrection from the Dead.*

Pag. 149.

Edict. Theoph. apud Balsam. in Synod. tom. 2. par. 1. p. 170.

Next to the Lord's-day, the *Sabbath* or *Saturday* (for so the Word *Sabbatum* is constantly used in the Writings of the Fathers, when speaking of it as it relates to *Christians*) was held by them in great Veneration; and especially in the *Eastern* Parts, honoured with all the publick Solemnities of Religion. For which we are to know, That the Gospel in those Parts mainly prevailing amongst the *Jews*, they being generally the first Converts to the *Christian* Faith, they still retained a mighty Reverence for the *Mosaick* Institutions, and especially for the *Sabbath*, as that which had been appointed by God himself (as the Memorial of his Rest from the Work of Creation) settled by their great Master *Moses*, and celebrated by their Ancestors for so many Ages, as the solemn Day of their publick Worship; and were therefore very loth that it should be wholly antiquated and laid aside.

**Part I.** aside. For this Reason it seemed good to the Prudence of those times (as in others of the *Jewish* Rites, so in this) to indulge the Humour of that People, and to keep the Sabbath as a Day for religious Offices. Hence they usually had most Parts of Divine Service performed upon that Day; they met together for Publick Prayers, for reading the Scriptures, Celebration of the Sacraments, and such like Duties. This is plain, not only from some Passages in *Ignatius* and *Clemens's* Constitutions, but also from Writers of more unquestionable Credit and Authority. *Athanasius*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, tells us, that they assembled on *Saturdays*, not that they were infected with *Judaism*; but only to worship *Jesus Christ*, the Lord of the Sabbath: And *Socrates* speaking of the usual Times of their Publick Meeting, calls the *Sabbath* and the *Lord's-day*, the Weekly Festivals, on which the Congregation was wont to meet in the Church for the Performance of Divine Services. Therefore the Council of *Laodicea*, amongst other things, decreed, That upon *Saturdays* the Gospels and other Scriptures should be read, that in *Lent* the Eucharist should not be celebrated but upon *Saturday* and the *Lord's-day*; and upon those Days only, in the Time of *Lent*, it should be lawful to commemorate and rehearse the Names of Martyrs. Upon this Day also, as well as upon *Sunday*, all *Fasts* were severely prohibited (an infallible Argument they counted it a Festival-day) one *Saturday* in the Year only excepted, *viz.* that before *Easter-day*, which was always observed as a Solemn Fast: Things so commonly known, as to need no Proof. But though the Church thought fit thus far to correspond with the *Jewish* Converts, as solemnly to observe the Sabbath; yet to take away all Offence, and to vindicate themselves from Compliance with *Judaism*, they openly declared, That they did it only in a

*Christian*

*Homil. de Sement. in init.*

*Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 8. p. 312.*

*Can. 16. 41. 51.*

Christian way, and kept it not as a Jewish Sabbath, as is expressly affirm'd by Athanasius, Nazianzen, and others; and the foremention'd Laodicean Synod has a Canon to this purpose; That Christians should not Judaize, and rest from all Labour on the Sabbath, but follow their ordinary Works, (i. e. so far as consisted with their Attendance upon the Publick Assemblies) and should not entertain such Thoughts of it, but that still they should prefer the Lord's-day before it, and on that Day rest as Christians: But if any were found to Judaize, they should be accursed.

Chap. 7.  
Athanas.  
Homil. de  
Sement. to.  
1. p. 835.  
Can. 29.

Thus stood the Case in the Eastern Church; in those in the West we find it somewhat different. Amongst them it was not observed as a Religious Festival, but kept as a constant Fast. The Reason whereof (as 'tis given by Pope Innocent in an Epistle to the Bishop of Eugubium, where he treats of this very Case) seems most probable: If (says he) we commemorate Christ's Resurrection not only at Easter, but every Lord's-day, and fast upon Friday, because 'twas the Day of his Passion, we ought not to pass by Saturday, which is the middle Time between the Days of Grief and Joy; the Apostles themselves spending those two Days (viz. Friday and the Sabbath) in great Sorrow and Heaviness: And he thinks no doubt ought to be made, but that the Apostles fasted upon those two Days; whence the Church had a Tradition, that the Sacraments were not to be administer'd on those Days; and therefore concludes, that every Saturday, or Sabbath, ought to be kept a Fast. To the same purpose the Council of Illiberis ordained, That a Saturday Festival was an Error that ought to be reformed, and that Men ought to fast upon every Sabbath. But tho' this seems to have been the general Practice, yet it did not obtain in all Places of the West alike. In Italy itself 'twas otherwise at Milan; where Saturday was a Festival; and

Innocent.  
Ep. ad De-  
cium Eu-  
gubin. c. 4.  
Sabbato  
vero.  
Can. 36.  
p. 35.

'tis

Part I. 'ris said in the Life of *S. Ambrose*, who was Bishop of that See, That he constantly dined as well upon *Saturday* as the *Lord's-day* (it being his Custom to dine upon no other Days but those, and the Memorials of the Martyrs) and used also upon that Day to preach to the People; tho' so great was the Prudence and Moderation of that good Man, that he bound not up himself in these indifferent Things; but when he was at *Milan* he dined upon *Saturdays*, and when he was at *Rome* he fasted as they did upon those Days. This *S. Augustin* assures us he had from his own Mouth: For when his Mother *Monica* came after him to *Milan*, (where he then resided) she was greatly troubled to find the *Saturday-Fast* not kept there as she had found it in other Places. For her Satisfaction he immediately went to consult *S. Ambrose*, then Bishop of that Place, who told him, he could give him no better Advice in the Case, than to do as he did: *When I come to Rome*, (said he) *I fast on on the Saturday as they do at Rome; when I am here, I do not fast. So likewise you, to whatsoever Church you come, observe the Custom of that Place, if you mean not either to give or take Offence.* With this Answer he satisfy'd his Mother, and ever after, when he thought of it, look'd upon it as an Oracle sent from Heaven. So that even in *Italy* the *Saturday-Fast* was not universally observed. Nay, a very learned Man (and a Bishop of the *Roman Church*) thinks it highly probable, That for the first Ages especially, *Saturday* was no more kept as a Fast at *Rome*, than in the Churches of the *East*: Tho' the great Argument whereby he would establish it, *viz.* because some *Latin Churches*, who must needs follow the Pattern of the Church of *Rome*, did not keep it so, is very infirm and weak; and needs no more than that very Instance of the Church of *Milan* to refute it, which, tho' under the *Pope's* Nose, did not

*Paulin. in  
vit. Amb.  
operibus  
Ambros.  
præfix.*

*Ad Janu.  
Ep. 118.  
col. 557.  
com. 2.*

*Albasp. de  
vet. Eccl.  
vit. obs.  
13. p. 90.*

not yet keep that Day as a Fast, altho' this was many Years after it had been so established and observed at Rome. Chap. 7.

And now that I am got into this Business, I shall once for all dispatch the Matter about their *Fasts*, before I proceed to their other Festivals. 'Tis certain, the ancient Christians had two sorts of solemn Fasts, *weekly and annual*. Their *weekly Fasts* (call'd *jejunia quarta & sexta feria*) were kept on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*, appointed so, as we are told, for this Reason, because on *Wednesday* our Lord was betray'd by *Judas*, on *Friday* he was crucify'd by the *Jews*. This Custom *Epiphanius* (how truly I know not) refers to the Apostles, and elsewhere tells us, that those Days were observed as Fasts thro' the whole World. These Fasts they call'd their *Stations* (not because they stood all the while, but by an Allusion to the *military Stations*, and keeping their Guards, as *Tertullian* observes, they kept close at it) and they usually lasted *ἕως ὥρας ἐννέα*, as *Epiphanius* informs us, till the ninth Hour, i. e. till three of the Clock in the Afternoon; at which time having ended their Fast-Devotions, they received the *Eucharist*, and then broke up the Station, and went home; whence it is, that *Tertullian* calls them *stationum semijejunia*, the *half Fasts of Stations*. And he seems to censure the Practice of some, who having privately resolved upon an entire Fast of the whole Day, refused to receive the *Eucharist* at the publick Stationary Fasts, because they thought that by eating and drinking the Sacramental Elements, they put a Period to their Fasting: For it was usual in those times with many, after the Stationary Fast was ended, to continue and hold on the Fast until the Evening. The Historian tells us, That it had been a very ancient Custom in the Church of *Alexandria*, upon those Days to have the Scriptures read and expounded, and all other

*Vid. Constit. Ap. l. 5. c. 14. p. 929. l. 7. c. 24. p. 978. Serm. Compen. p. 466. Hæres. 85. p. 387. De Orat. c. 14. p. 136. Serm. Compend. de fid. p. 466. De jejuniis. c. 13. p. 551. De Orat. c. 14. p. 135.*

*Vid. de jejuniis. p. 545. A. p. 544. B.*

*Socr. l. 5. c. 22. p. 28.*

Parts



**Part I.** Parts of Divine Service, except the Celebration of the Sacrament; and that it was chiefly in those days that *Origen* was wont to teach the People. Whether the Omitting of the Sacrament then might be a peculiar Custom to that Church, I know not; certain I am, 'twas upon those days administred in other Places. So *S. Basil*, enumerating the times how oft they received it every Week, expressly puts *Wednesday* and *Friday* into the Number. The Remains of these *primitive Stations* are yet observed in our Church at this day, which by her 15th Canon has ordained, *That tho' Wednesdays and Fridays be not Holy Days, yet that weekly upon those times Minister and People shall resort to Church at the accustomed Hours of Prayer.*

Tom. 3.  
Ep. 289.  
p. 279.

Bp. Taylor  
Duct. Dub.  
lib. 3. c. 4.  
p. 629.

Id. ib. vid.  
Thorndike  
rel. assemb.  
c. 8. p. 276.

Their *Annual Fast* was that of *Lent*, by way of Preparation to the Feast of our Saviour's Resurrection; this (tho' not in the modern Use of it) was very ancient, tho' far from being an *Apostolical Canon*, as a learned Prelate of our Church has fully proved. From the very first Age of the Christian Church, 'twas customary to fast before *Easter*; but for how long, it was variously observed according to different Times and Places; some fasting so many Days, others so many Weeks, and some so many Days in each Week; and 'tis most probably thought that it was at first styled *τεσσαρεσθήμερον*, or *Quadragesima*, not because 'twas a Fast of *forty Days*, but of *forty Hours*, begun about Twelve on *Friday*, (the time of our Saviour's falling under the Power of Death) and continued till *Sunday-morning*, the time of his rising from the Dead. Afterwards it was enlarged to a longer time, drawn out into more Days, and then Weeks, till it came to three, and at last to six or seven Weeks. But concerning the different Observations of it in several Places, let them who desire to know more, consult *Socrates* and *Sozomen*, who both speak enough of it. This

Qua-

*Quadragesimal* Fast was kept in those times with great Piety and Religion, People generally applying themselves with all seriousness to Acts of Penance and Mortification; whence *Chrysoſtom* calls *Lent* the Remedy and *Physick* of our Souls; and to the end that the Observation of it might be more grave and solemn, *Theodosius M.* and his Collegue Emperors passed two Laws, that during the time of *Lent* all Proceſs and Inquiry into criminal Actions should be suspended, and no corporal Punishments inflicted upon any; it being unfit (as the second of those Laws expresses it) that in the holy time of *Lent* the *Body* should suffer Punishment, while the *Soul* is expecting Absolution. But with what Care soever they kept the preceding Parts, 'tis certain they kept the Close of it with a mighty Strictness and Austerity, I mean the last Week of it, that which immediately preceded the Feast of *Easter*; this they consecrated to more peculiar Acts of Prayer, Abstinence and Devotion; and whereas in the other Parts of *Lent* they ended their Fast in the Evening, in this they extended it to the Cock-crowing, or first Glympse of the Morning. To be sure they ended it not before Midnight, for to break up the Fast before that time, was accounted a piece of great Prophaneness and Intemperance, as *Dionysius* Bishop of *Alexandria* determines in a Letter to *Basilides*, wherein he largely and learnedly states the Case. This was the *Hebdomada magna*, the great (or holy) Week; so called (says *Chrysoſtom*) not that it has either more *Hours* or *Days* in it than other Weeks, but because this is the Week in which truly great and ineffable good things were purchased for us; within this time Death was conquer'd, the Curse destroy'd, the Devil's Tyranny dissolved, his Instruments broken, Heaven opened, Angels rejoyced, the Partition-Wall broken down, and God and

Chap. 7:

Socrat. l. 5.

c. 22. Soz.

l. 7. c. 19.

Hom. 1. in

Gen. to. 2:

p. 1.

Cod. Theod.

lib. 9. Tit.

35. de Qua-

stion. 4. c. 5.

Constit. A-

post. l. 5. c.

17, 18. p.

932. Epi-

phan. λογ.

σύντομ.

p. 466.

Apu. Zo-

nar. in Sy-

nod. tom. 2.

part 1. b. 1.

Hom. 30. in

Gen. p. 328.

Man

**Part I.** Man reconciled. For this Cause we call it the *great Week*, for this Cause Men fast, and watch, and do Alms, to do the greater Honour to it : The Emperors themselves, to shew what Veneration they have for this time, commanding all Suits and Processes at Law to cease, Tribunal-doors to be shut up, and Prisoners to be set free ; imitating herein their great Lord and Master, who by his Death at this time deliver'd us from the Prison and the Chains of Sin ; meaning herein those Laws of *Theodosius*, *Gratian*, and *Valentinian*, which we lately mention'd.

We proceed now to enquire what other Festivals there were in those first Ages of the Church, which I find to be chiefly these : *Easter*, *Whitsuntide*, and *Epiphany*, which comprehends two, *Christmas* and *Epiphany*, properly so called. I reckon them not in their proper Order, but as I suppose them to have taken place in the Church ; of these *Easter* challenges the Precedence, both for its Antiquity and the great Stir about it. That in and from the very Times of the Apostles (besides the Weekly Return of the Lord's Day) there has been always observed an *Anniversary* Festival in Memory of *Christ's Resurrection*, no Man can doubt, that has any Insight into the Affairs of the ancient Church ; all the Dispute was about the particular Time when it was to be kept, which became the Matter of as famous a Controversy as any that in those Ages exercised the Christian World. The State of the Case was briefly this : The Churches of *Asia* the less, kept their *Easter* upon the same Day whereon the *Jews* celebrated their *Passover*, viz. upon the first Day of the first Month (which always began with the Appearance of the Moon) mostly answering to our *March* ; and this they did, upon what Day of the Week soever it fell, and hence were styled *Quartodecimans*, because keeping *Easter quarta*

*quarta decima Luna*, upon the 14th Day after the *pasce*, or Appearance of the *Moon*. The other Churches, and especially those of the *West*, did not follow this Custom, but kept *Easter* upon the *Lord's-day* following the Day of the Jewish Passover; partly the more to honour the Day, and partly to distinguish between *Jews* and *Christians*. The *Asiatics* pleaded for themselves the Practice of the *Apostles*; *Polycarpus* Bishop of *Smyrna*, who had lived and conversed with them, having kept it upon that day, together with S. *John* and the rest of the *Apostles*; as *Irenæus* (who himself knew *Polycarpus*, and doubtless had it from his own Mouth) speaks in a Letter about this very thing, tho' himself was on the other side. And *Polycrates*, in a Letter to the same purpose, instances not only in S. *John*, but S. *Philip* the Apostle, who himself and his whole Family used so to keep it; from whom it had been convey'd down in a constant and uninterrupted Observance thro' all the Bishops of those Places, some whereof he there enumerates, and tells us, That seven Bishops of that Place in a constant Succession had been his Kinsmen, and himself the eighth, and that it had never been kept by him upon any other Day. This we are not so to understand, as if S. *John* and the *Apostles* had instituted this Festival, and commanded it to be observed upon that Day; but rather that they did it by way of *Condescension*, accommodating their Practice, in a Matter indifferent, to the Humour of the *Jewish* Converts (whose Number in those Parts was very great) as they had done before in several other Cases, and particularly in observing the *Sabbath* or *Saturday*. The other Churches also (says *Eusebius*) had for their Patronage an *Apostolical Tradition*, or at least pretended it; and were the much more numerous Party. This Difference was the Spring of great Bustles in the Church; for the Bishops of *Rome* stickled hard to impose their Customs

Chap. 7.



Eus. Hist.

Ecc. l. 5.

c. 24.

p. 193.

Ib. p. 191.

Ib. c. 23.

p. 190.

**Part I.** Customs upon the *Eastern Churches*; whereupon *Polycarpus* comes over to *Rome* to confer with *Anicetus*, who was then Bishop, about it; and tho' they could not agree the Matter, yet they parted fairly.

*H. Vales.* After this, Pope *Victor* renew'd the Quarrel, and was so fierce and peremptory in the Case, that he either actually did, or (as a learned Man inclines rather to think, probably to mollify the *Odium* of the Fact) severely threatned to excommunicate those *Eastern Churches* for standing out against it. This rash and bold Attempt was ill resented by the sober and moderate Men of his own Party, who writ to him about it; and particularly *Irenæus*, (a Man, as *Eusebius* notes, truly answering his Name, both in his Temper and in his Life quiet and peaceable) who gravely reprov'd him for renting the Peace of the Church, and troubling so many famous Churches for observing the Customs derived to them from their Ancestors; with much more to the same purpose. But the *Asian* Bishops little regarding what was either said or done at *Rome*, still went on in their old Course, tho' by the diligent Practices of the other Party, they lost Ground, but yet still made Shift to keep the Cause on foot till the time of *Constantine*; who finding the Controversy amongst others much to disquiet the Peace of the Church, did for this and some other Reasons summon the great Council of *Nice*, by whom this Question was solemnly determin'd, *Easter* ordained to be kept upon one and the same Day throughout the World, not according to the Custom of the *Jews*, but upon the *Lord's-day*; and this Decree ratify'd and publish'd by the Imperial Letters to all the Churches.

*Euseb. de vit. Constant. l. 3. c. 14, 17.*

*Naz. Or. 2. in Pasch. Orat. 42. p. 676.*

The Eves, or *Vigils* of this Festival were wont to be celebrated with more than ordinary Pomp, with solemn Watchings, with Multitudes of lighted *Torches*, both in the Churches and their own private Houses,

Houses, so as to turn the Night itself into Day, and with the general Resort and Confluence of all Ranks of Men, both Magistrates and People. This Custom of Lights at that time was, if not begun, at least much augmented by *Constantine*, who set up Lamps and Torches in all Places, as well within the Church as without; that thro' the whole City the Night seemed to outvye the Sun at Noon-day. And this they did (as *Nazianzen* intimates) as a *Prodromus* or Forerunner of that great Light, even the *Son of Righteousness*, which the next day arose upon the World. For the *Feast* itself, the same Father calls it the holy and famous *Passover*, a Day which is the *Queen of Days*, the *Festival of Festivals*, and which as far excels all others, even of those which are instituted to the Honour of *Christ*, as the *Sun* goes beyond the other *Stars*. A Time it was, famous for Works of *Mercy* and *Charity*, every one both of *Clergy* and *Laity* striving to contribute liberally to the Poor; a Duty (as one of the *Antients* observes) very congruous and suitable to that happy Season; for what more fit, than that such as beg Relief should be enabled to rejoice at that time, when we remember the common Fountain of our Mercies? Therefore no sooner did the Morning of this day appear, but *Constantine* used to arise, and in Imitation of the Love and Kindness of our blessed *Saviour*, to bestow the richest and most noble Gifts, and to diffuse the Influences of his Bounty over all Parts of his Empire. And his Example herein, it seems, was follow'd by most of his Successors, who used upon this Solemnity by their Imperial Orders to release all *Prisoners*, unless such as were there for more heavy and notorious Crimes, High-Treason, Murders, Rapes, Incest, and the like. And *Chrysostom* tells us of a Letter of *Theodosius* the Great, sent at this time throughout the Empire, wherein he did not only command, that

Chap. 7.  
*Euseb. de vit. Const. l. 4. c. 22. p. 536.*

*Ib. p. 677;*

*Ib. & Orat. 19. p. 304.*

*Commod. instruct. c. 75. p. 57. Euseb. ut supra.*

*Hom. 20. ad pop. Antioch. p. 230. all tom. 1.*

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**Part I.** all Prisoners should be released and pardon'd, but wish'd he was able to recal those that were already executed, and to restore them to Life again. And because by the Negligence and Remifness of Messengers, or any Accident, those Imperial Letters might sometimes happen to come too late, therefore *Valentinian* the younger provided by a standing Law, That whether Order came or not, the Judges should dispence the accustomed Indulgence, and upon *Easter-Day* in the Morning cause all Prisons to be open'd, the Chains to be knock'd off, and the Persons set at Liberty.

Lib. 9.  
Theod. tit.  
38. de in-  
dulg. l. 8.

The next Feast considerable in those Primitive Times, was that of *WHIT-SUNDAY*, or *Pentecost*; a Feast of great Eminency amongst the *Jews*, in Memory of the Law deliver'd on Mount *Sinai* at that time, and for the gathering and bringing in of their *Harvest*; and of no less Note amongst *Christians*, for the *Holy Ghost's* descending upon the *Apostles* and other *Christians*, in the visible Appearance of *fiery cloven Tongues*, which happen'd upon that Day, and those miraculous Powers that were conferr'd upon them. It was observed with the same respect to *Easter*, that the *Jews* did with respect to their *Passover*, viz. (as the Word imports) just *fifty Days* after it, reckoning from the second Day of that Festival. It seems to some to have commenced from the first Rise of Christianity, not only because the *Apostles* and the Church were assembled upon that Day, but because *S. Paul* made so much Haste to be at *Jerusalem* the Day of *Pentecost*, which they understand of his great Desire to keep it there as a *Christian Feast*. But the Argument seems to me no way conclusive; for the Apostle might desire to be there at that time, both because he was sure to meet with a great Number of the Brethren, and because he should have a fitter Opportunity to preach the Gospel to  
the

Acts 20.  
16.

the Jews, who from all parts flock'd thither, to the Feast, as our Saviour himself for the same Reason used to go up to *Jerusalem* at all their great and solemn Feasts. But however this was, 'tis certain the Observation of it is ancient; 'twas mention'd by *Irenæus*, in a Book which he wrote concerning *Easter*, as the Author of the *Questions and Responses* in *J. Martyr* tells us, by *Tertullian*, and after him by *Origen* more than once. This Feast is by us styl'd *Whitsunday*, partly because of those vast Diffusions of *Light* and *Knowledge* which upon this Day were shed upon the *Apostles*, in order to the enlightning of the World; but principally because this (as also *Easter*) being the stated Time for *Baptism* in the ancient Church, those who were baptized put on *white Garments*, in token of that pure and innocent Course of Life they had now engaged in, (of which more in its proper Place.) This white Garment they wore till the next *Sunday* after, and then laid it aside; whence the *Octave*, or *Sunday* after *Easter* came to be styl'd *Dominica in Albis*, the *Sunday in White*; it being then that the new Baptized put off their white Garments. We may observe, that in the Writers of those times, the whole space of fifty Days between *Easter* and *Whitsunday* goes often under the Name of *Pentecost*,\* and was in a manner accounted Festival, as \* *Tertullian* informs us; and the forty third *Canon* of the *Illiberitan* Council seems to intimate. During this whole time *Baptism* was conferr'd, all *Fasts* were suspended and counted unlawful; they prayed standing, as they did every *Lord's-day*; and at this time read over the *Acts of the Apostles*, wherein their Sufferings and Miracles are recorded, as we learn from a Law of the younger † *Theodosius*, wherein this Custom is mention'd, and more plainly from *S. Chrysostom*, who treats of it in an *Homily* on purpose; where he gives this Reason why that Book,

Chap. 7.

Quæst.  
115. Tert.  
de Idol. c.  
14. p. 94.  
Adv. Cels.  
l. 8. p. 392.

\* Tert. de  
Idol. c. 14.  
Bapt. c. 19.  
de Cor. Mil.  
c. 3. Vid.  
Max. Tau-  
rin. Homil.  
3. de S. Pen-  
tec. p. 223.

† Co. Th. l.  
15. tit. 5. l.  
5. Serm. 73.  
Cyr. A. E.  
App. legan-  
tur in Pen-  
tec. tom. 53

K 2

which



Part I.



which contain'd those Actions of the Apostles, which were done after *Pemecost*, should yet be read before it, whenas at all other times, those Parts of the Gospel were read which were proper to the Season; because the Apostles Miracles being the grand *Confirmation* of the Truth of Christ's *Resurrection*, and those Miracles recorded in that Book, it was therefore most proper to be read next to the Feast of the Resurrection.

*Epiphany* succeeds: This Word was of old promiscuously used, either for the Feast of Christ's *Nativity*, or for that which we now properly call by that Name. Afterwards the Titles became distinct; that of Christ's *Birth* (or, as we now term it, *CHRISTMAS-DAY*) was called γενέθλια, the *Nativity*, and Θεοφάνιας the *Appearance of God in the Flesh*; two Names importing the same thing, as *Nazianzen* notes. For the Antiquity of it, the first Footsteps I find of it are in the second Century, tho' I doubt not but it might be celebrated before, mention'd by *Theophilus* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, about the time of the Emperor *Commodus*. But if any Credit might be given to the *Decretal* Epistles, it was somewhat elder than that; *Telesphorus*, who lived under *Antoninus Pius*, ordaining Divine Service to be celebrated, and an Angelical Hymn to be sung the Night before the *Nativity* of our *Saviour*. However, that it was kept before the Times of *Constantine*, we have this sad instance: That when the *Persecution* raged under *Dioclesian*, who then kept his Court at *Nicomedia*, amongst other Acts of barbarous Cruelty done there, finding Multitudes of *Christians* young and old met together, in the Temple, upon the day of *Christ's Nativity*, to celebrate that Festival, he commanded the Church-doors to be shut up, and Fire to be put to it: which in a short time reduced them and the Church to Ashes. I shall not dispute whether it

was

Ἐπιφάνια  
 Θεοφάνια,  
 Orat. 38.  
 p. 613.

Decret. Te-  
 lesph. sect.  
 Noctē vero.  
 Niceph. H.  
 Eccl. 1.7.c.  
 6. p. 446.  
 Forſan ex  
 Sim. Meta-  
 phraſt. qui  
 ead. habet  
 in Martyr.  
 Ind. &  
 Dom. apud  
 Sur. ad 26.  
 Dec. tom. 6.

was always observed upon the same Day that we keep it now, the 25th of December; it seems probable that for a long time in the East it was kept in January, under the Name, and at the general time of the Epiphania; till receiving more Light in the Case from the Churches of the West, they changed it to this Day. Sure I am, S. Chrysostom in an Homily on purpose about this very thing affirms, That it was not above ten Years since in that Church (*i. e. Antioch*) it began first to be observed upon that day, and there offers several Reasons to prove that to be the true day of Christ's Nativity. Chap. 7.  
Serm. 31.  
to. 5. p. 417.

The Feast of Epiphany, properly so called, was kept on the sixth of January, and had that Name from a threefold Apparition or Manifestation commemorated upon that Day; which all happen'd, tho' not in the same Year, yet upon the same Day of the Year. The first was the Appearance of the Star, which guided the Wise Men to Christ. The second was the famous Appearance at the Baptism of Christ, when all the Persons in the Holy Trinity did sensibly manifest themselves; the Father in the Voice from Heaven, the Son in the River Jordan, and the Holy Ghost in the visible Shape of a Dove. This was ever accounted a famous Festival, and as S. Chrysostom tells us, was properly called Epiphany, because he came in a manner into the World *incognito*; but at his Baptism openly appear'd to be the Son of God, and was so declared before the World. At this time it was, that by his going into the River Jordan, he did sanctify Water to the mystical washing away of Sin, (as our Church expresses it) in memory whereof, Chrysostom tells us, they used in this Solemnity at Midnight to draw Water, which they looked upon as consecrated this day, and carrying it home to lay it up, where it would remain pure and uncorrupt for a whole Year, sometimes two or three Years together; the Truth

*Hom. 23. de  
Bapt. Chr.  
tom. 1. p.  
278.*

*Ibid.*

Part I. whereof must rest upon the Credit of that good Man. The third *Manifestation* commemorated at this time, was that of Christ's *Divinity*, which appeared in the first *Miracle* that he wrought in turning *Water into Wine*; therefore 'twas called *Bethphania*, because it was done in the *House*, at that famous *Marriage in Cana of Galilee*, which our Saviour honour'd with his own Presence. All these three Appearances contributed to the Solemnity of this Festival.

But besides these, there was another sort of Festivals in the Primitive Church kept in Commemoration of *Martyrs*. For the understanding of which, we are to know, That in those sad and bloody Times, when the Christian Religion triumph'd over Persecution, and gain'd upon the World by nothing more than the constant and resolute Sufferings of its Professors, whom no Threatnings or Torments could baffle out of it; the People generally had a vast Reverence for those who suffer'd thus deep in the Cause of *Christianity*, and laid down their Lives for the Confirmation of it. They looked upon *Confessors* and *Martyrs*, as the great *Champions* of their Religion, who *resisted unto Blood*, and died upon the Spot to make good its Ground, and to maintain its Honour and Reputation; and therefore thought it very reasonable to do all possible Honour to their Memories, partly that others might be encouraged to the like Patience and Fortitude, and partly that Vertue even in this World might not lose its Reward. Hence they were wont once a Year to meet at the *Graves of Martyrs*, there solemnly to recite their Sufferings and their Triumphs, to praise their Vertues, and to bless God for their pious Examples, for their Holy Lives, and their happy Deaths, for their Palms and Crowns. These Anniversary Solemnities were called *Memoria Martyrum*, the *Memories of the Martyrs*; a Title mention'd

mention'd by *Cyprian*, but certainly much older than his Time ; and indeed when they were first taken up in the Church, is I think not so exactly known. The first that I remember to have met with, is that of *Polycarp* (whose Martyrdom is plac'd by *Eusebius*, *Ann.* 168, under the third Persecution) concerning whose Death and Sufferings the Church of *Smyrna* (of which he was Bishop) giving an Account to the Church of *Philomelium*, and especially of the Place where they had honourably entomb'd his Bones ; they do profess that (so far as the Malice of their Enemies would permit them, and they pray'd God nothing might hinder it) they would assemble in that Place, and celebrate the *Birth-day* of his Martyrdom with Joy and Gladness. Where we may especially observe, That this Solemnity is styled his *Birth-day* ; and indeed so the Primitive Christians used to call the Days of their Death and Passion, (quite contrary to the Manner of the *Gentiles*, who kept the *Natalitials* of their famous Men) looking upon these as the true Days of their Nativity, wherein they were freed from this Valley of Tears, these Regions of Death, and born again unto the Joys and Happiness of an endless Life. The same Account *Origen* gives (if that Book be his, a very ancient Author however :) We keep (says he) the Memories of the Saints, of our Ancestors and Friends that die in the Faith, both rejoicing in that Rest which they have obtain'd, and begging for ourselves a pious *Consummation* in the Faith. And we celebrate not the Day of their *Nativity*, as being the *Inlet* to Sorrow and Temptation ; but of their *Death*, as the *Period* of their Miseries, and that which sets them beyond the Reach of Temptations. And this we do, both *Clergy* and *People* meeting together, inviting the Poor and Needy, and refreshing the Widows and the Orphans ; that so our Festival may be, both

Chap. 7.

Epist. 37.

P. 51.

Euseb. Chron.  
ad Ann. 168.Euseb. Hist.  
Eccl. l. 4.  
c. 15. p.  
135.Expos. in  
Job. l. 3.  
fol. 39.  
tom. 2.

Part. I. in respect of them whom we commemorate, the Memorial of that happy Rest which their departed Souls do enjoy; and is in respect of us the Odour of a sweet Smell in the Sight of God. Under Constantine these Days were commanded to be observed with great Care and Strictness, enjoining all his Lieutenants and Governors of Provinces to see the Memorials of the Martyrs duly honour'd. And so sacred were they accounted in those days, that it was thought a piece of Prophaneness to be absent from them: Therefore S. Basil thought he could not use a more solemn Argument to persuade a certain Bishop to come over to him upon this Occasion, than to adjure him by the Respect he bore to the Memories of the Martyrs; That if he would not do it for his, yet he should for their sakes, towards whom it was unfit he should shew the least Disregard. Hence it is, that Libanius sometimes takes notice of the Christians under no other Character than this, Enemies to the Gods, τὰς αἰὲν τὰς τείρας, that haunt and frequent Tombs and Sepulchres. For the Time of these Assemblies, it was commonly once a Year, viz. upon the day of their Martyrdom; for which end they took particular Care to keep Registers of the Days of the Martyrs Passions. So Cyprian expressly charges his Clergy to note down the Days of their Decease, that there might be a Commemoration of them amongst the Memories of the Martyrs. Theodoret tells us, That in his time they did not thus assemble once or twice, or five times in a year, but kept frequent Memorials oftentimes, every day celebrating the Memorials of Martyrs with Hymns and Praises unto God. But I suppose he means it of Days appointed to the Memory of particular Martyrs, which being then very numerous, their Memorials were distinctly fixed upon their proper days; the Festival of S. Peter or S. Paul, Thomas, Sergius, Marcellus, &c. as he there enumerates them. For the Places, these Solemnities were kept

De vita  
Const. l. 4.  
c. 23. p. 536.

Epist. 336.  
c. 3. p. 328.

Apologet.  
pro doct.  
sua, p. 592.

Loco supra  
annot.

De Cur.  
Grac.  
affect.  
Serm. 8. de  
Martyrib.  
p. l. c. 121.

kept at first at the *Tombs* where the *Martyrs* had been buried, which usually were in the *Cæmeteria* or Church-Yards, distinct in those times from their Places of Publick Worship, and at a great Distance from them, as being commonly without the Cities. Here their Burying-Places were in large *Cryptæ* or *Grots* under Ground, where they celebrated these Memorials, and whither they used to retire for their common Devotions in times of great Persecution, when their Churches were destroyed or taken from them. And therefore when *Æmelian*, the Governor of *Ægypt* under the Reign of *Valerian*, would skrew up the Persecution against *Christians*, he forbade their Meetings, and that they should not so much as assemble in the Places which they called their *Church-Yards*; the same Privilege which *Maximinus* also had taken from them. By reason of the Darknes of these Places, and their frequent assembling there in the *Night*, to avoid the Fury of their Enemies, they were forced to use *Lights* and *Lamps* in their publick Meetings; but they who make this an Argument to patronize their burning of Lamps and Wax-Candles in their Churches at Noon-day, (as 'tis in all the great Churches of the *Roman* Communion) talk at a strange Rate of wild Inconsequence. I am sure *S. Hierom*, when charged with it, denied that they used any in the Day-time, and never but at Night when they rose up to their Night-Devotions. He confesses indeed, 'twas otherwise in the *Eastern* Churches, where when the *Gospel* was to be read, they set up Lights as a Token of their *Rejoicing* for those happy and glad Tydings that were contained in it, *Light* having been ever used as a Symbol and Representation of *Joy* and *Gladness*; a Custom probably not much elder than his time. Afterwards when *Christianity* prevailed in the World, the Devotion of *Christians* erected Churches in those Places; the Temples of the Mar-

Chap. 7.

Euf. Hist.  
l. 7. c. 11.  
p. 258.  
l. 9. c. 2.  
p. 349.

Adv. Vigil.  
tant. tom.  
2. p. 123.

**Part I.** Martyrs (says *Theodoret*) being *spacious and beautiful*, richly and curiously adorned, and shining with great Lustre and Brightness. These Solemnities, as the same Author informs us, were kept not like the Heathen Festivals, with *Luxury and Obscureness*, but with *Devotion and Sobriety*, with *Divine Hymns and Religious Sermons*, with fervent *Prayers to God*, mixed many times with Sighs and Tears. Here they heard Sermons and Orations, joined in publick Prayers and Praises, received the Holy Sacrament, offered Gifts and Charities for the Poor, recited the Names of the Martyrs then commemorated with their due Elogies and Commendations, and their Vertues propounded to the Imitation of the Hearers. For which purpose they had their set *Notaries*, who took the *Acts, Sayings, and Sufferings of Martyrs*, which were after compiled into particular *Treatises*, and were recited in these annual Meetings; and this was the first Original of *Martyrologies* in the Christian Church. From this Custom of offering up Prayers, Praises and Alms at those times, it is, that the Fathers speak so often of *Oblations and Sacrifices* at the Martyrs Festivals. *Tertullian*, *Often upon an anniversary Day* (says he) *we make Oblations for them that are departed, in memory of the Natalia or Birth-days*; and to the same Purpose elsewhere. *As oft* (says *Cyprian*) *as by an anniversary Commemoration we celebrate the Passion-days of the Martyrs, we always offer Sacrifices for them*: And the same Phrases oft occur in many others of the Fathers. By which 'tis evident, they meant no more than their publick *Prayers*, and offering up *Praises* to God for the Piety and Constancy, and the excellent Examples of their Martyrs, their celebrating the *Eucharist* at these times, as the *Commemoration of Christ's Sacrifice*, their *Oblation of Alms and Charity* for the Poor every one of which truly may, and often is styled a *Sacrifice or Oblation*; and

*Vide Conf.*  
*Ap. 1. 8. c.*  
*45. p. 1040.*  
*Vir. Epiph.*  
*λβγ. σύρ-*  
*τομ. πρ-*  
*πίς; p.*  
*466.*

*De Cor.*  
*mil. c. 3.*  
*p. 102.*  
*De exhort.*  
*Casil. p.*  
*523. De*  
*monog. p.*  
*531. Epist.*  
*34. p. 48. &*  
*Ep. 37.*

and are so understood by some of the more moderate even of the *Romish* Church : And with good Reason ; for that they did not make any real and formal *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* to Martyrs, but only honour them as *holy Men*, and *Friends to God*, who for his and our Saviour's Honour, and the Truth of Religion, chose to lay down their Lives, I find expressly affirmed by *Theodoret*.

These Festivals being Times of Mirth and Gladness, were celebrated with great Expressions of Love and Charity to the Poor, and mutual Rejoicing with one another. Here they had their *συμπόσια*, or *Feasts*, every one bringing something to the common Banquet, out of which the Poor also had their Share. These Feasts at first were very sober and temperate, and such as became the Modesty and Simplicity of Christians, as we heard before out of *Theodoret*, and is affirmed before him by *Constantine*, in his *Oration* to the *Saints*. But degenerating afterwards into Excess and Intemperance, they were every where declaimed against by the Fathers, till they were wholly laid aside. Upon the Account of these Feasts, and for the better making Provisions for them, we may conceive it was, that *Markets* came to be kept at these Times and Places ; for of such *S. Basil* speaks, *ἀγορασία ἐν τοῖς μαστυρίοις γινόμενα*, *Markets held at the Memorials and Tombs of Martyrs* : These he condemns as highly *unsutable* to those Solemnities, which were only instituted for Prayers, and a Commemoration of the Vertues of good Men, for our Encouragement and Imitation ; and that they ought to remember the Severity of our otherwise meek and humble Saviour, who whip'd the *Buyers* and *Sellers* out of the *Temple*, when by their Marketings they had turned the *House of Prayer into a Den of Thieves*. And the Truth is, these Anniversary Commemorations, though in their Primitive Institution they are highly reasonable

Chap. 7.

Rigalt.

Obf. ad

Cypr. H.

Vales. an-

not. ad Euf.

Hist. an-

not. p. 262.

Pichavel

de missa. p.

103, 107.

Loco supra

cit. p. 116.

Cap. 12.

p. 585.

Reg. fus.

disput. in-

terro. 40.

tom. 28.

p. 589.



**Part I.** sonable and commendable; yet through the Folly and Dotage of Men, they were after made to minister to great Superstition and Idolatry: So plain is it, that the best and usefulest things may be corrupted to bad Purposes: For hence sprung the Doctrine and Practice of *Prayer and Invocation of Saints*, and their *Intercession* with God, their worshipping of *Reliques, Pilgrimages*, and *visiting Churches*, and offering at the *Shrines* of such and such Saints, and such like Superstitious Practices, which in After-Ages over-run so great a Part of the Christian Church; things utterly unknown to the Simplicity of those purer and better Times.

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### C H A P. VIII.

Of the Persons constituting the Body of the Church, both People and Ministers.

*The People distinguish'd into several Ranks. Catechumens of two Sorts, gradually instructed in the Principles of the Christian Faith. Accounted only Christians at large. The more recondite Mysteries of Christianity concealed from Persons till after Baptism. Three Reasons assigned of it. How long they remained in the State of Catechumens. The several Classes of Penitents, the προσκλαίοντες, ἀκρωόμενοι, ὑποπίπτοντες, συνιστάμενοι, the πιστοί, or the Faithful. Their particular Stations in the Church. Their great Reverence for the Lord's Supper. The Clergy why called κληρος. Of two Sorts; the highest Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Bishops, as superior to Presbyters, how ancient by the most learned Opposers of Episcopacy. Their Office and Privilege*

*lege above Presbyters. The περιουτοι or Visitors in every Diocess. Of Metropolitans, what their Power and Authority above ordinary Bishops; their Antiquity. Of Patriarchs, and in what respects superiour to Metropolitans and Archbishops. An Account of conforming the external Jurisdiction of the Church to the Civil Government of the Roman Empire. Presbyters, their Place and Duty. Whether they preached in the Presence of the Bishop. Deacons, their Institution, Office, Number. The Archdeacon. Of inferior Orders. The Subdeacon. The Acolytus. The Exorcist. The Reader. The Doorkeeper. What the Nature of their several Places. Ordination to these Offices how managed. The People present at, and consenting to the Ordination. Sacerdotes prædicari, what. The Christian Discipline in this Case imitated by the Emperor Severus, in appointing Civil Officers. Great Trials and Testimonials to be had of Persons to be ordained. Clergy-Men to rise by Degrees. The Age usually required in those that were to be promoted to the several Orders. Of Deaconesses, their Antiquity, Age, and Office. The great Honour and Respect shewed to Bishops and Ministers. Looked upon as Common Parents. Nothing of Moment done without their Leave. Their Welcome, and the Honour done them wherever they came. This made good by several Instances; Bishops invested with Power to determine*

*Civil*

Chap. 8.

*Civil Controversies. The Plentiful Provision made for them. The great Privileges and Immunities granted by Constantine and his Successors to the Bishops and Clergy, noted out of the Theodosian Code.*

**F**ROM the Consideration of *Time* and *Place*, we proceed to consider the *PERSONS* that constituted and made up their Religious Assemblies; and they were either the *Body of the People*, or those who were peculiarly *consecrated* and set apart for the Publick Ministrations of Religion. For the Body of the People, we may observe, that as *Christianity* at first generally gained Admission in great Towns and Cities, so all the *Believers* of that Place usually assembled and met together, the *Christians* also of the neighbouring Villages resorting thither at Times of Publick Worship. But Religion increasing apace, the Publick Assembly, especially in the greater Cities, quickly began to be too vast and numerous to be manag'd with any Order and Conveniency; and therefore they were forced to divide the *Body* into particular *Congregations*, who had their *Pastors* and Spiritual Guides set over them, but still were under the Superintendency and Care of him that was their *President* or *Bishop* of the Place. And according as the Church could form and establish its Discipline, the People either according to their *Seniority* and Improvement, or according to the *Quality* of the present Condition they were under, began to be distinguish'd into several Ranks and \**Classes*, which had their distinct Places in the Church, and their gradual Admissions to the several Parts of the Publick Worship. The first were the *CATECHUMENS*; and of these were two Sorts, the *τελειότεροι*, or more *perfect*, such as had been *Catechumens* of some

\* *Balsam.*  
*Zonar.*  
*Aristen. in*  
*Can. 5.*  
*Conc. Neo.*  
*Cesar.*

some considerable standing, and were even ripe for Baptism; these might stay not only the Reading of the Scriptures, but to the very last Part of the first Service. The others were the ἀτελείεσσι, the more rude and imperfect, who stood only amongst the Hearers, and were to depart the Congregation as soon as the Lessons were read: These were as yet accounted Heathens, who applied themselves to the Christian Faith, and were catechized and instructed in the more plain Grounds of Religion. These Principles were gradually deliver'd to them, according as they became capable to receive them; first the more plain, and then the more difficult. Indeed they were very shy of imparting the Knowledge of the more recondite Doctrines of Christianity to any till after Baptism. So S. Cyprian expressly assures us, where speaking to the *Illuminate* or Baptized; If during the Catechetical Exercise (says he) a Catechumen shall ask thee, what that means which the Preachers say? tell him not, for he is yet without; and these *Mysteriet* are delivered to thee only. The weak Understanding of a Catechumen being no more able to bear such sublime *Mysteriet*, than a sick Man's Head can large and immoderate Draughts of Wine. And at the End of his Preface he has this Note; *These Catechetical Discourses may be read by those that are to be Baptized, or the Faithful already baptized: But to Catechumens, or such as are no Christians, thou may'st not impart them; for if thou dost, expect to give an Account to God.*

*Præf. ad Catech. Illum. p. 13.*

*ib. p. 21.*

S. Basil, discoursing of the Rites and Institutions of Christianity, divides them into two Parts, the τὰ κρυψύματα, and the τὰ δῆσματα. The τὰ κρυψύματα were those Parts of Religion which might δημοσιεύειν, be familiarly Preached and Expounded to the People: The τὰ δῆσματα were the

*De Spir. S. c. 27. p. 532. tom. 2.*

**Part I.** the sublime and hidden Doctrines and Parts of the Christian Faith; and these were ἀπόκρυφα, things not rashly and commonly to be divulged, but to be lock'd up in Silence. Of this Nature were the Doctrines of the *Trinity* and *Hypostatick Union*, and such like; especially of the two *Sacraments*, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*. For though they acquainted their young Hearers with so much of them as was necessary to stir up their Desires, yet as to the Main of the Things themselves, the *Sacramental Symbols*, the *Manner* of their Celebration, the *Modus* of the Divine Presence at the Holy *Eucharist*, the Meaning of all those *Mystical Rites* and Ceremonies that were used about them; these were carefully concealed both from *Strangers* and *Catechumens*, and communicated only to those who were solemnly initiated and baptized. Hence that ancient *Form* so common in the Sermons and Writings of the Fathers, whereby, when accidentally discoursing before the People of any of these *Mysterious Parts* of Religion, they used to fetch themselves off with an ΙΣΑΣΙΝ ΟΙ ΜΕΜΤΗΜΕΝΟΙ, *Those that are initiated know what is said*. This was so usual, that this Phrase occurs at least fifty times in the Writings of *S. Chrysostom* only, as *Casaubon* hath observed; who has likewise noted Three Reasons out of the *Fathers* why they so studiously concealed these Parts of their Religion. *First*, the Nature of the things themselves, so sublime and remote from vulgar Apprehensions, that they would signify little to *Pagans* or *Catechumens* not yet fully instructed and confirmed in the *Faith*; and would either be lost upon them, or in Danger to be derided by them. *Secondly*, that hereby the *Catechumens* and younger Christians might be inflamed with a greater Eagerness of Desire to partake of the *Mysteries* and Privileges of the *Faithful*;

Vid. Dion. Areop. de Ecc. Hier. arch. c. 1. p. 230.

Chryf. Hom. 67. in Gen. p. 719. tom. 1. & alibi sepiss. Isid. Pelus. l. 4. ep. 162. p. 82. alii que. Exercit. 16. ad Annal. Bar. S. 43. p. 556.

*Faithful*; Human Nature being desirous of nothing more than the Knowledge of what is kept and concealed from us. To help them forward in this, S. *Augustin* tells us, that in their publick Prayers they were wont to beg of God to inspire the *Catechumens* with a Desire of Baptifmal Regeneration. The same Account *Chryftom* gives us, this being Part of the Form used in their Publick Service, *Let us pray that the most gracious and merciful God would hear the Prayers of the Catechumens*: And what it was they prayed for, he presently adds, *viz. That they might no longer remain in that State*. Upon these Accounts, *Initiation* by Baptifm, but especially *Admission* to the Lord's-Supper, is, amongst other Titles in the Writers of those Times, called *Desiderata*, because fo earnestly desired and fought for by those that were not yet taken in. The Truth is, till Persons arrived at this State, they were not accounted *Christians* (or but in a large Sense, as *Candidates* that stood in order to it;) and therefore could not satisfy themselves either to *live* or *die* in that Condition, wherein they wanted the great *Seals* and *Pledges* of their Christianity. *Thirdly*, to beget in Mens Minds the higher Esteem and Veneration for these Religious Myfteries; nothing producing a greater *Contempt* even in Sacred things, than too much Openness and Familiarity. So that a little Obscurity and Concealment might seem necessary to vindicate them from Contempt, and secure the Majesty and Reverence that was due to them. This made the *Fathers* and *Seniors* of the Church (says S. *Basil*) in prescribing Rites and Laws, leave many things in the dark, behind the Veil and Curtain, that they might τὸ σεμνὸν τοῖς μυστηρίοις φυλάττειν, preserve the *Sacredness* and *Dignity* that was due to the Myfteries of Religion. For a thing (says he) cannot properly be said to be a *Mystery*, when 'tis once exposed to every vulgar

Chap. 8.

Ad Vital. ep. 107. col. 493.

Hom. 2. in cap. 11. ad Cor. p. 740.

Vid. Chryf. ibid.

Loc. supra laud.

L

and

Part I. and common Ear. But of this enough, if not too much.

In Can.  
26. Conc.  
Laod.

And as they were careful to keep the higher Parts of Christianity within the Cognizance of the *Faithful*, so they were not less careful to teach and instruct the *Catechumens* in all those Principles they were capable of being taught. This at their first coming over was done privately, and at home, by Persons deputed on purpose to that Office by the Bishop (as *Balsamon* clearly intimates) till they were sufficiently instructed in the first and more intelligible Principles of the Faith. Then they were admitted into the Congregation, and suffered to be present at some Parts of the Divine Service, especially the *Sermons*, which were made for the building them up unto higher Measures of Knowledge; which being ended, they were commanded to *depart* the Church, not being suffered to be present at the more solemn Rites, especially the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. And in this manner they were trained up, till they were initiated by Baptism, and taken into the highest Form of *Christians*. How long Persons remained in the State of the *Catechumens*, is difficult to determine; it not being always nor in all Places alike, but longer in some, and shorter in others, and probably according to the Capacity of the Persons. The *Apostolical Constitutions* appoint *three Years* for the *Catechumen* to be instructed, but provide withal, that if any one be diligent and vertuous, and have a Ripeness of Understanding for the thing, he may be admitted into Baptism sooner; for (say they) not the *Space* of Time, but the *Fitness* and *Manners* of Men, are to be regarded in this matter.

Lib. 8.  
c. 32.  
p. 1032.

Epist. Canon.  
περι  
ἡμῶν αἰδω-  
λου φεγ.  
Can. 11.  
p. 121.

The next Sort were the *Penitents*, such as for some Misdemeanors were under the Censures and Severity of the Church, and were gradually to obtain Absolution from it. Of these there were several

ral Degrees, five especially mentioned by S. Gregory of *Neocæsarea*, who lived about the Year 250. Chap. 8. The first were the *οἱ προσκλαίοντες*, such as wept and lamented, and were rather Candidates to be received into the Orders of *Penitents*, than *Penitents* properly so called. These usually stood in a squalid and mournful Habit at the *Church-Porch*, with Tears and great Importunity begging of the Faithful as they went in, to pray for them.

The second were the *ἀκροάμενοι*, the *Hearers*, who were admitted to hear the Holy Scriptures read and expounded to the People. Their *Station* was at the upper End of the *Narthex*, or first Part of the Church, and were to depart the Congregation at the same time with the *Catechumens*. The third Class of *Penitents* was that of the *προπίπτοντες*, the *Prostrate*, because Service being ended, they fell down before the Bishop; who, together with the Congregation, falling down and making Confession in their Behalf, after raised them up and laid his Hands upon them. These stood within the Body of the Church, next the *Pulpit* or *Reading-Pew*, and were to depart together with the *Catechumens*. The fourth were the *συνιστάμενοι*, the *Consistentes*, such as stay'd with the rest of the Congregation, and did not depart with the *Catechumens*; but after they and the other *Penitents* were gone out, stay'd and joined in Prayer and Singing (but not in receiving the Sacrament) with the Faithful. These after some time were advanced into the fifth and last Order of the *Communicantes* (*μέθεξιν ἢ ἀσισμάτων*, S. Gregory calls it) and were admitted to the Participation of the Holy Sacrament. This was the State of the *Penitents* in the Primitive Church. Persons having fully passed through the State of the *Catechumenate*, became then immediate Candidates of Baptism, presented their *Names* to the Bishop, and humbly prostrating themselves, begged that they might be

Soz. Hist. Ecc. l. 7. c. 16. p. 727.



Part I. entered into the Church. These are called *Competentes*, because they did *competere gratiam Christi*, sue for the *Grace of Christ* conferr'd in Baptism. The last Rank was that of the *πιστοι*, or the **FAITHFUL**, who having been baptized and confirmed, and having approved themselves by the long Train and Course of a strict, pious Life, were then admitted to the Participation of the *Lord's Supper*; which, being the highest and most venerable Mystery of the *Christian Religion*, was not then rashly given to any, but to such only as had run through all other Degrees, and by a Course of Piety evidenced themselves to be such real and faithful *Christians*, as that the highest Mysteries and most solemn Parts of Religion might be committed to them. This was the highest Order, and looked upon with great Regard, and for any of this Rank to lapse and be *overtaken with a Fault*, cost them severer *Penances* than were imposed upon the inferior Forms of Christians.

This, in short, was the State of the *People*. But because 'tis not possible any Body or Community of Men should be regularly managed without some particular Persons to superintend, direct and govern the Affairs of the whole Society, therefore we are next to enquire what Persons there were in the Primitive Church, that were peculiarly *set apart* to steer its Affairs, and to attend upon the Publick Offices and Ministrations of it. That God always had a *peculiar* People, whom he selected for himself out of the rest of Mankind, is too evident to need any Proof: Such were the *Patriarchs*, and the *holy Seed* of old; such the *Jews*, chosen by him above all other Nations in the World. This was his *κλήρο*, his particular Lot and Portion, comprehending the Body of the People in general. But afterwards this Title was confined to narrower Bounds, and became appropriate to that *Tribe* which God had made

made choice of to *stand before him*, to wait at his *Altar*, and to minister in the Services of his Worship. **Chap. 8.**  
 And after the *Expiration* of their *O Economy*, was accordingly used to denote the *Ministry of the Gospel*, the Persons peculiarly consecrated and devoted to the Service of God in the Christian Church: The Clergy being those, *qui divino cultui ministeria religionis impendunt* (as they are defined in a Law of the Emperor *Constantine*) who are set apart for the *Ministeries* of Religion in Matters relating to the *Divine Worship*. Now the whole *κατάλογος ἱερατικῆς* (as 'tis often called in the *Apostles Canons*) the *Roll* of the Clergy of the ancient Church (taking it within the Compass of its first four hundred Years) consisted of *two Sorts* of Persons, the *ἱεραρχοί*, who were peculiarly consecrated to the more *proper* and *immediate* Acts of the Worship of God: And the *ὑπηρέται*, such as were set apart only for the *more mean and common* Services of the Church. Of the first Sort were these three, *Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.*

C. Th. 1.  
 16. tit. 3.  
 de Episc.  
 Eccl. 3.  
 Cler. 1. 2.

The first and principal Officer of the Church was the President, or BISHOP, usually chosen out of the *Presbyters*. I shall not here concern myself in the Disputes, whether *Episcopacy*, as a superiour Order to *Presbytery*, was of Divine Institution (a Controversy sufficiently ventilated in the late Times) it being enough to my Purpose, what is acknowledged both by *Blondel* and *Salmasius*, the most learned Defenders of *Presbytery*, that Bishops were distinct from and superiour to *Presbyters* in the second *Century*, or the *next Age* to the Apostles. The main Work and Office of a Bishop was to *teach* and *instruct* the People, to *administer* the Sacraments, to *absolve* Penitents, to *eject* and *excommunicate* obstinate and incorrigible Offenders, to *preside* in the Assemblies of the Clergy, to *ordain* inferiour Officers in the Church, to *call them to account*, and to *suspend* or *deal* with them according to the Nature of the Offence;

**Part I.** to urge the *Observance* of Ecclesiastical Laws, and to appoint and institute such indifferent Rites as were for the decent and orderly Administration of his Church. In short, according to the Notation of his Name, he was a  $\sigma\kappa\acute{o}\pi\theta$ , a *Watchman* and *Sentinel*, and therefore obliged  $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\kappa\omicron\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ , diligently and carefully to *inspect* and *observe*, to superintend and provide for those that were under his Charge. This, *Zonaras* tells us, was implied in the Bishop's *Throne* being placed on *high*, in the most eminent Part of the Church, to denote how much 'twas his Duty from thence to overlook, and very diligently to observe the People that were under him. These and many more were the unquestionable Rights and Duties of the Episcopal Office; which because it was very difficult and troublesome for one Man to discharge, especially where the  $\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\iota\alpha$ , or *Diocess* (as we now call it) was any thing large, therefore upon the multiplying of Country-Churches, it was thought fit to take in a *subordinate* Sort of *Bishops*, called *Chorepiscopi*, *Country*, or (as amongst us they have been called) *Suffragan Bishops*; whose Business it was to *superintend* and *inspect* the Churches in the *Country*, that lay more remote from the City where the Episcopal See was, and which the Bishop could not always inspect and oversee in his own Person. These were the *Vicarii Episcoporum* (as they are called in *Isidore's* Version of the thirteenth Canon both of the *Ancyran* and *Neocasarean Council*) the Bishops *Deputies*, chosen out of the fittest and gravest Persons. In the Canon of the last mention'd Council, they are said to be chosen *in Imitation* of the Seventy, not the *Seventy Elders* which *Moses* took in to bear Part of the Government (as some have glossed the Words of that Canon) but of the *Seventy Disciples*, whom our Lord made choice of, to send up and down the Countries to preach the *Gospel*, as both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon* understood it:

And

In Can.  
Apost.  
Can. 58.

And thereupon, by reason of their great Care and Pains, are commanded to be esteemed very *honourable*. Their Authority was much greater than that of the *Presbyters*, and yet much inferior to the *Bishop*. Bishops really they were, though their Power confined within narrow Limits; they were not allowed to ordain either *Presbyters* or *Deacons* (unless peculiarly licensed to it by the Bishop of the *Diocess*) though they might ordain *Subdeacons*, *Readers*, and any inferior Officers under them. They were to be *assistant* to the Bishop, might be present at *Synods* and *Councils* (to many whereof we find their Subscriptions) and had Power to give *Letters of Peace*, *i. e.* such Letters whereby the Bishop of one *Diocess* was wont to recommend any of his Clergy to the Bishop of another, that so a fair Understanding and Correspondence might be maintained between them; a Privilege expressly denied to any *Presbyter* whatsoever. But lest this wandering Employment of the *Chorepiscopi* should reflect any Dishonour upon the Episcopal Office, there were certain *Presbyters* appointed in their room, called *πιστοδιδάται*, or *Visitors*, often mentioned in the ancient *Canons* and *Acts* of Councils; who being tied to no certain Place, were to go up and down the Country, to observe and correct what was amiss. And these doubtless were those *ἐπιχωρείοι Πρεσβύτεροι*, (spoken of in the thirteenth Canon of the *Neocæsarean Council*) those *rural Presbyters*, who are there forbid to consecrate the *Eucharist* in the *City-Church*, in the Presence of the *Bishop* of the *Presbyters* of the *City*.

Chap. 8.  
Conc.  
Antioch.  
Can. 10.

lb. Can. 8.

Conc. Laod.  
C. n. 57.

As *Christianity* increased and overspread all Parts, and especially the Cities of the Empire, it was found necessary yet farther to enlarge the Episcopal Office; and as there was commonly a Bishop in every great City, so in the *Metropolis* (as the *Romans* called it) the *Mother-City* of every *Province* wherein they had Courts of civil Judicature) there

**Part I.** was an ARCH-BISHOP or a METROPOLITAN, who had Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction over all the Churches within that Province. He was superiour to all the Bishops within those Limits; to him it belonged either to *ordain* or to *ratify* the Elections and Ordinations of all the Bishops within his Province, in so much that without his Confirmation they were looked upon as null and void. Once at least every Year he was to summon the Bishops under him to a *Synod*, to inquire into and direct the Ecclesiastical Affairs within that Province, to inspect the Lives and Manners, the Opinions and Principles of his Bishops, to admonish, reprove, and suspend them that were disorderly and irregular: If any Controversies or Contentions happened between any of them, he was to have the *Hearing* and *Determination* of them; and indeed no Matter of *Moment* was done within the whole Province, without first consulting him in the Case. Besides this *Metropolitan*, there was many times another in the same Province, who enjoyed nothing but that Name and Title, his *Episcopal See* being by the Emperor's *Pragmatick* erected into the Dignity of a *Metropolis*. He was only an *Honorary Metropolitan*, without any real Power and Jurisdiction, and had no other Privilege, but that he took place above other ordinary Bishops; in all things else equally subject with them to the *Metropolitan* of the Province, as the Council of *Chalcedon* determines in this Case. When this Office of *Metropolitan* first began, I find not; only this we are sure of, that the Council of *Nice*, settling the just Rights and Privileges of *Metropolitan Bishops*, speaks of them as a Thing of *ancient Date*, ushering in the *Canon* with an ἀρχαία ἐν ἡμετέροις, *Let ancient Customs still take Place*. The Original of the *Institution* seems to have been partly to comply with Peoples Occasions, who oft resorted to

Can. 12.

Can. 6.

to the *Metropolis* for Dispatch of their Affairs, and so might fitly discharge their *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* Concerns both at once; and partly because of the great Confluence of People to that City; that the Bishop of it might have Pre-eminence above the rest, and the Honour of the *Church* bear some Proportion to that of the *State*.

Chap. 8.  
Vid. Conc.  
Antioch.  
Can. 9.

After this sprang up another *Branch* of the Episcopal Office, as much superior to that of *Metropolitans*, as theirs was to ordinary Bishops; these were called **PRIMATES** and **PATRIARCHS**, and had Jurisdiction over many Provinces. For the understanding of this, it's necessary to know, that when Christianity came to be fully settled in the World, they contrived to model the external Government of the Church, as near as might be to the Civil Government of the *Roman Empire*; the Parallel most exactly drawn by an ingenious Person of our own Nation; the Sum of it is this. The whole Empire of *Rome* was divided into *thirteen Diocesses* (so they called those Divisions) these contained about *one hundred and twenty Provinces*, and every Province several *Cities*. Now as in every City there was a temporal Magistrate for the executing of Justice, and keeping the Peace both for that City and the Towns round about it, so was there also a *Bishop* for Spiritual Order and Government, whose Jurisdiction was of like Extent and Latitude. In every Province there was a *Proconsul* or President, whose Seat was usually at the *Metropolis* or chief City of the Province; and hither all inferior Cities came for Judgment in Matters of Importance. And in proportion to this, there was in the same City an *Archbishop* or *Metropolitan*, for Matters of Ecclesiastical Concernment. Lastly, In every *Diocese*, the Emperors had their *Vicarii* or *Lieutenants*, who dwelt in the principal City of the *Diocese*, where all Imperial Edicts were publish'd, and

Edward  
Breer-  
wood's  
Patriarch.  
Governm.  
of the anci-  
ent Church  
Quest. 1.

Part I. and from whence they were sent abroad into the several Provinces, and where was the chief *Tribunal* where all Causes, not determinable elsewhere, were decided. And to answer this, there was in the same City a *Primate*, to whom the last Determination of all Appeals from all the Provinces in Differences of the *Clergy*, and the sovereign Care of all the *Diocese* for sundry Points of spiritual Government did belong. This, in short, is the Sum of the Account which that *learned Man* gives of this Matter. So that the *Patriarch*, as superior to the *Metropolitans*, was to have under his Jurisdiction not any one single Province, but a whole *Diocese* (in the old *Roman* Notion of that Word) consisting of many *Provinces*. To him belong'd the Ordination of all the *Metropolitans* that were under him, as also the summoning them to Councils, the *correcting* and reforming the *Misdemeanours* they were guilty of; and from his Judgment and Sentence, in things properly within his Cognizance, there lay no Appeal. To this I shall only add what *Salmasius* has noted, that as the *Diocess* that was govern'd by the *Vicarius* had many *Provinces* under it, so the *Præfectus Prætorio* had several *Diocesses* under him: And in proportion to this, probable it was, that *Patriarchs* were first brought in, who if not superior to *Primates* in Jurisdiction and Power, were yet in *Honour*, by reason of the Dignity of those Cities where their *Sees* were fix'd, as at *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch* and *Jerusalem*; a Title and Dignity which they retain to this day.

The next Office to Bishops was that of PRESBYTERS, to whom it belong'd to preach to the People, to administer Baptism, consecrate the Eucharist, and to be assistant to the Bishop both in publick Ministrations, and dispatching the Affairs of the Church. The Truth is, the *Presbyters* of every great City were a kind of *Ecclesiastical Senate*, under

under the Care and Precedency of the Bishop, Chap. 8. whose Counsel and Assistance he made use of in ruling those Societies of Christians that were under his Charge and Government, and were accordingly reckon'd next in Place and Power to him: Thus described by S. Gregory in his *Iambics*:

—οὐ τὰ δ' ἄτερσ  
 Θρόνων λελοσχοτες,  
 Λαὸν πρεσβυτοι Πρεσβυται,  
 Σεμλή γερεσία.

Ἐις ἑαυ-  
 τόν. *Corm.*  
 23. p. 244.  
*Tom. 2.*

The venerable Senate of Presbyters, that preside over the People, and possess the second Throne, i. e. the Place next to the Bishop. They are called *Clerici superioris loci*, and otherwhiles (unless we understand it of the *Chorepiscopi*) *Antistites in secundo ordine*; and accordingly in Churches had Seats of Eminency placed for them next to the Bishop's Throne. Whereby was imply'd (says *Zonaras*) that they ought to use a proportional Care and Providence towards the People, to inform and teach them, to direct and guide them, being appointed as *Fellow-labourers* with, and *Assistants* to the Bishop. But tho' Presbyters by their Ordination had a Power conferr'd upon them to administer Holy Things, yet after that the Church was settled upon Foundations of Order and Regularity, they did not usually exercise this Power within any *Diocess* without Leave and Authority from the *Bishop*, much less take upon them to preach in his Presence. This Custom (however it might be otherwise in the *Eastern Church*) we are sure was constantly observed in the Churches of *Africk* till the time of *Valerius*, S. *Augustin's* Predecessor in the *See of Hippo*: Who being a *Greek*, and by reason of his little Skill in the *Latin Tongue*, unable to preach to the *Edification* of the People, admitted

S. Au-

C. Theod.  
 Leg. 11.  
 Tit. 39.  
 de fid.  
 Test. 1. 10.  
 Sidon. A-  
 poll. lib. 4.  
 Epist. 11.  
 p. 96.  
 In Can. 58.  
 Apost.



Part I. *S. Augustin* (whom he had lately ordain'd *Presbyter*) to preach before him. Which tho' at first 'twas ill resented by some Bishops in those Parts, yet quickly became a Precedent for other Churches to follow after.

Act 6.

After these came **DEACONS**: What the Duty of their Place was, appears from their Primitive Election, the Apostles setting them apart to *serve* or *minister to the Tables*. *i. e.* to attend upon and take Charge of those daily *Provisions* that were made for poor indigent Christians; but certainly it implies also their being destinated to a peculiar Attendance at the Service of the *Lord's Table*. And both these may be very well meant in that Place, it being the Custom of Christians then to meet every Day at the *Lord's Table*, where they made their Offerings for the Poor, and when Poor and Rich had their Meals together. And hence it was ever an accounted Part of the *Deacon's Office*, as to take care of the Poor, and to distribute the Monies given for their Relief and Maintenance; so to wait upon the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, which being consecrated by the Bishop or *Presbyter*, the *Deacon* deliver'd the Sacramental Elements to the People. Besides this, they were wont also to *preach* and to *baptize*, and were employ'd in many Parts of the Publick Service, especially in guiding and directing of the People. The Number of them in any one Place was usually restrain'd to *seven*; this being the Number originally instituted by the *Apostle*, and which might not be alter'd, altho' the City was never so *great* and *numerous*, as 'tis in the last *Canon* of the *Neocæsarean Council*. As the *Presbyters* were to the *Bishop*, so the *Deacons* were to the *Presbyters*, to be assistant to them, and to give them all due Respect and Reverence. And therefore when some of them began to take too much upon them, to distribute the Sacrament before

fore the Bishop or Presbyter, and to take Place amongst the Presbyters, the Council of *Nice* took Notice of it as a piece of bold and saucy Usurpation, severely commanded them to know their Place, and to contain themselves within their own *Bounds and Measures*, and neither to meddle with the Sacrament but in their Order, nor to *fit down* before the *Presbyters*, unless it be by their Leave and Command, as 'tis express'd by the *Laodicean Synod*. Accordingly the first Council of *Arles*, forbids the *Deacons* to do any things of themselves, but to reserve the Honour to the *Presbyters*. Out of the Body of these *Deacons* there was usually one chosen to overlook the rest, the *Archdeacon*; an Office supposed to have been of good Antiquity in the Church, and of great Authority, especially in after-times, being generally styled the *Eye of the Bishop*, to inspect all Parts and Places of his Diocese. This was he that in the Church of *Rome* was called the *Cardinal Deacon*, who (as *Onuphrius* tells us) was at first but one, tho' the Number increased afterwards. While Churches were little, and the Services not many, the *Deacons* themselves were able to discharge them; but as these increased, so did their Labours, and therefore 'twas thought fit to take in some inferior Offices under them. This gave Being to

**SUB-DEACONS**, who were to be Assistant to the *Deacon*, as the *Deacon* to the *Presbyter*, and he to the *Bishop*. One great Part of his Work was, to wait at the *Church-doors* in the Time of Publick Worship, to usher in and to bring out the several Orders of the *Catechumens* and *Penitents*, that none might mistake their proper Stations, and that no Confusion or Disorder might arise to the Disturbance of the Congregation. When he was first taken in, I cannot find, but he is mention'd in an Epistle of the *Roman Clergy* to them of *Carthage*, about

Chap. 8.

Can. 18.

Can. 20.

Can. 18.

De Episc.  
Tit. & Dia-  
con. Card.  
p. 24.Conc. Lao-  
dic. can. 43.  
ubi vid.  
Zon. &  
Balsam.

Part I. about S. Cyprian's Retirement, and elsewhere very often in Cyprian's Epistles: Where he also speaks of the Acolythus. What his proper Business was, is not so certain; by some his Office is said to have been this, to follow (as the Word implies) or to go along with the Bishop in the Quality of an *honourable* Attendant, to be ready at hand to minister to him, and to be a Companion and Witness of his honest and unblamable Conversation, in case any evil Fame should arise, that might endeavour to blast his Reputation. But by others he is said to have been a *Taper-bearer*, to carry the *Lights* which were set up at reading of the *Gospel*. And this seems to be clear from the fourth Council of *Carthage*, where, at his Ordination he is appointed to receive at the *Archdeacon's* Hand a *Candlestick* with a *Taper*, that he may know 'tis the Duty of his Place to light up the *Lights* in the *Church*. This might very well be in those Times, but 'tis certain the Office of *Acolythus* was in use long before that Custom of setting up *Lights* at the Reading of the *Gospel* was brought into the *Church*. By Cyprian also is mention'd the Office of the *EXORCIST*, whose Business was to attend the *Catechumens* and *Energumeni*, or such as were possess'd of the Devil. For after the miraculous Power of casting out Devils began to cease, or at least not to be so common as it was, these possess'd Persons used to come to the *Out-parts* of the *Church*, where a Person was appointed to *exorcise* them, *i. e.* to pray over them, with such Prayers as were peculiarly compos'd for those Occasions; and this he did in the publick Name of the whole *Church*, the People also at the same time praying within; by which Means the possess'd Person was deliver'd from the Tyranny of the evil Spirit; without any such *Charms* and *Conjurations*, and other *unchristian* Forms and Rites, which by Degrees crept into this Office, and are at this Day in use in the *Church*

Inter. Ep.  
Cypr. Epist.  
2. p. 8.  
Ep. 28.  
p. 41.

Can. 6.

Ep. 16. p.  
29. Ep. 146.

Church of *Rome*. Besides, to the *Exorcist's* Office it belong'd to instruct the *Catechumens*, and to train them up in the first Principles of the *Christian Faith*: In which Sense the *Exorcist* is by *Harmenius* plain'd by *Catechist*; and to *exorcise* (says *Balsamon*) is καλεχέν ἀπίστους, to instruct Unbelievers.

Chap. 8.

Ep. Can.

ff. 1. Tit. 9.

Fur. Grac.

Rom. p. 16.

In Can. 26.

Conc. Lao-

dic.

Socrat. H.

Eccl. lib. 3.

c. 1. p. 166.

Next to the *Exorcist* was the *Lector* or *Reader*, (mention'd frequently by *S. Cyprian*) whose Business was to stand near the *Ambo* or *Pulpit*, and to read those Portions of Holy Scripture which were appointed to be read as principal Parts of the Divine Service. Tis Office *Julian* (who was afterwards *Emperor*) when a young Student at *Nicomedia*, took upon him, and became a *Reader* in that Church; which he did only to blind his Cousin *Constantius*, who began to suspect him as inclining to *Paganism*, to which he openly revolted afterwards, and became a bitter and virulent Enemy to Christians; making an ill use of those Scriptures, which he had once privately study'd, and publicly read to the People. I know not whether it may be worth the while to take notice of the *Ostiarri*, or *Door-keeper*, answerable to the *Nethinims* in the *Jewish Church*; who were to attend the Church-doors at Times of Publick Meetings, to keep out notorious *Hereticks*, *Jews* and *Gentiles* from entering into the Christian Assemblies. It doubtless took its Rise in the times of Persecution, Christians then being forced to keep their Meetings as private and clancular as they could, and to guard their Assemblies with all possible Diligence; lest some *Jew* or *Infidel* stealing in, should have gone and accused them before the Magistrate. What other Officers there were (or whether any at all) in those times, in and about the Church, will not be worth our Labour to enquire.

To these Offices they were set apart by solemn Rites, of *Prayer* and *Imposition of Hands*; a Ceremony (so far as *χαισλορία* is strictly taken for *lifting up* the

Part I. the Hand in *Suffrage*) commonly used at *Athens*, and some of the *States of Greece*, in the designing and electing Persons to be Publick Magistrates. But more particularly in Use among the *Jews*, and from them doubtless (as many other of the *Synagogue-Rites*) transferr'd into the *Christian Church*, and there constantly used both as to the *lifting up* and *laying on* the Hands, as the Rite of conferring Ordination upon the Ministers of *Christ*. Only it is here to be remembred, that there was a *double Imposition* of Hands, in setting apart Ecclesiastical Officers: The one was *καθιέρωσις*, or by way of *Consecration*; and this was the proper way of ordaining the first Rank of Officers, *Bishops, Presbyters* and *Deacons*; the other *εὐλογία*, by way of *Blessing*; Hands being laid upon them only, as in the Absolution of Penitents, by way of solemn *Benediction*: And thus the inferior Officers, *Subdeacons, Readers, &c.* and *Deaconesses* were set apart. All Orders under Bishops were ordained by the Bishop, the Bishop himself by all the Bishops of that *Province*, who used to meet together for that purpose, if Nearness of Place and other Conveniences would allow; otherwise *three* (and in case of Necessity *two*) might do it, the rest testifying their Consent in Writing; and the Person thus ordain'd was to be confirm'd by the *Metropolitan* of that Province. And whereas the Council of *Antioch* provides, that no Bishop shall be ordain'd without the *Metropolitan* being present, it is to be understood (as *Balsamon* tells us) of his Leave and Permission, or his appointing it to be so. For the Ordination of the rest of the Clergy, *Priests, Deacons, &c.* the Act and Presence of one Bishop might suffice: And as no more than one was required, so one at least was necessary; the Power of conferring Orders, being even by those who otherwise have had no mighty Kindness for *Episcopacy*, acknowledg'd

Conc. Nicen. Can. 4.

Can. 19.

ledg'd an unquestionable *Right* of the Episcopal Chap. 8.  
 Office: Infomuch that in the Case of *Athanasius*,  
 it was a just Exception against *Ischyras*, that he had  
 been ordain'd by *Colythus*, who was no higher than  
 a Presbyter, and consequently his Ordination by  
 the Council was adjudged null and void.

*Athanas. Apol. 2. de fug. sua, p. 570. Tom. I.*

At all Ordinations, especially of superior Officers, the *People* of the Place were always present, and ratify'd the Action with their Approbation and Consent. And indeed it cannot be deny'd but that the People, in some Places especially, were very much consider'd in this Affair, it being seldom or never done without their *Presence and Suffrage*. To this end the Bishop was wont, before every Ordination, to *propound* and *publish* the Names of those who were to have holy Orders conferr'd upon them; that so the People, who best knew their Lives and Conversations, might interpose if they had any thing material to object against it. By which Means the *Unworthy* were discover'd and rejected, the *Deserving* honour'd and admitted; the Ordination became legitimate and satisfactory, having pass'd the common Vote and Suffrage without an Exception made against it, as *Cyprian* speaks. Hence the *Clergy*, of what Order soever, were said *prædicari*, to be *propounded* or published: And this Way seem'd so fit, and reasonable, that *Severus* the *Emperor*, (a wise and prudent Prince) in Imitation of the *Christians*, establish'd it in the Disposal of *Civil Offices*. For when he had a Mind to send out any *Governors* of *Provinces*, or to appoint *Receivers* of his *Revenues*, he propounded the Names of those he intended, desiring the People to except against the Persons, if they knew them guilty of any Crimes which they were able to make good against them: *Affirming it to be unfit* (says his own *Historian*) *that when the Christians and Jews did it in publishing those who were to be ordain'd their Priests*

*Vid. Cons. sit. Ap. lib. 8. c. 1004. Cyp. Epist. 68. p. 113, 114.*

*Lamprid. in vit. A. lex. Sev. c. 45. p. 570.*

M

and

Part I. *and Ministers, the same should not be observed in the Election of Governors of Provinces, who had the Lives and Fortunes of Men committed to them.* When the Case so happen'd, that the Ordination was more remote or private, they were then required to bring sufficient *Testimonials*. Thus *Cyprian*, when ordaining *Saturus* and *Optatus* to be *Readers*, we examin'd (says he) whether the *Testimonials* agreed to them, which they ought to have who are admitted into the Clergy.

Ep. 24. p. 35.

Basil. Ep. 181. p. 194. Tom. 3.

Can. 9.

And indeed they proceeded in this Affair with all imaginable Care and Prudence; they examin'd Mens Fitness for the Place to which they were set apart, enquired severely what had been the Course and Manner of their Life; how they had carry'd themselves in their Youth, and whether they had govern'd it by the strict Rules of Piety. This ancient Custom (as *S. Basil* calls it) was ratify'd by the *Nicene Council*, declaring, *That none should be ordain'd Presbyter without previous Examination, especially a strict Enquiry into his Life and Manners.* For the *Apostolick Church* (says *Joseph the Ægyptian*, in his *Arabick Paraphrase* of that *Canon*) admits none in this Case, but him that is of great Innocency and an unspotted Life; free from those Crimes and Enormities which he there particularly reckons up. They suffer'd not Men in those Days to leap into Ecclesiastical Orders, but by the usual Steps, and staying the appointed Times. *Cyprian* commends *Cornelius Bishop of Rome*, that he did not skip into the Chair, but pass'd thro' all the Ecclesiastical Offices, ascending thro' all the Degrees of Religion, till he came *ad sacerdotii sublime fastigium*, to the Top of the highest Order. A

Ad Antonian. Ep. 52. p. 67.

Can. 10.

Thing expressly provided for by the Synod of *Sardis*, That no Man, tho' never so rich, tho' furnish'd with never so good a knack of *Speech* and *Oratory*, should yet be made *Bishop* before he had pass'd thro' the

the preceding Orders of *Reader, Sub-deacon, Deacon,* and *Presbyter*; that having been found fit in each of these, he might, Step by Step, ascend up to the Episcopal Chair: And that he should spend some considerable Time in each of these Degrees; that so his Faith, and the Innocency and Excellency of his Life, his Constancy and Moderation might be made known to all; and his Fitness for that Sacred Function being made apparent, might procure him the greater Honour and Reverence from others. Men were then forced to stay their full Time before they could be promoted to any higher Order. They did not commence *Divines* and *Bishops* in a Day, (*ἀσθήμερον ἀγίοις καὶ θεολόγοις*, as *Nazianzen* elegantly calls them) like some he complains of in his Time, who were not polish'd by Time and Study, but fitted and made *Bishops all at once*; whom therefore he wittily compares to the *Dragon's Teeth*, which, the Fable tells us, *Cadmus* sowed at *Thebes*, which immediately sprung up *Giants* out of the Earth, arm'd *Cap-a-pee*, perfect *Men* and perfect *Warriors* in one Day: And just such (says he) were some Prelates, consecrated, made wise and learned in one Day, who yet understood nothing before, nor brought any thing to the *Order*, but only a *good Will* to be there. For the *Age* of the Persons that were to be ordain'd, they usually observed the *Apostolick Canon*, not to choose a *Novice*, but of an *Age* competent to that Office that he was chosen to; though it vary'd according to Times and Persons, and the Occasions of the Church. For that of *Bishops*, I find not any certain *Age* positively set down. *Photius*, in his *Nomocanon*, speaks of an *Imperial Constitution*, that requires a *Bishop* not to be under thirty five: But the *Apostolical Constitutions* allow not a *Man* to be made a *Bishop* under fifty Years of *Age*, as having then pass'd all *Juvenile Petulancies* and *Disorders*.

Orat. 1. de Theol. p. 535. & in laud. Bas. Or. 20. p. 335.

Τὸ λ. δ. κερ. κη. p. 20.

Lib. 2. c. 11. p. 824.



Part I. 'Tis certain, they were not generally (some extraordinary Instances alter not the Case) promoted to that Office, till they were of a considerable Age, and thence frequently styled *majores natu* in the Writings of the Church. *Presbyters* were commonly made at thirty; yea, the Council of *Neocaesarea* decreed, that no Man, tho' otherwise of never so unquestionable a Conversation, should be ordain'd *Presbyter* before that Age: The Reason whereof they give, because *Christ* himself was not *baptized*, nor began to preach till the thirtieth Year of his Age. The Council of *Agde* requires the same Age, but assigns another Reason; not before 30 Years of Age, because then (say they) he comes to the Age of a *perfect Man*. *Deacons* were made at *twenty five*, and the like Distance and Proportion observed for the inferior Officers under them. I take no Notice in this Place of *Monks*, *Hermits*, &c. partly because altho' they were under a kind of *Ecclesiastical* Relation, by reason of their more than ordinarily strict and severe Profession of Religion, yet were they not usually in *Holy Orders*; and partly because *Monachism* was of no very early Standing in the Church, beginning probably about the Times of the latter Persecutions; and even then too, *Monks* were quite another Thing, both in *Profession*, *Habit*, and *way of Life*, from what they are at this day; as will abundantly appear to him that will take the Pains to compare the Account which *Hierom*, *Augustin*, *Palladius*, *Cassian*, and others give of those *Primitive Monks*, with the several *Orders* in the Church of *Rome* at this day.

I shall only add, that out of the *Monks*, Persons were usually made choice of to be advanced into the *Clergy*, as is evident not only from Multitudes of Instances in the Writers of the fourth and following Centuries, but from an express Law of the

*Cod. Theod.*  
l. 16. tit. 2.  
*de Episc.*  
Ecc. l. 32.

Empe-

Emperor *Arcadius* to that purpose : The Strictness of their Lives, and the *Purity* of their Manners, more immediately qualifying them for those holy Offices ; infomuch that many times they were advanced into the Episcopal Chair, without going thro' the usual intermediate Orders of the Church. Several Instances whereof (*Serapion*, *Apollonius*, *Agatho*, *Aristo*, and some others) *Athanasius* reckons up in his Epistle to *Dracontius* ; who being a *Monk*, refused a *Bishoprick* to which he was chosen. But because we meet, in the ancient Writings of the Church, with very frequent mention of Persons of another Sex, *Deaconesses*, who were employ'd in many Offices of Religion ; it may not be amiss, in this Place, to give some short Account of them. Their Original was very early, and of equal standing with the Infancy of the Church ; such was *Phæbe* in the Church of *Cenchris*, mention'd by *S. Paul* ; such were those two *Servant-Maids* spoken of by *Pliny*, in his Letters to the Emperor, whom he examined upon the Rack : Such was the famous *Olympias* in the Church of *Constantinople* ; not to mention any more particular Instances. They were either *Widows*, and then not to be taken into the Service of the Church under *threescore* Years of Age, according to *S. Paul's* Direction ; or else *Virgins*, who having been educated in order to it, and given Testimony of a chaste and sober Conversation, were set apart at *forty*. What the proper Place and Ministry of these *Deaconesses* was in the ancient Church, tho' *Mat-Syntagm.* *thew Blastares* seems to render a little doubtful ; c. 11. lit. T. p. 71. Epiph. Ha- yet certainly it principally consisted in such Offices ref. 79. p. 447. as these, to attend upon the Women at times of Publick Worship, especially in the Administration of Baptism ; that when they were to be divested in order to their *Immersion*, they might overshadow them, so as nothing of Indecency and Un-

Part I.



comeliness might appear. Sometimes they were employ'd in *instructing* the more rude and ignorant sort of Women in the plain and easy Principles of *Christianity*, and in preparing them for *Baptism*; otherwhiles in visiting and attending upon Women that were sick; in conveying Messages, Counsels, Consolations, Relief, (especially in times of Persecution, when it was dangerous for the *Officers* of the Church) to the *Martyrs* and them that were in Prison; and these Women no doubt it was that *Libanius* speaks of amongst the Christians, who were so very ready to be employ'd in these Offices of Humanity. But to return.

*Orat. de  
vinctis.  
p. 56.*

Persons being thus set apart for Holy Offices, the Christians of those Days discover'd no less Piety in that mighty Respect and Reverence which they paid to them. That the Ministers of Religion should be peculiarly honour'd and regarded, seems to have been accounted a piece of natural *Justice* by the common Sentiments of Mankind: The most barbarous and unpolish'd Nations that ever had a Value for any thing of Religion, have always had a proportionable Regard to them, to whom the Care and Administration of it belong. *Julian* the Emperor expressly pleads for it as the most reasonable thing in the World, that *Priests* should be honour'd, yea, in some respects, above Civil Magistrates; as being the immediate Attendants and domestick Servants of *God*, our *Intercessors* with Heaven, and the Means of deriving down great Blessings from God upon us. But never was this clearer demonstrated than in the Practice of the Primitive Christians, who carry'd themselves towards their *Bishops* and *Ministers* with that Kindness and Veneration which they were capable to express towards them. *S. Paul* bears Record to the *Galatians*, that he was accounted so dear to them, that if the *plucking out their Eyes* would

*Julian.  
Fragm.  
Oper. c. 1.  
p. 542.*

*Gal. 4. 15.*

would have done him any good, they were ready to have done it for his sake. And S. Clemens testifies of the *Corinthians*, that they walked in the Laws of God, being subject to them that had the *Rule over them*; yielding also due Honour to the Seniors or Elder Persons that were amongst them. That by *ἡγεμόνας* in this Place he should mean *Civil Magistrates*, (as some have told us) I can hardly be persuaded, both because 'tis the *same Word* that is used by the Author to the *Hebrews*, *Obeys*, *Hob. 13. 17.* τοῖς ἡγεμόνοις ὑμῶν, *them that have the Rule over you*, *Hist. Eccl. and submit yourselves*; (and indeed both *Eusebius* *l. 3. c. 38.* and *S. Hierom* of old, observed such a mighty Affinity in the *Phrase* between this and the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, as certainly to conclude S. Clemens to have been; if not the *Author*, at least the *Translator* of that Epistle;) and also because the sole Occasion of S. Clemens's writing this Epistle, was a Mutiny which they had made against the *Spiritual Guides* and *Governors*; and therefore, according to the right Art of *Orators*, he first commends them for their eminent Subjection to them, that he might with the more Advantage reprove and censure them for their Schism afterwards; which he does severely in the latter Part of the Epistle; and towards the End of it, he exhorts those who had laid the Foundation of the Sedition, to become subject to their Presbyters; and being instructed to Repentance, to bow the Knees of their Hearts, to lay aside the arrogant and insolent Boldness of their Tongues, and to learn to subject and submit themselves. The Truth is, Bishops and Ministers were then looked upon as the common *Parents* of Christians; whom as such they honour'd and obey'd, and to whom they repair'd for Counsel and Direction in all important Cases. 'Tis plain from several Passages in *Tertullian*, That none could lawfully marry, till they had first advised

*Vid. Constit. Apost. l. 2. c. 33. De monogam. c. 11. p. 531. Ad Uxor. l. 2. c. 2. 9. Vid. de Coron. mil. c. 13. with p. 139.*

Part I. with the Bishop and Clergy of the Church, and had asked and obtained their Leave; which probably they did, to secure the Person from marrying with a *Gentile*, or any of them that were without, and from the Inconveniences that might ensue upon such a Match. No Respect, no Submission was thought great enough, whereby they might do Honour to them; they were wont to kiss their Hands, to embrace their Feet; and at their going from, or returning home, or indeed their coming unto any Place, to wait upon them, and either to receive or dismiss them with the universal Confluence of the People. Happy they thought themselves, if they could but entertain them in their Houses, and bless their Roofs with such welcome Guests. Amongst the various ways of Kindness which *Constantine* the Great shewed to the Clergy, the *Writer* of his Life tells us, That he used to treat them at his own *Table*, tho' in the meanest and most despicable Habit: He never went a Journey, but he took some of them along with him; reckoning that thereby he made himself surer of the propitious and favourable Influence of the Divine Presence. What Honours he did them at the Council of *Nice*, where he refused to sit down, till they had given him Intimation; with what magnificent Gifts and Entertainments he treated them afterwards, the same Author relates at large. The truth is, the Piety of that devout and excellent Prince, thought nothing too good for those who were the Messengers of God, and Ministers of holy Things: And so infinitely tender was he of their Honour, as to profess, that if at any time he should spy a *Bishop* overtaken in any immodest and uncomely Action, he would cover him with his own *Imperial Robe*, rather than others should take Notice of it, to the Scandal of his Place and Person. And because their

*Spiritual*

*Vid. Cbryst. de S. Melet. Antioch. Hom. 45. To. 1. p. 526. & Annot. p. 91.*

*De vit. Const. l. 1. c. 42. p. 429.*

*Lib. 3.*

*Theod. Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 11.*

*Spiritual* Authority and Relation might not be sufficient to secure them from the Contempt of rude and prophane Persons; therefore the first Christian Emperors invested them with Power even in *Civil* Causes, as the way to beget them Respect and Authority amongst the People. Thus *Constantine* (as *Sozomen* tells us, and he sets it down as a great Argument of that Prince's Reverence for Religion) ordained, that Persons contending in Law might, if they pleased, remove their Cause out of the *Civil* Courts, and appeal to the *Judgment* of the Bishops; whose Sentence should be *firm*, and take place before that of any other Judges, as if it had been immediately passed by the Emperor himself. And Causes thus judged by *Bishops*, all Governors of Provinces and their Officers were presently to put into Execution; which was afterwards ratified by two Laws, one of *Arcadius*, another of *Honorius*, to that purpose. This Power the Bishops sometimes *delegated* to their inferior Clergy, making them Judges in these Causes, as appears from what *Socrates* reports of *Sylvanus*, Bishop of *Troas*, That finding a *Mal-Administration* of this Power, he took it out of the Hands of his *Clergy*, and devolved the hearing and determining Causes over to the *Laiety*. And to name no more, *S. Augustine* more than once and again tells us, how much he was crouded, and even oppressed in deciding the Contests and Causes of *Secular* Persons. It seems they thought themselves happy in those days, if they could have their Causes heard and determined by *Bishops*.

A Pious Bishop, and a Faithful Minister was in those Days dearer to them than the most valuable Blessings upon Earth, and they could want any thing rather than be without them. When *Chrysofom* was driven by the *Empress* into Banishment, the People as he went along burst into Tears, and cried out, 'Twas better the Sun should not shine, than that John Chry-

Chap. 8.

Hist. Ecc.  
l. 1. c. 9.  
p. 413.C. Tit. 4.  
de Episc.  
Audient.  
ll. 7, 8.  
Hist. Ecc.  
l. 7. c. 37.  
p. 383.Ep. 147.  
col. 68. 5.  
vid. ep. Ne-  
brid. ad  
Aug. ep.  
114. & a-  
libi passim.Chrysf. Ep.  
125. tom.  
4. p. 763.

**Part I.** Chryfoftom *ſhould not preach.* And when, through the Importunity of the People, he was recalled from his former Banifhment, and diverted into the Suburbs till he might have an Opportunity to make a publick Vindication of his Innocency, the People not enduring ſuch Delays, the Emperor was forced to ſend for him into the City, the People univerſally meeting him, and conducting him to his Church, with all Expreſſions of Reverence and Veneration. Nay, while he was yet *Preſbyter* of the Church of *Antioch*, ſo highly was he loved and honoured by the People of that Place, that though he was choſen to the *See of Conſtantinople*, and ſent for by the Emperor's Letters, though their Biſhop made an Oration on purpoſe to perſuade them to it, yet would they by no means be brought to part with him : And when the Meſſengers by Force attempted to bring him away, he was forced, to prevent a Tumult, to withdraw and hide himſelf, the People keeping a Guard about him, left he ſhould be taken from them. Nor could the Emperor or his Agents with all their Arts effect it, till he uſed this Wile : He ſecretly wrote to the Governor of *Antioch*, who pretended to *Chryfoſtom*, that he had Concerns of moment to impart to him, invited him to a private Place without the City, where ſeizing upon him, by Mules which he had in readineſs he conveyed him to *Conſtantinople* : Where that his Welcome might be more magnificent, the Emperor commanded, That all Perſons of Eminency, both *Eccleſiaſtical* and *Civil*, ſhould with all poſſible Pomp and State go *ſix Miles* to meet him. Of *Nazianzen* (who ſate in the ſame Chair of *Conſtantinople* before him) I find, that when he would have left that Biſhoprick by reaſon of the Stirrs that were about it, and delivered himſelf up to Solitude and a private Life, as a thing much more ſuitable to his Humour and *Genius* ; many

*Socr. Hiſt.  
Ecc. l. 6.  
c. 16.  
p. 324.*

*Metaphr.  
in vit.  
Chryſ.  
apud Su-  
rium ad  
diem 27.*

*Greg. Pref-  
byt. de vit.  
Greg. Naz.  
prefix.  
oper. Naz.*

of

of the People came about him, with Tears beseeching him not to forsake his Flock, which he had hitherto fed with so much Sweat and Labour. They could not then lose their spiritual Guides, but they looked upon themselves as *Widows* and *Orphans*, resenting their Death with a general Sorrow and Lamentation, as if they had lost a *common Father*.

*Nazianzen* reports, that when his Father ( who was Bishop of but a little *Diocess* ) lay very sick, and all other Remedies proved unsuccessful, the People generally flocked to Church, and (though it was then the *joyful Time of Easter* ) broke out into mournful and passionate Complaints, and with the most earnest Prayers and Tears besought God for his Life. And of *Basil*, Bishop of *Cæsarea*, he tells us, that when he lay a dying, the whole City came about him, not able to bear his Departure from them, praying as if they would have *laid Hands* upon his Soul, and by Force detained it in his Body : They were (says he) even distracted with the Thoughts of so great a Loss, nor was there any who would not have been willing to have been deprived of *Part* of his own Life, might it have added unto his. His Funeral was solemnized with all possible Testimonies of Love and honourable Attendance, and with the abundant Tears not only of *Christians*, but of *Jews* and *Heathens* ; the Confluence so vast, that many were pressed to Death in the Croud, and sent to bear him Company to his *long home*. And that we may see that their Respect did not lie merely in a few kind Words or external Protestations, they made it good in more real and evident Demonstrations, by providing *liberal Maintenance* for them, parting at first with their own Estates to supply the Uses of the Church, and after that, making no less large than frequent Contributions, which could not but amount to very considerable Sums, the Piety of *Christians*

*In laud. patr. Or. 19. p. 304.*

*In laud. Basil. Or. 20. p. 371.*



**Part I.** *stians* daily adding to their Liberality; of which we may make some Estimate, by what the **Heathen Historian**, with a little kind of Envy, relates only of the Church of *Rome*, (and doubtless it was so in some Proportion in other Places) that the Profits of the *Clergy*, arising from *Oblations* chiefly, was so great, as to enable them to live in a *Prince-like State* and Plenty. And not long after, it became the Object not only of Admiration, but Envy; insomuch that *Chrysofom* was forced to make one whole Sermon against those that envied the *Wealth of the Clergy*. It was also the great Care of those Times, to free them from what might be either scandalous or burdensome to their Calling. *Constantine* decreed, That the *Orthodox Clergy* should be exempt from all *Civil Offices*, or whatever might hinder their Attendance upon the Services of the Church; his Son *Constantius*, That *Bishops* in many Cases should not be chargeable in the *Secular Courts*, but be tryed in an Assembly of *Bishops*: Which Privilege was extended by *Honorius* to all the *Clergy*, that they should be tryed before their *Bishops*; before whom he also ordained, that all Causes properly belonging to Religion should be brought, and be determined by them: And by another *Constitution*, That for the Veneration that is due to the Church, all *Ecclesiastical Causes* should be decided with all possible Speed. And to name no more, that the Persons of *Ministers* might be secured from foreign Attempts, he, and his Colleague *Arcadius*, made a Law, That whosoever did offer any Violence to them, should upon Conviction, or confessing of the Fact, be punished with *Death*; and that the *Ministers of Civil Justice*, should not stay till the *Bishop* complained of the Injury that was done (it being probable that he would rather incline to *Mercy and Forgiveness*.) but that every one in this Case should be admitted and encouraged to prefer

Ambr.  
Marcellin.  
lib. 27.  
p. 1739.

Πατριάρχης  
Ἰεροσολύμων  
Ἰωάννης  
τῆς ἐπιστολῆς  
ἐναντίον τῶν  
ἐπιτιμῶν, &c.  
Tom. 6. p.  
896. edit.  
Savil.  
Eus. Hist.  
Ecc. lib. 10.  
c. 7. p. 394.  
Cod.  
Theod. lib.  
16. Tit. 2.  
leg. 1, 2.  
Ib. l. 12.  
Ib. l. 21.  
Ib. Tit. 11.  
l. 1.

Ib. lib. 2.  
Tit. 4. l. 7.

Lib. 16.  
Tit. 2.  
l. 31.

fer and prosecute the Charge : And in case the rude Multitude should by Arms, or otherwise, obstruct the Execution, and that the Powers of that Place could not see it done, that then they should call in the Assistance of the Governor of the Province, to see Justice put into Execution. And because, next to his *Person*, nothing is so dear to a *Clergyman* as his *Credit* and *Reputation*, therefore the Emperor *Honorius* took care by a Law, *lb. l. 41.* that whosoever (be he a Person of the highest Rank) should charge any *Clergy-man* with Crimes which he was not able to make good, he himself should be publickly accounted vile and infamous, it being but just and equal (*says the Law*) that as Guilt should be punished, and Offenders reckoned as Spots and Blemishes to the Church ; so that injured Innocency should be righted and maintained. How infinitely tender the first general Council of *Constantinople* was in this Case, to secure the Honour and good Name of *Bishops* and *Clergy-men*, against the malicious Insinuations and Charges of false Accusers, may appear by the large Provision which they make about it in the *sixth Canon* of that Council. And because it sometimes so happens, that a Man's Enemies are those of his own House, therefore the *Apostolical Canons* ordain, That if any *Clergy-man* reproach and defame a Bishop, he shall be deposed from his Ministry ; for thou mayest not (*says the Canon*) *speak evil of the Ruler of thy People* : But if it be a *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, whom he thus reproaches, he shall be suspended from the Execution of his Office. So sacred and venerable did they then account the Persons and Concernments of those who ministered in the Affairs of Divine Worship.

Can. 55,  
56.

## C H A P. IX.

Of their usual Worship, both Private  
and Publick

*The Christians Worship of God in their Families discovered. Their usual Times of Prayer. Prayers before and after Meals. Singing of Psalms, and reading the Scriptures, at the same time. Frequency in Prayer noted in divers Instances. Their great Reverence for the Holy Scriptures, in reading, expounding, and committing them to Memory. Several Instances of it. Their Care in instructing their Families in Divine Things. Singing of Psalms mixed with their usual Labours. An Account of their Publick Worship. The Order of the Service in their Assemblies. Prayer: Reading the Scriptures: Two Lessons out of each Testament. Clemens's Epistle, and the Writings of other Pious Men read in the Church. Singing a Part of the Publick Service. How ancient: What those Hymns were. The Sermon or Discourse, upon what Subject usually. Such Discourses called Tractatus, and why. More Sermons than one at the same Time. Sermons preached in the Afternoon as well as in the Morning. The mighty Concourse and Confluence of People to these Publick Solemnities. The Departure of the Catechumens, Penitents, &c. The Missa Catechumenorum, what. The Missa Fidelium. The Word Missa or Mass, whence and how used*  
in

in the Writers of those Times. The singular Reverence they shewed in these Duties. Great Modesty and Humility. Praying with Hands lift up in the Form of a Cross, & why. They prayed either kneeling or standing. Sitting in Prayer noted as a Posture of great Irreverence. Praying towards the East. The Universality of this Custom. The Reasons of it enquired into. Their Reverence in hearing God's Word. The People generally stood. Standing up at the Gospels. The remarkable Piety and Devotion of Constantine the Great. No departing the Congregation till the Blessing was given.

Chap. 9.  
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**T**HUS far we have discovered the Piety of those ancient Times, as to those necessary *Circumstances* that relate to the Worship of God, we are next to see wherein their **WORSHIP** itself did consist; which we shall consider both as *Private* and *Publick*, that which they performed at Home, and that which was done in their Solemn and *Church-Assemblies*: Only let it be remembered, that under the Notion of Worship I here comprehend all those Duties of *Piety* that refer to God. The Duties of their *Private* Worship, were of two Sorts, either such as were more *solemn* and stated, and concerned the whole Family, or such as Persons discharged *alone*, or at least did not tie up themselves to usual Times. For the first, which are properly *Family-Duties*, they were usually performed in this Order: At their first rising in the Morning, they were wont to meet together, and to betake themselves to Prayer (as is plainly implied in *Chrysofom's* Exhortation) to praise God for the Protection and Refreshment of the

*Hom. 1. de precat. tom. 1. p. 7, 50. vid. Basil. Ep. ad Greg. de vit. solit. tom. 3. p. 43. A.*

Night,

## Part I.

Night, and to beg his Grace and Blessing for the following day: This was done by the *Master* of the House, unless some *Minister* of Religion were present. 'Tis probable that at this Time they recited the *Creed*, or some Confession of their Faith, by which they professed themselves *Christians*, and, as 'twere, armed themselves against the Assaults of Dangers and Temptations; however, I question not, but that now they read some Parts of *Scripture*, which they were most ready to do at all Times, and therefore certainly would not omit it now. That they had their set *Hours* for Prayer, the *third*, *sixth*, and *ninth* Hour, is plain, both from *Cyprian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, and others. This they borrowed from the *Jews*, who divided the Day into four greater Hours, the *first*, *third*, *sixth*, and *ninth* Hour, the three last whereof were stated Hours of Prayer; the first Hour began at six in the Morning, and held till Nine; the Third from Nine till Twelve; and at this Hour 'twas that the *Apostles* and *Christians* were met together, when the *Holy Ghost* descended upon them; the sixth Hour was from twelve to three in the *Afternoon*, and at this Time *Peter* went up to the *House-top* to pray; the ninth was from three till six at Night, and now it was that *Peter* and *John* went up to the Temple, it being the *ninth* Hour of Prayer. This Division was observed by the *Christians* of succeeding Times, though whether punctually kept to in their *Family-Devotions*, I am not able to affirm. About *Noon*, before their going to Dinner, some Portions of *Scripture* were read; and the Meat being set upon the *Table*, a *Blessing* was solemnly begged of God, as the Fountain of all Blessings (and so religious herein was the good Emperor *Theodosius jun.* that he would never eat any Meat, no not so much as a Fig, or any other Fruit, before he had first given Thanks to the great *Sovereign Creator*) and both Meat and Drink set

*De Orat.*  
*Dom. p.*  
196.  
*Strom. lib.*  
7. p. 722.

*Clem.*  
*Alex.*  
*strom. lib.*  
7. p. 728.  
*Tert. Apol.*  
e. 39.  
p. 32.  
*Sozom.*  
*præfat. ad*  
*Hist. Eccl.*  
p. 385.  
*De Cor.*  
*mil. c. 3.*  
p. 102. lib.  
2. in *Job.*  
*fol. 39. col.*  
2. tom. 2.

set apart with the *Sign of the Cross*, (a Custom they Chap. 9. used in the most common Actions of Life) as is expressly affirmed both by *Tertullian* and *Origen*; where he also gives a Form of such Prayers as they were wont to use before Meals, viz. that lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, they prayed thus: *Thou that givest Food to all Flesh, grant that we may receive this Food with thy Blessing: Thou Lord hast said, that if we drink any thing that is deadly, if we call upon thy Name, it shall not hurt us; thou therefore who art Lord of all Power and Glory, turn away all evil and malignant Quality from our Food, and whatever pernicious Influence it may have upon us.* \* When they were at Dinner, they sung *Hymns* and *Psalms*; a Practice which † *Clem. Alexandrinus* commends, as very suitable to *Christians*, as a modest and decent Way of praising God, while we are partaking of his Creatures. § *Chrysostom* greatly pleads for it, that Men should be careful to teach them their Wives and Children, and which they shall use even at their ordinary Works, but especially at *Meals*, such divine Songs being an excellent *Antidote* against Temptations: For (*says he*) as the Devil is never more ready to ensnare us than at *Meals*, either by *Intemperance*, *Ease*, or immoderate *Mirth*, therefore both before and at *Meals* we should fortify ourselves with *Psalms*; nay, and when we rise from the *Table*, with our Wives and Children, we should again sing *Hymns* to God. They used also to have the *Scriptures* read; and, as I have elsewhere noted out of *Nazianzen*, every time they took the *Cup* to drink, made the *Sign of the Cross*, and called upon *Christ*. Dinner being ended, they concluded with *Prayer*, giving Thanks to God for their present Refreshment, and begging his continued Provision of those good Things which he had promised to them. So great a Place had *Religion* in those Days even in *Mens* common and natural Actions, and so careful

N

were

\* *Nest vel hora convivii gratia celestis immunis, sonet Psalmos convivium sobrium magis carissimos pasces, sicut nobis spiritualis auditio proleget aures religiosam mulcedo.*  
 † *Cyprian. Epist. ad Donat. in fine.*  
 † *Padag. lib. 2. c. 4. p. 165.*  
 § *In Psalm. 41. tom. 3. p. 147. Cypr. Ep. 1. p. 7. Cl. Alex. ut supra.*  
*Basil. Ep. ad Greg. tom. 3. p. 46.*

## Part I.

were they, not to *starve* the Soul, while they were *feeding* of the Body. Much after the same Rate they spent the rest of the Day, till the Night approached; when, before their going to rest, the Family was again called to *Prayer*, after which they went to Bed: About *Midnight* they were generally wont to rise, to *pray* and to sing *Hymns* to God. This Custom was very ancient, and doubtless took its Original from the first times of Persecution, when not daring to meet together in the *Day*, they were forced to keep their Religious Assemblies in the *Night*; and tho' this was afterwards antiquated, as being found inconvenient for the Generality of *Christians*, yet did it still continue in the *nocturnal* Hours of *Monasteries* and Religious *Orders*.

Cl. Alex.  
Padag.  
lib. 2. c. 9.  
p. 185.

But besides these stated and ordinary Devotions, performed by a joint Concurrence of the Family, the *Christians* of those Days were careful to spend all the time they could, even when alone, in Actions of Piety and Religion. They were most frequent in *Prayer*: *Eusebius* reports of *S. James the just*, that he was wont every Day to go alone into the Church, and there *kneeling* upon the Pavement so long to pour out his Prayers to God, till his Knees became as hard and brawny as a *Camel's*; the same which *Nazianzen* also tells us of his good Sister *Gorgonia*, that by often praying, her Knees were become hard, and did as 'twere stick to the Ground. *Constantine* the Great, tho' burden'd with the Cares of so vast an Empire, did yet every day at his wonted Hours withdraw from all the Company of the *Court*, retire into his *Closet*, and upon his Knees offer up his Prayers to God: And to let the World know how much he was devoted to this Duty, he caused his *Image* in all his *Gold-Coins*, in his *Pictures* and *Statues*, to be represented in the Posture of a *Person* praying, with his *Hands spread abroad*, and his *Eyes lift up to Heaven*. Their next Care was, diligently  
and

Hist Eccl.  
lib. 2. c. 23.  
p. 63. ex  
Hegesippo.

In laud.  
Gorgon.  
or. 10.  
p. 183.  
De vit.  
Const. lib.  
4. c. 22.

and seriously to read the *Scripture*, to be mighty in the *Divine Oracles*, as indeed they had an invaluable Esteem of, and Reverence for the Word of God, as the Book which they infinitely prized beyond all others; upon which Account *Nazianzen* very severely chides his dear Friend *Gregory Nyssen*, that having laid aside the Holy Scriptures (the most excellent Writings in the World) which he was wont to read both *privately* to himself, and *publickly* to the People, he had given up himself to the Study of *foreign* and prophane Authors, desirous rather to be accounted an *Orator* than a *Christian*. *S. Augustin* tells us, that after his Conversion (how meanly soever he had before thought of them) the *Scriptures* were become the Matter of his most *pure* and *chaste* Delight, in respect whereof all other Books (even those of *Cicero* himself, which once he so much doted on) became dry and unfavory to him. In the Study of this Book it was, that *Christians* then mainly exercised themselves, as thinking they could never fully enough *understand* it, or deeply enough *imprint* it upon their Hearts and Memories. Of the younger *Theodosius*, they tell us, that rising early every Morning, he, together with his Sisters, interchangeably sung *Psalms* of Praise to God: The Holy Scriptures he could exactly *repeat* in any part of them, and was wont to discourse out of them with the Bishops that were at *Court*, as readily as if he had been an old Bishop *himself*. We read of *Origen*, though then but a Child, that when his Father commanded him to commit some Places of Scripture to *Memory*, he most willingly set himself to it; and not content with the bare reading, he began to enquire into the more profound and recondite Meaning of it, often asking his Father (to his no less Joy than *Admiration*) what the Sense of this or that Place of Scripture was: And this Thirst after Divine Knowledge still continued and increased

Chap. 9.

Epist. 43.  
p. 804.

Vid. Confess. l. 3. c. 5. &amp; l. 7. c. 20, 21.

Socrat. H. Ecc. l. 7. c. 22. p. 361.

Eus. Hist. Ecc. l. 6. c. 2. p. 202.



Part I. in him all his Life; *S. Hierom* reporting it out of a Letter of one who was his great *Companion* and Benefactor, that he never went to *Meals* without some part of Scripture read, never to *Sleep*, till some about him had read them to him; and that both by *Night* and *Day*, no sooner had he done praying, but he betook himself to reading; and after reading, returned again to Prayer. *Valens*, Deacon of the Church of *Jerusalem*, a venerable old Man, had so entirely given up himself to the Study of the Scriptures, that it was all one to him to *read* or to *repeat* whole *Pages* together. The like we find of *John* an *Egyptian* Confessor (whom *Eusebius* saw and heard) that tho' both his *Eyes* were put out, and his *Body* mangled with unheard of Cruelty, yet he was able at any time to repeat any *Places* or *Passages* either out of the *Old* or *New* Testament; which when I first heard him do in the publick Congregation, I supposed him (*says he*) to have been reading in a *Book*, till coming near and finding how it was, I was struck with great Admiration at it. Certainly *Christians* then had no mean Esteem of, and took no small Delight in these Sacred Volumes. For the Sake of this *Book* (which he had chosen to be the *Companion* and *Counsellor* of his Life) *Nazianzen* professes he had willingly undervalued and relinquished all other Things. This was the *Mine* where they enriched themselves with Divine Treasures, a *Book* where they furnished themselves with a true Stock of Knowledge; as *S. Hierom* speaks of *Nepotian*, that by daily Reading and Meditation he had made his Soul a *Library* of Christ: And he tells us of *Blessilla* a devout Widow, that though she was so far over-run with Weakness and Sicknes, that her *Foot* would scarce bear her *Body*, or her *Neck* sustain the Burden of her *Head*, yet she was never found without a *Bible* in her *Hand*.


Ep. ad  
Marcell.  
tom. 1.  
p. 129.

Euseb. de  
Martyr.  
Palest. c.  
11. p. 336.  
Ib. c. ult.  
p. 334.

De pace,  
Or. 12.  
p. 193.

Epitaph.  
Nep. nom.  
1. p. 25. Ep.  
ad Paul.  
p. 157.

Nor

Nor did they covetously hoard up, and reserve Chap. 9.  
 this excellent Knowledge to *themselves*, but freely   
*communicated* it to others, especially were careful to  
*catechize* and instruct their Children and Servants  
 in the Principles of Religion. S. Clemens praises Pag. 3.  
 the *Corinthians*, that they took Care to admonish  
 their young Men to follow those Things that were  
 modest and comely, and accordingly exhorts them lb. p. 31.  
 to instruct the *younger* in the Knowledge of the Fear  
 of God, to make their Children Partakers of the  
 Discipline of Christ, to teach them how much Hu-  
 mility and a Chaste Love do prevail with God, that  
 the Fear of him is good and useful, and preserves  
 all those who with pure Thoughts lead a holy Life  
 according to his Will. The *Historian* observes of De vit.  
*Constantine*, that his first and greatest Care towards Const. lib.  
 his *Sons* was, to secure the Happiness of their *Souls*, 4. c. 51.  
 by sowing the Seeds of Piety in their Minds, which  
 he did partly himself, instructing them in the  
 Knowledge of Divine Things, and partly by ap- lb. c. 52.  
 pointing such *Tutors* as were most approved for Re- p. 552.  
 ligious; and when he had taken them into a Part-  
 nership of the Government, and either by private  
 Admonitions, or by Letters gave them Counsels to  
 the Steering themselves; this was always the first  
 and chief, that they should prefer the Knowledge  
 and Worship of *God*, the great *King* of the World,  
 before all other Advantages, yea, before the *Em-*  
*pire* itself. For this *Nazianzen* peculiarly com- In laud.  
 mends his *Mother*, that not only she herself was Casaris,  
*consecrated* to God, and brought up under a pious Or. 10.  
 Education, but that she conveyed it down as a ne- p. 161.  
 cessary Inheritance to her *Children*; and it seems  
 her *Daughter Gorgonia* was so well seasoned with  
 these holy Principles, that she religiously walked in  
 the Steps of so good a Pattern, and did not only re-  
 claim her *Husband*, but educated her *Children* and  
*Nephews* in the Ways of Religion, giving them an

Part I. excellent Example while she *lived*, and leaving this as her last Charge and Request when she *died*. This was the *Discipline* under which *Christians* were brought up in those times; Religion was infilled into them betimes, which grew up and mixed itself with their ordinary Labours and Recreations; in-somuch that the most rude and illiterate Persons, instead of prophane wanton *Songs*, which *vitiare* and corrupt the Minds of Men, τὰς σατανικὰς ψῆδὰς, as *Chrystom* calls them (*Songs of the Devil's Composure*) used nothing but *spiritual* and divine *Hymns*: So that (as *S. Hierom* relates of the Place where he lived) you could not go into the Field, but you might hear the *Plowman* at his *Hallelujahs*, the *Mower* at his *Hymns*, and the *Vine-dresser* singing *David's Psalms*.

In *Psalms*.  
117. tom.  
3. p. 358.  
*Epist. ad*  
*Marc. tom.*  
1. p. 127.

Thus they carried themselves at Home; what they did in Publick, in their *Church-Assemblies*, on the Lord's-day especially, is next to be considered: The Manner whereof, I shall briefly represent, as it generally, and for the most part, obtained in those Ages; for it could not but vary something according to *Time* and *Place*. And here I should save myself the Trouble of any farther Search, by setting down the Account which *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* give of their *publick* Worship, in their *Apologies* for the *Christians*; but that I am satisfied they did not design to give a perfect and punctual Account of what was done at their Religious Assemblies; as might sufficiently appear from this one thing, That the first of them, in those Places, speaks not any thing of their *Hymns* and *Psalms*, which yet, that they were (even in the times wherein they lived) a constant Part of the *Divine Service*, no Man that is not wholly a Stranger in Church-Antiquity can be ignorant of. I shall therefore out of them and others, pick up, and put together, what seems to have constituted the main Body of their Publick Duties, and represent them in that Order

Order wherein they were performed, which usually was in this Manner: At their first coming together into the *Congregation*, they began with Prayer, as *Tertullian* at least probably intimates (for I do not find it in any besides him: ) We come together (says he) unto God, that being banded as 'twere into an *Army*, we may besiege him with our Prayers and Petitions; a *Violence* which is very pleasing and grateful to him. I do not from hence positively conclude, that Prayer was the first Duty they began with, though it seems fairly to look that way; especially if *Tertullian* meant to represent the Order as well as the Substance of their Devotions. After this followed the Reading of the *Scriptures*, both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, both the *Commentaries* of the *Apostles*, and the *Writings* of the *Prophets*, as *Justin Martyr* informs us. How much of each was read at one Meeting in the first times, is not known, it being then unfixed and arbitrary; because their Meetings by the sudden Interruption of the Heathens, were oft disturbed and broken up; and therefore both *Justin* and *Tertullian* confess, that they only read as much as *Occasion* served, and the *Condition* of the present times did require: But afterwards there were *set Portions* assigned, both out of the *Old* and *New Testament*, two *Lessons* out of each, as we find it in the Author of the *Apostolical Constitutions*. Nay, not only the *Canonical Scriptures*, but many of the *Writings of Apostolical Men* (such as were eminent for *Place* and *Piety*) were in those Days publicly read in the Church; such was the famous Epistle of *S. Clemens* to the *Corinthians*; of which, and of the Custom in like Cases, *Diomysius*, Bishop of *Corinth*, who lived about the Year 172, gives *Soter*, Bishop of *Rome*, this Account: *To Day* (says he) *we kept Holy the Lord's-day, wherein we read your Epistle, which we shall constantly read*

**Part I.** for our Instruction, as we also do the first Epistle which *Clemens* wrote to us. The like *Eusebius* reports of *Hermas's Pastor* (a Book so called) and *S. Hierom* of the Writings of *S. Ephrem*, the famous Deacon of *Edessa*, that in some Churches they were publickly read after the reading of the Holy Scriptures. About this Part of the Service it was that they sung *Hymns* and *Psalms*, a considerable Part of the Divine Worship, (as it had ever been accounted both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*) and more immediately serviceable for celebrating the Honour of God, and lifting up the Minds of Men to Divine and Heavenly Raptures. 'Twas in use in the very Infancy of the Christian Church, spoken of largely by *S. Paul*, and continued in all Ages after: Inso-much that *Pliny* reports it as the main Part of the Christians Worship, that they met together before Day, to join in singing Hymns to Christ, as God. These Hymns were either *extemporary* Raptures, so long as immediate *Inspiration* lasted; or set Compositions, either taken out of the Holy Scriptures, or of their own composing, as *Tertullian* tells us. For it was usual then for any Persons to compose Divine Songs, to the Honour of Christ, and to sing them in the Publick Assemblies; till the Council of *Laodicea* ordered, that no *Psalms* composed by *private* Persons should be recited in the Church; where tho' by the *ιδιωτικοὶ ψαλμοὶ*, the two *Greek Scholiasts* will have certain *Psalms* ascribed to *Solomon*, and others to be understood, yet 'tis much more reasonable to understand it of *private Compositions*, usual a long time in the Church, and here for good Reason prohibited. By this Council it was likewise appointed, That the *Psalms* should not be one entire continued Service, but that a *Lesson* should be interposed in the midst, after every Psalm; which was done (as *Balsamon* and *Alexius Aristenus* tell us) to take off the Weariness

Lib. 10.  
ep. 97.

Ap. c. 39.  
p. 32.  
Eus. l. 5. c.  
28. p. 196.

Can. 17.

riness of the People, whose Minds might be apt to tire in passing thro' those prolix Offices all together, especially the Lessons being so large and many. In this Duty the whole Congregation bore a Part, joining all together in a common Celebration of the Praises of God; afterwards the Custom was to sing *alternatim*, Course by Course, answering one another; first brought in (as we are told) by *Flavianus* and *Diodorus* in the Church of *Antioch*, in the Reign of *Constantine*: But if we may believe *Socrates*, some hundred of Years before that, by *Ignatius*, who was Bishop of that Church; who having in a Vision heard the *Angels* praising the *Holy Trinity* with *alternate* Hymns, thereupon introduced the Use of it in that Church, which from thence spread itself into all other Churches; and whether *Pliny* (who lived about that time) might not mean some such thing by his *Setum invicem canere*, that the *Christians* sung Hymns *one with another*, or *in their Courses*, may be consider'd by those who think it worth their Labour to enquire. In the mean time we proceed: *The Reader having done*, (they are the Words of *Ju-* Loc. supra  
*stin the Martyr*) *the President of the Assembly makes a* cit.  
*Sermon by way of Instruction and Exhortation, to the Imitation and Practice of those excellent Things that they had heard.* And indeed *Sermons*, in those times, were nothing else but the *Expositions* of some Part of the Scriptures which had been read before, and *Exhortations* to the People to obey the Doctrines contain'd in them; and commonly were upon the *Lesson* which was *last* read, because that being fresh- est in the People's Memory, was most proper to be treated of, as *S. Augustin* both avers the *Custom*, Serm. 237. de Temp. tom. 10. col. 1116. and gives the *Reason*. Hence, in the Writers of the Church, Preachers came to be called *Tractatores*, and their Sermons *Tractatus*, because they handled or treated of such places of Scripture as had been a little before read unto the People. According as

Occasion

**PART. I.** Occasion was, these Sermons were more or fewer, sometimes two or three at the same Assembly, made by the Presbyters first, and then the Bishop; as is expressly affirm'd in the *Apostolical Constitutions*:

*Ut supra*, Then (i. e. after the Reading of the Gospel) let the Presbyters exhort the People one by one, not all at once; and after all, the Bishop, as it is fitting for the Master

to do. And thus *Gregory Nyssen* excuses himself for not introducing his Sermons with a tedious Preface, because he would not be burdensome to the People who had already taken Pains to hear those admirable Discourses that had been made before him.

This Course they held not in the Morning only, but likewise in the Afternoon (at some times at least) when they had their publick Prayers and Sermons to the People. This *Chrysostom* assures us of, in an

Homily upon this very Subject, in Commendation of those who came to Church after Dinner, and that, as he tells them, in greater Numbers than before; who instead of sleeping after Dinner, came to hear the Divine Laws expounded unto them; instead of walking upon the Exchange, and entertaining themselves with idle and unprofitable Chat, came and stood amongst their Brethren, to converse with the Discourses of the Prophets. And this, he tells them, he puts them in Mind of; not that it was a Reproach to eat and drink, but that having done so, it was a Shame to stay at home, and deprive themselves of those Religious Solemnities. The same 'twere easy to make good from several Passages in *S. Basil*, *S. Augustin*, and others, who frequently refer to those Sermons which they had preached in the Morning.


But how many soever the Discourses were, the People were ready enough to entertain them, flocking to them as to their Spiritual Meals and Banquets. *We meet together* (says *Tertullian*) *to hear the Holy Scriptures rehearsed to us, that so* (according

to

*Ut supra*,  
p. 876.

Ἐἰς τῆς  
ἑαυτῶ  
χρηστονί-  
ας. Tom. 1.  
p. 872.

Ἐπειδὴ  
πάντες  
τὴν ἑσπέρα  
σιν ἀπὸ  
την ὀψων  
εἰς τὴν  
ἀκρόασιν.  
Hom. 10.  
ad pop. An-  
ticoch. p.  
116. tom.  
1.

to the *Quality of the Times*) we may be either forewarned Chap. 9.  
 or corrected by them: For certainly with these Holy   
 Words we nourish our Faith, erect our Hope, seal Ap. c. 39.  
 our Confidence; and, by these Inculcations, are the  
 better establish'd in Obedience to the Divine Commands.  
*Nazianzen* tells us what vast Numbers used to Orat. 32.  
 meet in his Church at *Constantinople*, of all Sexes, p. 517.  
 of all Sorts and Ranks of Persons, *Rich* and *Poor*,  
*Honourable* and *Ignoble*, *Learned* and *Simple*, *Gover-*  
*nors* and *People*, *Soldiers* and *Tradesmen*; all here  
 unanimously conspiring together, and greedily  
 desirous to learn the Knowledge of Divine Things.  
 The like *Chrysoptom* reports of the Church of *Anti- Hom. 56.*  
*och*, that they would set aside all Affairs at home, tom. 1.  
 to come and hear Sermons at Church: He tells p. 623.  
 them, 'twas the great Honour of the City, not so  
 much that it had large *Suburbs* and vast Numbers  
 of People, or brave *Houses* with gilded Dining-  
 rooms, as that it had a diligent and attentive Peo-  
 ple. And elsewhere, that 'twas the great Encou- Hom. 4. in  
 ragement of his Ministry, to see such a famous verb. Esaiæ  
 and chearful Concourse, a People so well order'd vid. Dom.  
 and desirous to hear: That 'twas this advanced Eccl. to. 3.  
 their City above the Honour of a *Senate*, or the  
 Office of a *Consul*, or the Variety of *Statues* and  
 Ornaments, or the Plenty of its *Merchandize*, or  
 the Commodiousness of its *Situation*; in that its  
 People were so earnest to hear and learn, its  
 Churches so throng'd and crowded, and all Per-  
 sons inflamed with such an insatiable Desire of the  
 Word that was preached to them; yea, that this  
 it was that adorn'd the City, even above *Rome* itself.  
 And indeed the Commendation is the greater, in  
 that Commonness did not breed Contempt; it be-  
 ing usual in that Church (as *Chrysoptom* often inti-  
 mates) for a good Part of the Year to have Ser-  
 mons every Day.

Well,



## Part I.

Constit.  
Apost. l. 8.  
c. 6.  
p. 1006.

Well, *Sermon* being ended, *Prayers* were made with and for the *Catechumens*, *Penitents*, *Possessed*, and the like, according to their respective Capacities and Qualifications; the Persons that were in every Rank departing as soon as the Prayer that particularly concern'd them was done; first the *Catechumens*, and then the *Penitents*; as is prescribed in the nineteenth Canon of the *Laodicean Council*: For no sooner was the Service thus far perform'd, but all that were under Baptism, or under the Discipline of Penance, *i. e.* all that might not communicate at the *Lord's Table*, were commanded to depart, the *Deacon* crying aloud, ΟΣΟΙ ΚΑΤΗΧΟΥΜΕΝΟΙ ΠΡΟΕΛΘΕΤΕ, *Those that are Catechumens go out*; in the *Latin Church* the Form was, ITE, MISSA EST; *Depart, there is a Dismissal of you*: *Missal* being the same with *Missio*, as *remissa* oft used in some Writers for *remissio*, (and so the Word *Missal* is used by *Cassian* even in his time, for the Dismissal of the Congregation.) Hence it was that the whole Service, from the Beginning of it till the Time that the *Hearers* were dismissed, came to be called *Missal Catechumenorum*, the *Mass* or Service of the *Catechumens*; as that which was perform'd afterwards at the Celebration of the *Eucharist* was called *Missal Fidelium*, the *Mass*, or Service of the *Faithful*, because none but they were present at it: And in these Notions, and no other, the Word is often to be met with in *Tertullian*, and other ancient Writers of the Church. 'Tis true, that in process of Time, as the Discipline of the *Catechumens* wore out, so that Title which belonged to the first Part of the Service was forgotten, and the Name *Missal* was appropriated to the Service of the *Lord's Supper*; and accordingly was made use of by the Church of *Rome*, to denote that which they peculiarly call the *Mass*, or the *Propitiatory Sacrifice* of the *Altar*, at this day. And the more plausibly to impose

this

De Instit.  
Monach.  
l. 3. c. 7.  
p. 26.

this Delusion upon the People, they do, with a Chap. 9.  
 great deal of Confidence, muster up all those Places of the Fathers where the Word *Missa* is to be found, and apply it to their *Mafs*; tho' it would puzzle them to produce but one Place, where the Word is used in the same Sense as they use it now, out of any genuine and approved Writer of the Church, for at least the first four hundred Years. But to return: The *Catechumens*, &c. being departed, and the Church-doors shut, they proceeded to the *Lord's Supper*, at which the *Faithful* only might be present; wherein they prayed for all States and Ranks of Men, gave the *Kiss* of Charity, pray'd for *Consecration* of the *Eucharist*, then received the Sacramental Elements, made their Offerings, and such like; of which I do not now speak particularly, because I intend to treat distinctly of the *Sacraments* afterwards. For the same Reason, I say nothing concerning their *Admonitions*, *Church-Censures*, *Absolutions*, &c. because these will come under Consideration in another Place; as also, because tho' managed at their Publick Assemblies, they were yet only accidental to them, and no settled Parts of the Divine Service. This, in short, was the general Form of Publick Worship in those ancient times; which, altho' it might vary somewhat according to *Times* and *Places*, did yet for the Main and the Substance of it hold in all.

That which remains, is, a little to remark how the *Christians* carry'd themselves in the Discharge of these solemn Duties; which certainly was with singular *Reverence* and *Devotion*, such *Gestures* and *Actions* as they conceived might express the greatest *Piety* and *Humility*. Let both Men and Women, (says *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) come to Church in comely Apparel, with a grave Pace, with a modest *Silence*, with a *Love* unfeigned, *chaste* both in Body and Mind, and so as they may be fit to put up  
 Prayers

*Padag. l. 3.  
 c. 11. p. 255.*

Part. I. Prayers to God. Let our *Speech* in Prayer (says *Cyprian*) be under Discipline, observing a *decorous Calmness* and *Modesty*: We are to remember that we are under the Eye of God, whom we are not to offend either in the *Habit* of our Body, or the *Manner* of our Speech; for as 'tis the Fashion of those that are impudent to clamour and make a Noise; so on the contrary, it becomes a sober Man to pray with a *modest Voice*. When therefore we come together with our Brethren into the Assembly, to celebrate the *Divine Sacrifices*, with the Minister of God, we ought to be mindful of *Order*, and a reverent *Regard*, and not to throw about our Prayers with a *wild* and *confused Voice*, or with a disorderly *Prattling* to cast forth those *Petitions* which ought with the greatest *Modesty* to be put up to God. The Men pray'd with their *Heads bare*, as not ashamed to look up to Heaven for what they begg'd of God; the Women *cover'd*, as a Sign of the *Modesty* of that Sex; and therefore *Tertullian* severely checks the Practice of some Women in his time, who in time of Worship had no Covering on their Heads, or what was as good as none: What *Reproof* (says he) do they deserve, that continue *unveil'd* in singing Psalms, or in any Mention of God? Or do they think it's enough to lay some thin and slight Thing over their Heads in Prayer, and then think themselves cover'd? Where he manifestly refers to those Rules which the Apostle prescribes in this Case; and concludes at last, that they should at all Times and in all Places be mindful of the Rule, being ready and provided against all Mentions of the Name of God; who if he be in Womens *Hearts*, will be known on their *Heads*, viz. by a modest *Carriage* and *Covering* of them in their Addresses to him. Their Hands they did not only lift up to Heaven (a Posture in Prayer common both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*) but they did

*De Virg.  
valand. p.  
504.*

did *expand* and spread them abroad, that so by this Means they might shadow out an *Image of the Cross*, or rather a Resemblance of him that hung upon it, as *Tertullian* more than once and again informs us. Prayer (says another) is a *Conversing with God*, and the Way to Heaven; and to stretch out our Hands, is to form the Resemblance of *Christ Crucified*, which, whoever prays, should do, not only as to the Form and Figure, but in Reality and Affection: For as he that is fasten'd to the Cross surely dies, so he that prays should *crucify* the Desires of the Flesh, and every inordinate Lust and Passion. In the performing of this Duty, they either *kneeled* (which was most usual) or *stood* which they always did upon the *Lord's-day*, for a Reason which we have spoken of before; *Sitting* was ever held a Posture of great *Rudeness* and *Irreverence*. Nay, *Tertullian* falls heavy upon some that used presently to clap themselves down upon their Seats, as soon as ever Prayer was done, and down-right charges it as against Scripture: If it be an irreverent Thing (as he argues) to sit down before, or over-against a Person for whom thou hast mighty Reverence and Veneration, how much more does it favour of *Irreligion* to do so in the Presence of the *living God*, while the *Angel* is yet standing by thee to carry up the Prayer to Heaven? unless we have a Mind to *reproach* God to his Face, and tell him that we are weary of the Duty.

Another Custom which they had in Prayer, was, that they constantly pray'd towards the *East*. This was so universally common, that there's scarce any ancient Ecclesiastical Writer but speaks of it; tho' not many of them agree in assigning the Reason of it. The Custom doubtless began very early, and is generally ascribed to the *Apostles*; so the Author of the *Questions and Answers* assures us, and tells us, it was because the *East* was accounted the most excellent

Chap. 9.

De Orat.  
c. 11. Apol.  
c. 39.Asterius  
Amasen.  
Hom. de  
precat.  
apud Phot.  
Cod. 271.  
col. 1496.De Orat.  
c. 12.  
p. 134.Quæst. 118.  
p. 471.

Part I. cellent Part of the Creation ; and seeing in Prayer we must turn our Faces towards some Quarter, *De Spir. S.* 'twas fittest it should be towards the *East*. Just *c. 27. p. 352.* (says he) as in making the Sign of the *Cross* in the *tom. 2.* Name of *Christ*, we use the Right-hand, because 'tis *Athanas.* better than the Left, not in its own Nature, but *ad Antioch.* only in its *Posture* and *Fitness* for our Use. *quaest. 37.* *S. Basil* likewise reckons it amongst the *Traditions* that had *p. 285.* been derived from the *Apostles* ; but tells us the *tom. 2.* *Mystery* of it was, that thereby they respected *Const. Ap.* *Paradise*, which God planted in the *East*, begging of *l. 2. c. 57.* him that they might be restored to that ancient *p. 876.* Country from whence they had been cast out. This might probably be with those who dwelt in the *Western* Parts of the World ; but how it could be done by those who lived *East* of the Garden of *Eden* (suppose in any Parts of *India*) I am not able to imagine. *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that herein they had Respect to *Christ* ; for as the *East* is the Birth and Womb of the Natural Day, from whence the *Sun* (the Fountain of all sensible Light) does arise and spring ; so *Christ* the true *Son of Righteousness*, who arose upon the World with the *Light* of Truth, when it sat in the *Darkness* of Error and Ignorance, is in Scripture styled the *East* ; and therefore our Prayers are directed thither. For which Reason, *Tertullian* calls the *East* the *Figure*, or the *Type* of *Christ*. But whatever the true Reason was, I'm sure 'tis a sober Account which *Athanasius* gives of it : *We do not* (says he) *worship towards the East, as if we thought God any ways shut up in those Parts of the World, but because God is in himself, and is so styled in Scripture, the true Light ; in turning therefore towards that created Light, we do not worship it, but the great Creator of it ; taking Occasion from that most excellent Element to adore that God who was before all Elements and Ages of the World.* This was their Carriage for Prayer ; nor were

*Strom. l. 7.*  
*p. 724.*

*Contr. Val-*  
*lent. c. 3.*  
*p. 251.*

*Ubi supr.*  
*p. 284.*



were they less humble and reverent in other Parts of Worship; they heard the Scriptures read and preached with all possible Gravity and Attention; which that they might the better do, they were wont to stand all the while the Sermon continued, none sitting then but the Bishop and Presbyters that were about him. So Optatus expressly tells us, That the People had no Privilege to sit down in the Church; tho' whether the Custom was universally so in all Places, I much doubt. Nay, S. Augustin tells us, That in some transmarine (I suppose he means the Western) Churches it was otherwise, the People having Seats placed for them as well as the Ministers. But generally the People stood, partly to express the greater Reverence, partly to keep their Attentions awake and lively. Hence it was part of the Deacon's Office (as Chrysostom tells us, and the same we find in the ancient Greek Liturgies) to call upon the People with an ΟΡΘΟΙ ΣΤΩΜΕΝ ΚΑΛΩΣ, Let us duly stand upright; respecting the decent Posture of their Bodies, tho' withal principally intending the Elevation of their Minds, the lifting up their Thoughts from low sordid Objects, to those Spiritual and Divine Things they were then conversant about. But whatever they did in other Parts of the Publick Service, they constantly stood up at the Reading of the Gospel; a Custom generally embraced in all Parts of the Christian World. Therefore Sozomen, discoursing of the various Rites observed in several Churches, notes it as an unusual thing in the Bishop of Alexandria, that he did not rise up when the Gospels were read; a Thing (says he) which I never saw nor heard of in any other Place. And Philostorgius tells us of Theophilus, the Indian Bishop, that amongst several Irregularities which he corrected in those Churches, he particularly reformed this, that the People were wont to sit while the Lessons out of the Gospel were read

De Schism. Donat. l. 4. p. 115.

De Catech. Rudib. c. 13. tom. 4. col. 907.

De incomparab. Dei natur. tom. 4. p. 353. tom. 1.

Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 19. p. 734.

Hist. Eccl. l. 3. num. 5. p. 29.



to

Part I.

to them. Nor did the greatest Personages think themselves too high to express this piece of Reverence in their Attendance upon the King of Kings. 'Tis very memorable what we read concerning the great *Constantine*, that when upon occasion *Eusebius* was to make a *Panegyrick* concerning the *Sepulchre* of our Saviour, tho' it was not in the *Church*, but in the *Palace*, yet he refused to sit all the Time; and when *Eusebius* beseeched him to sit down in his *Throne*, that was hard by him, he would not; but attentively heard, judged, and approved those Things that were spoken. And when after a good while, the *Sermon* having been prolix, *Eusebius* out of Compliance would have broken off and done, he called to him to go on till he came to the full End of his *Discourse*; whereupon he was again solicited to sit down, but refused, *Affirming it to be unfit to attend upon any Discourse concerning God, and much more at this time, with Ease and Softness; and that it was very consonant to Piety and Religion, that Discourses about Divine Things should be heard standing.* So great a Reverence had that excellent Prince for the Solemnities of Divine Worship. In the Discharge of these holy Exercises, as they carry'd themselves with all Seriousness and Gravity, so they continued in them till they were completely finish'd; there was then no such Airiness and Levity as now possesses the Minds of Men; no Snatching at some Pieces of the Worship, *tanquam Canis ad Nilum*, and gone again; no rude disorderly departing the Congregation, till the whole Worship and Service of God was over. And therefore when this Warmth and Vigour of the first Ages was a little abated, the Council of *Orleans* thought good to re-establish the Primitive Devotion by this Canon,

*Can. 22. That when the People came together for the Celebration of Divine Service, they should not depart till the whole Solemnity was over, and the Bishop or Presbyter had given the Blessing.*

CHAP.

## Of Baptism, and the Administration of it in the Primitive Church.

*Four Circumstances consider'd. Baptism, by whom administred. By none usually without the Leave of the Bishop. The great Controversy about re-baptizing those that had been baptized by Hereticks. An Account of it out of Cyprian. Lay-men how suffer'd to baptize. The Opinion of the absolute Necessity of Baptism. The Case of Athanasius's baptizing when but a Child. Women never permitted to baptize. Persons to be baptized, who. Infants. Sufficient Evidence for Infant-Baptism in the ancient Writers of the Church. Some Passages out of Cyprian noted. The Baptized most-what Adult Persons. The stated Times of Baptism, Easter and Whitsuntide, and why: Especially upon Easter-Eve, and why. In Cases of Necessity at any other time. Clinici, who. Clinic Baptism accounted less perfect, why. Usual to defer Baptism till a Death-bed, and the Reason of it noted in Constantine and others. Being baptized for the Dead, what (probably.) The usual Place of Baptism in, or near the Church; always before the Congregation. The Baptisterium, or Font, where it stood, and how large. Its distinct Apartments for Men and Women. A Curiosity in many of those times of being baptized in Jordan, and why. The Manner of the Administration.*

O 2. The



*The Person baptized look'd towards the West, and why. Their answering as to the Profession of their Faith. Their solemn Abrenunciation made twice, and the Form of it. Sureties in Baptism. Persons baptized Exorcised; what meant by it. Unction, upon what Account used; several Reasons of it assign'd by the Fathers. The Sign of the Cross made in Baptism, evident out of the ancient Fathers. Of Immersion or putting the Person under Water; what it shadow'd out. Generally in use in those Countries: Not absolutely necessary in others. Trine Immersion: Different Reasons of it assign'd by the Fathers. It obtain'd not in Spain, and why. A second Unction. Persons after Baptism clothed in white Garments, and why. These kept in the Church as a Testimony of their solemn Engagements. A memorable Passage out of Victor Uticensis. A brief Account of Confirmation. The Neglect of it bewailed.*

**O**UR Lord having instituted BAPTISM and the LORD'S SUPPER as the two great *Sacraments* of the *Christian Law*, they have accordingly been ever accounted principal Parts of Publick Worship in the Christian Church: We shall treat first of *Baptism*, as being the *Door* by which Persons enter in, the great and solemn Rite of our Initiation into the Faith of Christ; concerning which, four Circumstances are chiefly to be enquired into; the *Persons* by, and upon whom; the *Time* when, the *Place* where, the *Manner* how this Sacrament was administered in the ancient Church.

For the *Persons* by whom this Sacrament was administered, they were the *Ministers of the Gospel*, the *Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ*, baptizing and preaching the Gospel being joined together by our *Saviour* in the same Commission: Usually 'twas done by the Bishop, the *ægesas* in *J. Martyr*, the *Antistes* in *Tertullian*, the *President* or chief Minister of the Congregation, the *Summus Sacerdos, qui est Episcopus*, as he calls him, without whose Leave and Authority neither *Presbyters* nor *Deacons* might take upon them to baptize, as not only *Ignatius* but *Tertullian* expressly tells us; and if they did, it was only in case of Necessity, as is affirm'd by an ancient Author, who lived in or near the time of *Cyprian*. The same, *S. Hierom* assures us, was the Custom of his time; tho' otherwhiles we find the Bishop to begin the Action, and the *Presbyters* to carry it on and finish it. But as Christianity increased, this became a more familiar Part of the *Presbyters* and the *Deacons* Office, and doubtless had been more or less executed by them from the Beginning; tho' out of Reverence to the Bishop, and to preserve the *Honour* of the Church (as *Tertullian* gives the Reason) they did it not without his *Leave* and Deputation; and 'tis certain that *Philip* baptized the *Eunuch*, who yet was of no higher Order than that of *Deacon*. Nor was it accounted enough by some in those times, that Baptism was conferr'd by a Person called to the Ministry, unless he was also *orthodox* in the Faith. This became Matter of great Bustle in the Church: Hence sprang that famous Controversy between *Cyprian* and *Stephen* Bishop of *Rome*, concerning the re-baptizing those that had been baptized by *Hereticks*, (of which there is so much in *Cyprian's* Writings) *Cyprian* asserting, that they ought to be re-baptized, the other as stiffly maintaining it to be both against the *Doctrine* and *Practice* of the

*Epist. ad Smyrneos,*  
p. 6. *De*  
*Bap. c. 17.*  
p. 230.  
*De non re-*  
*bapt. apud*  
*Cypr. p. 138*  
*Dial. adv.*  
*Lucifer. p.*  
*139. Ambr.*  
*de Sacram.*  
l. 3. c. 1.

**Part I. Church.** This begot great Heats and Feuds between those good Men, and engaged a great Part of the whole Christian Church in the Quarrel; *Cyprian* endeavouring to strengthen his Cause, not only by Arguments from Scripture, but by calling a Council at *Carthage* of eighty seven *African Bishops*, who all concluded for his Opinion. How truly *Cyprian* maintained this, I am not concern'd to enquire; only I take Notice of two things which he and his Followers pleaded, by way of Abatement to the *Rigour* of their Opinion. First, That hereby they did not assert *Re-baptization* to be lawful, this they expressly deny to receive any Patronage from their Practice; for they looked upon that Baptism that had been conferr'd by Hereticks as *null* and *invalid*, (seeing Hereticks being out of the Church could not give what they had not) and therefore when any return'd to the Union of the Church, they could not properly be said to be re-baptized, seeing they did but receive what (*lawfully*) they had not before. Secondly, That they did not promiscuously baptize all that came over from Heretical Churches; for where any had been lawfully baptized, by *Orthodox* Ministers before their going over to them, these they received at their Return without any other Ceremony than *Imposition of Hands*; baptizing those only who never had any other Baptism than that which Hereticks had conferr'd upon them. *Cyprian* being thus severe against Baptism dispensed by *Heretical* Ministers, we may wonder what he thought of that which was administered by mere *Lay un-ordain'd Persons*, which yet was not uncommon in those times; for that Laymen (provided they were Christians and baptized themselves) might, and did baptize others in Cases of Necessity, is so positively asserted by *Tertullian*, *Hierom*, and others, that no Man can doubt of it. A Custom ratify'd by the Fathers of the *Illiberine* Council,

*Cypr. ep. ad Quint. de Heret. bapt. ep. vi. p. 119. & Conc. Carth. apud Cypr. sent. 35. p. 286.*

*Cypr. ib. & Conc. Carth. sent. 8. & Cyril. pref. Catech. ad Illum. p. 9.*

*Locis antea citat.*

Council, with this *Proviso*, That if the Persons so baptized, lived, they should receive *Confirmation* from the Bishop. This, without question, arose from an Opinion they had of the absolute and indispensable *Necessity* of Baptism, without which they scarce thought a Man's future Condition could be safe; and that therefore it was better it should be had from any, than to depart this Life without it; for, excepting the Case of *Martyrs*, (whom they thought sufficiently qualify'd for Heaven, by being *baptized* in their own *Blood*, insisting upon a two-fold Baptism, one of *Water* in time of Peace, another of *Blood* in the time of Persecution, answerable to the *Water* and *Blood* that flowed out of our *Saviour's* Side: Excepting these) they reckon'd no Man could be saved without being baptized, and cared not much in Cases of Necessity, so they had it, how they came by it. As for the A& of *Athanasius* (mention'd by the Author of his Life, in *Photius*, and more largely related by *Sozomen*) when a Boy, playing with the rest of his Companions, they form'd themselves into a kind of Church-Society, *Athanasius* was chosen Bishop, and others personated the *Catechumens*, ready to be baptized; and were accordingly, with all the usual Formalities, baptized by *Athanasius*. This Juvenile Ceremony being ended, they were brought before *Alexander*, the then Bishop of *Alexandria*, (who had himself beheld the whole *Scene*) who enquiring into the Reasons and Circumstances of the Action; and having consulted with his Clergy that were about him, concluded that those Children ought not to be *re-baptized*, and therefore only added his Confirmation to them. But this being only a particular Case, and the like not mention'd, that I remember, by any Writer of those Times, I only relate it as I find it. But tho' this Power, in Cases of Necessity, was allow'd

Chap. 10  
Can. 38.

Cyrl. ad  
Illum. Ca-  
tech. 3.  
p. 61.

Cod. 258.  
col. 1429.  
Hist. Eccl.  
l. 2. c. 17.  
p. 467.

Part I. to *Men* (who were capable of having the Ministerial Office conferr'd upon them) yet was it ever deny'd to *Women*, whom the Apostle has so expressly forbidden to exercise any Ministry in the Church of God; and accordingly censured in the *Apostolical Constitutions*, to be not only dangerous, but unlawful and impious. Indeed in the Churches of the Hereticks, Women even in those times took upon them to baptize; but it was universally condemn'd and cry'd out against by the Orthodox, and constantly affix'd as a Note of Dishonour and Reproach upon the Heretical Parties of those times; as abundantly appears from *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, and others, who record the Heretical Doctrines and Practices of those first Ages of the Church; however afterwards it crept in, in some Places, and is allow'd and practis'd in the Church of Rome at this Day; where in Cases of Necessity, they give Leave that it may be administred by any, and in any Language, whether the Person administering be a Clergy or a Lay-man, (yea tho' under Excommunication) whether he be a Believer or an Infidel, a Catholick or an Heretick, a Man or a Woman; only taking care, that (if it may be) a Priest be preferr'd before a Deacon, a Deacon before a Sub-deacon, a Clergyman before a Laic, and a Man before a Woman; together with some other Cases which are there wisely provided for.

From the Persons *ministring*, we proceed to the Persons upon whom it was conferr'd; and they were of two sorts, *Infants* and *Adult* Persons. How far the Baptizing of Infants is included in our Saviour's Institution, is not my Work to dispute; but certainly, if in controverted Cases the constant Practice of the Church, and those who immediately succeeded the Apostles, be (as no Man can deny it is) the best Interpreter of the Laws of Christ, the Dispute one would think should

*Tert. de Bapt. c. 17.*  
*De vel. virg. c. 9.*  
*De prescr. adv. heret. c. 41.*  
*Epiph. her. 49. & bar. 79.*

*Rit. Rom. de Sac. Baptism. Rubric. de ministr. Bapt. p. 9.*

should be at an End : For that it always was the Custom to receive the Children of *Christian Parents* into the Church by Baptism, we have sufficient Evidence from the greatest part of the most early Writers, *Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, &c.* whose Testimonies I do not produce, because I find them collected by others, and the Argument thence so forcible and conclusive, that the most zealous Opposers of *Infant-Baptism* know not how to evade it ; the Testimonies being so clear, and not the least Shadow that I know of in those Times of any thing to make against it. There was indeed in *Cyprian's* Time a Controversy about the baptizing of Infants, not *whether* they ought to be baptized (for of that there was no doubt) but concerning the *Time* when it was to be administered ; whether on the *second*, or *third*, or whether, as *Circumcision* of old, to be deferred till the *eighth* Day. For the determining of which, *Cyprian*, sitting in Council with sixty six Bishops, writes a *Synodical Epistle* to *Fidus*, to let him know, That it was not necessary to be deferred so long, and that it was their universal Judgment and Resolution, that the *Mercy* and *Grace* of God was not to be denied to any, tho' as soon as he was *born* : Concluding, that it was the Sentence of the Council, that none ought to be forbidden Baptism and the Grace of God ; which as it was to be observed and retained towards all Men, so *much more* towards *Infants* and *new-born* Children. And that this Sentence of theirs was no *novel* Doctrine, *S. Augustine* assures us, where speaking concerning this *Synodical Determination*, he tells us, that in this *Cyprian* did not make any new Decree, but kept the Faith of the Church most firm and sure. I shall only take Notice of one Place more out of *Cyprian*, which methinks evidently makes for this Purpose ; where describing the great Wickedness and miserable Condition of the

*F. G. Voss. de Bapt. disp. 14. p. 178. & seq. Forbes. Instruct. Hist. Theol. 1. 10. c. 5. sect. 14. & seq. Dr. Hammond's Defence of Infant-Baptism, c. 4. sect. 2.*

*Ep. 60. p. 97.*

*Ep. 28. ad Hierom. to. 2. col. 108.*

*De lapsis, p. 171.*

*Lapsed,*

**Part I.** *Lapsed*, such as to avoid Persecution had done Sacrifice to the Idols, he urges this as one of the last and highest Aggravations; That by their Apostasy their Infants and Children were exposed to Ruin, and *had lost that which they had obtained at their first coming into the World* (which whether he means it of their Right to Baptism, or their having been actually baptized, and losing the *Fruit and Benefit* of their Baptism, is all one to my Purpose) and therefore he brings them in thus elegantly pleading against their Parents at the Great Day: *'Twas no Fault of ours, we did not of ourselves forsake the Sacraments of our Lord, and run over to join with prophane Impieties; the Unfaithfulness of others has undone us, we have found our Parents to be Murderers; they denied us God for our Father, and the Church for our Mother: For while we alas were little, unable to take any Care of ourselves, and ignorant of so great a Wickedness, we were ensnared by the Treachery of others, and by them betrayed into a Partnership of their Impieties!*

*Conc. Lao.  
Can. 46.*

This was the Case of Infants; but those who made up the main Body of the Baptized in those Days were *adult* Persons, who flocking over daily in great Numbers to the Faith of Christ, were received in at this Door. Usually they were for some considerable time *catechized*, and trained up in the Principles of the Christian Faith, till having given Testimony of their Proficiency in Knowledge (to the Bishop or Presbyter, who were appointed to take their Examination, and to whom they were to give an Account once a Week of what they had learnt) and of a sober and regular Conversation, they then became *Candidates* for Baptism, and were accordingly taken in: Which brings me to the next Circumstance considerable, concerning

The *Time* when Baptism was wont to be administered. At first all Times were alike, and Persons were baptized as Opportunity and Occasion

sion served ; but the Discipline of the Church being a little settled, it began to be restrained to two solemn and stated Times of the Year, *viz.* *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*. At *Easter*, in Memory of Christ's *Death* and *Resurrection*, correspondent unto which are the two Parts of the Christian Life represented and shadowed out in Baptism, *dying* unto Sin, and *rising* again unto Newness of Life ; in order to which, the Parties to be baptized were to prepare themselves by a strict Observation of *Lent*, disposing and fitting themselves for Baptism by Fasting and Prayer. In some Places, particularly the Churches of *Thessaly*, *Easter* was the only Time for *Baptism* (as *Socrates* tells us) which was the Reason why many amongst them died unbaptized : But this was no Usage peculiar to them alone. The ancient Custom of the Church (as *Zonaras* tells us) was for Persons to be baptized, especially upon the *Saturday* before *Easter-Day* ; the Reason whereof was, that this being the *great* or *holy Sabbath*, and the Mid-time between the Day whereon Christ was buried, and that whereon he rose again, did fitliest correspond with the Mystery of Baptism, as it is the Type and Representation both of our Lord's *Burial* and *Resurrection*. At *Whitsuntide*, in Memory of the *Holy Ghost's* being shed upon the *Apostles* ; the same being in some measure represented and conveyed in Baptism. When I say that these were the two fixed Times of Baptism, I do not strictly mean it of the precise Days of *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, but also of the whole intermediate Space of fifty Days that is between them, which was in a Manner accounted *Festival*, and Baptism administered during the whole Time, as I have formerly noted. Besides these, *Nazianzen* reckons the Feast of *Epiphany* as an annual Time of Baptism, probably in Memory either of the *Birth* or *Baptism* of our Saviour, both which

Chap. 10

*Tert. de*  
*Bap. c. 19.*  
*p. 232.*


*Cyvil. prof.*  
*Catech. ad*  
*Illum. p. 6.*

*Hist. Ecc.*  
*l. 5. c. 22.*  
*p. 287.*

*In Can. 45.*  
*Conc. Lao.*

*ΕΙς τὸ*  
*ἄγ. Βαπτ.*  
*Orat. 40.*  
*p. 654.*



**Part I.**  anciently went under that Title. This might be the Custom in some Places, but I question whether it was universal; besides that, afterwards, it was prohibited and laid aside. But though Persons in Health, and the Space that was requisite for the Instruction of the *Catechumens*, might well enough comport with these annual Returns; yet if there was a *Necessity* (as in Case of *Sickness* and *Danger of Death*) they might be baptized at any other time. For finding themselves at any time surprized with a dangerous or a mortal Sickness, and not daring to pass into another World without this *Badge* of their Initiation into Christ; they presently signified their earnest Desire to be baptized, which was accordingly done, as well as the Circumstances of a sick Bed would permit. These were called *Clinici* (of whom there is frequent mention in the ancient Writers of the Church) because ἐν τῇ κλίνῃ βαπτίζομενοι, baptized as they lay along in their Beds. This was accounted a less solemn and perfect kind of Baptism, partly because it was done not by *Immersion*, but by *Sprinkling*; partly because Persons were supposed at such a time to desire it, chiefly out of a *Fear* of Death, and many times when not thorowly *Masters* of their Understandings. For which Reasons Persons so baptized (if they recovered) are by the Fathers of the *Neocasarean* Council rendered ordinarily incapable of being admitted to the Degree of *Presbyters* in the Church. Indeed 'twas very usual in those times (notwithstanding that the Fathers did solemnly and smartly declaim against it) for Persons to defer their being baptized till they were near their *Death*, out of a kind of *Novatian* Principle, that if they fell into Sin after Baptism, there would be no Place for Repentance; mistaking that Place of the *Apostle*, where 'tis said, that *if they who have been once enlightened*, (ἀπαξ φωτισθέντες, which the

Can. 12.

the Ancients generally understand of *Baptism*) Chap. 10  
*fall away, 'tis impossible to renew them again unto* ~  
*Repentance.* For some such Reason we may suppose it was, that *Constantine* the Great deferred his *Baptism* till he lay a dying; the same which *Socrates* relates of his Son *Constantius*, baptized a little before his *Death*. And the like he reports of the Emperor *Theodosius*, who apprehending himself to be arrested with a mortal *Sickness*, presently caused himself to be baptized, though he recovered afterwards. To this Custom of *Clinic Baptism*, some not improbably think the Apostle has Reference in that famous Place, where he speaks of those that are *baptized for the Dead*, ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν, which they expound with Reference to the *State of the Dead*; and that 'tis meant of such, who in *Danger of Death* would be baptized, that it might fare well with them after *Death*. This *Epiphanius* thinks the truest Interpretation, that it's meant of *Catechumens*; who being suddenly surprized with *Death*, would be baptized, that to their *Sins* being remitted in *Baptism*, they might go hence under the *Hope* of that *Eternal Life* which awaits good Men after *Death*, and testify their *Belief* and *Expectation* of their future happy *Resurrection*. Others think it may refer to the *Place of Baptism*, those who are baptized ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν, *over the Graves*, or *Sepulchres of the Dead*; it being an ancient and general Custom to have their religious Meetings, and to perform their publick Exercises at the *Tombs of Martyrs*; there being numerous Instances in the *Acts of the Martyrs*, of such as were baptized in the *Cœmeteria* over the *Monuments of the Dead*. Which soever of these is most suitable, yet certainly either of them is far more probable than that which many talk so much of, as if the Apostle meant it of a *Custom* common in those *Primitive Times* amongst the *Cerinthians*, and other *Hereticks*; where when any died without *Baptism*,

Euseb. de vit. Const. l. 4. c. 61, 62. p. 557. Hist. Eccl. l. 2. c. 47. p. 161. Lib. 5. c. 6. p. 262. Vid. Voss. Thes. de Baptism. p. 161. & de Resur. Thes. 18.

Hæres. 28. p. 54. Vid. Mat. Blast. Syn. tag. c. 1. lit. B. p. 41.

Vid. Prud. Peristeph. hymn. 8. p. 110.

Part I. tism, they used to place another under his *Bed*, who was baptized for him in his Stead, whence *Tertullian* calls it a *vicarious Baptism*; it being highly improbable, That the Great Apostle would fetch an Argument to confirm so solemn and fundamental a Principle of the Christian Faith, as the Doctrine of the *Resurrection* is, from such an absurd and ridiculous Rite, used only by the *worst* of Hereticks. But this only by the way.

For the *Place* where this solemn Action was performed, it was first unlimited, any Place where there was Water, as *Justin Martyr* tells us, in Ponds and Lakes, at Springs or Rivers, as *Tertullian* speaks; but always as near as might be to the Place of their Publick Assemblies, for it was seldom done without the Presence of the *Congregation*: And that for very good Reason, both as 'tis a principal Act of religious Worship, and as 'tis initiating of Persons into the Church, which therefore ought to be as publick as it could, that so the whole Congregation might be Spectators and Witnesses of that Profession and Engagement which the Person baptized then took upon him. And this they so zealously kept to, that the *Trullan Council* allows not Baptism to be administred in a private *Chappel*, but only in the publick Churches; punishing the Persons offending, if *Clergy* with *Deposition*, if *Laity* with *Excommunication*; which yet (as both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon* expound the *Canon*) is to be understood, unless it be done with the Leave and Approbation of the Bishop of the *Diocefs*. For this Reason they had afterwards their *Baptisteria*, (or as we call them) *Fonts*, built at first near the Church, then in the Church-Porch, to represent Baptism's being the *Entrance* into the mystical Church; afterwards they were placed in the Church itself. They were usually very large and

capacious,

Vid. Epiph.  
bares. 28.  
contra  
Cerinth.  
p. 54.  
De resur.  
canon. c. 48.

Ap. 2.  
p. 93.  
De Bapt.  
c. 4.

Can. 59.

capacious, not only that they might comport with the genenal Customs of those Times, of Persons baptized being *immersed* or put under Water; but because the stated Times of Baptism returning so seldom, great Multitudes were usually baptized at the same time. In the Middle of the *Font* there was a *Partition*, the one Part for Men, the other for Women, that to avoid Offence and Scandal they might be baptized asunder. Here it was that this great Rite was commonly performed, tho' in cases of Necessity they dispensed with private Baptism, as in the Case of those that were *sick* or shut up in Prison, of which there were frequent Instances in times of Persecution. Many there were in those Days (such especially as lived in the Parts near unto it) whom nothing would serve, unless they might be baptized in *Jordan*, out of a Reverence to that Place where our Saviour himself had been baptized: This, *Constantine* tells us, he had a long time resolved upon to be baptized in *Jordan*, though God cut him short of his Desire. And *Eusebius* elsewhere relates, that at *Bethabara*, beyond *Jordan*, where John baptized, there was a Place whither very many, even in his time, used to resort, earnestly desiring to obtain their Baptism in that Place. This doubtless proceeded from a very devout and pious Mind, though otherwise one Place can contribute nothing more than another; nothing being truer than what *Tertullian* has observed in this Case, That it's no Matter whether we be baptized amongst those whom John baptized in *Jordan*, or whom Peter baptized in *Tyber*.

The last Circumstance I propounded, concerns the Manner of the Celebration of this Sacrament, and for this we may observe, that in the *Apostles* Age Baptism was administered with great Nakedness and Simplicity, probably without any more Formality than a short Prayer, and repeating the Words of Institution :

Chap. 10



*De vita*  
*Const. l. 4.*  
*c. 62. Euseb.*  
*de loc. Heb.*  
*in voce*  
*Bethabara*  
*Basg.*  
*p. 59.*

*De Bapt.*  
*c. 4.*  
*p. 225.*

**Part I.** Institution : And indeed it could not well be otherwise, considering the vast Numbers that many Times were then baptized at once. But After-Ages added many Rites, differing very often according to Time and Place : I shall not undertake to give an Account of all, but only of the most remarkable, and such as did generally obtain in those Times ; keeping as near as I can to the Order which they observed in the Administration, which usually was thus : Persons having past through the State of the *Catechumens*, and being now ripe for *Baptism*, made it their Request to the Bishop that they may be baptized : Whereupon, at the solemn Times they were brought to the Entrance of the *Baptistery* or *Font*, and standing with their Faces towards the *West* (which being directly opposite to the *East*, the Place of *Light*, did symbolically represent the Prince of *Darkness*, whom they were to renounce and defy) were commanded to stretch out their Hand as it were in *Defiance* of him. In this Posture they were interrogated by the Bishop concerning their breaking off all their former Leagues and Commerce with Sin, and the Powers of Hell, the *Bishop* asking, *Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his Works, Powers, and Service?* To which the Party answered, *I do renounce them. Dost thou renounce the World, and all its Pomps and Pleasures?* Answ. *I do renounce them.* This *Renunciation* was made twice, once before the *Congregation* (probably at their obtaining leave to be baptized) and presently after at the *Font*, or Place of *Baptism*, as *Tertullian* witnesseth. Next, they make an open *Confession* of their Faith, the Bishop asking, *Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, &c. in Jesus Christ his only Son, who, &c. dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholick Church, and in one Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins, and Life everlasting?* To all which the Person answered, *I do believe.* This Form of Interrogation

Cyrl. Hieros. Catech. myst. 1. p. 506. & seq. Vid. Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 253. Ambr. de Sacram. 1. 1. c. 2. tom. 4. p. 429.

De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. De Spect. c. 13. p. 79. Vid. Const. Apost. 1. 7. c. 4. p. 993.

terrogation seems to have been very ancient in the Church, and the Apostle is justly thought to refer to it, when he styles Baptism, *the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, which can reasonably refer to nothing so well as that common Custom of *answering* in Baptism. These Answers and Actions in the *Adult* were done by the Persons themselves, in *Children* by their *Sponsors*, as *Tertullian* calls them, their *Sureties* and *Undertakers*; for that both Infants and adult Persons had those that undertook for them at their Baptism, is so notoriously known, that it were impertinent to insist upon it. After this there was a kind of *Exorcism*, and *Insufflation* or Breathing in the Face of the Person baptized (which *S. Augustin* calls a most ancient *Tradition* of the Church) by which they signified the Expelling of the Evil Spirit, and the Breathing in the Good Spirit of God: Not that they thought that every one before Baptism was *possessed* by the Devil, but only that *we are by Nature Children of Wrath*, Enemies to God, and Slaves to Satan. Nor did they lay any Stress upon the bare Usage of those Symbolick Rites, but wholly upon the Church's Prayers, which at the same time were made, that God would deliver those Persons from the Power of Satan, and by his Spirit unite them to the Church. This being done, they were brought to the *Font*, and were first stript of their *Garments*, (intimating thereby *their putting off the Old Man, which is corrupt, with his deceitful Lusts*:) And that all Occasions of Scandal and Immodesty might be prevented in so Sacred an Action, the \* Men and Women (as I observed before) were baptized in their distinct *Apartments*; the Women having *Deaconesses* to attend them, to undress and dress them, to stand about and overshadow them, that nothing of Indecency might appear. Then followed the *Unction*, a Ceremony of early Date, by which (says

Chap. 10



De Bapt.  
c. 18.  
p. 231.

De Nupt.  
& Concup.  
l. 2. c. 29.  
tom. 7.  
col. 856.

\* Const. A-  
pass. l. 3.  
c. 15.  
p. 899.

Epiph. Ha-  
ref. 79.  
p. 447. ib.  
l. 7. c. 23.

p. 379.  
Catec. 2.  
p. 518.

Ambros. de  
Sac. l. 1.  
c. 2. tom.  
4. p. 429.

Vid. Dion.  
Areop. de  
Ecccl. Hier-  
rarch. c. 2.  
p. 279.

P

S. Cyril)

Part I. S. Cyril) they signified that they were now cut off from the *wild Olive*, and were *ingrafted* into Christ the *true Olive-tree*, and made Partakers of his Fruits and Benefits; or else to shew that now they were become *Champions* for Christ, and had entred upon a State of Conflict, wherein they must strive and contend with all the Snares and Allurements of the World; as the *Athleta* of old were anointed against their solemn Games, that they might be more expedite, and that their *Antagonists* might take less hold upon them: Or rather probably to denote their being admitted to the great Privileges of Christianity, a *chosen Generation*, a *Royal Priesthood*, an *holy Nation* (as the *Apostle* styles Christians;) Offices, of which *Anointing* was an ancient Symbol, both of being designed to them, and invested in them. † And this Account *Tertullian* favours, where speaking of this *Uction* in Baptism, he tells us, 'tis derived from the Ancient, *i.e. Jewish* Discipline, where the Priests were wont to be anointed for the Priesthood. For some such Purpose, they thought it fit that a Christian (who carries *Uction* in his very *Name*) should be anointed as a *spiritual King* and Priest, and that no time was more proper for it than at his Baptism, when the Name of *Christian* was conferred upon him. \* Together with this, we may suppose it was, that the *Sign* of the *Cross* was made upon the Forehead of the Party baptized. When this Ceremony first began to be used in Baptism, I find not: S. *Basil* reckons it (and he puts it too in the first place) amongst those ancient *Customs* of the Church that had been derived from the Times of the *Apostles*: That it was generally in Use in the Times of *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, we have sufficient Evidence from the Writings, and indeed cannot reasonably suppose they should omit it in this solemn Action (where it is so proper) when they used it

† De Bap.  
c. 7.

p. 266.

\* De Spir.

S. c. 27.

tom. 2.

p. 351.

Vid. Tert.

adv. Mar-

cion l. 3.

p. 226.

Cyp. de lap.

p. 169.

Exons cum

signo &c.

De unit.

Ecc. p. 185.

Ea parte

Corporis,

&c. adv.

Demet.

p. 203.

Renati,

& signo

Christi sig-

nati, &c.

De cor.

mil. c. 3.

p. 102.

Vide Cyril

ad Illum.

Catech. 4.

p. 81.

it in the commonest Actions of their Lives; *Tertul- Chap. 10*  
*lian* expressly assuring us, *That upon every Motion, at*  
*their going out or coming in, at their going to Bath, or*  
*to Bed, or to Meals, or whatever their Employment or*  
*Occasions called them to, they were wont frontem sig-*  
*naculo terere, to make the Sign of the Cross upon their*  
*Forehead; and this they did (as he there tells us)*  
*not that it was imposed upon them by any Law of*  
*Christ, but brought in by a pious Custom, as that*  
*which did very much tend to strengthen and in-*  
*crease their Faith. By this they shewed, That they*  
*were not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, nor unwilling*  
*to engage in the Service of a Crucified Master,*  
*which yet was so great a Scandal to the Heathen*  
*World, and therefore they so often triumphed in*  
*this Symbol and Representation of it. Thus*  
*S. Hierom, though he lived in a Time when Christi-*  
*anity had almost quite prevailed over all other Re-*  
*ligions in the World, yet counted this the great*  
*Matter of his Glory, That I am (says he) a Christian,*  
*that I was born of Christian Parents, and do carry in my*  
*Forehead the Banner of the Cross. And indeed so*  
*great a Respect did they bear to this Representa-*  
*tion of our Saviour's Death, that (though they did*  
*not worship the Cross, yet) they took Care that it*  
*should not be put to any mean and trivial Uses, be*  
*painted or made upon the Ground, or engraven up-*  
*on Marble Pavements, or any thing where it might*  
*be trampled upon; as is expressly provided by a*  
*Law of Theodosius and Valentinian.*

*Pres. in*  
*Joh. tom.*  
*3. p. 24.*

*Lib. 1. C.*  
*Justin. tit.*  
*8. L. unie.*

The Action having proceeded thus far, the Party to be baptized was wholly *immersed* or put under Water, which was the almost constant and universal Custom of those Times, whereby they did more notably and significantly express the *three great Ends and Effects* of Baptism; for as in Immersion there are in a manner three several Acts, the *putting the Person into Water, his abiding there for a little*



Part I.

time, and his *rising* up again ; so by these were represented Christ's *Death, Burial, and Resurrection*, and in Conformity thereunto, our *Dying* unto Sin, the *Destruction* of its Power, and our *Resurrection* to a new Course of Life : By the Person's being put into Water, was lively represented the putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, and being washed from the Filth and Pollution of them : By his Abode under it, which was a kind of Burial in the Water, his Entering into a State of Death or Mortification, like as *Christ* remained for some time under the State or Power of Death ; therefore *as many as are baptized into Christ*, are said to be *baptized into his Death, and to be buried with him by Baptism into Death, that the Old Man being crucified with him, the Body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth he might not serve Sin, for that he that is dead is freed from Sin*, as the Apostle clearly explains the Meaning of this Rite : And then by his *Emerſion*, or Rising up out of the Water, was signified his Entering upon a new Course of Life, differing from that which he lived before, *that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life*. But though, by reason of the more eminent Significancy of these things, *Immerſion* was the common Practice in those Days, and therefore they earnestly urged it, and pleaded for it ; yet did they not hold *Sprinkling* to be unlawful, especially in Cases of Necessity, as of Weakness, Danger of Death, or where Conveniency of immerging could not be had : In these and such like Cases *Cyprian* does not only allow, but plead for it, and that in a Discourse on purpose, when the Question concerning it was put to him. Upon this Account it is, that *Immerſion* is now generally disused in these Parts of the World, and *Sprinkling* succeeded in its room, because the tender Bodies of most *Infants* (the only Persons now baptized) could not be

Ep. 76. ad  
Magn.  
p. 153.

put

put under Water in these cold Northern Climates, without apparent Prejudice to their Health, if not their Lives; and therefore in this as in other Cases, *God requires Mercy rather than Sacrifice*, especially considering that the main Ends of Baptism are attained this way, and the mystical Effects of it as *truly*, though not so *plainly* and significantly represented by Sprinkling, as by putting the Body under Water.

This Immersion was performed *thrice*, the Person baptized being three several times put under Water, a Custom which *Bazil* and *Sozomen* will have derived from the Apostles; 'tis certain that it was very early in the Church, being twice mentioned by *Tertullian* as the common Practice. By this trine Immersion they signified (say some) their adoring the three Persons in the *Blessed Trinity*; and therefore the Custom was, in repeating the Words of Institution, at the naming of every Person, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, to plunge the Party under Water, as *Tertullian* tells us, and *S. Ambrose* more expressly. 'Twas done (say others) to represent the *Death*, *Burial*, and *Resurrection* of our Saviour, together with his *three Days Continuance* in the *Grave*. *S. Augustin* joins both these together, as the double Mystery of this ancient Rite, as he is cited by *Gratian* to this purpose. It cannot be denied but that the Ceremony is very significant and expressive, and accordingly the Ancients laid great Weight upon it; insomuch that the *Canons* that go under the Name of *Apostolical*, command him, whether Bishop or Presbyter, that baptizes any without the *trine Immersion*, to be *deposed* from his Ministry. But though this Custom was in a manner universal, yet in some Places (in Aftertimes especially) it was otherwise; particularly in *Spain*, where they used it but *once*, lest they should gratify the *Arians*, who made use of the trine Im-

*Ubi supra.*  
*Hist. Eccl.*  
*lib. 6. c. 26.*  
*p. 673.*  
*Adv. Prax.*  
*c. 26.*  
*p. 443.*  
*de Cor.*  
*mil. c. 3.*  
*p. 460.*  
*Dion. Areop. Eccles.*  
*Hierarch.*  
*c. 2. p. 254.*  
*Ibid. de Sacram.*  
*lib. 2. c. 7.*  
*p. 424.*  
*Athanas. in dist. & interp. sap. Quæst. 93.*  
*Cyrl. Catech. Myst. 2. p. 518.*  
*Greg. Nyss. Orat. Catech. c. 35. tom. 2.*  
*p. 530.*  
*De consecrat. Distinct. 4. c. 78.*  
*Can. 50.*

**Part I.** **W**merſion to denote the Perſons in the Trinity to be three diſtinct *Subſtances*, and gloried that the *Catholicks* did, and held the ſame with them. Upon this Account they were content to immerge but once; and when Differences and Controverſies did ſtill remain about it, the fourth Council of *Toledo*, out of a Letter of *Gregory the Great*, thus determined the Caſe; That they ſhould ſtill uſe their ſingle Immerſion, and that this would ſufficiently expreſs the Myſteries of Baptiſm; the Diving under Water would denote Chriſt's *Death* and *descending* into Hell, the coming out, *his Reſurrection*; the ſingle Immerſion would expreſs the *Unity* of the Godhead; while the *Trinity* of Perſons would be ſufficiently denoted by the Perſon's being baptized *in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt*. The Perſon baptized being come out of the Water, was *anointed* the ſecond Time, as *S. Cyril* tells us; and indeed, whatever becomes of the *Unction* that was before, 'tis certain that that which *Tertullian* ſpeaks of as a Part of the ancient Diſcipline, was after the Perſon was baptized; which being done, he had a *white Garment* put upon him, to denote his having put off the *Luſts* of the *Fleſh*, his being *washed* from the Filth and *Defilement* of his former Sins, and his *Reſolution* to maintain a Life of unſpotted *Innocence* and *Purity*, according to that ſolemn and ſtrict *Engagement* which in Baptiſm he had taken upon him. In this they alluded to that of the *Apoſtle*, *that as many as are baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt, i. e.* have engaged in that ſtrict and holy *Course* of Life, which he, both by his *Doctrine* and *Example*, has left to the *World*. Accordingly Perſons baptized are both by the *Apoſtle* and by the *Greek Fathers* frequently called *φωτισμένοι*, or the *enlightned*, becauſe they now profeſſed that they were *become the Children of the Light and of the Day*, and would not return to *Works of Darkneſs* any more;

*De Baptiſm.* c. 7.  
p. 226.

*Cyriſt. Caſeb.* 4.

p. 533.

*Fobius apud Phoſ.*  
cod. 222.

c. 18. col. 597.

*Ambroſ. de iis qui myſter.*

initiat. c. 7.

tom. 4.

p. 425.

more; and this, as they expected Mercy from *Christ* Chap. 10  
 at the great Day; therefore the white Garment was  
 wont to be delivered to them with such a Charge as  
 this, *Receive the white and immaculate Garment, and  
 bring it forth without Spot before the Tribunal of our  
 Lord Jesus Christ, that thou may'st have Eternal Life.*

*Amen.* From the wearing of these white Vestments Greg. Sa-  
 crament-  
 inter Li-  
 turgic.  
 Latinor.  
 tom. 2.  
 p. 269. vid.  
 Eucolog.  
 Græc. in  
 Offic. S.  
 Baptism.  
 p. 357.  
 (as we have observed before) *Pentecost* (which was  
 one of the two annual Times for Baptism) came to  
 be called *Whitesunday*; as also the Sunday after  
*Easter*, (which was the other time) *Dominica in al-  
 bis*, because then they laid this white Robe aside:  
 For it was the Custom for Persons baptized to wear  
 this Garment for a whole Week after they were  
 baptized, and then to put it off and lay it up in the  
 Church, that it might be kept as an Evidence against  
 them, if they violated or denied that *Faith* which  
 they had owned in Baptism; whereof we have a me-  
 morable Instance under the *Arian* Persecution in  
*Africk. Elpidophorus*, a Citizen of *Carthage*, had lived  
 a long time in the Communion of the Church, but  
 apostatizing afterwards to the *Arians*, became a  
 most bitter and implacable Persecutor of the *Ortho-  
 dox* Party: Amongst others whom he summoned to  
 be put to the Rack, was one *Miritas*, a venerable  
 old *Deacon* (who had been the *Undertaker* for him at  
 his Baptism) who being ready to be put upon the  
 Rack, plucked out the white Vestment wherewith  
*Elpidophorus* had been clothed at his Baptism, and  
 with Tears in his Eyes thus openly bespake him  
 before all the People: *These, Elpidophorus, thou  
 Minister of Error, these are the Garments that shall ac-  
 cuse thee, when thou shalt appear before the Majesty of  
 the great Judge; these I will diligently keep as a Testi-  
 mony of that Ruin that shall depress thee down into the  
 Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone; these are they  
 that were girt upon thee, when thou camest pure out of  
 the Holy Font; and these are they that shall bitterly pur-  
 sue*

**Part I.** *ſue thee when thou ſhalt be caſt into the Place of Flames; becauſe thou haſt cloathed thyſelf with Curſing as with a Garment, and haſt caſt off the ſacred Obligation of thy Baptiſm, and the true Faith which thou didſt then profeſs and take upon thee.* Theſe were the main and moſt conſiderable Circumſtances wherewith *Baptiſm* was adminiſtered in the Primitive Church; ſome whereof were by Degrees antiquated and diſuſed: Other Rites there were, that belonged only to particular Churches, and which, as they were ſuddenly taken up, ſo were as quickly laid aſide; others were added in After-times, till they increaſed ſo faſt, that the Uſage and the Number of them became abſurd and burdenſom, as may appear by the Office for Baptiſm in the *Romiſh Ritual* at this Day.

*Bp. Taylor, Dr. Hammond, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Hamner, Mr. Daille,*

As a Conclusion to this Chapter, I had once thought to have treated concerning *Confirmation*, which ever was a conſtant *Appendage* to Baptiſm, and had noted ſome things to that Purpoſe; but ſhall ſuperſede that Labour, finding it ſo often, and ſo fully done by others in juſt Diſcourſes, that nothing conſiderable can be added to them; only I ſhall give this brief and general Account of it: All Perſons baptized in the ancient Church (according to their Age and Capacity, Perſons *adult*, ſome little time after Baptiſm; *Children*, when arrived to Years of competent Ripeneſs and Maturity) were brought to the Biſhop, there further to confirm and ratify that *Compact* which they had made with God in Baptiſm, and by ſome ſolemn Acts of his Miniſtry, to be themſelves *confirmed* and ſtrengthened, by having the *Grace* and *Bleſſing* of God conferr'd upon them, to enable them to diſcharge that great Promiſe and Engagement which they had made to God. This was uſually performed with the *Ceremony* of *Unction*, the Perſon confirmed being anointed by the *Biſhop*, or in his abſence by an inferior *Miniſter*; and indeed *Unction*

tion was an ancient Rite used in the *Jewish Church*, Chap. 10  
 to denote the conferring of Gifts or Graces upon  
 Persons, and thence probably, amongst other Rea-  
 sons (as many other Usages were) might be deri-  
 ved into the *Christian Church*; tho' a *learned Man*  
 is of Opinion, that *Unction* was never used in Con-  
 firmation, but where the Person being in Case of  
 Necessity baptized by some of the inferior Clergy,  
 had not been before anointed; otherwise those  
 who had received complete Baptism, were not af-  
 terwards anointed at their Confirmation, for which  
 the Council of *Orange* is most exprefs and clear. And  
 indeed, that Confirmation was often administred  
 without this *Unction*, no Man can doubt that knows  
 the State of those times; being done only by so-  
 lemn *Imposition* of the Bishop's Hands, and by de-  
 vout and pious Prayers, that the Persons confirm-  
 ed might *grow in Grace and the Knowledge of Christ*,  
 and be enabled to perform those Vows and Purpo-  
 ses, and that Profession of Faith which they had  
 before embraced in Baptism, and then again own'd  
 before the whole Congregation. 'Till this was  
 done, they were not accounted *complete Christians*,  
 nor admitted to the holy *Communion*, nor could chal-  
 lenge any actual Right to those great Privileges of  
*Christianity*. Whence it is that the Ancients so of-  
 ten speak of Confirmation, as that which did *perfect*  
 and consummate *Christians*, as being a Means to  
 confer greater Measures of that Grace that was  
 but begun in Baptism; upon all which Accounts,  
 and almost exactly according to the *Primitive Usage*,  
 it is still retained and practised in our own *Church* at  
 this day. And happy were it for us, were it kept up  
 in its due Power and Vigour; sure I am, 'tis too plain  
 that many of our unhappy Breaches and Controver-  
 sies in Religion, do (if not wholly, in a great Mea-  
 sure) owe their Birth and Rise to the Neglect and  
 Contempt of this excellent Usage of the Church.

C H A P.

Hen. Vales.  
 Annot. ad  
 Euf. Hist.  
 Eccles.  
 p. 135.  
 col. 1.

Can. 1.

## C H A P. XI.

## Of the Lord's Supper, and the Administration of it in the ancient Church.

*The Persons dispensing this Ordinance, who. The Persons communicating, the Baptized or the Faithful. Suspension from this Ordinance according to the Nature of the Offence. The Eucharist sent home to them that could not be present. The Case of Serapion. A Custom in some Places to give the Sacrament to Persons when dead, if they died before they could receive it, and why. The Eucharist kept by Persons at home. Sent abroad. This laid aside, and in its stead Eulogiæ, or pieces of consecrated Bread sent from one Church to another, as Tokens of Communion. The Time of its Administration; sometimes in the Morning, sometimes at Night; vary'd according to the Peace they enjoy'd. How oft they received the Eucharist. At first every Day. This continued, in Cyprian's time, four times a Week. Afterwards less frequented. The usual Places of receiving, the Church; ordinarily, not lawful to consecrate it elsewhere. Oblations made by Persons before their Communicating. Their Agapæ, or Love-feasts, what. Whether before, or after the Sacrament. How long continued in the Church. The Manner of celebrating this Sacrament, collected out of the most ancient Authors. The Holy Kiss. The general Prayer for the Church and the whole World. The Consecration of the Sacrament :*

ment : The Form of it out of S. Ambrose. Chap. II  
 The Bread, common Bread. The Sacramental Wine mix'd with Water. This no necessary Part of the Institution. Why probably used in those Countries. The Posture of Receiving not always the same. Singing Psalms during the Time of the Celebration. Followed with Prayer and Thanksgiving. The whole Action concluded with the Kiss of Peace.

THE Holy Eucharist, or SUPPER of our LORD, being a Rite so solemnly instituted, and of such great Importance in the Christian Religion, had place accordingly amongst the Ancients in their Publick Offices and Devotions. In speaking to which, I shall much-what observe the same Method I did in treating concerning Baptism, considering the Persons, the Time, the Place, and the Manner of its Celebration. The Persons administering were the ordinary Pastors and Governors of the Church, those who were set apart for the Ministration of Holy Offices; the Institution was begun by our Lord himself, and the Administration of it by him committed to his Apostles, and to their ordinary Successors to the End of the World. We find in Tertullian, that they never received it from any but the Hand of the President, which must either be meant of the particular Custom of that Church where he lived, or of Consecration only; for otherwise the Custom was, when the Bishop or President had by solemn Prayers and Blessings consecrated the Sacramental Elements, for the Deacons to distribute them to the People, as well to those that were absent, as to them that were present, as Justin Martyr expressly affirms, and as the Custom generally was

De cor.  
 mil. c. 3  
 p. 102.



Part I.

Apol. 2.  
p. 97.

was afterwards. For the *Persons communicating* at this Sacrament, at first the *whole Church, or Body of Christians*, within such a Space, that had embraced the Doctrine of the Gospel, and baptized into the Faith of *Christ*, used constantly to meet together at the *Lord's Table*. As Christians multiply'd, and a more exact Discipline became necessary, none were admitted to this Ordinance 'till they had arrived at the Degree of the *Faithful*; for whoever were in the State of *Catechumens, i. e.* under Instruction in order to their Baptism, or by reason of any heinous Crime; under the Censures and Suspension of the Church, and not yet passed thro' the several Stages of the *Penitents*; might not communicate, and were therefore commanded to *depart* the Church, when the rest went to the Celebration of the Sacrament: For looking upon the *Lord's Supper* as the highest and most solemn Act of Religion, they thought they could never take Care enough in the dispensing of it. Accordingly, whoever were found guilty of any scandalous Fault, was, according to the Nature of the Offence, debarr'd the Communion, a shorter or a longer Time, and sometimes all their Life, not to be reconciled and taken into the Communion of the Church, till they had continued their Repentance to their Death-bed. As for those Persons that could not be present, either thro' Distance of Place, Sickness, or any other just Cause, the *Eucharist* was wont to be sent *home* to them, some little Pieces of the *consecrated Bread* *dipt* in the Sacramental *Cup*, which were usually carry'd by the *Deacon* or some inferior Officer of the Church, or in Cases of Necessity, by any other Person: As in the Case of *Serapion*, of whom *Dionysius of Alexandria* relates, That having been all his Life a good Man, at last *lapsed* in a Time of Persecution, and tho' he oft desired Reconciliation, yet none would

Apud Eu-  
sebi. Hist.  
Eccles. l. 6.  
c. 44. p. 246.

com-

communicate with him. Not long after, he was seized upon by a mortal Sickness, deprived of the Use of his Speech and Senses; but coming to himself after four Days, he sends his Nephew, a little Boy, late at Night, for one of the *Presbyters* to come to him; the Minister was at that time sick, but considering the Exigence of the Case, gives the Boy a little Piece of the *Eucharist*, bids him to moisten it with a little Water, and so give it him in his Mouth, which he did; and immediately the old Man chearfully departed this Life. For the better understanding of which, we are to observe, that those who had lapsed into Idolatry were to undergo a very long time of Penance, and were not many times admitted to the Communion, till they were near their Death; and because it sometimes happen'd that they were overtaken with sudden Death, before the Sacrament could be administered to them, thence a Custom sprung up, to give it them *after they were dead*; which they did doubtless upon this Ground, that they might give some kind of Evidence, that those Persons died in the Peace and Communion of the Church; though this Usage was afterwards by many Councils abrogated and laid aside. I take no Notice in this Place of their giving the Eucharist to *new baptized Infants*, the Case being so commonly known and obvious. In those early times, nothing was more common than for Christians either to carry, or to have sent to them some Parts of the *Eucharist*, which they kept in some decent Place in their Houses against all emergent Occasions; especially to fortify and strengthen their Faith in times of Persecution, and to increase Kindness and Amity with one another; whence one that was well versed in *Church-Antiquities*, conjectures, that whenever they entertained Friends or Strangers, they used before every Meal, first to give them some Parts of the holy

Chap. II  
 Vid. Conc.  
 3: Carth.  
 Can. 6.  
 Conc. 6. in  
 Trull.  
 Can. 83:

Joa. Fromb.  
 Epist. de  
 φιλοστο-  
 μαις Veter.  
 p. 6.

*Eucharist*,

**Part I.** *Eucharist*, as being the greatest *Badge*, the strongest *Band* of true Love and Friendship in the World. Besides these *Parcels* of the *Sacramental Elements*, there were wont at the Celebration of the Communion, to be *Pieces of Bread* (which remained of the Offerings of the People) which being solemnly *blessed* by the Bishop, might be given to those who had no Right to be at the *Lord's Table*, as to the *Catechumens*, and such like, and were to them instead of the Sacrament. These *Pieces* were properly called *Eulogia*, because set apart by solemn *Benediction*, and were sent up and down the Towns and Villages round about, to testify and represent their mutual Union and Fellowship with one another; nay, and sometimes from Churches in one Country to those that were in another; which was also done by the *Eucharist* itself: For so *Irenæus* in a Letter to Pope *Victor*, tells us, that the Ministers of Churches (tho' differing in some little Circumstances) did yet use to send the *Eucharist* to one another; which Custom is also taken Notice of by *Zonaras*. But because the carrying the *Sacramental Elements* up and down the World, was thought not so well to consist with the Reverence and Veneration that is due to this solemn Ordinance; therefore it was abolish'd by the *Laodicean Synod*, and these *Eulogia* or *Pieces of Bread* appointed at *Easter* to be sent up and down in their room.

*Euf. Hist.*  
*Ecc. l. 5.*  
c. 23. p. 193.

Can. 14.

For the *Time*, the next Circumstance, when they met together for this solemn Action, it was in general at their Publick Assemblies, on the *Lord's-day* always, or the first day of the Week, as we find it in the History of the *Apostles Acts*; besides other Days, and especially *Saturday*; on which Day all the Churches in the World (those of *Rome* only and *Alexandria* excepted) used to celebrate this Sacrament, as the *Historian* informs us. What time of the Day they took to do it, is not altogether

gether so certain. Our blessed *Saviour* and his **Chap. I I**  
 Apostles celebrated at Night, at the time of the *Jewish* Passover; but whether the *Apostles* and their *Socr. l. 4.*  
 immediate Successors punctually observed this *Circumstance*, may be doubted; 'tis probable that the *C. 22. p. 286.*  
 Holy *Eucharist*, which *S. Paul* speaks of in the Church of *Corinth*, was solemnized in the *Morning*; the Apostles calling it a *Supper*, (as *Chrysostom* thinks) not because it was done in the *Evening*, *In loc.*  
 but the more effectually to put them in Mind of the Time when our *Lord* did institute those Holy Mysteries. *Tertullian* assures us, in his Time 'twas *Decor. mil.*  
 done *in tempore victus*, about *Supper-time*, (as all understand him) and very often in the *Morning* *C. 3. p. 102.*  
*before Day*, when they held their Religious Assemblies; of which *Pliny* also takes Notice in his Letter *Lib. 10.*  
 to the *Emperor*. For in those Times of Persecution, when they were hunted out by the inquisitive Malice of their Enemies, they were glad of the remotest Corners, the most unseasonable Hours, when they could meet to perform the joint Offices of Religion. But this communicating at Evening or at Night, either lasted only during the extreme Heats of Persecution, or at least wore off apace; for *Cyprian* expressly pleads against it, affirming, *Ad Cecil.*  
 that it ought to be in the *Morning*; and so indeed *Ep. 63.*  
 in a short time it prevailed over most Parts of the *p. 104.*  
 World, except in some Places of *Egypt* near *Alexandria*; of which *Socrates* tells us, that after they *Ut supra,*  
 had sufficiently feasted themselves in the *Evening*, *p. 287.*  
 they were wont to receive the Sacrament. Under this Circumstance of Time we may take Occasion to consider, how oft in those Days, they usually met at this Table. And at first (while the *Spirit of Christianity* was yet warm and vigorous, and the Hearts of Men passionately inflamed with the Love of *Christ*) 'tis more than probable they communicated *every Day*; or as oft as they came together

Chap. 10 ther for Publick Worship, infomuch that the *Canons*  
*Can. 9.* *Apostolical* and the Synod of *Antioch* threaten eve-  
*Concil. Antioch. Can. 2.* ry one of the Faithful with Excommunication, who  
 came to Church to hear the Holy Scriptures, but  
 staid not to *participate* of the *Lord's Supper*. The  
*Vid. Ep. Cyp. ad Thaboit. Ep. 56. circa inuit. p. 89.* Eye of their Minds was then almost wholly fixed  
 upon the Memory of their *crucified Saviour*; and  
 the oftner they fed at his Table, the stronger and  
 healthier they found themselves, and the more  
 able to encounter with those fierce Oppositions  
 that were made against them. This Custom of re-  
 ceiving the Sacrament *every Day* continued some  
 considerable time in the Church, tho' in some Pla-  
 ces longer than in others, especially in the *Western*  
 Churches. From *Cyprian* we are fully assured 'twas  
 so in his time: *We receive the Eucharist every Day*  
 (says he) *as the Food that nourishes us to Salvation*.  
 The like *S. Ambrose* seems to intimate, of *Milan*,  
 whereof he was Bishop; nay, and after him *S. Hiero-*  
*tom. 2.* *rom* tells us, 'twas the Custom of the Church of  
*De Serm. Dom. in mont. 1. 2. tom. 4. col. 1147. Ep. 118. ad Fan. c. 3. col. 557. Basl. Ep. 289. ad Casariam. Patris. tom. 3. p. 279.* *Rome*; and *S. Augustin* seems pretty clearly to in-  
 timate, that it was not unusual in his time. In the  
 Churches of the *East* this Custom wore off sooner,  
 tho' more or less, according as the Primitive Zeal  
 did abate and decay; *S. Basl* telling us, that in  
 his time they communicated *four times a Week*, on  
 the *Lord's-day*, *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday*;  
 yea, and upon other days too, if the *Memory* or  
 Festival of any Martyr fell upon them. After-  
 wards, as the Power of Religion began more sen-  
 sibly to decline, and the Commonness of the thing  
 begat some Contempt, (*Manna* itself was *sighted*  
 after once it was rained down every day) this Sa-  
 crament was more rarely frequented; and from  
 once a Day it came to once or twice a *Week*, and  
 then fell to once a *Month*, and after for the most  
 part to *thrice a Year*, at the *three great Solemnities*  
 of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Whitsunide*. To so  
 great

great a Coldness and Indifferency did the Piety and Devotion of *Christians* grow, after once the true Primitive Temper and Spirit of the Gospel had left the World!

Chap. II



Concerning the third Circumstance, the *Place* where this Holy Supper was kept, much need not be said, it being a main Part of their publick Worship, always performed in the Place of their Religious Assemblies. 'Twas instituted by our *Saviour* in a private *House*, because of its *Analogy* to the *Jewish Passover*, and because the Necessity of that Time would not otherwise admit. By the *Apostles*, and *Christians* with them, 'twas celebrated in the Houses of Believers, generally in an *upper Room*, set apart by the Bounty of some Christian, for the Uses of the Church; and which (as I have formerly proved) was the constant *separate* Place of Religious Worship for all the *Christians* that dwelt thereabouts. Under the Severities of great Persecutions they were forced to fly to the *Mountains*, or to their *Cryptæ*, or *Vaults* under Ground, and to celebrate the Sacrament at the *Tombs* of Martyrs, and over the *Asbes* of the Dead. Churches growing up into some Beauty and Regularity, several Parts of the Divine Office began to have several Places assigned to them; the Communion Service being removed to the upper or *East End* of the Church, and there performed upon a Table of Wood, which afterwards was changed into one of Stone; and both of them not uncommonly, though *metaphorically*, by the Fathers stiled *Altars*: And the *Eucharist* itself, in later Times especially, the *Sacrament of the Altar*. This Place was called *δυσιασήμερον*, and was fenced in with *Rails*, within which the *Clergy* received the Sacrament, as the *Laity* did without. Here it was that they all used to meet at this Heavenly Banquet; for out of this Place they allowed not the Celebration of the Sacrament, (a thing expressly

Q

presly

Part I. presly forbidden by the *Laodicean Council*) unless  
*Can. 58.* in Cases of great Necessity ; and therefore 'twas  
 one of the principal Articles for which the Synod  
*Socr. l. 2. c. 43.* of *Gangra* deposed *Eustathius* from his Bishoprick,  
*p. 156.* that he kept *private Meetings*, persuading some that  
*Conc. Gangr.* were averse to the *publick Assemblies* of the Church,  
*Can. 5, 6.* that they might communicate and receive the Sa-  
 crament at *Home*.

We come last of all to consider the *Manner*  
 how the *Eucharist* was celebrated in the ancient  
 Church ; but before we describe that, we are to  
 take Notice, that after the Service of the *Cate-*  
*Irenæus*  
*adv. Her. l. 4. c. 34. p. 362.*  
*Just. Martyr. Ap. 2. p. 98.*  
*De Oper. & Eleemos. p. 218.*  
 chumens, and before the Beginning of that of the  
*Faithful*, at which the *Eucharist* was administred,  
 the Custom was to present their *Offerings* ; every  
 one, according to his Ability, bringing some  
 Gift as the *first Fruits* of his Increase, which was  
 by the Minister laid upon the *Altar* or Communi-  
 on-Table, none of them then thinking it fit to ap-  
 pear before the Lord empty. And therefore *S. Cyprian*  
 severely chides a rich Widow of his time, who  
 came without giving any thing to the *Poor Man's*  
*Box*, and did partake of their *Offerings* without  
 bringing any *Offering* of her own. These *Oblations*  
 were designed to the Uses of the Church, for the  
 Maintenance of the Ministry, and the Relief of  
 the Poor ; especially out of them were taken the  
*Bread* and *Wine* for the Sacramental Elements, the  
 Bread being no other than *common Bread*, such as  
 served for their ordinary Uses ; there being then  
 no Notice taken of what has for so many hundred  
 Years, and still is to this Day fiercely disputed be-  
 tween the *Greek* and the *Latin Church*, whether it  
 ought to be Leavened or Unleavened Bread. Out  
 of these *Oblations* also 'tis probable they took ( at  
 least sent Provisions extraordinary) to furnish the  
*common Feast*, which in those Days they constantly  
 had at the Celebration of the Sacrament, where  
 the

the Rich and the Poor feasted together at the same Table. These were called *Apagæ* or *Love-Feasts*, (mentioned by S. *Jude*, and plainly enough intimated by S. *Paul*) because hereat they testified and confirmed their mutual *Love* and *Kindness*, a thing never more proper than at the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*; which is not only a *Seal* of our *Peace* with God, but a *Sign* and a *Pledge* of our *Communion* and *Fellowship* with one another. Whether this Banquet was *before* or *after* the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, is not easy to determine; 'tis probable, that in the *Apostles* time, and the Age after them, it was *before* it, in Imitation of our *Saviour's* Institution, who celebrated the Sacrament after Supper: And S. *Paul* taxing the Abuses of the Church of *Corinth*, reproves them, *That when they came together for the Lord's Supper, they did not one tarry for another, but every one took his own Supper, i. e.* that Provision which he had brought from Home for the common Feast; which was devoured with great Irregularity and Excess; some eating and drinking all they brought, others (the Poor especially that came late) having nothing left, one being hungry, and another drunken. All this, 'tis plain, was done before the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, which was never administered till the whole Church met together. That therefore which the Apostle reproves and corrects, is their Indecency and Intemperance, commanding both Rich and Poor to *wait for one another*, and to eat this common Meal together, that they might the more orderly and unanimously pass to the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*. In After-Ages this Feast was not till the Communion was over, when the Congregation feasted together, and so departed: And so *Chrysostom* expressly tells us 'twas in his Days. Besides, nothing is more obvious, than that it was customary in those Times for Persons to *fast* till they had received

Chap. II

I Cor. II.

Hom. 27.  
in I.  
ad Cor.  
p. 559.



Part I. ceived the Communion. I know a very learned  
 Man is of Opinion, that these *Love-Feasts* were  
 not kept at the same time with the Celebration  
 of the *Eucharist*; but besides that his Arguments  
 are not conclusive, the whole Stream of learned  
 Writers runs full against him. These Feasts con-  
 tinued for some Ages, till great Inconveniencies  
 being found in them, they were prohibited to be  
 kept in Churches by the *Laodicean* Synod, and af-  
 ter that by the Council of *Carthage*; which though  
 but Provincial or National Councils, yet the De-  
 crees were afterwards ratified by the sixth *Trullan*  
 Council, and the Custom in a short time dwindled  
 into nothing.

These things being premised, the Sacramental  
 Elements prepared, and all things ready, they  
 proceeded to the Action itself, which (following  
 for the main, the Account that is given us by  
 S. Cyril of *Jerusalem*, and taking in what we find in  
 others) was usually managed after this Manner:  
 First, The *Deacon* brought Water to the *Bishop*  
 and the *Presbyters* that stood round about the Ta-  
 ble, to wash their Hands; signifying the *Purity*  
 that ought to be in those that draw nigh to God,  
 according to that of the *Psalmist*, *I will wash my*  
*Hands in Innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar,*  
*O Lord.* Then the *Deacon* cried out aloud, *Mutu-*  
*ally embrace and kiss one another.* This *holy Kiss* was  
 very ancient, commonly used in the Apostles times,  
 and in the succeeding Ages of the Church; but  
 especially at the Sacrament, as a Sign of the un-  
 feigned *Reconciliation* of their Minds, and that all  
 Injuries and Offences were blotted out, according  
 to our Lord's Command; *When thou bringest thy*  
*Gift to the Altar, and remembrest that thy Brother hath*  
*ought against thee, leave thy Gift before the Altar and*  
*go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then*  
*come and offer thy Gift.* This being done, they fell

to

to Prayer, the whole Congregation praying together with the Minister, (which therefore *Justin Martyr* calls the *Common Prayer*, the Form whereof in the *Apostolical Constitutions* is described at large) for the *universal Peace* and Welfare of the Church, for the *Tranquillity* and Quietness of the World, for the *Prosperity* of the Age, for *wholsome Weather*, and *fruitful Seasons*, for all Sorts of *Persons*, for *Kings* and *Emperors*, and *all in Authority*, for *Soldiers* and *Armies*, for *Believers* and *Unbelievers*, for *Friends* and *Companions*, for the *Sick* and *Distressed*; and in short, for all that stood in Need of Help. This general Prayer is frequently mentioned by the ancient Fathers, as that which was at the Beginning of the Communion Service; tho' *S. Cyril* places it a little later, as doubtless it was in his time. After this, followed the mutual Salutation of the Minister and People, the *Minister* saying, *The Lord be with you*; to whom the *People* answered, *And with thy Spirit*. The *Minister* cryed, *Lift up your Hearts*, (nothing being more suitable, says *S. Cyril*, at this time, than that we should shake off all worldly Cares, and exalt our Hearts to God in Heaven) the *People* truly assenting and yielding to it, answered, *We lift them up unto the Lord*. The *Minister* proceeded, *Let us give Thanks unto the Lord*, (for what more fit than Thankfulness to God, and a high Resentment of such Favours and Blessings?) To this the *People* returned, *It is meet and just so to do*. Whereupon the *Minister* proceeded to the Prayer of Consecration, (the Form whereof we have in the *Apostolical Constitutions*) wherein he expressed huge Thankfulness to God for the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of his Son, for the Shedding of his Blood for us, and the Celebration of it in this Sacrament; for condescending to admit them to such mighty Benefits, and praying for a closer Unity to one another in the same mystical

Q 3

Body;

Chap. II

*Ibid.*

L. 8. c. 10.

p. 1011.

Tert. Apol.

c. 39.

Aug. ep.

118.

Const.

Apos. l. 2.

c. 57.

p. 881.

Ib. p. 538.

*Cyril.*

p. 537.

*Chrys. in*

c. 9. 1 ad

Cor. Hom.

36. p. 652.

2 ad Cor.

c. 8. Hom.

18. p. 873.

*Cypr. de*

Or. dom.

195.

L. 7. c. 26.

p. 979.

*Just.**Mart.*

ib. p. 98.

Part I. Body ; concluding usually with the *Lord's-Prayer*, and the hearty and universal Acclamation of *Amen* by all that were present. This done, the *Minister* cried out, ΤΑ ΑΓΙΑ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΙΣ, *Holy Things belong to holy Persons* ; the *People* answering, *There is one Holy, one Lord Jesus Christ*. Then he exhorted them to a due Participation of the holy Mysteries, which *Cyril* tells us was done by way of a Divine Hymn, singing, *Come taste and see that the Lord is good*.

*Cyril.*  
p. 541.  
*Const.*  
*Apos.*  
l. 8. c. 13.  
p. 1022.

*Ib.* p. 545.

*De Sacr.*  
l. 4. c. 5.  
p. 439.

After this, the *Bishop* or *Presbyter* took the Sacramental Elements, sanctified them by a solemn Benediction. The Form of *Consecration* we have in *S. Ambrose* : *Lord, make this Oblation now prepared for us, to become a reasonable and acceptable Sacrifice ; this, which is the Figure of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ ; who the Day before he suffered, took the Bread in his sacred Hands, looked up to Heaven, giving Thanks to thee, O Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, blessed it, and having broken it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take eat all of it ; for this is my Body which is broken for many. Likewise also, after Supper, he took the Cup that very Day before he suffered, looking up to Heaven, giving Thanks to thee, Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God ; and having blessed it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take and drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood*. After this, he first brake the *Bread*, and delivering to the *Deacon*, he distributed it to the *Communicants* ; and after that the *Cup*, which was likewise delivered to them : For the Custom of communicating under *one kind* only, as is used in the Church of *Rome*, was then unknown unto the World, nay, and for above a thousand Years after *Christ*. In some Cases ('tis true) they dipt the *Bread* in the *Wine*, as in the Case of baptized *Infants*, to whom they administered the *Eucharist*, in those Primitive Times, and to very weak

*Just.*  
*Mart.*  
*ubi sup.*



weak dying Persons who would not otherwise have swallowed the Bread ; and that by this means they might keep the Sacrament at home against all emergent Occasions ; and this probably might, in time, make the way easier for introducing the Sacrament under the kind of Bread only. Their Sacramental Wine was generally diluted and mixed with *Water*, as is evident from *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Cyprian* and others. *Cyprian* in a long Epistle expressly pleads for it, as the only true and warrantable Tradition, derived from *Christ* and his *Apostles* ; and endeavours to find out many *mystical* Significations intended by it, and seems to intimate as if he had been peculiarly warned of God to observe it according to that Manner : An Argument which that good Man often produces as his Warrant to knock down a Controversy, when other Arguments were too weak to do it. But altho' it should be granted, that our *Saviour* did so use it in the Institution of the Supper, (the Wines of those *Eastern* Countries being very *strong* and *generous* ; and that our *Saviour*, as all sober and temperate Persons, might probably abate its Strength with *Water*, of which nevertheless the History of the Gospel is wholly silent) yet this being a thing in itself *indifferent* and accidental, and no way necessary to the Sacrament, could not be obligatory to the Church, but might either be done or let alone. The Posture wherein they received it, was not always the same : The *Apostles*, at the Institution of it by our *Saviour*, received it (according to the Custom of the *Jews* at Meals, at that time) lying along on their Sides upon Beds round about the Table. How long this way of receiving lasted, I find not : In the time of *Dionysius Alexandrinus* the Custom was, to stand at the *Lord's Table*, as he intimates in a Letter to Pope *Xystus* ; other Gestures being taken in, as the Prudence and

Ut supra  
Iren. l. 4.  
c. 57.  
l. 5. c. 2.  
Ad Cæcil.  
Ep. 63.  
p. 100.

lb. p. 105.

Apud Euf.  
Hist. Ecc.  
l. 7. c. 9.  
p. 255.

**Part I.** Piety of the Governors of the Church judged most decent and comely for such a solemn Action. The Bread and Wine were delivered into the Hands of those that communicated, and not, as the Superstition of After-Ages brought in, *injected* or thrown into their *Mouths*. Cyril tells us, that in his time they used to stretch out their *right Hand*, putting their *left Hand* under it; either to prevent any of the Sacramental Bread from falling down, or, as some would have it, hereby to shadow out a kind of Figure of a *Cross*.

Pag. 545.  
Vid. Conc.  
6. in Trull.  
Can. 101.

Lib. 8.  
c. 13.  
p. 1023.

Vid. Dion.  
Areop. de  
Ecc. Hie-  
rarch. c. 3.  
p. 284.  
l. 7. c. 27.  
p. 980. &  
l. 8. c. 15.  
Cyril.  
p. 546.  
De Orat.  
c. 14.

During the time of Administration, which in populous Congregations was no little time, they sung *Hymns* and *Psalms*; (the Compiler of the *Apostolical Constitutions* particularly mentions the 33d Psalm) which being done, the whole Action was solemnly concluded with Prayer and Thanksgiving, (the Form whereof is likewise set down by the Author of the *Apostolical Constitutions*) that God had thought them worthy to participate of such sacred Mysteries; and the People being blessed by the Bishop or the Minister of the Assembly, and having again saluted each other with a *Kiss of Peace*, as a Testimony of their hearty Love and Kindness, (whence *Tertullian* calls this Kiss *signaculum orationis*, the *Seal of Prayer*) the Assembly broke up, and they returned to their own Houses. This, for the main, was the Order wherein the first *Christians* celebrated this Holy Sacrament; for tho' I do not pretend to set down every thing in that precise and punctual Order wherein they were always done, (and how should I, when they often varied according to *Time* and *Place*?) yet I doubt not but whoever examines the Usages of those Times, will find that 'tis done as near as the Nature of the Thing would bear.

*The End of the First Part.*

Primitivè

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Primitive Christianity :  
OR, THE  
**RELIGION**  
OF THE  
Ancient Christians  
IN THE  
*First AGES of the GOSPEL.*

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PART II.

*The Religion of the Primitive Christians, as  
to those Vertues that respect themselves.*

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CHAP. I.

Of their Humility.

*The second Branch of Religion comprehended  
under the Notion of Sobriety, and discover'd  
in some great Instances of it. The proper Ten-  
dency of the Christian Religion to beget Hu-  
mility. This Divine Temper eminently visi-  
ble in the first Christians: Made good out of  
their*



*their Writings. The great Humility and Self-Denial of Cyprian. What Nazianzen reports to this purpose of his own Father; their modest declining that just Commendation that was due to them. Many who suffer'd, refused the honourable Title of Martyrs. Nazianzen's Vindication of them against the Suggestions of Julian the Apostate. The singular Meekness and Condescension of Nebridius, amidst all his Honours and Relations at Court. Their stooping to the vilest Offices, and for the meanest Persons: Dressing and Ministring to the Sick, washing the Saints Feet, kissing the Martyrs Chains. The remarkable Humility of Placilla the Empress, and the Lady Paula. An excellent Discourse of Gregory Nyssen's against Pride.*

**N**EXT to *Piety* towards God, succeeds that Part of Religion that immediately respects *ourselves*, expressed by the Apostle under the general Name of *Sobriety*, or the keeping ourselves within those Bounds and Measures which God has set us; Vertues, for which the Primitive Christians were no less renowned than for the other. Amongst them I take Notice of their *Humility*, their *Contempt of the World*, their *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, their *Courage* and *Constancy*, and their exemplary *Patience* under Sufferings. To begin with the first.

*Humility* is a Vertue that seems more proper to the Gospel; for tho' *Philosophers*, now and then, spake a few good Words concerning it, yet it found no real Entertainment in their Lives, being generally *animalia gloriæ*, Creatures puffed up with Wind and Emptiness, and that *sacrificed* only to their own Praise and Honour: Whereas the Doctrines of the *Gospel*

*Gospel* immediately tend to level all proud and swelling Apprehensions, to plant the World with Mildness and Modesty, and to *clothe Men with Humility, and the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit*. By these we are taught to dwell at home, and to converse more familiarly with ourselves, to be acquainted with our own Deficiencies and Imperfections, and rather to admire *others* than to advance *ourselves*: For the proper Notion of Humility lies in a low and mean *Estimation* of ourselves, and an answerable Carriage towards others; *not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think*, nor being unwilling that other Men should value us at the same Rate. Now, that this was the excellent Spirit of *Primitive Christianity*, will appear, if we consider how earnestly they protested against all *ambitious* and vain-glorious Designs, how cheerfully they condescended to the *meanest* Offices and Employments, how studiously they declined all Advantages of *Applause* and Credit, how ready they were rather to *give* Praise to others, than to take it to themselves, in *Honour preferring one another*. S. Clemens highly commends his *Corinthians*, *Epist. ad Corinth.* that all of them were of an humble Temper, in nothing given to Vain-glory, *subject* unto others *P. 3.* rather than *subjecting* others to themselves, ready to give rather than receive. Accordingly, he ex- *Pag. 17.* horts them (especially after they were fallen into a little Faction and Disorder) still to be humble-minded, to lay aside all Haughtiness and Pride, Foolishness and Anger; and not to glory in *Wis-* *Pag. 20.* *dom, Strength, or Riches*, but *let him that glories glory in the Lord*; and to follow the Example of our Lord, the *Scepter* of the Majesty of God; who came not in the vain Boasting of Arrogance and Pride, altho' able to do whatsoever he pleased; but in great Meekness and Humility of Mind, appearing in the World without any *Form or*  
Come-



Part II. *Comeliness, or any Beauty that he should be desired; suffering himself to be despised and rejected of Men, who esteemed him not, and hid, as it were, their Faces from him; who counted himself a Worm, and no Man, and was accordingly made a Reproach of Men, and the Derision of the People; all they that saw him, laughing him to Scorn, shooting out the Lip, and shaking the Head at him.* Now, if our Lord himself was so humble-minded, what should we be, who are come under the Yoke of his Grace? This, and much more to the same purpose, has that Venerable and *Apostolical* Man in that admirable Epistle; wherein he does lively describe and recommend the meek and excellent Spirit of the Gospel.

*Epist. ad Zen. & Seren. p. 505.* Justin the Martyr treads in the very same Steps: He tells us, that we are to shun all *sinister* Suspicions of others, and to be very careful what *Opinion*

*Ibid. p. 508, 509.*

we entertain of them: That we are to be of a meek and unpassionate Mind, not *envying* the good Esteem and Respect which others have, nor ambitiously affecting, or putting ourselves forward upon any Service or Employment: That we are humbly to submit ourselves, not in *Words* only, but in all our *Actions*; so as that we may appear not to be *Impostors* and *Dissemblers*, but mild and undefigning Persons; for whoever would govern his Life aright, must be modest and *unpragmatical*; not angry and contentious, but silently consider with himself, what is best and fittest to be done: That we are to account others wise and prudent, and not to think ourselves the only discreet and understanding Persons: That we must not despise their Admonitions; but hearken to their Counsels whenever they are just and true. When some in *S. Cyprian's* time had made a noble and resolute Confession of *Christ* in the Face of the greatest Danger, lest they should be *exalted above measure* in their own Thoughts, he bids them remember, accord-

*Epist. 5. Presb. & Diacon. p. 13.*

according to the Discipline of the Gospel, to be **Chap. I.**  
 humble, and modest, and quiet, that they might  
 preserve the Honour of their Name; and be as  
 glorious in their *Actions*, as they had been in their  
*Words* and *Confessions* of Christ; that they should  
 imitate their Lord, who was not more proud,  
 but more humble at the time of his Passion, *wash-*  
*ing his Apostles Feet*; and follow the Counsel and  
 Pattern of *S. Paul*, who in his greatest Sufferings  
 continued meek and humble, and did not arro-  
 gate any thing to himself, no not after he had  
 been honour'd with a Translation into *Paradise*  
 and the *third Heavens*. And great Reason he had  
 to press this with all possible Vehemency at that  
 time, lest Christians by their turbulent and unquiet  
 Carriage should provoke the Heathen Magistrates  
 to greater Severity against them: And indeed  
 who could better do it than he, who was himself  
 so eminent for Humility? For tho' some *Schisma-*  
*tical* Persons (whose Wildness and Insolence he  
 sought to restrain) endeavour'd to insinuate that  
 he was not so humble as became a Man of his  
 Rank and Order, and as were our *Lord* and his  
 Apostles; yet observe how he vindicates himself  
 in a Letter to *Pupianus*, the Head of the Party: As *Epist. 69.*  
 for my Humility (*says he*) 'tis sufficiently known, *p. 116.*  
 not only to the Brethren, but the *Gentiles* them-  
 selves do see and respect it, and thou thyself didst  
 know and honour it, whilst thou wast yet in the  
 Church, and didst communicate with me: But  
 which of us, I pray, is farthest from Humility; I,  
 who daily serve the Brethren, and receive those  
 who come unto the Church with all Joy and Kind-  
 ness; or *Thou*, who makest thyself a *Bishop* over  
 thy *Bishop*, and pretendest to be a Judge appoint-  
 ed by God over him who is thy Judge? And in-  
 deed how far the good Man was from any Designs  
 of Greatness and Domination, appear'd in this,  
 that

**Part II.** that when the People had universally chosen him to be *Bishop*, he privately withdrew and retired himself, reckoning himself unworthy of so great and honourable an Office, and giving way to others, whose Age and Experience rendred them (as he thought) much fitter for it: But the Impor-tunity of the People being heightned into a greater Impatiency, and having found where he was, they beset the House, and block'd up all Passages of Escape till they had found him, and forced it upon him. And with no less Humility did he be-have himself in the Discharge of it: When con-sulted by some of his *Clergy* what they should do in the Case of the *Lapsed*, he answers, That being now alone he could say nothing to it, for that he had determined from his first entring upon his Bi-shoprick, not to judge any thing by his own *pri-vate* Order, without the Counsel of the *Clergy*, and the Consent of the *People*. So meanly did that wise and excellent Man think of himself, and so much did he attribute to the Judgment and Con-currence of those that were below him.

*Epist.* 5.  
p. 13, 14.

*Orat.* 19. in  
laud. Patr.  
p. 300.

*Nazianzen* reports of his Father (a *Bishop* too) that amongst other Vertues he was peculiarly re-markable for *Humility*; which he did not express *Philosopher-like* in little Arts of external *Modes*, and Carriage, putting on a feign'd Behaviour, like *Women*, who having no *natural* Beauty of their own, fly to the *Additional*s of *Dresses* and *Paintings*, *ἡ ἐὺχρη-μοσύνην ἀχρήμονες*, becoming more deform'd by their ascititious Beauty. His *Humility* consisted not in his *Dress*, but in the *Constancy* of his *Mind*; not in the *hanging down* of his *Head*, or the *Softness* of his *Tone*, or the *Demureness* of his *Look*, or the *Gra-vity* of his *Beard*, or the *Shaving* of his *Head* [the *Cropping of his Hair*] or the *Manner of his Gate*; but in the *Frame* and *Temper* of his *Soul*, being as *humble* in his *Mind*, as he was *sublime* and excel-lent

lent in his Life ; and when no Man could arrive at the Perfection of his Vertues, yet every one was admitted to a Freedom of Converse with him. Both in his Garb and Diet he equally avoided *Pomp* and *Sordidness* ; and tho' a great RefRAINER of his Appetite, would yet seem not to do it, lest he should be thought plainly to design Glory to himself, by being *needlestly* singular above other Men. How industriously do we find them many times disowning that deserved Praise and Commendation that was due to them ? How modestly does *Justin Martyr* decline his Adversary's Commendation of the Acuteness and Elegancy of his Reasonings ? resolving all into the *Grace of God*, that enabled him to understand and expound the *Scriptures*, of which Grace he there persuades all Men freely and fully to become Partakers with him. Of the *Confessors* in the time of the Persecution under *M. Aurelius*, *Eusebius*, out of the Relation which the Churches of *Vienna* and *Lyons* in *France* sent to the Churches in *Asia*, tells us, that altho' they had often born witness to the Truth at the dearest Rate of any thing on this side Death, tho' they had been frequently thrown to wild *Beasts*, exposed to the *Fire*, and the Remains of Wounds and Violence were visible in all Parts of their Bodies ; yet in Imitation of the great Humility of the Son of God, they would not after all this (which yet was not uncommon in those times) either call themselves *Martyrs*, or suffer others to call them so ; but if any of the Brethren either by Letter or Discourse had saluted them by that Title, they would severely reprove and check them for it ; acknowledging themselves at best but vile and despicable *Confessors*, and with Tears begging of the Brethren to be instant with God by Prayer, that they might perfect all by a real Martyrdom. Hence it was, that when *Julian* the *Apostate* refused to proceed against the Christians

by

Part II. by open Persecution, as his Predecessors had done, because he envy'd them the *Honour* of being *Martyrs*; *Nazianzen* answers, that he was greatly mistaken if he supposed they suffer'd all this, rather out of a Desire of *Glory*, than a Love of *Truth*. Such a foolish and vain-glorious Humour might indeed be found amongst his *Philosophers*, and the best of his Party, many of whom have put themselves upon strange Attempts, meerly to gain the Honour of a Name, and the Reputation of *Divinity*: But for Christians, they had rather *die* in the Cause of Religion, altho' no Man should ever know of it, than to live and flourish amongst others with the greatest Honour and Esteem; it being our great Solicitude not to please *Men*, but only to obtain Honour from God: Nay, some of us (*says he*) arrive to that *heroick* Pitch, as to desire an intimate *Union* unto God meerly for himself, and not for the Honours and Rewards that are laid up for us in the other World. Memorable is the Humility of the great *Constantine*, that when all Mens Mouths were filled with the honourable Mention of his Vertues, and one took upon him to praise him to his Face, telling him how happy he was whom God had thought worthy of so great an *Empire* in this World, and for whom he reserved a much better *Kingdom* in the next; he was highly offended with the Address, and advised the Man that he should not presume to talk so any more; but rather turn his *Praises* of him into *Prayers* to God for him, that both here and hereafter he might be thought worthy to be numbred amongst the Servants of God.

*De Vit.*  
*Constant.*  
*lib. 4. c. 48.*  
*p. 551.*

† *Ad Sal-*  
*vinam Ne-*  
*bridii vi-*  
*duam, de*  
*viduit. ser-*  
*vand.*  
*p. 75.*  
*tom. 1.*

I cannot but take Notice of what † *S. Hierom* reports of *Nebrius*, a young *Roman Gentleman*, Cousin-German to the *Empress*, by whom he was brought up in the Palace, Play-fellow and Companion to the young Emperors (to whom he was

very

ery dear) trained up with them in the same Studies and Arts of Education; that notwithstanding all this, and that he was then in the Prime and Vigour of his Youth, yet he was neither *debauched* by Intemperance, amidst the Delicacies and Pleasures of the Court, nor *swell'd* with Pride, reflecting upon others with a surly Look; but rendered himself amiable unto all: The Princes he loved as Brethren, and *revered* as Lords; their Attendants and Ministers, and all the Orders of the Palace he had so endeared by Kindness and Condescension, that they who were so much *below* him, did in a Manner think themselves *equal* to him.

I shall give but one Instance more of the Humility of those times, and that is, their ready condescending to any *Office* or Employment, tho' never so mean, about the poorest Christian: They thought it not below them to *cook* and *provide* *Vi-ctuals* for them, to *visit* the Imprisoned, to *kiss* their Chains, to *dress* their Wounds, to wash their Feet. And in this our Lord himself went before them, when a little before his Death he rose from Table, girt himself, *wash'd* and *wiped* his *Disciples Feet*, and then told them what Influence this ought to have upon them, *That if their Lord and Master had washed their Feet, they ought also to wash one another's Feet, for that he had given them an Example, that they should do as he had done to them; and good Reason, the Servant not being greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him.* Accordingly we find this particular Act of Christian Condescension frequently used in the Primitive Church. S. Paul expressly requires it as a Qualification in a *Widow* that was to be taken in as a *Deaconess* into the Church, that she be *one that has used to lodge Strangers, and to wash the Saints Feet.* Ter-tullian assures us, 'twas usually done by Christi-

1 Tim. 5.  
10.

Part II. ans in his time, to go into the Prisons to *kiss* and embrace the Martyrs Chains, to *harbour* and provide for indigent Brethren, and to bring Water to wash the Saints Feet : No Office so low, which they were not content to stoop to.

*Ad uxor.*  
l. 2. c. 4.  
p. 168.

*Theodoret.*  
*Hist. Eccl.*  
l. 5. c. 18.  
p. 161.

When *Placilla* the Empress was check'd by some of the Court for her mighty Condescension in visiting the *Hospitals*, and curing the Lame and the Sick with her own Hands, preparing and giving them their Provisions, as a thing too much below her State and *Grandeur* ; she answered, That to distribute Gold became the *Emperor*, but for her part she thought herself obliged to do this for *God*, who had advanced her to that Honour and Dignity : Often instilling this pious Counsel into her Husband, *It becomes you, Sir, always to remember what you once were, and what you now are ; by which Means you will shew yourself not to be ungrateful to your great Benefactor, and will govern the Empire committed to you justly and lawfully, and to the Honour of him that gave it.*

*Epitaph.*  
*Paula ad*  
*Eusoch.*  
*filiam.*  
*Tom. 1.*  
p. 175.

*S. Hierom* reckoning up the Vertues of *Paula*, a Lady of the greatest Descent and Nobility in *Rome*, but devoting herself afterwards to the Solitudes of a Religious Life ; tells us of her, That for Humility (the *prime* and chief Vertue of *Christians*) she carried herself with so much Lowliness, that whoever had seen and not known her, could not but have mistaken her for the meanest of the Maids that waited on her. Whenever she appeared in the midst of those devout and pious Virgins that dwelt with her, she always seemed both in *Cloaths* and *Voice*, and *Garb*, and *Gate*, the least and most contemptible of all the rest. So studious was the Piety of those Days to keep the Lustre of their own Perfections from sparkling in their Eyes, and not fondly to admire the *Glimmerings* of their own Light ; being so far from falsely arrogating to themselves

elves those Excellencies which they had not, that they industriously concealed those excellent Perfections which they had!

Chap. 1.

I cannot better conclude this Chapter, than with the excellent Reasonings of S. *Gregory of Nyssa* against *priding* a Man's self in any external Ornaments or Advantages; where he thus entertains the proud Man: He that looks to *himself*, and not to the things that are about him, will see little Reason to be *proud*: For what is *Man*? Say the best of him, and that which may add the greatest Honour and Veneration to him, that he's *born* of *Nobles*; and yet he that adorns his *Descent*, and speaks highliest of the Splendor and Nobility of his *House*, does but derive his *Pedigree* from the *Dirt*. And to enquire more narrowly into the Manner of his being born into the World common with other Men, were to uncover what Shame and Modesty require should be concealed in the profoundest Silence. And dost thou not *blush*, thou *Statue* of *Earth*, who art shortly to be crumbled into *Dust*, who *Bubble-like* containest within thee a short-lived Humour? Dost thou not *blush* to swell with Pride and Arrogance, and to have thy Mind stuffed with vain idle Thoughts? Hast thou no regard to the double Term of Man's Life, *how* it *began*, and where it will *end*? thou *pridest* thyself in thy *juvenile* Age, and flatterest thyself in the Flower, the Beauty and Sprightliness of thy Youth, that thy *Hands* are ready for *Action*, and thy *Feet* apt to dance nimble *Measures*; that thy *Locks* are *waved* by the wanton Motions of the Wind, and a soft Down over-grows thy Cheeks; that thy purple Robes put the very *Roses* to the Blush, and thy silken Vestures are *variegated* with rich Embroidery of *Battles*, *Huntings*, or Pieces of ancient *History*; or brought down to the Feet, artificially set off with black, and curiously made fast

*De beatitudinib.  
Orat. 1.  
Tom. 1.  
p. 768.*



Part II. with *Strings* and *Buttons*. These are the Things that thou look'st at, without any Regard to *thyself*. But let me a little, as in a *Glass*, shew thee thy own Face, *who* and *what* thou art : Hast thou not seen in a publick *Charnel-house* the unveiled Mysteries of Human Nature ; *Bones* rudely thrown upon Heaps ; naked *Skulls* with hollow *Eye-holes*, yielding a dreadful and deformed Spectacle ? Hast thou not beheld their *grinning* Mouths, and *ghastly* Looks, and the rest of their Members carelessly dispersed and scattered ? If thou hast beheld such Sights as these, in *them* thou hast seen thyself. Where then will be the Signs of thy present Beauty, that good *Complexion* that adorns thy Cheeks and the Colour of thy Lips, that frightful *Majesty* and supercilious Loftiness that once resided in thine Eyes, or thy Nose that once beautifully graced thy Cheeks ? Where are thy Locks that were wont to reach thy Shoulders, the Curls that used to adorn thy Temples ? What are become of those Arms that used to draw the *Bow*, those Legs that used to bestride thy *Horses* ? Where's the *Purple*, the *silken Garments*, the *long Robe*, the *Belt*, the *Spurs*, the *Horse*, the *Race*, the *Noise* and *Prancings* ; and all the rest of those things that now add Fuel to thy Pride ? Tell me, where then will those things be, upon the Account whereof thou dost now so much *boast* and *bear up* thyself ? Was there ever any *Dream* so fond and inconstant, any thing more *famastick* that ever appeared to a Man asleep ? What Shadow was ever so thin, so incapable of being grasped within the Hollow of the Hand, as this Dream of Youth, which at once *appears*, and immediately *vanishes* away. Thus the Holy Man treats the young vapouring Gallant, and levels his Pride with the sober Considerations of Mortality. In his following Discourse he deals with Persons of riper Years, and such as are in Places of

*Authority*

*Authority and Power, and shews how absurd and uncomely Pride is in them; which it might not be impertinent to represent; but fearing to be tedious, I forbear.*

## C H A P. II.

Of their Heavenly-Mindedness, and  
Contempt of the World.

*The Soul rightly constituted naturally tends upwards, especially when assisted with the Aids of Religion. The first Christians much above the World. Not wrought upon by Temptations of Advantage. They accounted it the greatest Honour to be Christians. Contented with a very mean Portion of Outward things. The Story of some of our Saviour's Kinsred brought before Domitian. The Sect of the Apostolici and Apotactici, the Fathers of the Mendicant Orders in the Church of Rome. The little Care which Christians then had of rich Furniture and costly Provisions. Their denying to go to publick Feasts and Sports made for the Pleasure of the People. This charged upon them by the Heathens. The Case of the Woman that was seized upon by an Evil Spirit while she was at the Theatre. Their chearful parting with any worldly Comforts, Estates, Relations, &c. A strange Heroick Speech of Melania at the Loss of her Husband and two Sons, mentioned by S. Hierom. Eager for Martyrdom, as what would presently send them to Heaven. Their frequent*



frequent supporting themselves under Sufferings with Discourses of the Kingdom above. Thence accused as treasonable Affecters of the Empire. Their Contempt of the World much promoted by the Opinion, that the Day of Judgment was near at hand. Christians in the World like Sojourners in a strange Country.

**T**HE Soul of Man being *Heaven-born*, cannot but partake of the Nature and Disposition of that Country, and have a Native Inclination to that Place from whence it borrows its *Original*: And though, 'tis true, in this corrupt and *degenerate* State, it is deeply sunk into *Matter*, clogg'd and over-born with the earthly and sensual Propensions of the lower Appetites, the Desires and Designs of Men creeping up and down like *Shadows* upon the Surface of the Earth; yet does it often, especially when assisted with the Aids of *Religion*, attempt its own Rescue and Release. The Mind of a good Man is acted by manly and *generous* Impulses, it dwells in the Contemplations of the *upper* Region, tramples upon those little Projects of Profit or Pleasure which *ensnare* and *enslave* other Men, and makes all its Designs subservient to the Interests of a better Country: A Temper of Mind never more triumphant in any, than in the *Christians* of old, whose *Conversations were in Heaven*, and whose Spirits breathed in too free an Air to be caught with the Charms of the best Enjoyments this World could afford: They looked upon the Delights and Advantages of this Life, as things not worthy to arrest their Affections in their Journey to a better. *Justin Martyr* discoursing with *Trypho* the Jew, tells him, That they were careful with all Fear to converse with Men according to the Scriptures, not greedily desiring

desiring to gain *Riches*; or *Glory*, or *Pleasure*, Chap. 2.  
 to themselves, concerning any of which no Man  
 could lay any thing to their Charge; and that <sup>Dial. cum</sup>  
 they did not live like the great Men of *his Peo-* <sup>Tryph.</sup>  
*ple*, of whom God himself has left this reproach- <sup>p. 308,</sup>  
 ful Character, *That their Princes were Companions*  
*of Thieves, every one loving Gifts, and following*  
*after Rewards.*

Nay, *Trypho* himself bears them this Testi- <sup>Orat.</sup>  
 mony, though doubtless he intended it as a Re- <sup>con. Gra,</sup>  
 proach to them, That having from a vain Report <sup>p. 167.</sup>  
 chosen *Christ* to be their *Master*, they did for  
 his Sake foolishly undervalue and throw away all  
 the Enjoyments and Advantages of this World.  
 Amongst us (says *Tatian*) there is no Affectation  
 of *vain Glory*, no *Diversity* of Sentiments and  
 Opinions; but separating ourselves from all vul-  
 gar and earthly Thoughts and Discourses, and  
 having given up ourselves to the Commands of  
 God to be govern'd by his Law, we abandon  
 whatever seems but a-kin to Human Glory. They  
 never met with Opportunities to have advanced  
 and enriched themselves, but they declined and  
 turned them off with a noble Scorn. When *Ab-* <sup>Eus. Hist.</sup>  
*garus* the *Toparch* of *Edessa* offered *Thaddeus* (one <sup>Ecc. 1. 1. 69</sup>  
 of the *Seventy Disciples*) great Sums of Gold and <sup>15. p. 352</sup>  
 Silver for the Pains he had taken, and the great  
 Things he had done amongst them, he refused  
 them with this Answer, *To what Purpose should we*  
*receive good Things from others, who have freely for-*  
*saken and renounced our own?* As indeed, in those  
 times, Friends and Relations, Houses and Lands  
 were cheerfully parted with, when they stood in  
 Competition with *Christ*; they could content them-  
 selves with the most naked Poverty, so it might  
 but consist with the Profession of the Gospel.

When *Quintianus* the President, under *Decius*  
 the Emperor, asked *Agatha* the Virgin-Martyr,

R 4

why,

Part II. why, being descended of such rich and illustrious Parents, she would stoop to such low and mean Offices as she took upon her? She presently answered him, *Our Glory and Nobility lies in this, that we are the Servants of Christ.* To the same Purpose was the Answer of *Quintinus* the Martyr under the *Dioclesian* Persecution, when the President asked him, How it came about, that he being a *Roman* Citizen, and the Son of a *Senator*, would truckle under such a *Superstition*, and worship him for a *God*, whom the *Jews* had crucified? The Martyr told him, That it was the highest Honour and Nobility to know and serve God; that the Christian Religion, which he called Superstition, ought not to be traduced with so base a Name, seeing it immediately guided its Followers to the highest Degrees of Happiness: For herein it is that the Omnipotent God is revealed, the great Creator of Heaven and Earth, and his Son *Jesus Christ* our Lord, by whom all things were made, and who is in all things equal to his Father.

In laud.  
Casar.  
frat.  
Orat. 10.  
p. 166.

The Simplicity of Christians then kept them from aspiring after Honour and Greatness, and if at any time advanced to it, their great Care was to keep themselves unspotted from the World, as *Nazianzen* reports of his Brother *Casarius*, chief Physician to the Emperor *Constantius*, That tho' he was very dear to him (as he was to the whole Court) and advanced by him every Day to greater Honours and Dignities, yet *this* (says he) *was the chief of all*, that he suffered not the Nobility of his Soul to be corrupted by that Glory, and those Delights that were round about him: But accounted this his chiefest Honour, that he was a *Christian*; in Comparison of which, all things else were to him but as a Sport and Pageantry. He look'd upon other things but as *Comick Scenes*,  
soon

soon up, and as soon over; but upon *Piety*, as Chap. I.  
 the most safe and permanent Good, and which we  
 can properly call our own, regarding that *Piety*  
 especially which is most inward and unseen to the  
 World.

The like he relates of his Sister *Gorgonia*, as the  
 Perfection of her excellent Temper, that she did  
 not more *seem* to be good, than she did really *strive*  
 to be so; being peculiarly conversant in those se-  
 cret Acts of *Piety* which are visible only to him,  
 who sees what is *hidden* and *secret*. To the Prince  
 of this World she left nothing, transferring all in-  
 to those safe and celestial Treasuries that are above;  
 she left nothing to the Earth but her Body, chang-  
 ing all things for the Hopes of a better Life; be-  
 queathing no other *Riches* to her Children, but an  
 excellent *Pattern*, and a Desire to follow her Ex-  
 ample. The Truth is, as to Estate, they were  
 not concern'd for more than what would supply  
 the Necessities of Nature, or the *Wants* of others;  
 not solicitous to get or possess such Revenues as  
 might make them the Objects either of Mens  
*Envy*, or their *Fear*; as may appear, amongst  
 others, by this Instance.

*Domitian* the Emperor being inform'd that there  
 were yet remaining some of Christ's *Kindred ac-*  
*cording to the Flesh*, (the Nephews of *Judas* the Bro-  
 ther of our Lord, of the Race and Posterity of  
*David*, which the Emperor sought utterly to ex-  
 tirpate) he sent for them, enquired of them, whe-  
 ther they were of the *Line of David*? They an-  
 swer'd, they were. He asked what Possessions  
 and *Estate* they had? They told him they had be-  
 tween them *thirty nine Acres of Land* (to the Value  
 of about *nine thousand Pence*) out of the Fruits  
 whereof they both paid him *Tribute*, and main-  
 tained themselves with their own hard Labour,  
 whereto the *Hardness* and *Callousness* of their  
 Hands,

*In laud.*  
*Gorgom.*  
*Orat. 114*  
*p. 183.*

*Euseb.*  
*lib. 3. c. 20.*  
*p. 89.*

Part II. Hands, which they then shew'd him, bore witness. He then asked them concerning *Christ*, and the State of his *Kingdom*; to which they answer'd, That his *Empire was not of this World*, but Heavenly and Angelical, and which should finally take Place in the end of the World, when he should come with *Glory to judge both the Quick and the Dead, and to reward Men according to their Works*: Which when he heard, despising the Men upon the Account of their Meanness, he let them go without any Severity against them. Of *Origen* we read, that he was so great a Despiser of the World, that when he might have lived upon the Maintenance of others, he would not; but parted with his *Library of Books* to one that was to allow him only *four Oboli* a day; the Day he spent in laborious Tasks and Exercises, and the greatest Part of the Night in Study; he always remembered that Precept of our Saviour, *Not to have two Coats, not to wear Shoes, not anxiously to take Care for to-morrow*; nor would he accept the Kindness of others, when they would freely have given him some Part of their Estate to live on.

*Id. lib. 6.  
c. 3. p. 205.*

Not that the Christians of those times thought it *unlawful* to possess Estates, or to use the Blessings of Divine Providence; for tho' in those times of Persecution they were often forced to quit their Estates and Habitations, yet they did preserve their *Properties* entire, and industriously mind the *necessary Conveniences* of this Life, so far as was *consistent* with their Care of a better. There were indeed a sort of Christians called *Apostolici*, who in a fond Imitation of the *Apostles* left all they had, and gave up themselves to a voluntary Poverty, holding it not lawful to possess any thing: Hence they were also called *Apotactici*, or *Renouncers*, because they quitted and renounced whatsoever they had; but they were ever accounted infamous *Hereticks*:

reticks : They were, as *Epiphanius* tells us, the Descendants of *Tatian*, Part of the old *Cathari* and *Encratita* ; together with whom they are put in a Law of the Emperor *Theodosius*, and reckon'd amongst the vilest of the *Manichean* Hereticks ; mention'd also by *Julian* the *Apostate*, as a Branch of the *Galileans*, as he calls the Christians, by him compared to the *Cynick Philosophers* amongst the Heathens, for the neglecting of their Country, the abandoning of their Estates and Goods, and their loose and rambling Course of Life ; only herein different, that they did not, as those *Galilean Apotactista*, run up and down under a Pretence of Poverty to beg Alms. The Truth is, by the Account which both he and *Epiphanius* give of them, they seem to have been the very *Patriarchs* and Primitive Founders of those *Mendicant Orders*, and Professors of vow'd Poverty, which swarm so much in the Church of *Rome* at this day. But to return : The Christians of those days did not study those Arts of *Splendor* and *Gallantry* which have since over-run the World, stately Palaces, costly Furniture, rich Hangings, fine Tables, curious Beds, Vessels of Gold and Silver, the very Possession of which (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks) creates Envy ; they are rare to get, hard to keep, and, it may be, not so accommodate to Use. Will not a Knife cut as well (*says he*) tho' it have not an *Ivory Haft*, or be not garnish'd with Silver, or an *Earthen Basin* serve to wash the Hands ? Will not the *Table* hold our Provisions, unless its Feet be made of *Ivory* ? Or the *Lamp* give its *Light*, altho' made by a *Potter*, as well as if it were the Work of the *Goldsmith* ? May not a Man sleep as well upon a *mean Couch*, as upon a Bed of *Ivory* ? Upon a *Goat-Skin*, as well as upon a *Purple* or *Phœnician Carpet* ? Our *Lord* eat his Meat out of a *common Dish*, and made his Followers sit upon the *Grass*,

Chap. I.

Contr. Apostolic. Heret. ref. 61.

p. 220. Cod. Theod. lib. 16.

tit. 5. de Heret. 1. 7. De Cynic. Sect. Orat. 7. p. 417.

Pedag. lib.

2. c. 3.

p. 160,

161.



**Part II.** *Grass*, and washed his Disciples Feet, without ever fetching down a *Silver Bowl* from Heaven; he took the Water which the *Samaritanes* had drawn in an *Earthen Pitcher*, not requiring one of God, shewing how easy it was to quench his Thirst; for he respected the *Use*, not the vain and superfluous State of Things. This and much more he there urges to this excellent Purpose, to let us see how little a Christian need be beholden to the World, if he be content with what's enough for the necessary Uses of human Life.

*De Orat. Domin.*  
*Orat. 5.*  
p. 745.  
tom. I.  
*Vid. Cyp. de Orat. Dom.*  
p. 192.

To this let me annex some Part of that Discourse which *Gregory Nyssen* has upon this Subject: The fluid and transitory Condition of Man's Life (*says he*) calls for a daily *Reparation* of the Decays of Nature. He therefore that looks no farther than to minister to the *Desires* of Nature, and troubles not himself with vain anxious Thoughts for more than's *necessary*, lives little less than the Life of Angels, whilst by a Mind content with little he imitates their Want of nothing. For this Cause we are commanded to seek only what's enough to keep the Body in its due State and Temper, and thus to address our Prayers to God, *Give us our daily Bread*. Give us *Bread*, not *Delicacies* or *Riches*, not splendid and purple *Vestures*, or rich golden *Ornaments*; not *Pearls* and *Jewels*, *Silver Vessels*, large *Fields*, and great *Possessions*; not the Government of *Armies*, the Conduct of *Wars*, and Disposal of *Nations*, not numerous *Flocks* and *Herd*s of Cattle, or Multitudes of *Slaves*, and *Servants*, not Splendor and Gallantry in Publick; not *Marble-Pillars*, or *Brazen Statues*, or *Silken Carpets*, or *Quires* of *Musick*, or any of those Things by which the Soul is diverted, and drawn from more *Noble* and *Divine* Thoughts and Cares; but only *Bread*, which indeed is the true and common Staff of Man's Life.

*Min. Fel.*  
p. 10. *vid.*  
*Constit.*  
*Apostol. ib.*  
2. c. 62.  
p. 886.

Nor

Nor were they more studious of *Pleasures* and *Recreations abroad*, than they were of *Fineness and Bravery at home*: They went not to *Publick Feasts*, nor frequented the *Shews* that were made for the *Disport and Entertainment of the People*; and this was so notorious, that the *Heathens* charged it upon them as *Part of their Crime*. Observe how he in *Minutius Felix* draws it up: The *Romans* (*says he*) govern and enjoy the *World*, while *you* in the mean time are careful and *mopish*, abstaining even from *lawful Pleasures*; you visit not the *Shews*, nor are present at the *Pomps*, nor frequent the *publick Feasts*; you abhor the holy *Games*, the *sacrificial Meats and Drinks*, *crowns* not your *Heads with Garlands*, nor *perfume* your *Bodies with sweet Odours*; a *gastly, fearful, and miserable People*. Which by that time that *Octavius* the *Christian* comes to answer, he grants it all Pag. 30. to be true, and tells him there was very good Reason why they should abstain from their *Shews, Pomps, and Divertisements*, at which they could not be present without great *Sin and Shame*, without *affronting their Modesty*, and offering a *Distaste and Horror* to their *Minds*. And indeed they reckon'd themselves particularly obliged to this by what they had vowed and undertaken at their *Baptism*, when they solemnly engaged to *renounce the Devil and all his Works, Pomps and Pleasures, i. e.* (*says S. Cyril*) the *Sights and Sports* Catech. of the *Theatre*, and such like *Vanities*. The *Truth* Myst. 1. is, they looked upon the *publick Sports and Pa-* p. 510. *stimes of those days as the Scenes* not only of *Folly and Lewdness*, but of great *Impiety and Idolatry*; as *Places where the Devil* eminently ruled, and reckon'd all his *Votaries* that came thither. Accordingly *Tertullian* tells us of a *Christian Woman*, who De Spect. going to the *Theatre*, was there possess'd by the c. 26. p. 83. *Devil*; and when the *Evil Spirit* at his casting out was

Part II. was ask'd, how he durst set upon a Christian? he presently answer'd, *I did but what was fit and just, for I found her upon my own Ground.*

*Athan. leg.  
pro Christ.  
p. 2.*

Being thus affected towards the World, they could very willingly part with any thing that was dearest to them, *Friends, Estate, Liberty, or Life* itself. We are not moved (*says one of their Apologists*) with the Loss of our *Estates* which our Enemies wrest from us, nor with the *Violence* that's offer'd to our *Credit* and Reputation, or if there be any thing of greater *Concernment* than these; for altho' these things are mightily prized and valued amongst Men, yet can we despise and slight them: Nay, we cannot only, when *beaten*, refrain from striking again, and make no *Resistance* against those that invade and spoil us; but to them that *smite one Cheek* we can turn the other; and to them that take away the Coat, we can let them take the Cloak also.

*Orat. 1.  
p. 32.*

And I remember *Nazianzen* tells us, That of those Excellencies and Endowments which God had given him, *Health, Wealth, Esteem, and Eloquence*, he reaped this only Benefit, that he had something which he could *contemn*, and by which he could shew that he infinitely valued *Christ* before them. The greatest Endearment of this Life is *Relations*, and yet these too they could quietly resign when God called for them. Memorable it is, what

*Ad Paul.  
tom. 1.  
p. 160.*

*S. Hierome* reports of *Melania*, a Lady of great Piety in his time, in whose Commendation *Paulinas*, Bishop of *Nola*, spends a very large Epistle, especially commending her for her *generous* and heroick

*Epist. 1. 2.  
Epist. 2.*

Mind, *tam viriliter Christiana*, that she was something above a Woman, and had the *Masculine* Spirit of a Christian. Of this Lady *S. Hierom* tells us, That her *Husband* lying dead by her, she lost *two of her Sons* at the same time; and when every one expected that she should break out into a violent Passion, tear her Hair, rent her Garments, and

and burst into Tears, she stood still, and at last falling down, as 'twere at the Feet of *Christ*, broke out into this Pious and Christian Resentment, *Lord, I shall serve thee more nimbly and readily, by being eased of the Weight thou hast taken from me.* Nay, so little Kindness had they for this World, that they cared not how little they stayed in it; and therefore readily offer'd themselves to *Martyrdom* at every Turn. *Tertullian* tells his Adversaries, that all those Plagues which God sent upon the World, what Damage soever they might do their Enemies, could not hurt them, because they had no other Concernment in this World, than as soon as they could to get out of it. This, he elsewhere tells us, the very *Gentiles* assign'd as one Reason, why the Christians were trained up in a Defiance of all the Sports and Pleasures of this Life, that they might be more willing to die; and that the Cords being cut by which they were tedder'd to this World, they might be more nimble and expedite for their Passage hence. Their main Designs were intent upon the Happiness of another World, and therefore they regarded not what they went through to come sooner to it. Being inflamed (says *Justin Martyr*) with the Desire of a pure and an *eternal* Life, we breathe after an intimate Converse with God the great Parent and Creator of the World, and make haste to seal our Confession with our *Blood*; being certainly persuaded that they shall attain to this State, who by their Actions study to approve themselves to God, that they follow after him, and are heartily desirous of Communion with him in that Life, where no Malice or Wickedness shall take place. This was the mighty Support they lean'd upon, the great Cordial with which they kept up their Spirits in those sad times of Suffering and Persecution, the firm *Belief* and Expectation which they had

Apol. c. 41.

p. 33.

De Spect.

c. 1. p. 73.

Apol. 2.

p. 57.

Part II. had of enjoying God in a better Life. They knew, that the more Haste their Enemies made to *break open the Cage* of their Bodies, the sooner their Souls would be at Liberty to *fly* to the Regions of Blessedness and Immortality. And indeed so much were their Thoughts fix'd upon this, so often did they use to comfort one another by discoursing of that *Kingdom* which they expected hereafter, that some of their Enemies over-hearing and mistaking them, accused them as *treasonable*

*Ib. p. 58.* *Affecters* of the *Empire*; when, alas! (as *Justin Martyr* assures the *Emperors*) they meant nothing less; which they might know by this, that being brought to Tryal, they freely confessed themselves to be Christians, tho' they certainly knew they must die for it: Whereas, (*said he*) did we expect an *Human Kingdom*, we would dissemble and deny it, and avoid Death, and so expect a more convenient Season to accomplish our *Designs*; but since our Hopes are not placed in any thing in this World, we regard not those that take away our Lives, well knowing they take nothing from us, but what we must needs lay down ourselves. It was their Care then continually to *keep Company* with *dying* Thoughts, and to dwell within the Prospect of Eternity; it being generally true of all, what *S. Hierom* particularly reports of *Marcella*, That she *lived* so as always believing that she should immediately *die*, and never put on her *Garments*, but it put her in Mind of her *Grave*, and of the *Sheet* that should wrap her up in the *House of Silence*.

*Epitaph.*  
*Marcell.*  
*ad Princip.*  
*p. 119.*

But besides the Influence which the Expectation of their particular *Dissolutions* had upon them, there was one thing which I doubt not did mightily contribute to their being *wean'd* from the World, and did strongly animate them to a quick and speedy Diligence about the Affairs of the other Life; and that

that was, the *Opinion* they generally had of the *Day of Judgment being near at hand*. An *Opinion* started early, as appears by that *Caution* which *S. Paul* gives the *Thessalonians* about it, and it lasted for some *Ages* after, as is evident from several *Passages* in *Tertullian*, who always improves it to this purpose, that *Men* should not unnecessarily incumber themselves with the *Affairs* of this *Life*, but carry themselves as those that were immediately passing hence. I conclude with that of *Justin Martyr*: *Christians* (*says he*) dwell in their own *Countries* but as *Inmates* and *Foreigners*; they have all things common with other *Men* as *Fellow-Citizens*, and yet suffer all things as *Strangers* and *Foreigners*: Every *Foreign Region* is their *Country*, and every *Country* is *foreign* to them: They *marry* like other *Men*, and beget *Children*, but do not *expose* or neglect their *Offspring*; they *feast* in common, but do not *exceed* like other *Men*; they *are in the Flesh*, but do not *live after the Flesh*; dwell upon *Earth*, but their *Conversation is in Heaven*. Therefore he compares *Christians* in this *World* to the *Soul* in the *Body*; as for other *Reasons*, so especially for this, that as the *Soul* lives *in* the *Body*, but is not *of* the *Body*; so *Christians* dwell *in* the *World*, but are not *of* the *World*: An *immortal Spirit* dwells in a *mortal Tabernacle*, and *Christians*, while they sojourn in these *corruptible Mansions*, expect and look for an *incorruptible State* in *Heaven*.

Chap. 1.  
2 *Thes.* 2.  
3, 4.

*Vid. de cultu  
fœmin.  
lib. 2. c. 9.  
ad uxor.  
lib. 1. c. 9.  
Epist. ad  
Diognet.  
p. 497.*

## Primitive Christianity.

## C H A P. III.

## Of their Sobriety, in respect of their Garb and Apparel.

*Much of the Temper of the Mind shewn in the outward Garb. The great Ends of Clothes, for Honesty, Necessity, Distinction. The Primitive Christians accommodated themselves to these. Careful to avoid both Singularity and Excess. Generally conformable to the sober Fashions of the Places where they lived. Whether when they turned Christian, they left off the Roman Gown, and took up the Pallium or Cloak, à Toga ad Pallium. The Occasion of Tertullian's writing his excellent Book on that Subject. The Pallium principally worn by those that entred upon a Life of more than ordinary Strictness. Their great Care to keep a Medium between Costliness and Sordidness. This accounted Part of that Pomp and Vanity which they renounced in Baptism. The Vanity of excessive Garbs and Finery complain'd of by the Fathers in some of those times. Especially invective against Methods of artificial Beauty: What pleaded in Defence of it, by some Persons in those days, consider'd and answer'd out of the Fathers. That they were rich, no sufficient Argument to patronize the doing of it. Better ways of employing their Estates. Nor that they could do it without violating their Chastity. The Inconveniencies of it with respect to others. That they did it to please their Husbands, answer'd.*

answer'd. This needless: Every wise and good Man content without it. Such Arts favour'd too much of lewd wanton Prostitutes. Painting and such Arts injurious to God, and a Disparagement of his Workmanship. This largely prosecuted out of Tertullian and Cyprian. A memorable Story which Theodoret relates of his own Mother. True Beauty accounted to lie in a holy and vertuous Mind, and a pure and pious Life. Gay and Fantastick Persons fitly represented by the Egyptian Temples. Nazianzen's Description of his good Sister Gorgonia. Chap. 3.

**T**HE Primitive Christians being thus eminent for their Contempt of the World, 'tis easy to imagine that they were very temperate and abstemious in the Use of all the Pleasures and Conveniences of human Life, which we shall more particularly consider in these three Instances; their Sobriety in respect of Garb and Apparel, their Temperance in regard of Food and Diet, and their Continence or Chastity.

For the first, the Care about our Garb and Dress, it is one of those Instances of Sobriety which are to be conducted by the Rules of Religion and Reason, and which very much discover a vertuous or a vicious Temper: *There are three things* (as the Son of Syrach well observes) *that shew a Man what he is, his Attire, excessive Laughter, and his Gate.* There is not certainly a more open Evidence of a vain Mind, than a vain Garb and Habit. S. Basil discoursing what Habit does best beseem a Christian, tells us in general, that it ought to be such as most lively expresses the Meekness and Humility of the Mind; that good Men of old were so attired, and that we

Reg. sup.  
Disput. in-  
terrog. 22.  
p. 566.  
tom. 2.



Part II. are commanded, *having Food and Raiment, to be therewith content*; not studying *Variety*, and which most commonly follows it, *Softness* and *Elegancy*, which are but Instruments to minister to Excess and Luxury, introduced into human Life thro' the idle and unnecessary Arts of Looseness and Effeminacy. 'Tis not enough (says *Tertullian*) that a Christian be chaste and modest, but he must appear to be so; a Vertue, of which he should have so great a Store and Treasure, that it should flow from his *Mind* upon his *Habit*, and break from the Retirements of his *Conscience* into the *Superficies* of his *Life*, as he there expresses it. More particularly *S. Basil* tells us, That the Habit of a Christian ought to be suitable to the two great *Ends* of Cloathing instituted by *God*, viz. *Honesty* and *Necessity*; *Honesty* to hide the less comely Parts of the Body, and to cover that Shame which Sin has brought upon Mankind: In Paradise *Innocency* was Man's only *Robe*, 'twas Sin brought in the *Figleaved Coat*; and what should more induce us to be modest in our Apparel, than to remember, that our Clothes are *Monitors* of our *Apostasy*, and that there's little Reason we should *pride* ourselves in that which is only a Cover for our *Shame*? *Necessity*; and so Clothes were design'd to keep the Body in convenient Warmth, and to defend it from those Injuries and Extremities of the Air and Weather, which would otherwise soon rot down this House of Clay. Now to both these Ends (he tells us) we ought to accommodate our Garments, not striving for *Variety*, having some for *Uses* at home, others for *Ostentation* when we go abroad; but that whatever attains these Ends, is enough. But besides these, there is a third *Use* and *End* of Clothes noted by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and that is for *Distinction*, not only of *Sexes*, but of different *Ranks* and *Degrees* of Men; such as agree best to Men's *Age*, *Persons*,

*De cultu  
fœmin. lib.  
2. c. 13.  
p. 160.*

*Ib. p. 167.*

*Vid. Cyril.  
ad Illumi-  
nat. Catec.  
4. p. 94.*

*Padag. lib.  
3. c. 11.  
p. 245.*

*Persons, Shape, Nature, or their several States and* Chap. 3.  
*Employments*; in these respects Men may use different and distinguishing Habits: Nay, he grants, that in some Cases Men may recede from the strict Rule and Discipline of this Affair, and that such Women as cannot otherwise gain upon their Husbands, may (if they require it) go a little more *trim* and neat, provided (as he there limits it) it be done only to *please* and gain upon their Husbands, and that they do not practise any Artifices of unlawful Beauty.

Now that the *ancient Christians* governed themselves by these Rules in this Affair, is plain, in that they avoided both *Singularity* on the one hand, and *Excess* on the other, generally conforming themselves to the *decent* and *orderly* Customs and Fashions of the Times and Places where they lived. *Justin* Epist. ad Diog. p. 496. *Martyr* giving his Friend an Account of the Christians, tells him, that they differ'd not from other Men, either in their *Country*, or *Speech*, or the *Usages* of the Civil Life: They dwell in their own Cities, use the same Language with other Men, nor have they any singular and extraordinary way of Life; they are not in any thing affected or fantastick; but inhabiting partly amongst *Greeks*, partly in *barbarous* Cities, as every one's Lot is fallen, they follow the Customs of their Country; and both in Clothes and Diet, and all other Affairs of outward Life, shew the excellent and admirable Constitution of their Discipline and Conversation. I am not ignorant of what some Learned Men would have us to believe, that in those times, when any turned from *Paganism* to *Christianity*, they were wont to *change* their *Habit*, to leave off the *Toga* or *Gown* (the common Habit almost in all Parts of the *Roman Empire*) and to take up the *Pallium* or *Cloak*; and this they think sufficiently countenanced by the Instance of *Tertullian*, who laying aside the

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Gown,

Part II. **W**Gown, and putting on the Cloak, was accused of Lightness and Inconstancy by the People of Carthage, and bitterly persecuted with the common Sarcasm, à Toga ad Pallium, as one that had wantonly skipped from the Gown to the Cloak, i. e. from one Profession to another; insomuch that he was forced to write an Apology for himself, which he did in his Book *de Pallio*, where, with a great deal of satyrical and sarcaſtick Wit, he retorts upon them, and vindicates himself from their Charge and Cavils. But that there was any such Change of Habit at Persons first coming over to Christianity, I can see no Reason to believe; and for the Case of *Tertullian*, it makes nothing to the Purpose, unless it could be proved that he left off the Gown at his first Entrance upon the Christian Religion, which will be hard to make out; for I am clearly of the Mind of the Learned *Salmaſius*, that he alter'd his Habit, and assumed the Cloak, not when he first became Christian, but when he was made *Presbyter* of the Church of Carthage; whence it is called by him, according to his Dialect, *Sacerdos Habitus* (for so it is in all ancient Manuscripts, and in the first Edition of *B. Rhenanus*, and not *Sacer Habitus*, as later Editions have it) the *Priest's Habit*, because the Christian Priests usually wore it after their Entrance upon Holy Orders. For the better understanding of which, we are to consider a little, that amongst the *Greeks*, the *Philosophick Pallium* or Cloak was not commonly worn, but was the proper Habit of Philosophers, who profess'd a more severe and accurate Course of Life. Accordingly amongst the *Christians* those who profess'd themselves to be ἀσκηταί, the more strict and exact Observers of the Christian Discipline, whether they were *Laity* or *Clergy*, assumed this Habit to themselves. And because the Clergy in those times generally took upon them this au-

*Præfat. in Comment. Tertul. de Pallio.*

*Tertul. de Pall. c. 4.*

*Vid. Tert. ex Edit. B. Rhenani. p. 620.*

*Vid. etiam Salm. in loc.*

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stere and philosophick way of Life, this Garb was most peculiar to them ; and this probably they did the rather, not only because this was the most plain and simple Garment in itself, but because they supposed the *Apostles* (whom they strove to imitate) wore this Habit, as is plain they did, as from other Passages in the *New Testament*, so from *S. Paul's* sending for the *Cloak which he left at Troas*. Therefore the Author of the *Apostolical History*, who shelters himself under the Name of *Abdias Babylonius*, certainly forgot himself, when describing the Habit of *S. Bartholomew the Apostle*, he made it so trim and fine : *Vestitus*, says he, *Colore* (doubtless it should be *Colobio*) *albo*, &c. *he was clothed in a white Coat, beset with Studs of Purple, over which he had a white Cloak, having Purple Gems at each Corner of it ; a Piece of Gallantry unknown to the Plainness of those times, and unsuitable to the Profession of that Holy Man*. Indeed as Plenty and Prosperity began to flow in upon the Church, this simple and modest Garment was laid aside, and the Clergy took upon them a more rich and splendid Garb ; insomuch that when *Eustathius* Bishop of *Sebastia* took upon him to wear the *Philosophick Cloak*, and persuaded his Followers also to use it, he was for this very Reason deposed by his own Father *Eulapius*, Bishop of *Cæsarea*, because wearing a Habit unsuitable to the Ministerial Order ; which Sentence was, not long after, ratify'd by the Synod of *Gangra*, and a *Canon* made against it.

Lib. 8.  
Fol. 96.  
p. 2.

Socrat.  
Hist. Eccl.  
lib. 2. c. 43.  
p. 156.

Vid. Concil.  
Gangr.  
Can. 12.

From what has been said, it may appear, that altho' the Clergy, and such as entred upon a more strict and *ascetick* Course of Life, had a Habit peculiar to themselves ; yet the generality of Christians differed not from the *common* Garb. They were indeed exceeding careful to avoid all such as savour'd of *Costliness* and *Finery*, choosing such as expressed the greatest Lowliness and Innocency.

Part II. The Garment that we should wear (says *Clemens of Alexandria*) ought to be mean and frugal, not *curiously* wrought with divers Colours (the Emblem of *Craftiness* and *Deceit*) but *white*, to denote our embracing and professing *Simplicity* and *Truth*; our outward Cloathing is an Indication of the Temper of our Manners: That's true *Simplicity* of Habit, which takes away what's vain and superfluous; that the best and most solid Garment, which is furthest from Art and Curiosity, and most apt to preserve and keep warm the Body.

*Pont. Diac. in vit. Cyp. p. 12.* *S. Cyprian* ever observed a due *Decorum* in his *Garb* as well as his *Countenance*; his *Aspect* was *grave* and yet *cheerful*; neither a frowning *Severity*, nor an over-pleasant *Merriness*, but such a happy Mixture of both, that it was hard to say whether he was more to be *feared* or *loved*, but that he equally deserved both: And just such was his *Garb*, sober and moderate, keeping a just *Distance* both from *Slovenliness* and *Superfluity*; it neither argued him to be swelled with *Pride*, nor infected with a miserable and *fordid Mind*. *Chrysostom*, amongst other things, especially commends *Olympias* (a Woman of great Birth and Estate, and of no less Piety) for the incredible *Modesty* and *Meanness* of her Attire, not much better than that of the poorest Beggar; having nothing in her *Garb* or *Gate* that was *feigned* or *gaudy*, nothing elaborate or artificial; which things, says he, were the Colours, the bright and beautiful Representations of her *Vertue*, whereby that *Wisdom* and *Divine Philosophy*, that lay hidden in her *Mind*, was externally painted and shadowed out. So far were they then from the *Vanity* and *Affection* of *Pomp* and *Bribery*, of dazzling the Eye with rich costly *Ornaments*, that they thought they could never seem mean enough; and this they looked upon themselves as especially bound to,

*Ad Olymp. Ep. 2. tom. 1. p. 617. p. 623.*

to, by the *Promise* which they had made at *Baptism*, when they renounced the *Devil*, and his whole *Pomp* and *Service*, as the same *Father* elsewhere informs us.

Chap. 3.  
Hom. 21.  
ad pop.  
Antioch.  
tom. 1.  
p. 244.

It cannot be denied, but that the *Fathers* frequently complain of, and smartly declaim against the *Vanity* and *Folly* of some in those times (*Women* especially, by the *Weakness* of their *Sex*, more propense to the *Excesses* of *Pride* and *Superfluity*) who gave up themselves to all the *Arts* of *Fineness* and *Gallantry*; and out of an *Emulation* to the *Heathen Ladies*, amongst whom they lived, they affected all manner of *Pomp* and *Elegancy*, striving to be as rich and gawdy, not as they *ought*, but as they *could* make themselves: Whose excessive *Prodigality* *Tertullian* does thus no less *elegantly* than *satirically* describe: A great *Estate* (*says he*) is drawn out of a *little Pocket*; it's nothing to expend *many thousand Pounds* upon one *String of Pearls*; a weak *tender Neck* can make a shift to carry about *whole Woods and Lordships*: *Vast Sums* of *Money* borrowed of the *Banker*, and noted in his *Account-Book* to be repayed every *Month* with *Interest*, are weighed at the *Beam* of a thin slender *Ear*. So great is the *Strength* of *Pride* and *Ambition*, that even the *weak feeble Body* of one *Woman* shall be able to carry the *Weight* and *Substance* of so many *Pounds* taken up at *Usury*. This was looked upon as a very great *Sin*. *Clemens Alexandrinus* censures it very deep; that though *Gluttony* and *Intemperance* be great *Vices*, yet not to be compared with a *nice over-curious Study* of *Fineness* and *Bravery*. I suppose he means in respect of its *insatiable* and *unbounded Nature*: For so he adds; A well-furnish'd *Table*, and *Cups* that go round, may quickly stop the *Mouth* of a hungry *Stomach*; but where there is a *nice Affectation* of *Bravery*, of *Gold*, *Purple*, or *Jewels*, there not the *Treasures* of the *Creation*; not what's

De Cult.  
Fœm.  
lib. 1. c. 8.  
p. 153.  
In the  
Lat. decies  
sestertium,  
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lings.  
Padag.  
lib. 3. c. 2.  
p. 219.

Part II. what's above, or under Ground ; not the Spoils of the Tyrian Sea ; not the Fraughts from *India*, or *Ethiopia* ; no, nor *Pactolus* with his golden Streams, would suffice. Nay, such Persons, tho' as rich as *Midas*, would not yet think themselves rich or fine enough. But that which the Fathers do most severely censure and cry out against, is not only the *Expence* and *Costliness* of their Cloaths and Jewels, but the *Arts* which they used, to add greater Beauty and Hand-somness to themselves, than God and Nature had bestowed upon them. This, it seems, the Pride and Folly of some Christian Women had arrived to ; which the Zeal and Piety of those times did vehemently condemn and protest against. It may not be amiss to consider, what the *Gallants* of those times pleaded for themselves, and what was returned in answer to them. Sometimes they pleaded, that they were rich, and had great Estates, and ought therefore to live *like themselves*, and to make use of the Estates that God had given them. To this, *Cyprian* answers, That they only are truly rich, that are rich in and towards God ; that the World ought to be despised, the *Pomps* and *Delights* whereof we then renounced, when we happily turned to God, with the Love of whom *all that is in the World*, the *Lust of the Flesh*, the *Lust of the Eye*, and the *Pride of Life* is not consistent : That the Use of Riches, in this Case, is to be governed by just and moderate Measures ; the Apostle commanding all Women, how rich soever, to adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with Shamefacedness and Sobriety, not with broi-dered Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or costly Array ; but (which becomes Women professing Godliness) with good Works : S. Peter also requiring of them, not the outward adorning of Gold or fine Apparel, but the hidden Ornament of the Heart. That though they were rich, yet they were to consult the Honour and Modesty of their Profession, and might not go

De discipl.  
& habit.  
virgin.  
p. 164.

to

to the utmost Bounds of what was lawful, some things being *lawful*, which were not *expedient*; especially when by their wanton and lascivious Dress, they might be a means to kindle in the Breasts of others, the Flames of an unchaste and unlawful Passion, and so prove the Occasion of their Ruin: That if they thought themselves bound to use the Estate that God had given them, God hath shewn them a *more excellent Way*, to relieve the *Hungry*, and feed the *poor Members of Christ*; that this was the best Art of improving Riches, and the way to lay them up in safe and unfailing Treasuries, where we may be sure to reap the Fruit of them another day; and not to throw them away upon Arts of Beauty, upon vain and fantastick Dresses. This is the Sum of that good Man's Reasonings in the Case.

Vid. Constit. Apost. lib. 1. c. 3. p. 804.

Sometimes they pleaded, that they might beautify and honour the Body, without any Danger of violating their *Chastity*, or setting open the Casement for Luxury to fly in upon them. *Tertullian* answers, Let them that had a mind to it glory in the *Flesh*, that for us we have no Designs of Glory; partly as being highly unsuitable to us, who by the Law of God are under the Profession of *Humility*; partly because all Glory (to us especially) is vain and swelling; how much more that which arises from the *Flesh*? If we must glory, 'tis much fitter for us who follow *Spiritual* Things, to please ourselves in the *Excellencies* of the *Spirit*, than in those of the *Flesh*; let us rejoice in those things about which we are employed, and seek *Glory* from those things, from which we hope for *Salvation*. A Christian may indeed glory in the *Flesh*, but it is when for the Sake of *Christ* it is torn in Pieces, that the *Spirit* may be crowned; not that it may prove a Snare to attract the Eyes and Sights of young Mens ungovernable Passions after it, then when 'tis tormented for confessing the *Christian* Name: When  
a *Woman*

De cult. fœmin. lib. 2. c. 3. p. 155.



Part II. a *Woman* is found stronger than the *Man* that torments her, when she suffers *Fires*, or *Crosses*, or *Swords*, or *wild Beasts*, that she may receive the *Crown*; these (says *Cyprian*) are the precious *Jewels* of the *Flesh*, these the much better *Ornaments* of the *Body*. So that (as *Tertullian* goes on) *Beauty* being altogether so unuseful to us, ought to be *despised* by them that want it, and to be *neglected* by them that *have* it. A good *Woman* that's content with her own native *Beauty*, has not that *Occasion* to betray her to *Lust* and *Folly*; and if she had, it would become her, not to *promote*, but *hinder* it. Sometimes again, they pretended they did it only to *please* their *Husbands*, and that they might appear more *lovely* and *acceptable* to them: To which *Plea*, as being most specious and plausible, I observe especially *Three* things returned by way of answer.

Ut supra  
p. 163.

Tert.  
Ib. c. 4.

Id. ibid.

*First*, That to design the pleasing of their *Husbands* by such *Arts* as these, was altogether *needless*, seeing every wise and good *Man* cannot but like his *Wife* best without them. No *Wife* (says *Tertullian*) can seem *deformed* to her own *Husband*, who doubtless was well enough pleased with her, either for her *Temper*, or her *Beauty*, when he first made choice of her: Let none fear their *Husbands* will more distaste and dislike them for abstaining from *artificial* Compositions, for every *Husband* is a rigid *Exacter* of his *Wife's* *Chastity*; and consequently they can be of no *Advantage* to this *End*, whether he be a *believing*, or an *unbelieving* *Husband*, a *Gentile*, or a *Christian*: If a *Christian*, then he will not require any such *foreign* *Beauty*, as not being taken with those *Accomplishments* which the *Gentiles* do account so; if a *Gentile*, then according to that vile *Opinion* which they have of us *Christians*, let her do what she can, he will suspect her to be *naught*. For whose *Sake* therefore should she so curiously dress, so delicately nurse  
and

and nourish up her Beauty? for a *believing Husband*? he requires it not: For an *Infidel*? he'll never believe it to be *true*; Why then should she so much desire to *please* either one that *suspects* it, or one that does not desire it? Chap. 3.

*Secondly*, That these loose delicate Arts came too near the Practice of lewd wanton *Prostitutes*, who made use of these Ways and Tricks for no other End but to *enveigle* Men into their Embraces. The Bravery of Ornaments and Apparel, and the additional Enticements of Beauty are chiefly used (as *Cyprian* tells them) by *Prostitutes* and unchaste Women; and that no Womens *Garb* is more *rich* and *gaudy*, than theirs, whose *Modesty* is most *vile* and *cheap*. And this he tells us the *Scripture* shadows out by the *Woman that was arrayed in purple and scarlet Colour, and decked with Gold and precious Stones and Pearls; having a golden Cup in her Hand, full of Abominations and Filthiness of her Fornication*. But chaste and modest Virgins shun the Dresses of the Defiled, the Habit of the Shameless, the Badges of the Stews, the Ornaments of light wanton Women. Whereas all other Creatures (says *Clemens Alexandrinus*) Birds and other Beasts are content with their own natural Beauty and Colours; *Woman* only, as if she were inferior to the Beasts, thinks herself so deform'd, as that there's Need to repair the Defect by external, bought, and borrowed Beauty: For while by infinite Arts of curious and costly Dresses (some whereof he there particularly mentions) they seek to *ensnare* them, who, Children-like, are apt to admire every thing that's strange and gaudy, they shew themselves to be Women that have put off Shame and Modesty; and whoever (\* says he) calls them so, shall do them no Wrong, as carrying the *Signs* and Representations of it in their very Faces.

*Ubi supr.*  
p. 165.  
*vid. Tert.*  
*de cult.*  
*fœmin.*  
lib. 1. c. 4.

*Pedag.*  
lib. 3. c. 2.  
p. 220.  
\* *De cult.*  
*fœmin.*  
lib. 2. c. 9.  
p. 156.  
*Vid. Com-*  
*stit. Ap.*  
lib. 1. c. 8.  
p. 823.  
*Cl. Alex.*  
*Pedag.*  
l. 3. c. 11.  
p. 249.  
*De Discipl.*  
*virg.*  
p. 166.

*Thirdly*,

Part II. *Thirdly*, They mainly insisted upon this, that these Arts were *injurious to God*, and a *Disparagement* to his *Workmanship*. We are not (says *Tertulian*) to seek after Neatness and Finery beyond what is simple and *sufficient*, and what *pleases God*, against whom they offend, who are not satisfied with his *Workmanship*; an Argument which he there prosecutes with great Severity. *S. Cyprian* treads in his *Master's Steps*, and prosecutes the same Argument with a great deal of Zeal and Shrapness: Amongst other things he tells us, that these additional Arts are a bold and *sacrilegious Attempt*, and an high Contempt of God; that it is to reform what God has *form'd*, to alter and change his Work, and, as much as they can, to *disfigure* that Person, which God has *made after his own Image and Likeness*: That such a one has cause to fear, lest when the *Day of Resurrection* comes, he that *made* them should not *know* them, nor receive them when they come for the promised Rewards. Accordingly he brings in the great *Censor* and *Judge* of the World thus speaking to such a Person: *This is none of my Workmanship, nor is this our Image and Likeness; thou hast defiled thy Skin with false Compositions, changed thy Hair into an adulterous Colour, thy Face counterfeit, thy Shape corrupt, thy Countenance quite another thing; thou canst not behold God, thine Eyes not being the same which God created, but which the evil Spirit has infected; thou hast imitated the fiery, sparkling, and glittering Eyes of the Serpent; of thine Enemy hast thou learnt to be over-trim and neat, and with him like to receive thy Portion.* And are not these (says he) things fit to be thought on by the Servants of God, and to be the daily Objects of their Care and Fear?

*Hist. Religios. c. 9. in vit. Pet. p. 343.*

I cannot but in this Place set down a Passage which *Theodoret* reports of his own *Mother*; That in her younger Years having a Distemper in one of her

Eyes,

Eyes, which had baffled all the Arts of *Physick*, she was at length persuaded to make her Address to one *Peter*, famous for the Gift of *Miracles*! who lived near *Antioch* a very severe and ascetick Course of Life: And to render herself (as she thought) the more *considerable* in his Eye, she put on all her *Bravery*; her richest *Robes*, her *Pendants*, and Chains of *Pearl*, and whatever could render her *fine* and *splendid*. No sooner was she come to him, but the severe and *uncomplimental* Man at first sight bluntly entertained her with this Discourse: Tell me, *Daughter*, suppose an excellent *Artist* having drawn a Picture according to all the Laws and Rules of Art, should expose and hang it forth to View; and another rude and unskilful *Bungler* coming by, should find fault with this excellent Piece, and attempt to *amend* it, draw the *Eye-brows* to a greater Length, make the Complexion *whiter*, or add more *Colour* to the Cheeks; Would not the true Author be justly angry, that his Art was disparaged and undervalued, and *needless* Additions made to the Piece by an unskilful Hand? And so 'tis here; Can we think that the great *Artificer* of the World, the *Maker* and *Former* of our Nature, is not, and that justly, angry, when you accuse his incomprehensible Wisdom and Perfection of Unskilfulness, and Want of Knowledge? For you would not add your *Reds*, *Whites*, or *Blacks*, did you not think your Bodies needed these Additions; and while you think so, you *condemn* your Creator for *Weakness* and *Ignorance*: But know, that he has *Power* answerable to his *Will*, and as the *Psalmist* tells us, *The Lord has done all Things as he pleased*: And he that takes care of what is good for all, would not give what is *evil* and *hurtful* unto any. Corrupt not therefore the *Image* of God, nor attempt to *add*, what he in his infinite Wisdom thought not fit to *give*: Study not to invent this adulterate Beauty, which even to chaste Persons

oft

Part II. oft proves a Cause of Ruin, by becoming a Snare to them that look upon it. The *holy Man* said no more, and the *young Lady* presently found herself wounded with the Force of his Reasonings, but would not leave him till she had obtained the End of her Errand ; which he granted, not without great Importunity, and an humble and modest referring all to the *Grace of God*, and so sent her home with a double Cure ; her Body cured of its Distemper, and her Mind of its Pride and Vanity : And she ever after led a most humble, sober, and pious Life.

*Padag.*  
l. 3. c. 11.  
p. 248.

*Ibid.* c. 2.  
p. 216.

But it were to transcribe whole Books, to tell you what the Fathers (these three that I have so often mentioned especially) have said in this Case, the Cause being not more copiously than *elegantly* managed by them ; and thither I refer the capable Reader, who has any farther Curiosity for these things. The *true Beauty* of a Christian in those Days lay not in *external* and adventitious Ornaments, but in the *Goodness* and *Purity* of the Mind : The Beauty of the Body (says *Clemens of Alexandria*) consists in a *good Complexion*, and in an *apt Symmetry* and Proportion of its Parts ; but the greatest Beauty in the World is that of the *Soul*, when 'tis adorn'd with the *Holy Spirit*, and the excellent Graces of it, *Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, the Love of Goodness and Modesty* ; which is the brightest and most lovely Ornament that the Eye of Man can behold. It is not (says he) the exterior Aspect of the Man that is to be regarded, but the Mind that is to be furnished and adorned with Goodness and Vertue : And therefore he wittily compares those Women that *curiously* trick and trim up the Body, but neglect how it is with the Soul within, to the *Egyptian Temples* ; look upon their *Out-side*, and they are most *splendid* and *magnificent*, encompassed with delicate Groves, built with large Entries, and stately *Portico's*, surrounded with several

several Rows of *Pillars*, the Walls both within and without set off with *Stones* of several Countries curiously wrought and carved, the Temples themselves garnish'd with *Gold, Silver, Amber*, and all the glittering and *precious Stone* that *India* or *Ethiopia* can afford; but enter within them, and enquire for the *Deity* that is there worshipped, and you shall be *gravely* shewed behind a *Curtain* a *Cat* or a *Crocodile*, or a *Serpent* of that Country, or some such *ill-favoured Beast*, which is the *residentiary* or *tutelary Deity* of that Place. And just such (*says he*) do those Women seem to me, who trim themselves with *Gold*, and are taken up with curling their *Hair*, painting their *Faces*, blacking their *Eyes*, colouring their *Locks*, and other undue Arts of Softness and *Luxury*, beautifying the *outward Rail and Fence*; but if a *Man* look within the *Veil* and *Covering* of the *Temple*, what is under all this *Gayness* and *Finery*, he should be so far from meeting with what was truly beautiful, that it will excite his *Horror* and *Aversion*: For he shall not find the *Image* of *God* dwelling there, as might reasonably be expected; but instead thereof some *filthy* and *treacherous Beast*, that possesses the most inward *Recesses* of the *Soul*, a *lustful Ape*, or that *crafty Serpent* that devours the *Understanding* of a *Man*, and turns his *Soul* into a *Nest* or *Den*, full of most deadly *Venom*, and the *Poison* of his *Error* and *Deceit*.

I conclude this with the Account which *S. Gregory* gives of his Sister *Gorgonia*: That she used no *Gold* to make her fine, *no yellow Hair* ordered into *Knots* and *Curls*, nor any other *Tricks* to make her *Head* a *Scene* and *Pageantry*; no loose and *transparent* *Garments*, no *Lustre* of *Stones* and *Jewels* enlightning the *Air* round about, and reflecting *Splendor* upon them that wear them; no *Devices* and *Arts* of *Painting*, no *Affectation* of *Beauty* that may be easily bought, no counter-working *God's*

T

Creation,

*Nazian:  
in Laud.  
Gor.  
Or. II.  
p. 181.*

Part II. Creation, dishonouring, reproaching, covering his Workmanship with false and deceitful Colours, suffering a *spurious* and *supposititious* Beauty to steal away that natural Image which ought to be kept entire to God and the future State: All this was far from her; and though she very well understood the several *Modes* and *Garbs* of *Bravery* amongst Women, yet she thought none so honourable as the Manner of her Life, and that *inward* Brightness that was lodg'd in her Mind. The only *Redness* that pleased her, was that which was the Fruit of *Blushing* and *Modesty*; no other *Whiteness* but what came through *Fasting* and *Abstinence*, leaving *Fucus's* and *Paintings*, and *living Pictures*, and fading Beauty to those that belong to Plays and *Theatres*, and to such, for whom to *blush* and be *ashamed* is a *Shame* and a *Disgrace*. To which I add that of *Tertullian*, who after he had smartly condemned and confuted the Arts of unlawful Beauty, the Vanity of going in too curious, costly and excessive *Dresses*, concludes with this Counsel to the Women of his time, to cloath themselves with the *Silks of Honesty*, the *fine Vestures of Piety*, the *Purple of Modesty*; and being thus beautified and adorned (says he) *God himself will be your Lover*.

De cult.  
fœmin.  
l. 2. c. 13.  
ad fin.

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#### C H A P. IV.

### Of their great Temperance and Abstinence.

*A vicious Curiosity about Meats and Drinks, a great Temptation. Severely forbidden by the Christian Law. The ancient Christians curious only of such Diet as ministred to Health. They gratified not Ease and Delicacy.*

*licacy. The great Inconveniencies of Intemperance either in Meats or Drinks. Their chief Care about spiritual Food. For other things, content with any Provisions, manifested in several Instances. An over-nice and superstitious Abstinence from some Kinds of Food, condemned. The Instance of Alcibiades the Martyr, out of Eusebius. Christians unjustly accused by the Heathens of Excess and Prodigality in their Feastings. Thyestian Suppers laid to their Charge. The Charge in both Parts of it denied, and fully refuted by Tertullian, and other Christian Apologists.*

**A**Mongst the many Temptations that besiege the Life of Man, there is scarce any into which we are more easily betrayed, than into a *vicious Curiosity* about Meats and Drinks, and the Excesses of an unruly Appetite; therefore it is, that the Christian Religion does so frequently inculcate upon us the Precepts of *Sobriety and Temperance*; to be *temperate in all things, to watch and be sober, to cast off the Works of Darkness, to walk honestly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Excess of Wine, Revellings and Banquetings*; to take heed that our Hearts be not at any time overcharged with *Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and that we be not, as the Men of the old World, brutishly taken up with Eating and Drinking when the Flood came and swept all away.* The Law of Christ commands to *fast often, to keep under the Body, and to make no Provision for the Flesh*: If Nature, regularly governed, be content with *little*, Religion will teach us to be content with less. These Rules the first Christians exactly transcribed into their Lives, being the greatest Instances of



Part II. real Abstinence and Mortification, which they both *practised* themselves and *pressed* upon others: They knew very well, that God had given Men a Charter of Freedom indifferently to use the Creatures, and to enjoy them in some Degree, not only for *Necessity* but *Delight*; but yet were afraid to go so far as they might, or to do any thing that might look towards Excess, or argue an irregular and unsober Mind: They contented themselves with such Provisions as were conducive to *Health* and *Strength*, without any studied seeking after those that were more *luscious* and *delightful*. 'Tis very true what *S. Basil* observes, that by reason of Mens different *Ages* and Course of Life, their different *Temper*s and Constitutions of Body, and other Circumstances, no one fix'd and certain Rule can be prescribed in this Case: But yet our Food and Diet ought for the main to be regulated by the general End of it, which is not wantonly to please the *Palate*, but to minister to *Health*, and to repair the Weakness and Decays of Nature. Many (says *Clemens Alexandrinus*) like brute Beasts, *live* only that they may *eat*; but for us, we are commanded to *eat*, that we may *live*: For Food and Pleasure is not the *Work* and Design for which we live in the World, our Residence here being in order to an incorruptible Life; and therefore our Nourishment ought to be easy and simple, and such as is subservient to the two main Ends of *Life, Health* and *Strength*. We ought to choose such Food (as *Justin Martyr* tells his Friends) not as may gratify our *Ease* and *Delicacy*, but make our Lives *useful* and *serviceable*; and if at any time overtaken with Want, we should quietly acquiesce in that State; and therefore a little after he smartly declaims against all Excess. Wine (says he) is neither to be drank daily to *Excess*, nor to be used as commonly as *Water*: Both indeed are God's *Creatures*; but

Reg. fus.  
disput. in-  
terrog. 19.  
tom 2.  
p. 560.

Pedag.  
l. 2. c. 1.  
p. 139.

Epist. ad  
Zen. &  
Seren.  
p. 506.

p. 51.

but *Water* necessary, *Wine* given only to help and relieve the Body; which [*immoderately taken*] chains up the *Tongue*, sparkles *Fire* out of the *Eyes*, makes the *Legs* tremble, and the *Understanding* being gone, readily takes off its Cup of deadly *Poison*: Contrary to God's Ordination, it turns the peaceable *Instruments* of Husbandry into *Swords* and *Spears*. It may indeed be necessary, sparingly to drink *Wine* both Winter and Summer; but he that drinks it to *Excess*, as a Man that takes over-much of a *Medicine*, like a *Dog* or a *Swine*, betrays his own *Shame*. But above all Men in the World, it least becomes us [*Christians*] as if we were *Votaries* to *Luxury*, to abuse the *Creatures* of God, and to make use of *Thirst*, as a Pretence to *Drunkenness*, seeing we ought to drink no more than what will serve to *quench* our *Thirst*; not like those who swallowing down *Wine*, as Men do drink in a burning *Fever*, quickly make an *End* of themselves thro' their *Intemperance*. Nor are we less to take heed of *Gluttony*, contenting ourselves with a *spare* Diet, and such only as is necessary; not giving way to the infinite and unsatisfied *Cravings* of a nice and intemperate *Appetite*, which will have a thousand Pretences to defend itself; but ruling ourselves according to the wise *Sentence* of him who said τροφαῖς ἀεὶ χριστίων ἵνα τὸ μὴ πεινῆν, *That we are to eat only to satisfy our Hunger*. Thus that ancient Father. To this Purpose also *Clemens Alexandrinus* discourses at large, representing the great Evils and Inconveniences of *Gluttony* and *Excess*; that it wastes the *Estate*, ruins the *Body* by impairing its *Health*, debauching the *Stomach*, deflowering its *Taste*, begetting an ill *Habitude* and *Temper*, and sowing it with the *Seeds* of all *Diseases*: It dulls the *Mind*, and renders it inept and sluggish, and prepares it for the *Entertainment* of any *Vice* or *Wickedness*: That altho'

Ut supr.  
Cap. 1, 2.  
per tot.

**Part II.** we are not absolutely bound to abstain from Variety of Meats, yet we are not to make them our Desire or Study, especially such as savour of Niceness and Delicacy, and are apt to pamper and excite Lust and Wantonness; for though 'tis true all things were especially made for Man's Sake, yet it is not convenient to make use of all, and at sometimes less than at others; to the advantageous Use of a Thing, respect being to be had, not only to the Thing itself, but to the *Time, Occasion, and Manner* of it: That therefore our Meals for the main should be *light and easy*, not mixed with *Variety* of Dainties, but such as may prepare for *Fasting*, and the Exercises of Religion. Upon this Account *S. Cyprian*, in an Epistle wherein he gives Directions about Prayer, advises them (and to make the Counsel more effectual, tells them, that he was *warned* of it by immediate *Revelation* from God) to eat and drink soberly and sparingly, that outward Snares might not enfeeble that Heavenly Vigour and Sprightliness that was in their Breasts, lest their Minds being over-charged with too plentiful Meals, might be less *watchful unto Prayer*. The same Counsel *S. Hierom* gives to *Lata* about the Education of her Daughter, that her Diet should be thin and mean, and that we should never eat more, than she might arise with some *Appetite*, so as that after Meals she might be presently fit either to read or sing *Psalms*.

*Ad Presb.  
& Diac.  
ep. 7. p. 18.*

*Ad Lat.  
tom. 1.  
p. 57.*

*Conc.  
Laod.  
Can. 53.*

*ib. p. 144.*

When at any time invited to publick Solemnities, as *Marriages* and the like, the Prudence of the Church thought fit to lay Restraints upon them, and not only to forbid them *light and ludicrous* Actions, as *leaping or dancing*, but that they should *dine* and *sup* gravely and modestly, as becomes Christians.

The chief Care of Christians then was to become Partakers *τῆς ἀνω τροφῆς ἢ θείας*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* styles it, of that *Divine Food that is from above*, and that only is capable to give real Satisfaction,

little

little regarding what Provisions they had (so they had but any) for that Part that dwelt here below. When *Julian* the Emperor, to raise Money for his Wars, began to squeeze and oppress the Christians, he sent amongst others to *S. Basil* (who had formerly been his Fellow-Student at *Athens*) for a thousand Pounds; the Answer he sends him was, that it could not be expected there, where he had not so much Provision before-hand as would serve for one day; that there were no Arts of *Cookery* at his House, nor Knives stained with the Blood of slaughtered Provisions; that his greatest Dainties were a few *Pot-herbs*, a piece of Bread, and a little sour *vapid* Wine; no such Exceedings as to stupify his Senses with Fumes arising from a loaded Stomach, and to render them incapable to discharge their Functions through Intemperance and Excess. *Chrysoſtom* commends *Olympias* not more for the Modesty of her Garb, than the Meanness and Sobriety of her Diet, to which she had so used herself, that she had got the perfect Mastery over all undue Appetites and Inclinations, and had not only bridled the Horse, but tamed and reduced him to an entire Subjection, and taught her Stomach to receive only so much Meat and Drink as was enough to keep her alive, and in Health. This indeed was the great End of their signal Abstinence in those days, that by subduing the *Flesh* they might keep the stricter hand over the inordinate Motions of corrupt Nature. When *Celsus* accused the *Jews*, and in them obliquely the Christians, for needlessly abstaining from *Swines Flesh*, and some other sorts of Food, affirming this to be no such great Matter, when the *Pythagoreans* wholly abstained from eating any living Creature, who yet were never thought the better, or the more dear to God for it: *Origen* answers, that whatever Reason the *Jews* did it for,

*Basil. Ep.*  
208. tom.  
3. p. 225.  
*Confer. So-*  
*crat. lib. 3.*  
c. 13.  
p. 185.

*Ep. 2. ad*  
*Olymp.*  
tom. 4.  
p. 616.

*Orig. cont.*  
*Cels. 1. 5.*  
p. 259,  
264.

Part II. (God having appointed the Difference) this concerned not *Christians*; that it is not *what enters in at the Mouth that defiles the Man, nor does Meat commend us to God*, nor do we think this Abstinence any such great matter; nor yet do we so indulge the Belly, as to affect or pursue such Delights; that there's a vast Difference between *us* and the *Pythagoreans* in this Affair; they indeed abstain upon the Account of their absurd and fabulous Doctrine of the Soul's *Transmigration*, or passing out of one Body into another; and so forbear to kill or eat any living Creature, lest haply they may destroy and devour their own *Friends* or *Children*: But we in all our Abstinence do it only to *keep under the Body, and to bring it into Subjection*, endeavouring to *mortify the Deeds of the Body, to expel and extinguish our Members that are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affection, and every evil Concupiscence and Desire*. Where he fully vindicates the Christians in their Abstemiousness and Temperance, from doing it out of any vain and foolish Affectation, any nice and singular Opinion, any base and sordid, morose or unsofiable Temper: They were careful to keep the *Mean*, and to avoid *Sordidness* as well as *Luxury*; nor did they profess themselves Enemies to the Provision of human Life, any further than as they were inconsistent with the Ends of Sobriety and Religion: As may appear from a *memorable Passage* related by *Eusebius*, out of a Letter of the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vien*, in *France*, to those in *Asia*. *Alcibiades* (one of those who shortly after suffered Martyrdom) had accustomed himself to a very rigid and sordid Kind of Life, rejecting all other Sorts of Food except only *Bread* and *Water*; and this he did both before and after he was in Prison, which it seems had an ill Influence upon others; Whereupon *Attalus*,

*Hist. Ecc.*  
*lib. 5. c. 3.*  
*p. 167.*

*Attalus*, one of the most eminent of those famous Martyrs, the day after his being first exposed in the *Amphitheatre*, had it revealed to him (For as yet, says the Historian, the Divine Grace had not withdrawn itself, but they had the Holy Spirit as their immediate Counsellor to instruct them; which by the way may give Countenance to those frequent *Visions*, and *Divine Condescensions* which *Cyprian* speaks of in his Epistles: To this *Attalus* it was revealed) that *Alciades* did amiss in refusing to use the *Creatures* of God, and thereby giving a Scandal, and an Offence to others; upon which he laid aside his *Singularity*, and with all Thankfulness to God promiscuously eat any kind of Food.

From the whole of what has been said, it's very evident, what little Reason the Heathens had to accuse the Christians (in their *Agapæ*, or Love-Apol. c. 39. feasts, especially) of *Excess* and *Prodigality*; for that they did, *Tertullian* expressly affirms: Our little P. 32. Suppers (says he) besides as being guilty of other Asbenag. legat. pro Christian. Wickedness, they traduce as *prodigal*, saying of us P. 37. as *Diogenes* did of the People of *Megara*, that they *supped* as if they meant to *die* to morrow. Nay, what were infinitely horrid and barbarous, they commonly charged them with *Thyestian Suppers*, and eating *Man's Flesh*. To the first Part of the Charge, concerning their *Prodigality*, *Tertullian* answers, That they could easilier see a *Mote* in Ibid. another's Eye, than a *Beam* in their own; if they looked home, they would find that 'twas their own *Tribes* and *Precincts*, wherein the very Air was corrupted with the unfavory *Fumes* of their loaded *Tables*, and over-charged *Stomachs*; and yet all this was passed by, and only the poor Christians *Triclinium* called in question: That if they had any *Feast*, it was a *Love-feast*, and whatever Cost was laid out upon it, was expended not for *vain Glory*, but upon the *Accounts* of *Piety* and *Religion*; not  
to

Part II.



to nourish *Parasites* and Flatterers, but to refresh the *Poor*: That the *Order* of the Feast was as *sober* and regular as the *Cause* was honest, going no farther than *Modesty* would admit: They *prayed* to God before they ventured upon his *Creatures*, eat but what sufficed *Hunger*, drank no more than consisted with *sober* and *modest Men*; and fed so, as remembering they were to rise *at Night* to worship God. When they had done, they sung *Psalms*, either of their own *Composure*, or out of the *Holy Volumes*; and as they *began*, so they ended the Feast with *Prayer*, and then departed with the same *Care* to preserve their *Modesty* and *Chastity*; so that they appeared not so much to have *feasted* at *Supper*, as to have *fed* upon *Discipline* and *Order*. So *be*. For the other Part of the Charge, their feeding upon *Man's Flesh* at this common *Supper*, 'twas a Suggestion so *savage* and *barbarous*, as could have found *Belief* with nothing but the very *Spirit of Malice*; we shall again meet with this *Objection* in another Place, and shall therefore here only note out of their *Apologist*, that it was a Charge never offer'd to be made *good* against them, nor proved in any of those many thousand *Trials* which the *Christians* had had in all *Parts* of the *Empire*; that it was very unlikely they should be guilty of eating *Human Flesh*, who did not think it lawful to be present at the *Gladiatory Sports*, where *Men* were *slain*, or so much as to *taste* any *Blood* at all. So *Biblias* the *Martyr* told her *Enemies*, when being reproached with this in the midst of her *Torments*, she cried out, *How is it possible that we should devour Infants, as you charge us, who think it not lawful so much as to taste the Blood of any Creature?* For even till then, and a long time after, they observed that *Canon* of the *Apostolick Council*, *To abstain from things strangled, and from Blood*. So far were they from being either *barbarous* or *luxurious*! No, our

*Athenag.*  
3.  
*Ibid.* p. 38.

*Enf. Hist.*  
*Eccl. ubi*  
*supr.* p. 158.  
*Cap. I.*

our Feasts (as he says in *Minutius Felix*) are not only *chaste*, but *sober*; we indulge not ourselves in Banquets, nor make our Feasts with Wine, but temper our Cheerfulness with Gravity and Seriousness. And indeed their often Watchings and Fasting, and their constant Observance of the strictest Parts of Devotion, sufficiently shew'd how little they pamper'd or indulg'd the *Flesh*, the *Signs* whereof they every where carry'd in their very *Faces*; and this was so notorious, that their very Enemies reproached them with their *trembling* Joints, and their *pale* ghastly Looks. And *Lucian*, giving an Account of the *Christian* Assembly, into which he tells us *Critias* was brought to be made a *Profelyte*, describes them to be a *Company of Persons with their Heads hanging down and pale Faces*; which certainly did not arise from their Fear of Suffering, (for no Men in the World were ever so *willing*, nay, so desirous of laying down their Lives as they) but from their frequent *Abstinence* and *Fasting*. To which purpose *S. Basil's* Comment is most apposite; where commending *Temperance*, or (as he calls it) *Continence*, using the Word in its largest Sense: Other Virtues (says he) being mainly exercised in *secret*, are not altogether so *visible* to the Eyes of Men; whereas *Continence*, where-ever it is, will at first Sight betray itself. For as a good Complexion, and an excellent Constitution of Body, peculiarly design a Man to be an *Athletes*, or *Champion*; so, *Leanness* of Body, and that *Paleness*, which is the Fruit of *Continence*, evidence a Christian to be a real *Champion* for the Commands of *Christ*, vanquishing his Enemy in the Weakness of his Body, and shews how able he is to *contend* in the Cause of *Piety* and *Vertue*. The very Sight of such a Man must needs be of great Advantage to affect us, to behold him sparingly and moderately using even those things that are necessary, not paying Nature its

*Tribute,*

Chap. 4.

*Min. Fel.*  
p. 26.

*Pallidi,*  
*trepidi.*  
*Apud eundem,* p. 10.

*Philopat.*  
tom. 2.  
p. 1007.  
*Reg. suf.*  
*disp. inter-*  
*rog. 17.*  
p. 559.



Part II. *Tribute*, without some Regret, begrudging the little Time that he spends about it, and therefore making Haste to get from the Table to return to his better Exercifes and Employments.

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C H A P. V.

Of their Singular *Continence* and *Chastity*.

*Their admirable Continence discover'd in several Particulars. Their Abstinence from Marriage. Their Marrying only to comply with the End of the Institution. Seldom marry'd more than once. Their Continence admired by Heathens. The Fathers generally severe against second Marriages. The moderate Judgment of Clemens Alexandrinus in the Case. The Canons of several Councils concerning it. Three sorts of Digamy or second Marriages. Their shunning all Occasions and Appearances of Lightness and Immodesty, abstaining from Publick Meetings, Feasts, Plays, &c. Constantine's Law, that no Widow should be forced to appear at publick Tribunals. Another of Theodosius, that none should marry within twelve complete Months after her Husband's Decease. The promiscuous Use of Baths forbidden both by Canon and Civil Laws. Unmarry'd Persons, especially of Ecclesiastick Relation, not familiarly to converse together. Mulieres *Συρείσασαι*, who. How brought in. Condemned by the Council of Antioch, and that of Nice. Clandestine Marriages disallow'd. Their abhorring all immodest Pictures and Discourses. The great Modesty*

Modesty of Gorgonia. Their valuing Cha- Chap. 5.  
 stity above Life; submitting to any kind of  
 Death rather than violate it; many choosing  
 to kill themselves rather than be deflower'd.  
 Several Instances of it. Impurity in Christians  
 bewailed as a great Scandal; punish'd by the  
 Church with very severe Penalties. Several  
 Passages out of the Fathers and Councils no-  
 ted to that purpose. Christians accused by the  
 Heathens of Incest and Adultery. The Sum  
 of the Charge. Their Answer. The Heathens  
 very unfit to bring in this Charge, being them-  
 selves so notoriously guilty; whole Nations,  
 their wisest Philosophers, their very Gods  
 themselves; This fully proved against them.  
 The very Gentiles tacitly confessed the Christi-  
 ans innocent, by condemning them to be for-  
 cibly prostituted. A Part of their Religion not  
 to give way to wanton Looks or unchaste De-  
 sires. The eminent Prevalency of Christianity  
 in converting Persons from Uncleanness and  
 Debauchery, pleaded and asserted. The Ori-  
 ginal of the Accusation enquired into. Found  
 to arise from the beastly Practices of the Gno-  
 sticks, &c. who tho' guilty of the most noto-  
 rious Villanies, and of these in particular, yet  
 shrowded themselves under the general Name  
 of Christians. Some forced thro' Fear to con-  
 fess the Christians guilty of these Crimes.

**A** Third considerable Instance of that Sobriety  
 and Moderation for which the Christians were  
 so renowned of old, was their Continnence, in ab-  
 staining from all manner of Uncleanness; which is  
 that

**Part II.** that Vertue that we properly call *Chastity*; a Vertue for which how eminent they were, (notwithstanding what their Enemies heavily charged upon them to the contrary, of which afterwards) we shall take Notice of in some few Particulars.

*First*, The Christians of those Times were so far from breaking in upon any *unchaste* Embraces, that they frequently abstained even from *lawful* Pleasures, and kept themselves even from the *honourable* and *undefiled* Bed, never marrying all their Life.

*Min. Fel.*  
p. 26.

We are (says *Octavius*) *chaste* in our *Speech*, and *chaster* in our *Bodies*; and very many of us, tho' we do not boast on't, do inviolably preserve a *perpetual* Virginitie; and are so far from any extravagant Desire after *incestuous* Mixtures, that many stand at a Distance from the most *chaste* and modest Embraces. Thus *Justin Martyr* tells the Emperors,

*Ap. 2. p. 62.*

*Athanas. leg.*  
*pro Christi.*  
p. 37.

all other sorts of Men. To the same purpose another *Apologist*: 'Tis very easy (says he) to find many amongst us both Men and Women, who remain unmarried even in *old Age*; conceiving that in this State they shall have fitter Opportunities of drawing near to God. Not that they who persevered in this Course of *Celibate*, did combine themselves into distinct Societies, and bind themselves under an *Oath* of *perpetual* Virginitie, (as the Humour was in after-ages) for of this not the least Shadow appears in any of the Writings of those times: They lived promiscuously 'till towards the End of the third *Century*, apply'd themselves to the Business of their Place and Station, and only lived single, that in those troublesome and hazardous Times of Persecution, they might be less ensnared with the Entanglements

tanglements of the World, and be more free for the Exercifes of Religion. Chap. 5.

*Secondly*, When they did marry, they generally professed they did it only to comply with the great End of the *Institution*, viz. the Propagation of Mankind; not to gratify wanton and brutish Desires, but to answer the great *End* of Nature, that Human Society might not fail: Either (say they) we marry not at all, but keep ourselves *always* continent; or if we do marry, it is for no other End but the bringing forth and the bringing up of Children. Whoever amongst us takes a Wife according to the Laws prescribed us, he reckons he does it only for the Begetting of Children: Within this his Desires are bounded and limited; as the Husbandman concerns himself no further in tilling his Ground, and sowing of his Corn, than to bring forth the Crop at Harvest. Hence it was, that they seldom marry'd more than *once*: We willingly contain ourselves (as he speaks in *M. Felix*) within the Bounds of single Marriage, and either know but *one* Woman, (and that merely out of a Desire of Children) or *none*. The first Knot being loosed by Death, they very rarely tied a second: Which gained great Honour and Reputation both to them and to their Religion with the *Gentiles*, amongst whom they lived. *Chrysoftom* tells us, That a Discourse happening on a time between him and his Master, who was a *Gentile*, concerning his *Mother*, being told that she was a Widow, and after enquiry concerning her Age, being answer'd that she was 40 Years old, and that she had lived 20 Years of the time a Widow; the Man was surprized with a strange Admiration, and cried out before all the Company, *Behold* (said he) *what brave Women there are amongst the Christians!* The Truth is, such was the Heavenly Zeal and Temper of the first Ages of *Christianity*, that they would have no more to do

*Just.*  
*Mart.*  
*ib. 71.*  
*Athenag.*  
*ibid.*

*Ubi supra.*

*Ad vid. junior. tom. 4. p. 458.*

with

Part II. with the World than they needs must, but industriously shunn'd all its Burdens and Incumbrances, amongst which they especially reckon'd Marriage, a State not rashly to be engaged in; for once it was *allowable*, but for a second time *inexcusable*. And indeed it cannot be deny'd, but that many of the ancient Fathers, *Tertullian, Cyprian, Hierom,* and others, did inveigh against *second Marriages* with too much Bitterness and Severity, violently pressing many Passages in Scripture to serve the Cause, straining the String many times till it cracked again; and not sticking to censure and condemn second Marriages, as little better than *Adultery*. Hear what one of the *Apologists* says to it: Amongst us every Man either remains as he was born, or engages himself in one only Marriage: For as for second Marriages, they are but a more plausible and *decorous* kind of Adultery; our Lord assuring us, That *whoever puts away his Wife, and takes another, commits Adultery*. Which Place, as also another of like Importance, how perversly he interprets, and imperitently applies to his purpose, I am not willing to remember. *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks in the Case with much more *Modesty* and *Moderation*: As for those to whom God has given the Gift of *absolute* Continence, we think them happy; we admire the Gravity and Staidness of those that content themselves with a single Marriage; but yet say withal, that Compassion ought to be had of others, and that we *should bear one another's Burdens*, lest he who *seems to stand fair, do fall himself*. And as for second Marriages, that of the Apostle is to take place, *if they cannot contain, they should marry; for it is better to marry than to burn*. However, 'tis certain, the Fathers of old generally did what they could to discourage second Marriages. The ancient *Canons* (as *Zonaras* tells us) suspended such Persons from the Communion for a whole Year; and the Council of

*Laodicea,*

*Asbenag. ut supra.*

*Strom. l. 3. p. 428. Vid. Epiph. Her. 48. p. 178. Cyril. ad illum. Ca. secb. 4. p. 90. De Can. 7. Conc. Neo. Casar. Can. 1.*

*Laodicea*, tho' it determine not the Time, yet it requires that they should spend some small time at least in *Penance*, in Fasting and Prayer, before they be received to the Communion. By the *Canons* that are call'd *Apostolical*, whoever, after Baptism, has engaged in a second Marriage, is rendred incapable of any Degree in the Ministry. Accordingly *Epiphanius* reports of one *Joseph*, whom he knew, a converted *Jew*, and advanced to the Dignity of a *Count* by *Constantine* the Great; that when the *Arians* would have laid Hands upon him to have made him Bishop, he got off by this Wile, by pretending himself to have been twice married. But tho' the Fathers and ancient Councils were thus severe in this Case, yet the Rigour of their Censure will be much abated, if what some tell us be true, That many of their Passages are not level'd against successive Marriages, but against having two Wives at the same time. For, as a learned Man hath observed, there were three sorts of *Digamy*; the first a Man's having two Wives at once; this was condemned by the *Roman Laws*. The second, when the former Wife being dead, the Man marry'd a *second time*. A third, when for any slight Cause a Man put away his Wife by a Bill of *Divorce*, and marry'd another; which tho' then frequently practised and connived at (if not allowed) by the Laws of those Times, was yet prohibited by the Decrees of the Church; and of this last sort (says he) many of the ancient *Canons* are to be understood.

*Thirdly*, They were infinitely careful to shun all *Occasions* and *Appearances* of Lightness and Immodesty, whatever might tend to inveigle their Senses, and to debauch their Minds and Manners; nay, whatever might but give a Suspicion of Wantonness and Incontinence. They declined, as much as might be, going to all publick Meetings; such

U

as

Chap. 52

Heres. 30  
p. 61.Jussell:  
not. in  
Can. 1.  
Conc.  
Laod.

Part II. as Feasts, Plays, Shews, &c. Therefore *Cyprian* severely chides some *Virgins* for being present at *Weddings*, where they laughed freely, could not but hear loose Discourses, see uncomely Carriages, feed upon luxurious Dishes; all which must needs not only kindle, but add *Fuel* to the *Fire*, and fill their Minds with indecent Thoughts and Desires. *S. Hierom*, on the other hand, does as much commend some whom he knew, who always kept at home on *Festival-days*, to avoid the Crowd and Gazes of the People; and would never go abroad at those times when they could not venture into the Publick, without the greatest Care and Custody of themselves. For this Reason *Constantine* made a Law, That *Matrons* should not be forced, upon the Account of Debt, to come out of their own Houses, to appear before the publick *Tribunals*; but that the Business should be decided in such way, as might not betray the Modesty of that Sex. And when afterwards the Fervor of Christianity began to abate apace, and Persons had in a great measure lost that huge Reverence which former Times had for Continenence and Chastity; *Theodosius*, to restrain them a little within the Bounds of Decency, provided a Law, That no *Woman*, of what Quality or Rank soever, should marry again within a Year at least, (*i. e.* within twelve full Months, whereas under the old *Roman Laws*, the Time of Mourning was but Ten, as a Learned *Interpreter* of that Law observes) after her Husband's Death; and this he ratify'd by a double Penalty; a Note of perpetual *Infamy* to be set upon the offending Person, and the Loss of her whole *Dower*, and whatever Estate her Husband had bequeathed her; which was to go to the Children she had by him, or (if none) to his next of Kin. By the *Laodicean Council*, not only Clergymen, and such as have entred upon a State of Continenency; but

De Discipl.  
& Hab.  
Virg.  
p. 167.

De Virg.  
servand.  
p. 71.  
tom. 1.

Cod. Theod.  
l. 1. tit. 10.  
l. 1.

Ib. l. 3. tit.  
8. l. 1.  
Vid. Gothofred.  
in loc.

Can. 30.  
Vid. Conc.  
in Trull.  
Can. 77.

but all Christian Men whatsoever, are forbidden to use the same *common Baths* with Women: And for very good Reason, it being a Thing (as *Zonaras* observes) both *shameful* and uncomely in itself, and pernicious in its Consequence: For how easily does an unlawful *Flame* kindle from such a *Spark*? And when Human Nature is of itself so ready to *boil over*, who would pour *Oil* upon the *Fire*? A thing ever look'd upon as repugnant to all the *Laws of Modesty*, yea, even by them that are *without*; this being (says the *Council*) one of the chiefest Things which the very *Heathen condemn*, and for which they censure and reproach us. Parallel to this, *Photius* and his Commentator *Balsamon* tell us of a Law of the Emperor *Justinian*, making it a sufficient Cause of *Divorce*, and losing her *Dowry*, for a Woman either to *feast* or *bathe* in the Company of other Men, without the Leave and Consent of her Husband. Indeed in the first and purer Times, they took all imaginable Care that unmarried Persons, especially such as were of *Ecclesiastical Cognizance*, or had devoted themselves to a severer Course of *Piety*, should not commonly converse together. *Cyprian* writing to *Pomponius* about the Virgins that had taken Profession of *Continence* upon them, but lived too familiarly with some Persons that belonged unto the Church, charges him, that Men and Virgins should not only not *sleep* near one another, but not dwell together in the same House; lest the Infirmitie of their Sex, and the Slipperiness of their Youth should betray them into *the Snare of the Devil*. Wherefore he commends *Pomponius* for having suspended the *Deacon*, and the rest that had kept such familiar Correspondence with those Virgins; and order'd that they should not be absolved till they had sufficiently testify'd their Repentance, and made it appear by satisfactory Evidence, that no

Chap. 5:



Nomocan.  
τίτλ. δ'.  
κεφ. λα'.  
p. 104.

Ep. 62:  
p. 98.  
Videssis  
Conc. 1.  
Carthag.  
Can. 3, 4



Part II. unlawful Familiarity had passed between them; and that if ever they returned to the like Cohabitation, greater Penalties should be inflicted upon them. The Foundation of which ill Custom doubtless sprung, or at least took Encouragement from hence: In those first Times of Christianity it was usual for *Clergymen*, such especially as were sent up and down to preach the Gospel, to have some grave and sober *Woman* along with them; who might be helpful and assisting to them, and who was neither *Wife* nor *Concubine*, but taken in either upon the Account of necessary *Attendance*, or the Pretence of *Piety*. These *Women* in the Writings of the Church (wherein there is frequent mention of them) are called *Συνοικιστοι*, such as were brought in, taken into the House as *Domestick Assistants* to *Ecclesiastick* Persons. But this proving matter of Scandal and Inconvenience, was not only cried out against by *private* Fathers, but by *publick* Synods. The Council of *Antioch* held in the Reign of *Aurelian* the Emperor, *Anno* 272, in a *Synodical* Epistle, wherein they censure the *Doctrines* and *Practices* of *Paulus Samosatenus*; condemn this among the rest, that he and his *Presbyters* and *Deacons* keep these *introduced Women*, whereby horrible Inconveniences did arise; for besides the Snare and Temptation of it, although they should keep themselves innocent, yet they could not avoid the Suspicion and Scandal that would arise, and the Danger of drawing in others by their bad Example. For which reason *S. Basil* writes to an old *Presbyter* in his *Diocess*, to abstain from the Company of a *Woman*, with whom he was wont to *cohabit*; not so much to avoid Temptation to Incontinence (the *Man* being then 70 Years of Age) as that he may not lay a *Stumbling-stone*, and *Occasion of Offence* in his Brother's way. The same was universally forbidden by the great Council of *Nice*, and no

*Euf. Hist.*  
*Ecll. l. 7.*  
*c. 30. p. 281.*

*Epist. ad*  
*Paregor.*  
*Presbyt.*  
*Ep. 198.*  
*p. 216.*

*Can. 3. ubi*  
*vid. Zonar.*

**Man**

Man within the Clergy allow'd to have any Woman near him, unless his *Mother*, his *Sister*, or his *Aunt*, or such only of whom there could be no *Suspicion*; as we find it in the third *Canon* of that Council; in the ancient Version whereof these *mulieres Συρέσαστοι* are styled *Extraneæ*, *Strangers*; by which Name they are also called in a Law of the Emperor *Honorius*, prohibiting any Clergyman whatsoever, to keep Company with these *strange Women*; limiting their *Converse* and *Cohabitation* within the very same *Relations* to which they are restrained by the *Nicene Canon*, which 'tis not to be doubted that the Emperor had in his Eye when he made that *Constitution*. And because *Bishops* were the highest Order in the Church, therefore that their Honour might be especially secured, Care was taken, that no Bishop, under Penalty of being *deposed*, should entertain, or cohabit with any *Woman* whatsoever, either Relation or Stranger, that so all Pretence either of Temptation or Scandal, might be cut off. For the same Reason it was, that they disallow'd all *Clandestine Marriages* which were not openly made in the Face of the Church, accounting them no better than a State of *Adultery* or *Fornication*. And as they were careful not to give Offence to others, so they were not willing themselves to come within the Shadow of a Temptation: They stood at a Distance from whatever was offensive either to their *Eyes* or *Ears*; their *Ears* they stopt against all loose idle Songs, all filthy and obscene Discourses; their *Eyes* they shut against all uncomely Objects, all wanton and lascivious Pictures, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* expressly tells us, not doing any thing that seemed but to carry an ill Colour with it. *Nazianzen* tells us of his Sister *Gorgonia*, a vertuous Woman, whose Example we have often quoted, That for Modesty and Sobriety she went beyond all other Women;

Chap. 5.

C. Tb. lib. 16. Tit. 2. de Episc. l. 44.

Synop. Bap. lib. Tit. 1. c. 41. p. 22.

Tertull. de pudicit. c. 4. p. 557.

Admonit. ad Grec. p. 40. vid. Conc. 6. in Trul. Can. 100. Orat. 11. p. 182.

Part II. that she reconciled the two opposite States of Human Life, *Celibate* and *Marriage*; the one more *sublime* and *divine*, but more *dangerous* and *troublesome*; the other more *humble*, but withal more *safe*; that she avoided the Inconveniences of each, and chose what was most excellent out of both, the *Sublimity* of the one, and the *Security* of the other; shewing, that neither of these States, in itself, did wholly tie us up either to God or the World, nor yet wholly separate us from them; so that the one should be absolutely rejected, or the other absolutely commended and embraced; but that it is the *Mind* that admirably presides both over *Marriage* and *Virginitie*. And withal, farther adds concerning her, That so great was her *Bashfulness* and *Modesty*, that when she lay under a most acute and dangerous *Distemper*, yet she refused to have any *Physician* come near her; as blushing that any *Man* should either *see* or touch her.


*Ib.* p. 185.

*Fourthly*, They valued their *Innocency* and their *Honour* above their *Lives*, and therefore chose to undergo the greatest *Dangers*; to *die*, yea, to *kill* themselves rather than any *Violence* should be offer'd to their *Chastity*. As the fairest *Promises* could not *tempt* them, so neither could the fiercest *Torments* *affright* them into any unchaste *Compliance*. When *Maximinus*, the *Emperor*, govern'd in the *Eastern* Parts, amongst other Effects of his wild and brutish *Fury* and *Extravagance*, he fill'd all *Places* where he came with *Adulteries* and *Ravishments*, abusing *Women*, and deflouring *Virgins*; which succeeded well enough (says the *Historian*) with all others, except only *Christians*, who generously despising *Death*, made light of the *Rage* and *Fury* of the *Tyrant*. The *Men* underwent all sorts of *Punishments* which *Cruelty* could invent; the *Women* bore up with a *Courage*, no less *manly* and *unconquerable*; and when any were drawn

*Euseb.*  
*Hist. Eccl.*  
*lib. 8. c. 14.*  
p. 312.

drawn out to be abused, they rather submitted their Lives to Death, than their Bodies to *Dishonour*. Of these he tells us of one especially at *Alexandria*, a Woman of great Birth and Fortune, but much more famous for her Vertues, especially her Modesty and Chastity; which she stoutly defended, and preferr'd before her Nobility, or her Riches, her excellent Parts, or any Accomplishments whatsoever. The Emperor had oft attempted her by all Arts of Solicitation; but all in vain, till at last, not being able to prevail, his Affection somewhat attempering his Fierceness and Cruelty, he would not put her to Death, which she was most ready to have undergone; but spoil'd her of her Estate, and then sent her into Banishment; there being many hundreds of others at the same time, who not able to bear the Violation of their Chastity, wherewith the Governors and Commanders threatned them, willingly subjected themselves to all kinds of Racks and Tortures, and the worst *capital* Punishments which their Enemies could inflict upon them. Nay, when the Case so happen'd that they were set upon, and all their Resoluteness could not provoke the cruel Kindness of their Enemies to dispatch them, they would rather dispatch *themselves*, than fall into the rude Hands of Lust and Wantonness. Thus did that famous *Woman*, and her two Daughters, (mention'd by the same Author, whose Names, as *Chrysoptom* in an *Oration* on purpose in their Commendation tells us, were *Domnina* the Mother, *Bernice* and *Prosdice* the Daughters) eminent as well for the outward Beauty and *Features* of their Bodies, as for the inward *Vertues* of their Minds, being sought for as a Prey to Lust, under the *Dioclesian* Persecution, they fled for it; but being found out by the Soldiers that were sent to search for them, and knowing there was no other way to

*Ib. c. 12.  
p. 305.  
Hom. 51. de  
S. S. Domn.  
Ber. Prosd.  
tom. 1.  
p. 557.*

Part II.  escape ; in their Return, they begg'd Leave of the Soldiers, that for some private Occasions they might step a little out of the Road ; which being granted, fitting themselves for what they had before-hand agreed on, as well as the Time would give them Leave, they unanimously threw themselves into the River, and there perish'd in the *Waters*. The like he relates of a noble *Woman* at *Rome*, Wife to the *Prefect*, or chief Governor of the City, (but a Christian) that *Maxentius* the Emperor being passionately inflamed with the Love of her, sent Officers to fetch her, who breaking into the House, to the great Terror of her Husband, would violently have seiz'd on her ; of whom she begg'd only so much Time as that she might a little dress and adorn herself ; under which Pretence, retiring into her Chamber, she caught up a Sword, and by a fatal Stroke, left the Messengers nothing but a dismal Spectacle of Amazement and Horror. These Instances (both of them highly applauded by *Chrysostom* and *Eusebius*) I quote not to justify a Man's laying violent Hands upon himself, as either lawful or laudable ; whether in some such Cases, Persons might not be acted by some *divine* Motions, extraordinary and *heroick* Impulses (the Case of *Sampson*, &c.) as *S. Augustin* inclines to believe, it is not very pertinent for me to enquire ; it being enough to my purpose to observe, that they were great Evidences how highly they prized *Chastity* and *Integrity*, which they were willing to secure at so dear a Rate.

And in those Cases wherein Life was not concern'd, they gave the greatest Testimony how much they abhorr'd all Uncleaness. None were ever more hearty Enemies to *Idolatry* ; and yet *Origen* at *Alexandria* (if that Story be true) when put to this unhappy Choice, either to *sacrifice* or *defile* himself, chose rather to commit *Idolatry* than *Fornication*. Tho' even that too was rather his *Enemies* Act than his

*Ibid. c. 14.*  
*p. 313.*

*De Civ. D.*  
*lib. 1. c. 26.*  
*col. 75. ubi*  
*de hac ipsa*  
*re agit.*

*Epiphan.*  
*Haes. 64.*  
*p. 228.*

his own, they thrusting the Frankincense into his Hand, and haling him up to the *Altar*. Chap. 5.

*Fifthly*, Whenever any was found guilty of the least Uncleaness, it was looked upon and *bewailed* as a very *heinous Sin*, and a great *Dishonour* to the Christian Name : What is it that I hear (says *Cyprian*) how detestable should it be to you, what with the greatest Grief and Affliction of my Mind I have understood, that there are some amongst you who have defiled their *Bodies*, the *Temples of God*, even after they were *sanctified* by Confession, and *cleansed* by Baptism, with filthy and infamous Embraces, promiscuously using the Beds and Lodgings of the Women ? When although they should be free from *actual* Adultery, yet even in this 'twould be a *Fault* of a mighty Aggravation, that by their *scandalous* Example others might be seduced into Ruin. *S. Basil*, writing to a *Monk* who had been *overtaken* with this *Fault*, elegantly bewails the Greatness of his Sin, as a Dishonour to the Strictness of his former Profession ; a Reproach to those Lips, which had *kissed* the Mouths of so many *Saints* ; to those Hands, which so many devout Persons had *embraced* as pure and undefiled ; to those Knees, before which so many Servants of God had *fallen down* ; as a being caught in the Snare of a crafty *Devil*, a perfidious Violation of his *Promises*, a being become a *Sport* and Scorn to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, a confuting (what in him lay) that triumphant Speech of *Christ*, that he had *overcome the World*, filling even to the Place where he lived a Cup of *Infamy* and *Reproach*. In the next Epistle he deals with the *Woman*, and treats her with the same elegant Severity, tho' in both he so aggravates the Case, as to excite them to Repentance, and to a speedy *Recovery of themselves out of the Snare of the Devil*. But because good Words and Persuasions were not *Cords* strong enough to restrain some Mens irregular

*Ad Rogat.  
& Confess.  
Ep. 6. p. 115.*

*Ad Mach. lap.  
tom. 1.  
p. 11.*

Part II. regular Lusts and Passions, they twisted with them  
 the *Discipline* of the Church : And therefore,

*Sixthly*, They were wont to *punish* the Breach of Chastity by inflicting severe Penalties upon incontinent Persons. Amongst all the Sins that were most sharply punished in the ancient Church, *Adultery* was one of the chief : Whosoever was convicted of it, was immediately cast out of the Church, and disowned as a rotten Member. This, *Tertul-*

*Vid. Tert. de Pudicit. c. 7. p. 560. de Hares. p. 120.*

*lian* tells us, first made *Marcion* turn *Heretick* ; for being found guilty of lying with a Virgin, and for that thrown out of the Communion of the Church, he betook himself to one *Cerdon*, a *Master-Heretick*, and espoused his Doctrines and Opinions. The Truth is, in those first Times the Punishment of Adultery was very great, *perpetual Penance* all a Man's Life, and scarce being admitted into Communion at the very *Hour of Death*, till Pope *Zephyrinus*, about the Year *two hundred and sixteen*, considering the great Inconveniences of so much Severity, Persons hereby being oft *driven* into *Despair*, and others discouraged from coming over to the Christian Faith, ordered, That Penance in this Case should be limited to a shorter time ; which being ended, such Persons might be received again into the Bosom of the Church. This *Decree* gave great Offence to the *African Churches*, most whereof stood up for the Strictness of the *ancient Discipline*.

*Lib. de Pudicit. c. 1. p. 555. Ad Antonian. Ep. 52. p. 71, 72. Cap. 20.*

*Tertullian* more especially inveighs against it with much Bitterness and Animosity, as a thing *unfit* in itself, and an *Innovation* in the Church. The same *Cyprian* also plainly intimates, tho' he himself was for the more *mild* Opinion. By the *Ancyran Council*, held *Anno* three hundred and fifteen, it was decreed, That whoever was guilty of Adultery, should be punished with a *seven Years Penance* before they were admitted to the Communion. By the Synod of *Illiberis*, if a Man, after having done his

*Can. 7. p. 13.*

his Penance for the first Fault, fell afterwards into Chap. 5.  
 the same Sin again, he was not to be taken into  
 Communion, no, *not* at the Hour of Death. The  
 same Punishment they inflicted upon *Barwds*, and Can. 12.  
 such Persons as for Gain prostituted the Bodies of p. 22.  
 their *Children*, by selling them (or themselves ra-  
 ther, of whom their Children were a Part) to Lust  
 and Ruin. S. *Basil*, writing to *Amphilochius* Rules Epist. Can.  
 for the Conduct of Discipline, and the Measures 58, 59.  
 of Repentance, sets Adultery at *fifteen Years* Pe- tom. 3.  
 nance, Fornication at *seven*, and then to be ad- p. 36.  
 mitted to the Holy Sacrament. His Brother *Gre-* Ep. Can.  
*gory*, Bishop of *Nyssa*, treating about the same Af- ad Letoi.  
 fairs, appoints Fornication to be punished with Can. 4.  
 no less than *nine Years* Penance, and Suspension tom. 1.  
 from the Sacrament; and Adultery, and all other p. 95<sup>1</sup>.  
 Species of Uncleanness, with double that Time:  
 Though allowing Liberty to the *Spiritual Guide* to  
 contract this Time, as the Circumstances of the *Case*  
 or *Person* might require. But both these last men-  
 tioned being but private Bishops, their *Canons*  
 could be no further obligatory, than to those par-  
 ticular *Diocesses*, that were under their Charge.  
 And indeed the Censures of the Church in this  
 Case did much vary according to Time and Place,  
 in some more *rigid* and *severe*, in others more *lax*  
 and favourable; tho' in all, such as did abundantly  
 shew what hearty Enemies they were to all Filthi-  
 ness and Impurity whatsoever.

What has been hitherto said of the Modesty, the  
 chaste and sober Carriage of the *Primitive Christians*,  
 will receive further Light, if we consider how clear-  
 ly they vindicated themselves from that *malicious*  
 Charge of *Incest* and *Adultery*, which the Heathens  
 commonly charged upon them; so commonly, that  
 we scarce find any of the ancient *Apologists* but takes  
 Notice of it, and confutes it. The Sum of the  
 Charge, as 'tis more formally drawn up by the  
 Heathen



Part. II. Heathen in *M. Felix*, take thus: That the Christians knew one another by certain *privy* Marks and Signs, and were wont to be in *love* with, almost before they *knew* one another; that they exercised Lust and Filthiness under a Pretence of Religion, promiscuously calling themselves *Brothers* and *Sisters*, that by the Help of so *sacred* a Name, their common Adulteries might become *incestuous*: That upon a solemn Day, they meet together at a Feast [*he means their Love-Feasts*] with their *Wives, Children, Sisters, Mothers, Persons of every Age and Sex*; where, after they have well eaten and drank, and begun to be *warm* and merry, heated with the Excess of Wine, a Piece of *Meat* is thrown for the *Dogs*, who being tied to the *Candlesticks*, begin to leap and frisk about, till they have run away with, and put out the *Lights*; and then nothing being left but *Darkness*, the fit *Cover* and *Shadow* for *Impudence* and *Villany*, they promiscuously run amongst one another into filthy and incestuous Embraces; and if they be not *all alike* guilty of *Incest*, 'tis not the Fault of their *Will*, but the good Fortune of their *Chance*, seeing what actually happens to one, is *intentionally* the Lot of all. This is the Tale, which however absurd and incredible, yet strangely found *Belief*, or at least was pretended to be believed amongst the Enemies of *Christianity*. Now, though it be sufficiently refuted by what has been already said, yet we may observe the Christians of those Times further pleading these *Four* things in their own Vindication.

*Tert. Apol.*  
c. 9. p. 10.  
c. 39. p. 31.  
*Min. Fel.*  
p. 26.

*First*, That if the Charge had been true, yet the *Heathens* had little reason to object it to the *Christians*, being *themselves* so notoriously guilty in this kind. For *Adultery*, nothing more common amongst them; and for *Incest*, 'twas a general Indictment of *whole Nations*, the *Persians* usually lying with their own *Mothers*, the *Macedonians* and *Egyptians* mar-

marrying with their own *Sisters*, and this done even at *Athens* itself; their Histories full of them, their Plays and Tragedies, which they frequented every day with great Applause, represented them as *lawful* and *commendable*. *Socrates* himself, the great Glory of the Heathen World, was condemned at *Athens*, among other things, for *Sodomy*, and the Corruption of Youth; and some of *Plato's* School have perished in the very *Act* of Adultery. Nay, their very Gods themselves, whom they worshipped and adored, were highly guilty in this kind. They feign those things of us (says *Athenagoras*) which they themselves report of their own Gods; whose Lusts and Wantonnesses 'tis no wonder if they style *Mysteries*: Were they such hearty Enemies to shameful and promiscuous Mixtures, they must abhor their great God *Jupiter*, who begot Children both of *Rhea* the Mother, and *Proserpina* the Daughter, and marry'd with his own Sister; and who was (unless *Orpheus* their great Poet lyes) more wicked and vile in his kind, than *Thyestes* himself? *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells them, That as they had order'd the matter, by the *Marriages*, begetting Children, *Adulteries*, and *Banquets* of their Gods, (which they set out in their *Plays* and *Poems*) they had turned Heaven into a *Comick Scene*, and made the *Deity* a Piece of *Dramatick Sport*, and by *Satyrick Wit* had jested *Religion*, and whatever was most *Sacred*, into *Scorn* and *Laughter*. Nothing more usual amongst them (as he there *observes*) than to hang their Rooms with the *Pictures* of their Gods drawn in the most lascivious and *propudious* Postures, engaged in the most filthy and dishonest Actions, enough to shame Intemperance itself. *These* (says he) *are the Original Patterns of your soft Effeminacy; this your beastly and shameful Divinity; these the Doctrines of your Gods, Copartners with you in your Uncleanmess and Adultery.* And whereas they might pretend, that these *Stories* of their Gods were on-

Chap. 5.  
Tert. ib.  
c. 46.  
p. 36.

Legat. pro  
Christian.  
p. 35.

Admonit.  
ad Græc.  
p. 39, 40.  
Videsis  
ful. Firm.  
de Err.  
Prof. Relig.  
p. 8.

Part II. ly the Extravagant Inventions of their *Poets*, who took a Liberty to say any thing to gratify the People; *Athanasius* answers, That hereby they shook the very *Foundation* of their *Gods*, having no other Authority for their *Existence*, than what Account their *Poets* gave them; so that if they feigned their *Actions*, they might with equal Reason be supposed to feign their very *Names* and *Persons*; there being the same ground of Belief for the one as for the other; and that there was as much Reason to believe they spake Truth in this, as in the Relation of any other Matters of Fact, concerning *Achilles*, *Ulysses*, *Nestor*, *Hector*, or any of the rest; all depending upon the same Warrant and Authority. This propagated Looseness and Uncleaness to them, under the Notion and Shadow of Religion; such as the *Gods* are, such warrantably may be their *Worshippers*. Wherever you are (says *Tertullian*) at home, or abroad, or beyond the Seas, Lust is your Companion, which often stumbles upon *Incest*; whereas Chastity, diligently and faithfully preserved, keeps us from any such Event, and we are as far from *Incest*, as we are from *Whoredom*, or any Excess in a married State; yea, many prevent all Possibility of this Charge, by containing themselves within perpetual Virginity. And yet though we are thus, (says another *Apologist*) yet there want not those who object these things to us; and as 'tis in the Proverb, ἡ πόρνῃ τὴν σώφρονα, *The Strumpet reproaches the honest Woman*; for though they merchandize for Lust, and keep open Shop for all manner of Uncleaness, not abstaining from the Violation and Abuse of *Youth*, Males with Males committing that which is unseemly; though themselves are guilty of these Villanies, which they report also of their *Gods*, and do themselves boast of them as brave *Achievements*; yet have they the Face to accuse us of them. *Adulterers* and *Sodomites* as they are, they charge

Orat. cont.  
Gent.  
p. 14.  
tom. I.

Ibid. c. 9.  
p. 10.

Athenag.  
ut supr.  
p. 37.

charge us, who are either always continent, or never marry more than once; themselves in the mean while living like *Fishes*, where the great ones *subdue and swallow up the less*. Such infamous Filthinesses are done amongst you, which we do not care to *hear*, and may much less defend; you laying things to the Charge of chaste and modest Men, which we could not believe that there should be such things done in the World, were not you yourselves *Instances* of them. This Consideration made *Justin Martyr* thus freely and passionately bespeak the *Senate*: It were to be wished that some body getting up into a *high Place*, should with a loud Voice cry out, *Be afraid, be afraid to charge those things of which you yourselves are openly guilty, upon the Innocent and Undeserving; to attribute what belongs only to yourselves, and to your Gods, to those with whom there is not so much as the Shadow of any such thing to be found. Learn to be more wise and sober, and repent of such Injustice.*

Secondly, That the Heathens themselves did tacitly *confess* Christians to be *innocent* in this Case, when their great Care was how they might *debauch* them: 'Twas a Part of their severest Punishment to be *prostituted*, and exposed to Rudeness and Violence; a Penalty which they would never have inflicted upon them, had they really been such *lewd* profligate Persons as their Enemies endeavoured to represent them. This Plea *Tertullian* urges in the Close of his *Apology*: Condemn, (says he) crucify and torment us; your *Cruelty* and Injustice is the Evidence of our *Innocency*, and therefore God suffers it to come upon us: For while you choose rather to condemn a *Woman* that is a *Christian* to the *Stews* than to the *Lions*, you plainly confess, that the Violation of Chastity is accounted by us a *heavier* Penalty, than any Punishment or kind of Death which you can inflict upon us.

Chap. 5.

M. Eccl.

p. 24. B.

Ap. I. p. 51.

C. ult.

p. 40.

Ad Lenonem quam ad Leonem.

An

## Part II.

*Vit. Pauli  
Eremit.  
tom. 1.  
p. 237.*

An eminent Instance hereof (tho' of the other Sex) S. *Hierom* relates to this Purpose : In the Time of the *Decian* Persecution, a young Man, a *Christian*, then in the Flower and Beauty of his Age, whose Constancy had been oft attempted by other Means to no Purpose, he was at last set upon in this Manner ; he was carried into a pleasant *Garden*, and into a Part of it beset with *Lillies* and *Roses* hard by the Banks of a *Crystal River*, whose soft *Murmurs*, together with the *Musick* made by the Leaves of the Trees, waven by the gentle Motions of the Wind, conspired to render it a Place for *Pleasure* and *Delight* : Here, upon a *Bed of Down* the young Man was laid ; and that he might not be able to help himself, or shift his Posture, was tied down with *silken Cords*. The Company withdrawing, a beautiful *Strumpet* was sent in to him, who began to caress him with Kisses and Embraces, treating him with all the Arts of Wantonness, not consistent with *Modesty* to name. How to relieve himself in this Case, the poor Man knew not ; but finding the Temptation beginning to prevail, he presently bit off his *Tongue*, and spit it in her Face as she attempted to kiss him, by the Greatness of his Pain extinguishing those *sensual* Titillations which her wicked Artifices began to kindle in him.

*Thirdly*, They confidently assured them, That amongst *Christians* it was not only unlawful to be actually unclean, but to look after a *Woman* with wanton and unchaste *Desires*. Our Lord (says *Justin Martyr*) has told us, That whosoever looks after a *Woman* to lust after her, has already committed *Adultery* with her in his *Heart* ; and that if our *Right Eye* offend us, we must pluck it out : As therefore human Laws condemn two Wives, so by the Laws of our *Master*, they are Sinners who look upon a *Woman* with unfit *Desires* after her ; for not only

*Ap. 2.  
p. 61, 62.*

ly he that really commits Adultery is rejected by Chap. 5: him, but even he that has a *Mind* to it; not only our *Actions*, but our very *Thoughts* being open unto God. So *Athenagoras*: So far are we from any promiscuous Embraces, that we are not permitted the Freedom of an unchaste Look; for, *whoever* (says our Lord) *looks after a Woman to desire her, has play'd the Adulterer with her in his Heart.* Ut supra p. 36.

We are not therefore allowed to use our Eyes to any other Purposes, than those for which God created them, *viz.* to be *Lights* to the Body. To abuse them to Wantonness, is to be guilty of Adultery; forasmuch as they know they were made for other Ends, and cannot but be conscious to themselves of their own *Thoughts*: And how is it possible for Men under such *Limitations* to be otherwise than chaste and sober? For we have not to deal with *Human* Laws, under which a Man may be wicked, and yet escape; but our Discipline was deliver'd by God himself: We have a Law, which makes our *selves* the *Rule* and *Measure* of *Righteousness* towards others. According therefore to the Difference of Age we account some as *Sons* and *Daughters*, others as *Brethren* and *Sisters*, the more Aged we honour in the Place of *Parents*; those therefore whom we account as *Sisters*, or as allied to us in any other Relation, we reckon it a Matter of great Concernment that they should be chaste and incorrupt.

*Fourthly*, They pleaded, that this Objection would easily vanish, if they would but consider what a strange *Change* and *Alteration* was in this very Case wrought upon Persons at their first *Conversion* to Christianity; immediately becoming quite of another Spirit and Temper from what they were before. We who before-time (says *Justin Martyr*, speaking of the converting Power of the *Christ. an* Doctrine) did please ourselves in *For-* Ap. 2. p. 61, 62.  
*nications* and *Uncleanness*, do now solely embrace

X

Temperance

Part II. Temperance and Chastity : What an innumerable Company could I name of those who have left their Luxury and Intemperance, and come over to this kind of Life ! for *Christ came not to call the Chaste and Righteous*, [they needed it not] *but the Wicked, the Incontinent and the Unrighteous, to Repentance.* And in his other *Apology*, he gives an Instance of a Woman, who having, together with her Husband, lived a very *vicious* and debauched Course of Life, after her Conversion to Christianity, become strictly chaste and sober ; and not content with this, she urged her Husband also to do the like, laying before him the Doctrines of Christianity, and persuading him both by the Rewards and Punishments of another World : But he obstinately refusing, it begot a Quarrel between them, which still ripen'd into a wider Breach, till it became Matter of publick Cognizance, and was an Occasion for *Justin Martyr* to write that excellent *Apology* for the Christians. Upon this Account *Tertullian* justly condemns the Madness of the Heathens, and their unreasonable Prejudice against Christianity, that they would hate their nearest Relations meerly for being *Christians*, though they saw how much they were every ways *bettered* by it in their Lives and Manners : The Father *dis-inheriting* his Son, of whom now he had *no Cause* left to complain, but that he was a *Christian* ; the Master *imprisoning* his Servant, though now he had found him useful and necessary to him. But (what's more especially to the Purpose) he tells us of some Husbands he knew, who tho' before so infinitely *jealous* of their Wives (and possibly not without reason) that a *Mouse* could not stir in the Room, but it must be a *Gallant* creeping to their Bed ; yet when upon their turning Christians they became so eminently reserved, chaste and modest, that there was not the least

Ap. 1.  
p. 41.

Ad Nati-  
on. l. 1.  
c. 4. p. 43.

Foun-

Foundation for Suspicion, their *Jealousy* was converted into *Hatred*, and they vow'd they had rather their Wives should be *Strumpets* than *Christians*: So obstinately (says he) do Men stand in their own *Light*, and contend against those Advantages which they might reap by Christianity. This Argument from the powerful and successful Influence of the Christian Faith, *Origen* frequently makes use of: They must needs (says he) confess the Excellency and *Divinity* of Christ's Doctrine; whoever do but look into the *Lives* of those that adhere to it, comparing their former Course of Life with that which they now lead; and considering in what Impurities, Lusts, and Wickednesses, every one of them wallowed before they embraced this Doctrine: But since that they entertained it, how much more grave, moderate, and constant are they become? Infomuch that some of them, out of a Desire of a more *transcendent* Purity, and that they may worship God with a chaste Mind, deny themselves even the Pleasures of a *lawful* Bed. The same he affirms elsewhere, that those whom the Gentiles scorn'd as the most rude and sottish Persons, being once initiated into the Faith and Discipline of the Holy *Jesus*, were so far from Lasciviousness, Filthiness, and all manner of Uncleaness, that (like *Priests* wholly devoted to God) they altogether abstain even from allowed Embraces; that there was no need for them (as some of the best among the *Gentiles* have done) to use Arts and *Medicines* to keep them chaste; nor *Guardians* set over them to preserve their Virginitie; the Word of God being sufficient to expel and drive out all irregular Appetites and Desires. This also *Tertullian* observes, as the incomparable Excellence of the Christian Doctrine above that of the best Philosophers, that whenas *Democritus* was forced to put out his Eyes, because not able to

Chap. 9:

Adv. Cels.  
l. 1. p. 21.Lib. 7.  
p. 365.Ap. c. 46.  
p. 36.



Part II. defend himself from the Charms of Beauty ; a Christian could look upon a Woman with chaste unſeduc'd Eyes, being at the ſame time inwardly blind as to any Temptation from his Luſt. With ſuch a mighty Force did the Goſpel come and captivate Mens Hearts into the Obedience of the Truth. Thence *Lactantius* makes this triumphant Challenge, where diſcourſing of the Prevalency which the Commands of God had upon the Minds of Men, as daily Experience did demonſtrate : Give me (ſays he) a Man that is angry, furious, and paſſionate ; and with a few Words from God, I will render him as meek and quiet as a Lamb : Give me one that is luſtful, filthy, and vicious, and you ſhall ſee him ſober, chaste and continent. The ſame he inſtances in moſt other Vices : So great (ſays he) is the Power of the Divine Wiſdom, that being infuſed into the Breſt of a Man, it will ſoon expel that Folly which is the grand Parent of all Vice and Wickedneſs.

Lib. 3. de  
falſ. ſ. ſpi-  
ent. c. 26.  
p. 328.

The Innocency of Chriſtians ſtanding thus clear from this wicked Imputation, it may not be amiſs, before we conclude, to enquire a little into the Riſe and Original of this abſurd and malicious Charge. *Ovigen* fathers it upon the Jews, as if they had falſly and ſpitefully invented it (as they did other things) to diſgrace and prejudice Chriſtianity ; and he tells us, that in ſome meaſure it ſucceeded accordingly, keeping many at a Diſtance from the Chriſtian Religion ; and that even in his time there were ſome who for this very Reaſon would have no Diſcourſe or Commerce with a Chriſtian. But though both Jew and Gentile had Malice and Spite enough againſt the Chriſtians, yet I can hardly think that it was a purely invented Falſhood ; but that it had ſome Ground of Preſence, though ill applied, and ſo we ſhall find it had : For which we are to know, that in the moſt early Times of Chriſtianity, there were ſe-  
veral

Cont. Celſ.  
l. 60.  
p. 293,  
294.

veral Sorts of *Hereticks* (who though they had their particular Names, yet all called themselves Christians, accounting that hereby they *graced* and honoured their Party, as *Epiphanius* tells us) the Followers of *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, *Marcion*, *Marcus*, *Basilides*, &c. who all went under the general Name of *Gnosticks*, and were, under the Pretence of Religion, guilty, of the most prodigious Villanies, and particularly those we are speaking of. *Irenæus* reports of them, that they gave up themselves to all Filthiness and Bestiality, not only privately *corrupting* the Women whom they had inveigled into their Sect (as some of them, returning after to the Church, *confessed* with Shame and Sorrow) but openly and with bare Face *marrying* the Women whom they had *seduced* from their Husbands; committing the most execrable Wick- ednesses, and *laughing* at the Pious and *Orthodox* Christians whom the *Fear of God* restrained from Sin either in Word or Thought, as a Company of *ignorant* and *filly* Fellows; magnifying themselves, styling themselves *Perfect*, and the *Seeds of Election*. And much more in other Places to the same Purpose, where he gives Account of the prophane and hellish Rites of their Assemblies. Of the *Carpocratians*, another Gang of those *brutish* Hereticks, *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates the same, both as to their Doctrines and Practices, reporting the matter almost in the very same Circumstances wherein it is charged upon the Christians by the Heathen in *Min. Felix*, viz. That both Men and Women used to meet at *Supper* (which they had in Imitation of the true *Christian ἀγάπη*, or *Love-Feast*) where after they had loaded themselves with a plentiful Meal, to prevent all Shame (if they had any remained) they put out the *Lights*, and then promiscuously mixed in Filthiness with one another, or else each sorting as they pleased.

Chap. 5.

Heres. 29.  
p. 58.Adv. Her.  
lib. 1. c. 1.  
p. 28.  
vid. etiam  
c. 9. p. 70.  
Ep. c. 32.  
p. 132.Strom. 1. 3.  
p. 430.

Part II. And of the *Gnosticks*, *Epiphanius* tells us, That they had their Wives in *common*, and if any Stranger of their Party came to them, both Men and Women had this Mark and Sign to know one another by; stretching out their *Hands* by way of Salutation, they used to *tickle* each other in the *Ball* of the Hand, by which they were satisfied that the Stranger really was of their Gang and Party. Amongst their Brethren the *Carpocratians*, they were wont to mark their Disciples and Profelytes under the *right Ear* with a Brand, a Slit, or a Hole, that they might the more readily discern them; (this agrees exactly with the Charge of the Heathens, that they *knew* one another at the first *Sight* by privy Marks and Signs) and having thus owned and received each other, they went to their luxurious Feasts, and to those horrid Brutishnesses that followed after.

Now this being the Case with these abominable Wretches, who yet had the Face to call themselves *Christians*, it is no Wonder if *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who were greedy of any Occasion to bespatter and reproach *Christians*, and rather than not find an Occasion, would *make* one, charged it upon all Christians; either not knowing it to be otherwise, or if they did, not willing to distinguish between true and false. And that this was the true and only Rise and Ground of the Charge, besides some Intimations of it in *Justin Martyr*, we have it expressly asserted by *Eusebius*, as that which gave Being to that absurd and impious Opinion, which spread so fast among the Heathens, of the Christians being guilty of promiscuous Mixtures, to the great Reproach and Infamy of the *Christian Name*. I do not deny but this malicious Report might receive Strength and *Encouragement* from the Servants of some Christians, who being racked by the Heathens, might confess what they put into

Her. 26,  
p. 42.

16. Her.  
27. p. 51.

Ap. 2,  
p. 56, 60.  
Hist. Eccl.  
1. 4. c. 7.  
p. 120.

into their Mouths, and this Charge amongst the rest. This the same *Historian* relates out of the Letters of the Churches in *France*: Certain *Gentiles*, who were Servants to some Christians, being apprehended, and having seen the exquisite Torments which the Christians were put to, for Fear of the like, did, at the *Instance* of the Soldiers, who urged them to it, confess, That the Christians had amongst them *incestuous* Mixtures, and Suppers furnished with *Man's* Flesh; laying such things to their Charge as they held unlawful to *speak* or *think* of, or could *believe* were ever done by Men: Which being once divulged, they every where fell upon the Christians with the greatest Rage and Fierceness. So in the Persecution under *Maximinus*, one of the Commanders that then resided at *Damascus* laid hold of a few light inconsiderable *Women* in the Market, and threatening them with the Rack, forced the Wretches publicly to confess that they had formerly been Christians, and that they knew all their *Villanies*, that in their Religious Meetings they committed the most beastly Actions; and indeed whatever else he would have them say, that might disgrace Christianity. This Confession of theirs he caused to be entred into the publick *Records*, and then transmitted it to the *Emperor*, by whose Command it was immediately published in all Cities and Places of the Empire: So industriously did the Malice of Men and Devils bend all the *Nerves* of their Power and Subtilty (tho' in vain) either wholly to *suppress*, or at least to *dishearten* and baffle out the Christians! Which brings me to the Consideration of another Vertue no less remarkable in the *Christians* of those Times.

## C H A P. VI.

Of their Readiness and Constancy in  
Professing their Religion.

*Their Courage and Undauntedness in professing the Truth, tho' reproached and persecuted. Their open and resolute owning it to the Face of their Enemies, and in Defiance of the greatest Dangers. The Story of Victorinus the Rhetorician converted by Simplician. The free and impartial Answers of Maris to Julian, of Basil to the Arian Governor. Polycarp's refusing to fly, when Officers were sent to apprehend him. His resolute Carriage before the Proconsul. The like of Cyprian. No Torments could make them deny Christ. Women unconquerable. The excellent Instance of Blandina and others. Divers voluntarily offering themselves. Others offering to plead the Cause of the Christians, tho' with the immediate Hazard of their Lives. This Boldness and Resolution noted as an Argument of the Excellency of their Religion, and the Goodness of their Cause above that of the best Philosophers. Aristotle's flying for Fear of suffering for his Opinions. The cowardly Silence of Jamblichus's Scholars. This Resolution of theirs confessed by Heathens, Pliny, Apollo's Oracle in the Case of Porphyry's Wife, Galen, &c. The Constancy of Christians to their Religion, Proverbial.*

W H E N

**W**HEN our Blessed Saviour sent out his Disciples to preach the Gospel, he acquainted them with the Difficulties that were like to attend their Message; but withal, bad them arm themselves with Constancy and Resolution, and not to regard the Scoffs and Reproaches, the Miseries and Sufferings that might fall upon them; *not to fear them that could only kill the Body*, but to make a free and bold Confession of his Name before the World, and chearfully to take up their Cross and follow him. And S. Paul, tho' himself then in Chains at Rome, exhorts the Christians to stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind striving together for the Faith of the Gospel, being in nothing terrify'd by their Adversaries; it being given them on the Behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his Sake; which made it very necessary for them to have their Feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace. And certainly, if ever true Courage and Greatness of Mind appear'd in any Persons in the World, it was in the Christians of those Times, who with such a generous and untterrify'd Mind defy'd Dangers and Torments, own'd and glory'd in the Profession of Christianity against all the Threats, Reproaches, and Persecutions, which the worst of their Adversaries could make against them. We shall first see what Account their Apologists give of it even before their Enemies, and then how they made it good in their Lives and Actions.

Justin Martyr speaking of the successful Propagation of the Gospel, immediately upon Christ's Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven: The Apostles of Christ (says he) going forth from Jerusalem, preached the powerful Word in every Place; altho' it were capital either to preach or to profess the Name of Christ, which yet we do every where embrace and teach; which if you (as Enemies) still go on

Apol. 2.  
Pag. 38.

Part II. to obstruct, the worst you can do is but to *kill* us, whereby you will do us no great harm, but will purchase to yourselves, and to all those that unjustly persecute us, and persist impenitent in their Proceedings, the *Vengeance* of Eternal Flames. And when *Trypho* the Jew had charged *Christianity* for an idle Story, and the *Christians* for no better than *Fools* to quit all the Conveniences of this Life upon the Account of it; the *Martyr* answers, That this proceeded from his Ignorance, and an implicit Assent to the absurd and malicious Insinuations of their *Rabbins*, who understood very little of the *Scriptures*; that would he but admit the true Reasons of Christianity, he would quickly understand how far they were from being in an Error, and how little Reason they had to quit their Profession; altho' Men did sufficiently scorn and reproach them for it, and the Powers of the World endeavour to force them to renounce and forsake it: Notwithstanding all which, they chose rather to die, and cheerfully underwent it; being fully assured, that what *God* had *promised* thro' *Christ*, he would infallibly make good to them. And discoursing afterwards of the same Matter, As for us (*says he*) that have entertained the Religion of the Holy *Jesus*, yourselves know very well, there is none throughout the World that is able to *subdue* or *affright* us out of our Profession; nothing being plainer, than that tho' our Heads be exposed to *Swords* and *Axes*, our Bodies fastned to the *Cross*, tho' thrown to *wild Beasts*, haras'd out with *Chains*, *Fire*, and all other Instruments of *Torment*, yet do we not start from our Profession: Nay, the more these things happen to us, the faster others flock over to the Name of *Jesus*, and become pious and devout Followers of *Christ*; it being with us in this Case as with a *Vine*, which being *pruned* and *trimmed*, and its luxurious Excrescences pared off,


Dial. cum  
Tryph.  
p. 226.

Ib. p. 223.  
D.

Ib. p. 337.

off, brings forth more fruitful and flourishing Branches. How little he valued any Danger in Competition with the Truth, he tells his Adversary he might know by this, that he would not stifle and conceal it, altho' they should immediately tear him in Pieces for it; and therefore when he saw his Countrymen the *Samaritans* seduced by the Impostures of *Simon Magus*, whom they held to be a *God above all Principality and Power*, he could not but by an Address make his Complaint to *Cæsar*, not regarding the Hazards and Troubles that might ensue upon it. *Tertullian* giving the Heathens an Account of that Christ whom they worshipped, tells them they might well believe it to be true, for that no Man might lye for his Religion; to dissemble in this Case, being to deny a thing which could not be charged upon the *Christians*, who owned and stood to it with the last Drop of Blood. *We speak it* (says he) *and we speak it openly, yea, while you are tearing our Flesh and shedding our Blood, we cry aloud, that we worship God through Christ.* So fully were they satisfy'd in the Truth of their Religion, as to be ready rather a thousand times to die, than to deny it.

Chap. 6.


 Ib. p. 339.

Ap. 21.

p. 21.

Nor were these merely *big Words* with which the Christians vapour'd in the Sight of their Enemies; we shall find that they made them good by acting suitably to these Professions and Protestations. They did not then think it enough to espouse the Faith of *Christ*, unless they publicly testify'd it to the World; whereof this Instance amongst others: *Victorinus*, a *Rhetorician* of *Rome*, a Man of so great Note and Fame, that he had obtained the Honour of a Publick *Statue*, but a zealous Defender of *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, had read the Holy Scriptures, by which being convinced, he came to *Simplician*, and privately told him that he was a *Christian*; which the other refused to believe,

Aug. Conf.

l. 8. c. 2.

tom. 1.

col. 136,

137.



**Part II.** lieve, unless he saw him testify it in the publick Church; to which *Victorinus* returned with a little Scorn, *What are they then the Walls that make a Christian?* This Answer he has oft returned as the other urged a publick Confession, for he was not willing to disoblige his great Friends who he knew would fall foul upon him; till by Reading and Meditation he gathered Courage, and fearing that *Christ* would deny him before the *Holy Angels*, if he should refuse to confess him before Men, he became sensible of his Fault, and was ashamed of his Vanity and Folly, and calling to *Simplician*, *Let us go* (said he) *into the Church, I will now become a Christian*; which when he had done, and had been thoroughly instructed in the Faith of *Christ*, he offer'd himself to Baptism; and being to make the accustomed *Confession* of his Faith, the Ministers of the Church offer'd him the Liberty of doing it in a more *private* way, (as they were wont to do for those who were of a fearful and bashful Temper) which he utterly refused, and openly made it before all the People; affirming it to be unreasonable, that he should be ashamed to confess his *Hopes* of Salvation *before the People*, who while he taught *Rhetorick* (wherein he hoped for no such Reward) had publickly professed it every day. An Action that begat Wonder in *Rome*, as it was no less matter of Rejoicing to the Church: No Dangers could then sway good Men from doing of their Duty. *Cyprian* highly commends *Cornelius* for taking the Bishoprick of *Rome* upon him in so dangerous a time; for the Greatness of his Mind, and the unshaken Firmness of his Faith, and the undaunted Managery of his Place, at a time when *Decius* the Tyrant threatned such heavy Severities to the Ministers of Christianity, and would sooner endure a *Cor-rival* in the Empire, than a Bishop to sit at *Rome*. How freely, how impartially did they speak

*Ad Antonian. Epist. 52. p. 68.*

ſpeak their Minds, even to the Faces of their bit-  
 tereſt Enemies? When *Maris*, Biſhop of *Chalcedon*,  
 a Man blind with Age, met *Julian* the Emperor,  
 he boldly charged him with his *Atheiſm* and *Apoſta-*  
*cy* from the Chriſtian Faith: *Julian* reproached him  
 with his *Blindneſs*, and told him his *Galilean* God  
 would never cure him. To which the good old  
 Man preſently answer'd, *I thank my God who has*  
*taken away my Sight, that I might not behold the Face*  
*of one that has lapſed into ſo great Inpiety.*

Were they at any time attempted by Arts of  
*Flattery* and *Enticement*, the Charms would not  
 take place upon them. So when *Julian*, both by  
 himſelf and the Officers of his Army, ſet upon the  
 Soldiers, and by fair Promiſes of Preferments and  
 Rewards, ſought to fetch them off from Chriſtia-  
 nity, tho' he prevailed upon ſome few weak and  
 inſtable Minds, yet the far greateſt Part ſtood off;  
 yea, by many even of the *meanest* and moſt inconfi-  
 derable Quality, his *Temptations* were as reſolutely  
 beaten back, as the *Blow* of an Engine is by a Wall  
 of *Marble*. Nor were there any more ſhaken by  
 Storms and Threatnings. When *Modestus* the  
 Governor under *Valens* the *Arian* Emperor could  
 not by any Means bring over *S. Baſil* to the Party,  
 he threatned him with Severity: Doſt thou not fear  
 this Power that I have? Why ſhould I fear? ſaid  
*Baſil*: What can'ſt thou do, or what can I ſuffer? The  
 other answer'd, the Loſs of thy *Eſtate*, *Baniſhment*,  
*Torment*, and *Death*. But threaten us with ſome-  
 thing elſe if thou can'ſt (ſaid *Baſil*) for none of theſe  
 things can reach us: Confiſcation of *Eſtate* cannot  
 hurt him that has nothing to loſe, unleſs thou wan-  
 teſt theſe tatter'd and thread-bare Garments, and a  
 few *Books*, wherein all my *Eſtate* lies: Nor can I be  
 properly *baniſh'd*, who am not tied to any Place;  
 where-ever I am 'twill be my Country, *the whole*  
*Earth is God's*, in which I am but a *Pilgrim* and a  
 Stranger.

Chap. 6.  
 Socr. Hiſt.  
 Eccl. l. 3.  
 c. 12.  
 p. 183.

Naz. Orat.  
 in Jul. 1.  
 p. 75.

Id. in laud.  
 Baſil. Orat.  
 20. p. 349,  
 350.

Part II. Stranger. I fear no *Torments*, my Body not being able to hold out beyond the first Stroke; and for *Death*, it will be a *Kindness* to me; for it will but so much the sooner send me unto *God*, for whose sake I live, and am indeed in a great Measure already dead, towards which I have been a long time hastening. And there is no Reason to wonder at this *Freedom* of Speech; in other things we are meek and yielding, but when the *Cause of God* and Religion is concerned, over-looking all other things, we direct our Thoughts only unto him; and then *Fire* and *Sword*, *wild Beasts* and *Engines* to tear off our *Flesh*, are so far from being a *Terror*, that they are rather a *Pleasure* and *Recreation* to us. Reproach and threaten, and use your Power to the utmost, yet let the Emperor know, that you shall never be able to make us assent to your *wicked Doctrine*; no, tho' you should threaten ten thousand times worse than all this. The Governor was strangely surprized with the Spirit and Resolution of the Man, and went and told the Emperor, *That one poor Bishop was too hard for them all*. And indeed so big were their Spirits with a Desire to assert and propagate their Religion, that they would not hide their Heads to decline the greatest Dangers. When the Officers were sent to apprehend *S. Polycarp*, and had with great Industry and Cruelty found out the Place where he was, tho' he had timely Notice to have escaped by going into another House, yet he refused, saying, *The Will of the Lord be done*; and coming down out of his Chamber, saluted the Officers with a chearful and pleasant Countenance. As they were carrying him back, two Persons of Eminency and Authority met him in the way, took him up into their Chariot, labour'd by all Means to persuade him to do *Sacrifice*; which when he absolutely refused, after all their Importunities, they turned their

*Kind-*

*Eus. Hist.*  
*Ecc. l. 4.*  
 c. 15.  
 p. 130.

Kindness into Reproaches, and tumbled him with so much Violence out of the Chariot, that he was forely *bruised* with the Fall; but nothing daunted, as if he had received no harm, he chearfully went on his Way; a Voice being heard as he went along, as it were from Heaven, *Polycarp, be strong, and quit thyself like a Man.* When he came before the Tribunal, the *Proconsul* asked him, whether he was *Polycarp*? which he presently confessed. Then he attempted by all Arts of Persuasion to urge him to deny *Christ*, or to do but something that might look like it; but all in vain: *These fourscore and six Years* (says he) *have I served Christ, and he never did me any harm; and how then can I blaspheme my Master and my Saviour?* Being urged to swear by the Emperor's *Genius*, he reply'd, Forasmuch as thou pressest me to do this, pretending thou knowest not who I am, know, *I am a Christian.* Then the *Proconsul* told him, he would throw him to the wild Beasts, unless he alter'd his Opinion: Call for them (answer'd *Polycarp*) for we have no Mind to change from *better* to *worse*; as counting that Change only to be honest and laudable, which is from *Vice* to *Vertue*. But if thou makest so light of wild Beasts (added the *Proconsul*) I'll have a *Fire* that shall tame thee. To which the good old Man returned, You threaten, Sir, a *Fire* that will burn for an *Hour*, and presently be *extinguished*; but know not, that there is a *Fire* of *eternal* Damnation in the Judgment to come, reserved for the Punishment of all wicked Men: But why delay you? Execute whatever you have a Mind to. This, and much more to the same purpose he discourf of, to the great Admiration of the *Proconsul*; being so far from being terrify'd with what was said to him, that he was filled with Joy and Chearfulness; and a certain *Grace* and Loveliness over-spread his Face.

So

Part II.

So likewise when *Cyprian* was brought before the *Proconsul*: Thou art (said he) *Thascius Cyprian*, who hast been a *Ring-leader* to Men of a *wicked Mind*; the Emperor commands thee to do *Sacrifice*, and therefore consult thy *Welfare*. To which he answer'd, *I am Cyprian, I am a Christian, and I cannot sacrifice to your Gods; do therefore what you are commanded; as for me, in so just a Cause there needs no Consultation.* And when the Sentence was pronounced against him, he cried out, *I heartily thank Almighty God, who is pleased to free me from the Chains of this earthly Carcass.* Had Torments and the very Extremities of Cruelty been able to *smk* their Courage, it had soon been trodden under foot; but it was triumphant in the midst of Torments, and lift up its Head *higher*, the greater the Loads that were laid upon it; whereof there are Instances enough in the *Histories* of the Church: Nay, in this Triumph, even the *weaker Sex* bore no inconsiderable Part. *Eusebius* tells us (among others that suffer'd in the *French Persecution* under *M. Aurelius*) of one *Blandina*, a good Woman, but of whom the Church was afraid how she would hold out to make a resolute Confession, by reason of the Weakness of her Body, and the Tenderness of her Education; that when she came to it, she bore up with such invincible Magnanimity, that her Tormenters, tho' they took their Turns from Morning to Night, and plied her with all Kinds of Racks and Tortures, were yet forced to *give over*, and confess themselves *overcome*; wondring that a Body so broken and mangled, should yet be able to draw its Breath. But this noble *Athleta* gained Strength by suffering; she eased and refreshed herself, and mitigated the Sense of present Pain by repeating these Words, *I am a Christian*, and, *no Evil is done by us.* Nor did they only generously bear these things for the sake of their Religion,

Act. Passi-  
on. Cyp. in  
vit. ejus,  
p. 17.

Hist. Eccl.  
l. c. 1.  
p. 157.

gion, when they were laid upon them, but many times freely offered themselves, confessing themselves to be *Christians*, when they knew that their Confession would cost their Lives. So did those noble *Martyrs*, whom *Eusebius* saw at *Thebais*, Multitudes having been executed every Day

Πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ὀπισθενοί, ὡς ὁμολογήσαντες μὲν Χριστιανισμόν, ἑποδανέψαι ἀρνησάμενοι δὲ ἑπολυθέσονται, καὶ τὰ ἀπάραχοντα ἑπολήθησαν, κατεφρόνισαν μὲν τὰ εἶναι, ἐπιστάως δὲ τὸ ἑσπῶν ἐσεβείας θάνατον εἰλοντο.  
Orig. contr. Celf. l. 2. p. 71.

with all imaginable Cruelties: Sentence was no sooner passed against one Party of them, but others presented themselves before the *Tribunal*, and confessed that they were *Christians*, receiving the fatal Sentence with all possible Expressions of Chearfulness and Rejoicing. The same which he also reports of six young Men, that suffered in *Palestine*, spontaneously addressing themselves to the Governour of the *Province*, owning that they were *Christians*, and ready to undergo the severest Punishments. In the *Acts* of *St. Cyprian's* Passion, we are told, That the President having cauled a mighty *Furnace* to be filled with *burning Lime*, and *Fire*, with Heaps of *Frankincense* round about the Brim of it, gave the *Christians* this Choice, either to *burn* the *Frankincense* in Sacrifice to *Jupiter*, or to be thrown into the *Furnace*; whereupon three hundred Men, being armed with an unconquerable Faith, and confessing *Christ* to be the *Son of God*, leaped into the Midst of the fiery *Furnace*, with whose Fumes and Vapours they were immediately suffocated, and swallowed up.

De Martyr Palest. c. 3. p. 321.

Ubi supra p. 16.

There wanted not some, who in the hottest Persecutions durst venture to undertake the Cause of *Christians*, and to plead it before the Face of their bitterest Enemies: Thus did *Vettius Epagatus*, a Man full of Zeal and Piety, who seeing his Fellow-Christians unjustly dragged before the Judgement-Seat, required Leave of the *President*, that he might plead

Euf. l. 9. c. 1. p. 155.

Y his

Part II. his Brethrens Cause, and openly shew, That they were not guilty of the least Wickedness or Impiety; but not daring to grant him so reasonable a Request, the Judge took the Advantage of asking him, Whether he was a *Christian*? Which he publickly owning, was adjudged to the same Martyrdom with the

*Ib. l. 6. c. 2. p. 204.* Rest. Of *Origen* we read, That though then but Eighteen Years of Age, yet he was wont not only to wait upon the *Martyrs* in Prison, but to attend upon them at their Trials, and the Times of their Execution, kissing and embracing them, and boldly preaching and professing the Faith of *Christ*; inso-much, that had he not been many times miraculoufly preserved, the *Gentiles* had pelted him to Death with Stones; for they mortally hated him for his industrious and undaunted Propagation of the Faith.

*Ib. c. 2. p. 202.* Nay, when but a Boy, and his Father *Leontius* was seized upon, he wrote to his Father, most earnestly pressing him to persevere unto Martyrdom, and not to concern himself what might become of his Wife and Children; nor for their Sakes to decline that excellent Cause he was engaged in.

By this free and chearful undergoing the greatest Miseries, rather than deny or prejudice their Religion, *Christians* evidently demonstrated the Goodness of their Principles, and shewed, they were no such Persons as their Enemies commonly looked upon them; that a *Christian* (as *Ignatius* observes) is not a Child of *Fancy* and *Perwasion*, but of true *Gallantry* and *Greatness* of Spirit, having so much Hatred of the World to grapple and contend with. Those

*Epist. ad Roman. p. 57.* who are Malefactors (as *Tertullian* argues) desire to be concealed, and shun to appear; being apprehended, they tremble; being accused, they deny; being racked, do not easily, nor always confess the Truth: However, being condemned, they are sad, and search into, and censure themselves; are unwilling to acknowledge

knowledge their Wickednesses to be their own, and accordingly impute them either to their *Fate* or *Stars*. But what is there like this, to be found in *Christians*? Amongst them no Man is *ashamed*, none *repents* him of his being a *Christian*, unless it be that he was no sooner so: If marked out, he *glories*; if accused, he stands not to *defend* himself; being interrogated, he confesses of his own accord; being condemned, he gives Thanks: What Evil then can there be in this, which is so far from having any Shadow of *Evil*, any *Fear*, *Shame*, *Tergiversation*, *Repentance*, or *Deplorableness* to attend it? What Evil can that be, of which he that is guilty *rejoices*? of which to be accused, is their *Vote* and *Desire*; and for which to be punished, is their *Happiness* and *Felicity*? This likewise *Arnobius* lays down as a grand Evidence of the Divinity of the *Christian Faith*, that in so short a Time it had conquered so much of the World: Subdued Men of the greatest Parts and Learning: Made them willing to quit their beloved *Opinions*, to forfeit their *Estates*, to part with their *Ease* and *Pleasures*, and to submit to *Torments*, rather than violate the Faith of *Christ*, or start from the Station they had entered upon. By this excellent Temper and Carriage they admirably triumphed over the best Men amongst the *Gentiles*, none of whom durst engage so deep for the Defence of their dearest Sentiments, as the *Christians* did for theirs. Witness *Plato*, who set up the *Academy*, and brought in an *obscure* and *ambiguous* Way of delivering his Opinions, lest by speaking out he should fall under the Sentence and the Fate of *Socrates*. Thus *Origen* puts *Celsus* in Mind of *Aristotle*, who understanding, that the *Athenians* intended to call him to account for some of his (as they thought them) *un-orthodox* Opinions, immediately removed his School, saying to his Friends, *Let us be gone from Athens*,

*Adv. gent.  
lib. 2. p. 21.*

*Cont. Cels.  
lib. p. 51.*



Part. II, Athens, lest we give them an Occasion of being guilty of a second Wickedness like to that which they committed against Socrates, and lest they again offend against the Majesty of Philosophy: It being, alas! not Kindness to the Athenians, but Cowardise and Fear of Punishment, made him so hastily pack up and be gone, and leave his Opinions behind him to shift for themselves as well as they could. Nay, Eunapius himself

*In vit. Æ-* confesses, That in the Time of Constantine, when *paganism* began to go down the Wind, and Christianity to be advanced and honoured, their best Philosophers, the great Scholars of *Jamblicus*, took Sanctuary at a mysterious Secrecy, and wisely kept their Dogmata and Opinions to themselves, sealed up under a profound and religious Silence. No, they were the Christians only, the very meanest of whom

*Hist. lib. 1.*  
*c. 3. p. 14.*

durst stand by and defend naked Truth in the Face of Danger and Death it self; this being (as Eusebius notes) one of the most wonderful Things in the Christian Religion, That they who embrace it, are not only ready to profess it in Words, but entertain it with such a mighty Affection and Sincerity of Soul, as willingly to prefer the bearing Testimony to it even before Life it self. And indeed this Piece of Right is done them by \* Pliny himself, where speak-

\* *Epist. 97.*  
*lib. 10.*

ing of some, who having been accused for Christians, to shew how far they were from it, readily blasphemed Christ, and sacrificed to the Gods; he adds, None of which, 'tis said, that they who are truly Christians, can by any means be compelled to do. Nay, thus much is confessed by the Oracle it self; for when Porphyry the great Philosopher, and acute Enemy of the Christians, enquired of Apollo's Oracle what God he should make his Address to, for the Recovery of his Wife back from Christianity; the Oracle returned him this Answer (as himself reported in his Book, *ἐκ λόγων φιλοσοφίας*, not *διολογία φιλοσοφίας*, as 'tis corruptly

ruptly in St. *Augustine*, \* a Book frequently cited Chap 7. both by *Eusebius* and *Theodoret*, where, by the way, in the *Latin* Version of *Theodoret*, 'tis by a strange Mistake rendred *de Electorum Philosophia*, as if it had been ἐκλογῶν: In this Book concerning the *Philosophy* drawn from *Oracles*, he tells us, he received this Answer) That he might as well, and to better purpose, attempt to write upon the Surface of the Water, or to fly like a Bird in the Air, than to reduce his Wife from those wicked Sentiments she had taken in. And this was so common and notorious, that it became in a manner proverbial; whence that of † *Galen*, when he would express how pertinaciously the Philosophers adhered to those Sentiments they had once drunk in, and how very hard, and almost impossible it was to convince them; Sooner, says he, may a Man undeceive a Few or a Christian, and make them renounce the Doctrine of *Moses* or of *Christ*, than Philosophers and Physicians that are once addicted to their several Sects.

\* *Apud. August. de Civ. Dei, lib. 19. c. 23. col. 1181.*

*de prepar. Evang. lib. 4. de Curand. Grac. Affect.*

† *Θαῖνον γδ ἄν τις τῆς ἀπὸ*

*Μουσεῦ καὶ*

*Χριστοῦ μὲν*

*ἁδιδουξείν,*

*ἢ ἢς ταῖς*

*αἰρέσεσι*

*περὶ τῆς*

*κατὰ τὰς*

*ἑκατέρωθεν*

*κατὰ τὰς*

*ἑκατέρωθεν*

*ἑκατέρωθεν*

*ἑκατέρωθεν*

*ἑκατέρωθεν*

C H A P. VII.

Of their Exemplary Patience under Sufferings.

Christianity likely to engage its Followers in Suffering; and why continual Edicts put forth against Christians. The Form of those Imperial Orders exemplified out of the Acts of the Martyrs. The fierce Opposition of the Roman Emperors, and their probable Hopes of having destroyed Christianity, evidenced from several Inscriptions to that purpose found in Spain. The Greatness of the Torments Christians endured

*ured: Some of the ordinary Kinds of them described. The Cross; the Pain and Ignominy of it: Persons crucified with their Heads downwards. The Rack, what. Catasta: ad Pulpitum post Catastam. Ungulæ: one of these kept and adored as a Relique at Rome. The Wheel. Burning. Throwing to Wild Beasts. Being Condemned to Mines; their Treatment there, and the Case of such Persons. Some of the extraordinary Ways of Punishment used towards Christians. Torn asunder by Branches of Trees: Burnt in pitched Coats: Boiled in Pots of Oil or Lead, &c. Their Carriage under their Sufferings sedate and calm, meek and patient. Their Refusing to make use of Opportunities to avoid Suffering. Whether they might fly and withdraw in Times of Persecution: Allowed and practised in some Cases; two instanced in. Where Persons were of more than ordinary Use and Eminency. Where they were weak for the present, and not like to hold out. Proved by particular Instances. Their cheerful Offering themselves to the Rage and Fury of their Enemies, confessed by the Relation of their Judges and bitterest Adversaries, Tiberianus, Arius, Antonius, Lucian. The earnest Desire of Martyrdom in Ignatius, Laurentius, Origen, and others. When unjustly condemned, their Judges thanked for condemning them. Their Glory in Suffering and being Crucified. Babylas the Martyr's Chains buried with him. No Signs of an impatient*

*patient Mind under their bitterest Torments. An Account of their chearful Suffering, out of Cyprian. Their Patience wondred at by their Enemies. Their grand Support under Suffering; the Hopes and Assurance of a Reward in Heaven. The Case of the forty Martyrs in St. Basil. Psalms sung at the Funeral of Christians, and Lights carried before the Corps, and why. Christianity vastly increased by the Patience and Constancy of Christians. Justin Martyr's Account of his Conversion by this Means. Julian generally refused to put Christians to death, and why. The Testimonies of several Heathens concerning the Christians Courage and Patience under Sufferings.*

**T**HAT the Christian Religion at its first Appearing in the World was likely to engage its Followers in Miseries and Sufferings, could not be unknown to any that considered the Nature of its Doctrine, and the *Tendency* of its Design. The *Severity* of its Precepts, so directly opposite to the *corrupt* and vicious Inclinations of Men; the *Purity* of its Worship, so flatly contrary to the *loose* and obscene Rites and Solemnities of the Heathens; its absolute Inconsistency with those Religions which had obtained for so many Ages, which then had such firm Possession of the Minds of Men, and all the Powers and Policies of the World to secure and back them; could not prophesy to it any kind of welcome Entertainment. *This Sect* (for so they called it) *was every where not only spoken, but fought against:* For since Men have a natural Veneration for *Antiquity*, and especially in Matters of Religion, they thought themselves concerned to defend that Way,



which had been conveyed to them from their *Ancestors*, and to set themselves with Might and Main against, whatever might oppose it: especially the *Great Ones* of those Times; and the *Roman Emperors* made it their Master-design to oppress and stifle this Infant-Religion, and to banish it out of the World. Hence those Imperial *Orders* that were daily sent abroad into all Parts of the Empire, to command and impower their Governours to ruine and destroy the *Christians*; of which, that we may the better apprehend the *Form* of them, it may not be amiss to set down one or two of them out of the *Acts of the Martyrs*. This following was agreed upon both by the *Emperors*, and the whole *Senate of Rome*. *Decius and Valerian Emperors, Triumphers, Conquerors,*

*August, Pious, together with the whole Senate, have by common Consent decreed thus: Whereas we have received the Gifts and Blessings of the Gods, by whom we enjoy Victory over our Enemies, as also temperate Seasons, and Fruits in great Plenty and Abundance; since we have found them our great Benefactors, and to supply us with those Things that are universally beneficial to all: We therefore unanimously decree, That all Orders of Men, as well Children as Servants, Soldiers as private Persons, shall offer Sacrifices to the Gods, doing Reverence and Supplication to them. And if any shall dare to violate our divine Order thus unanimously agreed upon, we command, that he be cast into Prison, and afterwards exposed to several Kinds of Torments. If by this means he be reclaimed, he may expect no mean Honours from us. But if he shall persist contumacious, after many Tortures, let him be beheaded, or thrown into the Sea, or cast out to be devoured by Dogs and Birds of Prey: But especially, if there be any found of the Religion of the Christians. As for those that obey our Decrees, they shall receive great Honours and Rewards from us. So happily fare ye well.*

*Metaphrast. in Martyr. S. Mercur. apud Sur. ad 24 Novemb. tom. 6.*

To this we may add that short *Rescript of Valerian.* Chap. 7. *Valerian the Emperor, to the Ministers and Governours of Provinces: We understand that the Precepts of the Laws are violated by those who in these days call themselves Christians. Wherefore we will, that apprehending them, unless they sacrifice to our Gods, you expose them to divers Kinds of Punishments; that so both Justice may have place without delay, and Vengeance, in cutting off Impieties, having attained its End, may proceed no further. This Course they prosecuted with so much Vigour and Fierceness, that some of them boasted, that they had absolutely effected their Design. Witness those Trophies and triumphal Arches, that were every where erected to perpetuate the Memory of their Conquest over Christianity; whereof these two Inscriptions, found at Clunia in Spain, are a sufficient Evidence.*

*Act. Symphor. apud Sur. ad 22. Aug tom. 4.*

DIOCLESIANUS JOVIUS ET  
MAXIMIAN. HERCULEUS  
CAES. AUG.  
AMPLIFICATO, PER ORIEN-  
TEM ET OCCIDENTEM,  
IMP. ROM.  
E T  
NOMINE CHRISTIANORUM  
DELETO, QUI REMP. EVER-  
TEBANT.

*Gruter.  
Inscript.  
p. 210.  
Num. 3.*

*The other,*

DIOCLESIAN. CAES.  
AUG. GALERIO IN ORI-  
ENTE ADOPT. SUPER-  
STITIONE CHRIST-  
UBIQ. DELETA, ET CUL-  
TU DEOR. PROPAGATO.

*Ib. num. 4.*

The Meaning of both which, is to shew, that *Dioclesian* and his Collegue *Maximianus* had ever-  
ry

Part II. ry where extinguished the wicked *Superstition* of *Christ*, so pernicious to the Commonwealth, and had restored *Paganism* and the Worship of the *Gods*. But long before them we find *Nero* (the first Emperor that raised Persecution against the *Christians*, as *Tertullian* notes) so active in the Business, as to glory (or some Flatterers in his behalf) that he had done the Work; Witness an *Inscription* found also in *Spain*.

*Ibid.* p. 238.  
num. 9.

NERONI CL. CAES.  
AUG. PONT. MAX.

OB. PROVINC. LATRONIB.  
ET HIS QUI NOVAM  
GENERI HUM. SUPER-  
STITION. INCULCAB.

PURGATAM.

.....  
.....

This *Inscription* was set up in Memory of his having purged the Country of Robbers, and such as had introduced and obtruded a new *Superstition* upon Mankind. The *Christians*, it's true, are not particularly named in it (probably the *Gentiles* so much detested the very Name of *Christian*, that especially in public Monuments they would not mention it) yet can it be meant of no other. For besides that this Character of *inculcating* their *Superstition*, admirably agrees to *Christians*, who fought by all means to *instill* their Principles into the Minds of Men; besides that *Superstition* was the common Title by which the *Gentiles* were wont to denote *Christianity*; besides

*Ad An.*

*Christi* 69.

besides this, there was not (as *Baronius* observes) Chap. 7. any other *new* Religion at that Time, or long *before* or *after*, that appeared in the World; to be sure, none that could be the Object of *Nero's* Persecution. And how he entertained this, *Tertullian* sufficiently intimates, bidding them search their own *Records*, and they would find. And from this very *Inscription* alone 'tis evident, they thought, that (at least in that part of the World) they had wholly extirpated and rooted it out. By all which we may guess what hot Service the *Christians* had on't under those Primitive Persecutions. Indeed their Sufferings were beyond all Imagination great, which yet did but so much the more exercise and advance their *Patience*; the Bitterness of their Sufferings, making their *Patience* more eminent and illustrious. Of which, that we may take the truer Measure, 'twill be necessary to consider these two Things, the *Greatness* of those *Torments* and Sufferings which the *Christians* generally underwent; and then the *Manner* of their Carriage under them.

For the first, the *Greatness* of those *Torments* and Sufferings which they underwent, they were as bad as the Wit and Malice of either *Men* or *Devils* could invent; in the Consideration whereof we shall first take a View of those Punishments which were more standing and *ordinary*, familiarly used amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*; and then of such as were *extraordinarily* made use of towards the *Christians*. Amongst their ordinary Methods of Execution, these six were most eminent; the *Cross*, the *Rack*, the *Wheel*, *Burning*, *Wild Beasts*, and *Condemning to Mines*.

I. The *Cross* deserves the first place in our Account, not only as having been one of the most *ancient* and *universal* Ways of Punishment amongst the *Gentiles*, and from them brought in amongst the *Jews*; but as being the Instrument by which our Blessed



Part II. Blessed *Saviour* himself was put to Death. Omitting the various and different Forms and Kinds of it, which were all used towards the Primitive Christians, I intend here only that which was most common, a straight Piece of Wood fixed in the Ground, having a transverse Beam fastened near the Top of it, not unlike the Letter T, though probably it had also a piece of Wood arising above the top of it. And there were *two Things* in this way of Punishment, which rendered it very severe, the *Pain* and *Ignominy* of it. Painful it must needs be, because the Party suffering was fastned to it with *Nails* driven through his *Hands* and *Feet*, which being the Parts where the *Nerves* and *Sinews* terminate and meet together, must needs be most acutely sensible of Wounds and Violence. And because they were pierced only in these Parts so far distant from the *Vitals*, this made their Death very *lingring* and tedious, doubling and trebling every Pain upon them: Insomuch that some out of a generous Compassion have caused Malefactors first to be *strangled* before they were *crucified*; as *Julius Caesar* did towards the *Pirates*, whom he had sworn to execute upon the Cross. But no such Favour was shewed to Christians; they were suffered to remain in the midst of all those exquisite Pangs, till mere Hunger starved them, or the Mercy of wild Beasts, or Birds of Prey dispatched them. Thus *St. Andrew* the Apostle continued *two whole Days* upon the Cross, teaching the People all the while. *Timotheus* and his Wife *Maura*, after many other Torments, hung upon the Cross *nine Days* together, before they compleated their Martyrdom. Nor was the Shame of this way of suffering less than the Pain of it; Crucifixion being the *peculiar* Punishment of *Slaves*, *Traitors*, and the vilest *Malefactors*: Insomuch that for a *Freeman* to die thus was accounted the highest

Accent

*Sueton. in vit. Cesar. c. 74. p. 76.*

*Vid. Enseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 8. c. 8.*

*p. 300. Martyrol.*

*Rom. ad diem 30.*

*Nov. p. 736. Ib. ad diem*

*3 Maii p. 272.*

*Vul. Gallic. in Auid.*

*Cass. c. 4. p. 248.*

Accent of Ignominy and Reproach : Therefore the **Chap. 7.**  
*Roman Historians* calls it *servile Supplicium*, a Punish-  
 ment proper to Slaves. Sometimes they were cru-  
 cified with their Heads *downwards* : Thus St. Peter *Vid. Laet.*  
 is said to have been crucified ; thus those *Egyptian* *de ver. Sap.*  
 Martyrs, who hung in this posture till they were *c. 26. p. 436.*  
 starved out of the World. But this Punishment of *Euseb. l. 3.*  
 the Cross, soon after the World was become Chri- *c. 1. p. 18.*  
 stian, *Constantine* took away out of Reverence to *Sozom. l. 1.*  
 our Saviour, not being willing that that should be *c. 8. p. 412.*  
 the Punishment of the vilest Malefactors, which had  
 been the Instrument whereupon the Son of God had  
 purchased *Salvation* for Mankind.

II. The Rack, called in *Lation Equuleus*, either  
 from the Situation of the Offender's Body upon the  
 Engine, resembling a Man on *Horseback* ; or rather  
 from the *horsing* or holding of him up to it by Ropes  
 and Skrews. The first Design of it was to torment the  
 Guilty, or the suspected Person, to make him *confess*  
 the Truth : What the particular Form of it was, is  
 not agreed amongst learned Men ; but this we may  
 probably conceive, That it was an Engine framed of  
 several Pieces of Timber joined together, upon the  
 Top whereof, upon a long *Board*, the suffering Person  
 being laid upon his Back, and fastened to it by  
 his Hands and Feet, the Engine was so contrived  
 with Skrews and Pullies, that all his Members were  
*distended* with the utmost Violence, even to a *Luxa-*  
*tion* of all the Parts ; and this more or less, accord- *Cic. pro*  
 ing to the Tormenters Pleasures. Sometimes they *Deistar. p.*  
 were hung by the Hands and Feet under the top- *579. tom. 2*  
 board of the Engine, and tormented in that pos- *Vid. Gallon.*  
 ture. This Rack was a Punishment which the *de cruciat.*  
*Christians* were very frequently put to. Much of *martyr. c. 3.*  
 the same nature was that which they called the *Catasta*,  
 being a Piece of Wood raised up like a little Scaf-  
 fold, upon which Christians were set, that their  
 Torments

Part II. Torments might be more conspicuous; thence that  
 ———— Proverb in *Cyprian, Ad Pulpitum post Catastam venire*, speaking of *Aurelius* a Confessor, who having been publicly tormented upon this Engine, was after ordained a *Reader* in the Church, and promoted to read the Scriptures out of the Pulpit, as he had lately confessed Christ upon the Scaffold. In this, as in that of the Rack, there were certain additional Torments made by Instruments, called *Ungula*; which were a Kind of *Iron Pincers*, made with sharp Teeth, with which the Flesh was by piece-meal pulled and torn off their Backs.

In the Time of Pope *Paul* the Third, one of these *Ungula*, as the Author of the *Roma Sub-*

*Hac Ungula in sacra-*  
*rum Sanctuario reli-*  
*quiarum ejusdem Basi-*  
*lica, religioso cultu,*  
*tanquam res, omni pre-*  
*tiosior auro, dignissime*  
*asservoatur; & Christi-*  
*anorum populo viden-*  
*da ac veneranda propo-*  
*nitur.* Rom. Subter.  
 l. 2. c. 4. num. 16.  
 p. 149.  
 Gallon. ib. c. 5. p. a  
 189.

*terranea* tells us, was among other Things found in the *Vatican Coemetry* amongst the Monuments of the *Martyrs*, and laid up amongst the other *Reliques* of that Church as an inestimable *Treasure*, and a worthy Object of *religious* Worship; being there kept to be seen and adored by all Christian People. And another of their Writers being about to describe it, tells us, that though altogether *unworthy* of such *Favour*, yet he was blessed with the Sight of it; and that (as became him) he

kissed and embraced it with great *Veneration*. Which by the way seems to me a little strange, that it should be accounted an *Honour* and a *Kindness* done to the *Martyrs*, to adore that which was the *Instrument* of their Torment. Might they not by the same reason as well worship their *Executioners*, and pay a religious Respect to the Ashes of those who dragged them to the Stake, tore off their Flesh, and put them to death with all imaginable Pain and Torture?

III. The **Wheel**. This was a round Engine, to which the Body of the condemned Person being bound,

bound, was not only extremely distended, but *whirled* about with the most violent Distortion; the Pain whereof was unconceivable, especially as used towards the Primitive Christians: The Wheel, to which they were bound naked, being sometimes full of Iron Pricks, sometimes a Board full of sharp-pointed Iron Pricks being placed under it; so that every time the Body of the Martyr came to it, they racked off the Flesh with inexpressible Torment. Thus were served those three Martyrs, *Felix* the Presbyter, *Fortunatus* and *Achilleus* the Deacons at *Valentia* in France, and hundreds more in other Places.

Chap. 7.  
Ep. 33. p. 47.  
Mart. Rom. ad diem April. 23. p. 249.

IV. Burning. This was done sometimes by staking them down to a Pile of Wood, and setting it on Fire. Thus suffered *Julianus* and others, in the Persecution at *Alexandria*. Sometimes by laying them to roast at a slow gentle Fire, that they might die with the greater Torment. Otherwhiles they were hung up either by the Neck, Hands or Feet, and a Fire made under them, either to burn or choke them; or burning Torches held to several Parts of their naked Bodies. Sometimes they were placed in an Iron Chair, or laid upon an Iron Grate, which was either made red-hot, or had a Fire continually burning under it. Of all which ways of Execution, and some other near a-kin to them, were it not too tedious, I could easily give abundant Instances. This was accounted one of the prime ways of capital Punishments, and none were adjudged to it but the greatest *villains*, the meanest and vilest Persons.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 4. p. 238.  
L. 28. Pref. & Sect. 11. ff. de pœnis. Leg. 3. Sect. 5. ff. l. 48.

V. Throwing to wild Beasts. This was a Punishment very common amongst the Romans, to condemn a Man to fight for his Life with the most savage Beasts, Bears, Leopards, Lions, &c. and was usually the Portion of the vilest and most detpicable Offenders; under which Notion the Gentiles looking upon the Christians, did most commonly condemn

tit. 8. ad leg. Corn. de Sicar. & ven.

Part II. demn them to this Kind of Death ; a thing so familiar, that it became in a manner *proverbial*, *Christiana Tert. Ap. nos ad Leones*, Away with the *Christians* to the *Lions*. c. 49. And that they were many *times* tied down to a *Stake*; sometimes cloathed in *Beasts Skins*, the more eagerly to provoke the Rage and Fury of the wild *Beasts* against them.

VI. *Condemning to the Mines*. To this the *Romans* adjudged their *Slaves*, and the most infamous Male actors ; and to this too the *Christians* were often sent. What their *Treatment* was in those Places, besides their continual *Toil* and *Drudgery*, *Cyprian* lets us know in a *Letter to Nemesian*, and the rest that labour'd in the *Mines*, viz. That they were cruelly *beaten* with *Clubs*, *bound* with *Chains*, forced to lie upon the hard, cold, damp *Ground* ; conflicted with *Hunger*, *Nakedness*, the *Deformity* of their *Heads* half *shaved*, after the manner of *Slaves*, and forced to live in the *Midst* of *Filth* and *Nastiness*.

*Ep. 77. p. 155.*  
*Vid. Lev. 8. Sect. 4. ff. qui test. fac. possunt.*  
 Besides which, they were wont to be *marked* and *branded* in the *Face*, to have their *right Eye* pulled out, and their *left Foot* disabled by cutting the *Nerves* and *Sinews* of it : Not to say, that being once under this *Condemnation*, all their *Estate* was forfeited to the publick *Treasury*, and themselves for ever reduced into the *Condition* of *Slaves*. These were some of the more usual *Ways* of *Punishment* amongst the *Romans*, though exercised towards the *Christians* in their utmost *Rigour* and *Severity*. I omit to speak of *Christians* being *scourged* and *whipped* even to the *Tiring* of their *Executioners*, especially with *Rods* called *Plumbatae* (whereof there is frequent mention in the *Theodosian Code*) which were *Scourges* made of *Cords* or *Thongs*, with *leaden Bullets* at the *End* of them ; of their being *stoned* to *Death*, their being *beheaded*, their being *thrust* into *stinking* and *nasty*

nasty Prisons, where they were set in a Kind of Stocks with five Holes, their Legs being stretched afunder, to reach from one End to the other. Chap 7.

We shall now consider some few of those *unusual* Torments and Punishments which were inflicted only upon Christians, or (if upon any others) only in extraordinary Cases. Such was their being tied to Arms of Trees, bent by great Force and Strength by certain Engines, and being suddenly let go, did in a Moment tear the Martyr in Pieces; in which way many were put to death in the Persecution at *Thebais*. Sometimes they were clad with Coats of Paper, Linnen, or such like, dawbed in the Inside with Pitch and Brimstone; which being set on fire, they were burnt alive. Other whiles they were shut into the Belly of a *brazen* Bull, and a Fire being kindled under it, were consumed with a Torment beyond Imagination. Sometimes they were put into a great Pot or *Caldron* full of *boiling* Pitch, Oil, Lead, or Wax mixed together; or had these fatal Liquors, by Holes made on purpose, poured into their *Bowels*. Some of them were hung up by one or both Hands, with Stones of great Weight tied to their Feet, to augment their Sufferings. Others were *anointed* all over their Bodies with Honey, and at Mid-day fastned to the Top of a Pole, that they might be a Prey to the Flies, Wasps, and such little Cattel, as might by degrees sting and torment them to Death. Thus, besides many others, it was with *Marcus* Bishop of *Arethusa*, a venerable old Man, who suffered under *Julian* the Apostate; after infinite other Tortures, they dawbed him over with Honey and Jellies, and in a Basket fastned to the Top of a Pole, exposed him to the *hottest* Beams of the Sun, and to the Fury of such little *Insects* as would be sure to prey upon him. Sometimes they were put into a rotten Ship, which being turned

*Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 8. c. 9. p. 300.*

*Naz. Or. 1. in Jul. p. 89.*

Part II. out to Sea, was set on Fire. Thus they served an orthodox *Presbyter* under *Valens* the *Arian* Emperor; *Id. Or. 20.* the same which *Socrates* reports of fourscore pious *p. 416. l. 4.* and devout Men, who by the same Emperor's *e. 16. p. 227.* Command, were thrust into a Ship, which being brought into open Sea, was presently fired, that so by this Means they might also want the Honour of a Burial. And indeed the Rage and Cruelty of the *Gentiles* did not only reach the Christians while *alive*, but extended to them after *Death*, denying them (what has been otherwise granted among the most *barbarous* People) the Conveniency of Burial, exposing them to the Ravage and Fierceness of *Dogs* and *Beasts* of Prey; a Thing which, we are told, the Primitive *Christians* reckoned as not the least Aggravation of their Sufferings. Nay, where they had been quietly buried, they were not suffered many times (as *Tertullian* complains) to enjoy the *Asylum* of the Grave, but were plucked, cut, rent, and torn in Pieces.

But to what purpose is it any longer to insist upon these Things? Sooner may a Man tell the Stars, than reckon up all those Methods of Misery and Suffering which the *Christians* endured. *Eusebius*, who himself was a sad Spectator of some of the later Persecutions, professes to give over the Account, as a Thing beyond all Possibility of Expression; the Manner of their Sufferings, and the Persons that suffered, being hard, nay, impossible to be reckoned up. The Truth is, (as he there observes, and *Cyprian* plainly tells *Demetrian* of it) their Enemies did little else but set their Wits upon the Tenters, to find out the most *exquisite* Methods of Torture and Punishment. They were not content with those old Ways of Torment which their Forefathers had brought in, but by an ingenious Cruelty daily invented new; striving to excel one another in this Piece of hellish Art, and accounting those the *wit-  
tiest*

*Enf. Hist.*  
*Ecc. l. 4.*  
*c. 1. p. 165.*  
*de Martyr Pal. c.*  
*9. p. 334.*  
*Ap. 37. p.*  
*30.*

*Lib. 8. c.*  
*12. p. 307.*

*Cypr. ad*  
*Demetr.*  
*p. 200.*

tiest Persons that could invent the bitterest and most barbarous Engines of Execution ; and in this they improved so much, that *Ulpian*, Master of Records to *Alexander Severus* the Emperor, and the great Oracle of those Times for Law, writing several Books *De Officio Proconsulis* (many Parcels whereof are yet extant in the Body of the *Civil Law*) in the seventh Book collected together the several bloody *Edicts* which the Emperors had put out against the *Christians* ; that he might shew by what Ways and Methods they ought to be punished and destroyed, as *Lactantius* tells us. But this Book (as to what concerned *Christians*) is not now extant, the Zeal and Piety of the first *Christian* Emperors having banished all Books of that Nature out of the World ; as appears by a Law of the Emperor *Theodosius*, where he commands the Writings of *Porphyry*, and all others that had written against the *Christian Religion*, to be burned ; the Reason why we have no more Books of the Heathens concerning the *Christians* extant at this Day.

Having given this brief *Specimen* of some few of those grievous Torments to which the Primitive *Christians* were exposed, (they that would have more, must read the *Martyrologies* of the Church, or such as have purposely written on this Subject.) we come next to consider what was their *Behaviour* and *Carriage* under them. This we shall find to have been most *sedate* and *calm*, most constant and resolute ; they neither *fainted* nor *fretted* ; neither railed at their Enemies, nor sunk under their Hands ; but bore up under the heaviest Torments, under the bitterest Reproaches, with a Meekness and Patience that was invincible, and such as every way became the mild, and yet generous Spirit of the Gospel. So *Justin Martyr* tells the *Jews* ; We patiently bear (says he) all the Mischiefs which are brought



Part II. brought upon us either by Men or Devils, even to the Extremities of Death and Torments, praying for those that thus treat us, that they may find Mercy, not desiring to hurt, or revenge our selves upon any that injure us, according as our great *Lawgiver* has commanded us. Thus *Eusebius*, reporting the hard Usage which the *Christians* met with during the Times of Persecution, tells us, That they were betrayed and butchered by their own Friends and Brethren; but they, as courageous Champions of the true Religion, accustomed to prefer an honourable *Death*, in Defence of the Truth, before *Life* it self, little regarded the cruel Usage they met with in it: But rather, as became true Soldiers of God, armed with Patience, they laughed at all Methods of Execution, Fire and Sword, and the Piercing of Nails, wild Beasts, and the Bottom of the Sea, Cutting and Burning of Limbs, Putting out Eyes, and Mutilation of the whole Body, Hunger, and Digging in Mines, Chains and Fetters; all which, for the great Love that they had to their *Lord* and *Master*, they accounted *sweeter* than any Happiness or Pleasure whatsoever. Nay, the very *Women* in this Case were as courageous as the *Men*, many of whom, undergoing the same Conflicts, reaped the same Rewards of their Constancy and Vertue. But this will more distinctly appear in a few particular Cases.

*First*, Whenever they were sought for, in order to their being condemned and executed, they cared not to make use of *Opportunities* to escape. *Poly carp*, at his Apprehension, refused to fly; tho' going but into the next House he might have saved his Life. *Cyprian* writing to the Confessors, commends them, that when they were oft desired (I suppose he means by their *Gentile* Friends and Relations) to go out of Prison, they chose rather to abide there still, than to make their own Escape; telling them, they

Orat. de  
Laud. Conf.  
c. 7. p. 622.

Epist. ad  
Mosen &  
Max. Ep.  
c. 5. p. 28.

they had made as many Confessions, as they had had Opportunities to be gone, and had rejected them. Though (it's true) he himself withdrew from *Carthage* when the Officers were sent to take him and carry him to *Utica*, yet he did it (as he tells his People) by the Advice of some Friends; but for this Reason, that when he did suffer, he might suffer at *Carthage*, whereof he was Bishop; and that those Truths which he had preached to them in his Life, he might seal before them with his Blood: a Thing he earnestly and daily begged of God, and which was granted to him afterwards. And if they did not run away from Suffering, much less did they oppose it, and make Tumults and Parties to defend themselves; no, they were led as *Lambs to the Slaughter*, and as *Sheep before the Shearers are dumb*, so opened not they their Mouth, but committed their Cause to him that judges righteously, and who has said, *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it*. None of us (says *Cyprian* to the Governour) when apprehended, makes Resistance, nor (though our Party be large and numerous) revenges himself for that unjust Violence that you offer to us. We patiently acquiesce in the Assurance of a future Vengeance; the *Innocent* truckle under the *Ungodly*; the *Guiltless* quietly submit to Pains and Tortures; knowing for certain, that whatever we now suffer shall not remain unpunished; and that the greater the Injury is, that is done us in these Persecutions we endure, the more just and heavy will be that Vengeance that will follow it. Never was any wicked Attempt made against Christians, but a Divine Vengeance was soon at the heels of it. But though they thus resolutely stood to it, when the Honour of their Religion lay at stake; yet it must not be denied, that in some Cases they held it lawful and convenient to fly in Times of Persecution. *Tertullian*, indeed, in a Book pur-

Ep. 83. p. 161.

Ad Demetrian. p. 202.

Lib. de fug. in persecut.

Part II. { posely written on this Subject, maintains it to be simply and absolutely unlawful for *Christians* to fly at such a Time; an Assertion which with all the Subtilties of his Wit, and the Flourishes of his *African* Eloquence, he endeavours to render fair and plausible. But besides the Strictness and rigid Severity of the Man at all times, this Book was composed after his complying with the Sect of the *Montanists*, whose peculiar Humour it was to out-do the *Orthodox* by overstraining the Austerities of Religion; as appears not only in this, but in the Case of *Marriages, Fasts, Penances*, and such like. Otherwise, before his espousing those Opinions, he seems elsewhere to speak more favourably of shunning Persecution. But whatever he thought in the Case, 'tis certain the Generality of the Fathers were of another Mind, That *Christians* might, and ought to use Prudence in this Affair, and at some times withdraw, to avoid the Storm when it was a coming, especially in these two Cases :

*De patient.*  
c. 13. p.  
147.

*Lib. 8. p.*  
406.

*Athan. A-*  
*pol. de fug.*  
*sua, tom. 1.*  
p. 545.


I. When Persons were of more than ordinary Use and Eminency, the saving of whom might be of great Advantage to the Church. A Christian that flies in this Case (as *Origen* tells *Celsus*) does it not for Fear, but in a prudent Compliance with his Lord's Direction, and with a Design to keep himself undefiled, that he may be able to minister to the Salvation of others. Thus *St. Paul* was let down the Wall in a *Basket*, when the Governour of *Damascus* sought his Life. Thus *Cyprian* withdrew from *Carthage*, and lay hid for two Years together, during which time he gave secret Orders for governing of the Church. Thus *Athanasius*, when *Syrinns* and his Soldiers broke into the Church to apprehend him, was by the universal Cry both of Clergy and People persuaded, and in a Manner forced to retire and save himself; in which Retirement he continued so long, that the *Arians* charged him

him with Fear and Cowardice; infomuch, that for his Chap. 7.  
 own Vindication he was forced to write an *Apology* {  
 for himself, wherein he learnedly and eloquently  
 discourſes the whole Affair, juſtifying himſelf from  
 the Inſtances in the Old Teſtament, of *Jacob, Moſes,*  
*David, Elias*; from the Example of *Chriſt* himſelf,  
 and his Apoſtles, in the New; from the plain and po-  
 ſitive Allowance of the Goſpel, *When they perſecute*  
*you in one City, flee unto another*; and that *when they*  
*ſhould ſee the Abomination of Deſolation ſtanding in the*  
*holy Place* (i. e. the Miſeries that were to come upon  
*Jeruſalem* by the Roman Army) *they ſhould flee unto*  
*the Mountains*; and if upon the *House-top*, or in the *Field*,  
*not turn back to fetch any Thing that was left behind*:  
 That 'twas neceſſary for the Apoſtles to ſhun the  
 Storm, becauſe they were the *Inſtruments* immedi-  
 ately deputed to propagate and convey the Goſpel  
 to the World: That they were herein imitated by  
 the Primitive Saints and Martyrs, who wandered about  
 in *Deſerts and Mountains*, and in *Dens and Caves of*  
*the Earth*; being equally careful to avoid the two **Ex-**  
**treams**, of *Raſhneſs* and *Cowardice*, they would nei-  
 ther *bruſt* themſelves upon Danger, nor *baſely run*  
 from *Death*, when called to it; like wiſe *Physicians*,  
 reſerving themſelves for the Uſe of thoſe that needed  
 their Aſſiſtance. All which, and a great deal more,  
 he rationally argues in that *Apology*.

II. Another Caſe wherein they accounted it law-  
 ful for Perſons to retire from Perſecutions, was,  
 when being but *new Converts*, and as yet *weak* in  
 the Faith, they looked upon them as not likely to  
 bear the Shock and Brunt of the Perſecution; in this  
 Caſe they thought it better for them to *withdraw* Nyſſen. O-  
 for the preſent, than to put them under a Temptati- rat. de vit.  
 on of being drawn back to Paganism and Idolatry. Gregor.  
 Thus when Gregory Biſhop of *Neocaſarea*, ſaw the Thaumat.  
*Decian Perſecution* grow extreme hot and violent; p. 1001.  
tom. 2.

Part II. considering the Frailty and Infirmary of Human Nature, and how few would be able to bear up under those fierce Conflicts that must be undergone for the Sake of Religion, persuaded his Church for a little to decline that dreadful and terrible Storm; telling them, 'Twas a great deal better to *save* their Souls by flying, than by abiding those furious Trials, to run the Hazard of *falling* from the Faith. And that his Counsel might make the deeper Impression upon them, and he might convince them that in thus doing, there was no Danger or Prejudice to their Souls, he resolved to shew them the Way by his own *Example*; and himself first retiring out of the Reach of Danger, retreated to the mountainous Parts thereabouts, that were freeest from the Rage and Malice of the Enemy. Nor was this any *Impeachment* of their Zeal and Readiness for Suffering, but only a prudent gaining a little Respite for a time, that they might suffer with greater Advantage afterwards. They did not desire to save their Heads, when the Honour of their Religion called for it, nor ever by indirect Means skewed themselves out of Danger, when once engaged in it; though they did sometimes prudently prevent it, reserving themselves for a more convenient Season. Thus *Cyprian* withdrew a little, not out of Fear of Suffering, but a Desire to prevent his being put to Death in an *obscure* Place (which his Enemies had designed) being desirous his Martyrdom should happen in that Place where he so long lived, and so publicly preached the *Christian Faith*.

Secondly, They were so far from declining Sufferings, and being terrified with those Miseries which they saw others undergo, that they freely, and in great Multitudes offered themselves to the Rage and Fury of their Enemies; embracing Death as the greatest *Honour* that could be done them: They strove (as  
*Sulpitius*

*Sulpitius Severus* observes, speaking of the ninth Per- Chap. 7.  
 secution) which should rush first upon those glorious   
 Conflicts; Men in those Days (as he adds) much more *Sac. Hist.*  
 greedily seeking *Martyrdom* in the Cause of *Christ*, *lib. 2. p. 143.*  
 than in After-times they did for *Bishopricks* and the  
 Preferments of the Church. *Lucian*, who certainly  
 had very little Love to Christians, yet gives this Ac-  
 count of them: The miserable Wretches (says he,  
*ὁ καλοῦσαίμωνος*) do verily persuade them, i. e. those of  
 their own Party, that they shall surely be *immortal* *De Mort.*  
 and live for ever; upon which account they *despise* *Peregr. tom.*  
*Death*, and many of them voluntarily offer them- *2. p. 793.*  
 selves to it. Indeed they did ambitiously contend  
 who should be first crowned with *Martyrdom*, and  
 that in such Multitudes, that their Enemies knew not  
 what to do with them, their very Persecutors grew  
 weary of their bloody Offices. *Tiberianus*, the Presi- *Apud Ulfser,*  
 dent of *Palestine*, in his Relation to the Emperor *Appen. Ig-*  
*Trajan* (recorded by *Joannes Malela*, mentioned also *nat. p. 9.*  
 by *Suidas*) gives this Account of his Proceedings a- *ex Jo. Ma-*  
 gainst them: *I am quite tired out in punishing and de-* *lel. Chron.*  
*stroying the Galileans (called here by the name of Chri-* *lib. 11. vid.*  
*stians) according to your Commands, and yet they cease* *Annot. in*  
*not to offer themselves to be slain: Nay, though I have* *Ep. ad*  
*laboured both by fair Means and Threatnings to make* *Philad.*  
*them conceal themselves from being known to be Chri-* *not. 82.*  
*stians, yet can I not stave them off from Persecution.* *in verb.*  
 So little regard had they to Sufferings; nay, so im- *Τεταυός.*  
 patient were they till they were in the Midst of *Tertul. ad*  
 Flames! This made *Arrius Antonius* the Proconsul *Scap. c. 4.*  
 of *Asia*, when at first he severely persecuted the *p. 71.*  
 Christians, whereupon all the Christians in that City  
 like an *Army*, voluntarily pretended themselves be-  
 fore his Tribunal, to be surprized with wonder; and  
 causing only some few of them to be executed, he  
 cried out to the Rest, *O unhappy People! if you have a*  
*mind to die, have you not Halters and Precipices enough*  
 to

Part II. to end your Lives, but you must come hither for an Execution? So fast did they flock to the Place of Torment, faster than *Droves* of Beasts that are driven to the Shambles! They even longed to be in the Arms of Suffering. *Ignatius*, though then in his Journey to *Rome* in order to his Execution, yet by the way as he went could not but vent his passionate Desire of it.

O that I might come to those *wild Beasts* that are prepared for me! I heartily wish that I may presently meet with them; I would invite and encourage them speedily to devour me, and not be afraid to set upon me as they have been to others; nay, should they refuse it, I would even force them to it: I am concerned for nothing either *seen* or *unseen*, more than to enjoy *Jesus Christ*: Let *Fire* and the *Cross*, and the Rage of *wild Beasts*, the Breaking of *Bones*, *Distortion* of Members, *Bruising* of the whole Body; yea, all the Punishments which the *Devil* can invent, come upon me, so as I may but enjoy *Christ*. They even envied the Martyrdom of others, and mourned that any went before, while they were left behind. When

*Ambr. offic.*  
*lib. 1. c. 42.*  
*tom. 1.*  
*p. 26.*

*Laurentius* the Deacon espied *Sixtus* the Bishop of *Rome* going to his Martyrdom, he burst into Tears, and passionately called out, Whither, O my *Father*, art thou going without thy *Son*? Whither so fast, O Holy Bishop, without thy *Deacon*? Never didest thou use to offer *Spiritual Sacrifice* without thy *Minister* to attend thee. What have I done that might displease thee? Hast thou found me *degenerate* and fearful? Make Trial at least, whether thou hast chosen a fit Minister to wait upon thee. To this, and more to the same import, the good Bishop replied: Mistake not, *my Son*, I do not leave thee nor forsake thee; greater Tryals belong to thee: I, like a weak old Man, receive only the first Skirmishes of the Battel; but thou being youthful and valiant, hast a more glorious Triumph over the Enemy re-

\*

served

*Served* for thee : Cease to weep, thy Turn will be presently ; for within *three Days* shalt thou follow me. So pious a Contention was there between these good Men, which of them should first suffer for the Name of Christ ! 'Tis memorable, what we find concerning *Origen*, though then but a Youth, That when a great Persecution was raised at *Alexandria*, wherein many suffered, he was so eagerly inflamed with a Desire of Martyrdom (especially after his Father had been seized upon and cast into Prison) that he exposed himself to all Dangers, and courted Torments to come upon him ; and had certainly suffered, if his Mother, after all other Intreaties and Persuasions to no purpose, had not stolen away his *Clothes* by Night, and for mere Shame forced him to stay at home.

Chap. 7.  
Euseb. H.  
Eccl. lib. 6.  
c. 2. p. 202.

To these I shall add but one Example of the weaker Sex. When *Valens*, the *Arian* Emperor, (who persecuted the *Orthodox* with as much Fury and Bitterness as any of the Heathen Emperors) came to *Edeffa*, and found there great Numbers of them daily meeting in their publick Assemblies, he severely checked the Governour, and commanded him by all Means to rout and ruin them. The Governour, though of another Persuasion, yet out of common Compassion, gave them *private* Notice of the Emperor's Commands, hoping they would forbear. But they not at all terrified with the News, met the next Morning in greater Numbers, which the Governour understanding, went to the Place of their Assembly : As he was going, a Woman in a careless Dress, leading a little Child in her Hand, rushed through the Governour's *Guard* ; who commanding her to be brought before him, asked her, Why she made so much *haste* ? That I may the sooner come (*said she*) to the Place where the People of the *Catholick Church* are met together.

Know-

Sozom. H.  
Eccl. lib. 6.  
c. 18.  
p. 660.



Part II. Knowest thou not (*says he*) that the Governour will be there to day, and kill all whom he finds there? I know it well (*answered the Woman*) and therefore make so much haste, lest I come too late, and be deprived of the *Crown* of Martyrdom. And, being asked, Why she carried her *little Son* along with her? She answered, That he also may partake of the common Sufferings, and share in the same Rewards. The Governour admiring the Courage of the Woman, turned back to the *Palace*, and dissuaded the Emperor from his cruel Resolution, as what was neither *honourable* in it self, nor would conduce to his Purposes and Designs.

Thirdly, When they were condemned, though it was by a most unjust Sentence, and to a most horrid Death, they were so far from raging or repining, that instead of bitter and tart Reflections, they gave Thanks to their Enemies for condemning them.

A Christian being condemned (*says Tertullian*) thanks his Judges, he takes it for a Favour to die for so good a Cause. That they persecute us (*says Cle-*

*Apol. c. 46.* mens of *Alexandria*) it is not because they find us to  
*p. 36.* be wicked, but because they think we wrong the  
*Strom. lib.* World by being Christians, and by teaching and  
*4. p. 505.* perswading others to be so: As for us, they do us no harm, Death does but the sooner send us to God; if therefore we be wise, we shall thank them that are the Occasion of our more speedy Passage thither.

*Lib. 7.* And elsewhere he tells us of *St. Peter*, that seeing  
*p. 736.* his Wife going towards Martyrdom, he exceedingly rejoiced that she was called to so great an Honour, and that she was now returning home; encouraging and exhorting of her, and calling her by her Name, bid her be mindful of the *Lord*. Such (*says he*) was the Wedlock of that blessed Couple, and their perfect Disposition and Agreement in those Things that were dearest to them.

When

When *Lucius*, one of the Primitive Martyrs, was charged by *Urbicius*, the Roman Prefect, for being a Christian, only because he offered to speak in behalf of one that had very hard Measure, he immediately confessed it, and being forthwith condemned, he heartily thanked his Judge for it, that by this means he should be delivered from such unrighteous Governours, and be sooner sent home to his Heavenly Father. No joyfuller Message could be told them, than that they must die for the sake of Christ. Though we contend with all your Rage and Cruelty (as *Tertullian* tells the President *Scapula*) yet we freely offer our selves, and rejoyce more when we are condemned, than when we are absolved and released by you. In despite of all the Malice of their Enemies, they accounted the *Instruments* of their Torment, the *Ensigns* of their Honour and their Happiness. When the Heathens reproached them for dying such an infamous Death as that of the *Cross*, and in derision stiled them *Sarminticii* and *Semaxii*, for being burnt upon a little Stake to which they were bound with *Twigs*; *Tertullian* answers for them, *This is the Habit of our Victory, this is the embroidered Garment of our Conquest, this the triumphant Chariot wherein we ride to Heaven.* When in Prison, they looked upon their *Chains* as their *Ornaments*; as adding a Beauty and Lustre to them, with which they were adorned against the Time of their Suffering, as the Bride is with Fringes of Gold, and variegated Ornaments against the Day of her Espousals. For this reason *Babylas* the Martyr commanded that the *Chains* which he had worn in Prison, should be buried with him, to shew that those things which seem most ignominious, are for the sake of Christ most splendid and honourable; imitating therein the great *Apostle*, who was so far from being ashamed of, that he took Pleasure in *Bonds, Chains, Reproaches,*

Chap. 7:  
Fust. Mar-  
tyr. Apol. 1.  
p. 43.

Ad Scap.  
c. 1. p. 68.

Apol. c. 50.  
p. 39.

Euseb. H.  
Eccl. lib. 5.  
c. 1. p. 160.  
C.

Chrysof. 1.  
de St. Babyl.  
tom. 1.  
p. 669.

Part II. *proaches, Persecutions, Distresses for Christ's sake ;*  
 professing to glory in nothing but the Cross of  
 Christ.

Epist. 8.  
 p. 19.

Fourthly, Whenever they were actually under the bitterest Torments, they never discovered the least Sign of a *furious* or *impatient* Mind, but bore up with a Quietness and Composure which no Sufferings could overcome. *Cyprian*, exhorting the Martyrs to Courage and Conitancy, tells them this of those that had gone before them, That in the hottest Conflict they never stirred, but maintained their Ground with a *free* Confession, an *unshaken* Mind, a *Divine* Courage, destitute indeed of *external* Weapons, but armed with the *Shield of Faith* ; in Torments they stood *stronger* than their Tormentors ; their bruised and mangled Limbs proved too hard for the Instruments wherewith their Flesh was racked and pulled from them ; the Blows, though never so oft repeated, could not conquer their impregnable Faith, although they did not only slice and tear off the Flesh, but rake into their very Bowels ; and let out Blood enough to extinguish the Flames of Persecution, and to *allay* the Heats of the Everlasting Fire. And in another Place, speaking of the Persecution under *Decius* at *Rome*, he tells us, That the Adversary did with an horrible Violence break in upon the *Camp of Christ*, but was repulsed with a Strength as great as that wherewith he came upon them : That then he craftily attempted the more rude and weak, and subtilly endeavoured to set upon them singly, hoping the easilier to circumvent them ; but that he found them like a *well-compacted* Army, sober and vigilant, and prepared for Battle : That they could *die*, but could not be *overcome* ; yea, therefore *unconquerable*, because not afraid to die ; that they did not resist those that rose up against them, being ready, not to kill them

Ad Correl.  
 Epist. 57.  
 p. 91.

them that assaulted them, but to lay down their **own Lives**, and to lose their **Blood**, that they might make the more haste to get out of a cruel and malicious World. Indeed, so admirable was their **Patience** and **Readiness** to die, that their very **Enemies** stood amazed at it. When **Simeon**, the second Bishop of **Jerusalem**, and of our **Saviour's** Kindred according to the **Flesh**, had, by the **Command** of **Atticus** the Governour of **Syria**, been tortured with all the **Arts** of Cruelty for many Days together; he bore it with such **Courage**, that the **Proconsul** himself, and all that were present, greatly wondered, that a Man of an **Hundred and Twenty Years** of Age should be able to undergo so many **Miseries** and **Torments**. Of the **Martyrs** that suffered together with **St. Polycarp**, the Church of **Smyrna** gives this Account; That all that were present were astonished when they saw them whipped till the **Cords** made way to the **inmost Veins** and **Arteries**, till the **Bowels** and the most hidden **Parts** of the **Body** appeared. They were raked with **Shells** of **Fishes**, laid all along upon sharp-pointed **Stakes** driven into the **Ground**, exercised with all **Sorts** of **Torments**, und at last thrown to be devoured of **Wild Beasts**; all which they bore with a mighty **Patience** and **Constancy**: Nay (as we find it in the first Part of that **Epistle** contracted by **Eusebius**, but published at large by Bishop **Usher**) so great was their **Patience** and **Magnanimity**, that in all their **Sufferings** not any of them gave a **Sigh** or a **Groan**; the **Holy Martyrs** of **Christ** (*says the Epistle*) evidently shewing us, That during this sad **Hour** of **Suffering** they were **Strangers** to their own **Bodies**, or rather, that our **Lord** himself stood by them, and familiarly conversed with them; and that being **Partaker** of his **Grace**, they made light of these **Temporal Torments**, and by one short **Hour** deli-

Chap. 7.

www

Euseb. l. 3.

c. 32.

p. 104.

Id. lib. 4.

c. 15. p. 129.

Append.  
Ignatian.  
par. 2. p. 14.

Part. II. delivered themselves from *Eternal* Miseries. The *Fire*, which their Tormenters put to them, seemed to them but *cool* and *little*, while they had it in their Thoughts to avoid the everlasting and unextinguishable *Flames* of another World; their Eyes being fixed upon those Rewards which are prepared for them that *endure to the End*, such as *neither Ear bath beard, nor Eye bath seen, nor bath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive*; but which were shewn to them by our *Lord*, as being now ready to go off from Mortality, and to enter upon the State of *Angels*.

*Encom. in*  
*40 Martyr.*  
*append. ad.*  
*oper. Greg.*  
*Thaum.*  
 p. 85.

Thus reasoned those Forty Martyrs in *St. Basil*, that suffered at *Sebastia* in *Armenia*, in the Reign of *Licinius*, when the Governour, to contrive a new Method of Torment, had commanded them to stand *naked* all Night in cold frosty Weather (which in those more *Northberly* Countries is extreme sharp and bitter, it being then the Depth of Winter, and the *North* Wind blowing very fierce) in a *Pond* of Water; they first gave Thanks to God that they put off their *Cloaths* and their *Sins* together, and then comforted one another by ballancing their *present* Hardships with their *future* Hopes: Is the Weather *sharp*? (said they) but *Paradise* is *comfortable* and delightful: Is the *Frost* cold and bitter? The *Rest* that remains is sweet and pleasant; let us but hold out a *little*, and *Abraham's* Bosom will refresh us; we shall change this *one* Night for an *eternal* Age of Happiness. Let our *Feet* glow with very *Cold*, so as they may for ever rejoice and triumph with *Angels*; let our *Hands* sink down, so as we may have *Liberty* to lift them up to God. How many of our *Fellow-Soldiers* have lost their Lives to keep Faith to their *Temporal* Prince? And should we be unfaithful to the true *King* of Heaven? How many have justly died for their Crimes and Villanies? And shall we refuse, in the Cause of *Righteousness* and Religion?

gion? 'Tis but the *Flesh* that suffers, let us not spare it; since we must die, let us *die* that we may *live*.

Chap. 7.

Thus generously did they bear up under this uncomfortable State; their ardent Desires of Heaven from within, extinguishing all Sense of Cold and Hardship from without. Nay, when, a little before, their Commander had set upon them both with Threatnings and Promises; assuring them, That if they would but *deny Christ*, they should make their own Terms for Riches and Honour; they told him, That he had laid his *Snares* at a wrong Door; that he could not give them what he endeavoured to *take* from them; nor could they close with his Offers, without being infinitely Losers by the Bargain; that it was to no Purpose to proffer a little of the World to them, who despised the Whole of it; that all these visible Advantages were nothing to what they had in Hope and Expectation; all the Beauty and Glory of Heaven and Earth not being comparable to that State of Blessedness, which is the *Portion* of the Righteous; the one being *short-lived* and transitory, the other *permanent* and perpetual; that they were Ambitious of no *Gift*, but the Crown of Righteousness, nor sought after any other *Glory* but what was *Heavenly*; that they *feared* no Torments but those of *Hell*, and that that Fire was truly terrible. As for those Punishments they inflicted, they accounted them but as the *Blows* of Children; and the ill Usage that their Bodies met with, the longer 'twas endured, the more Way it made for a *brighter* Crown. Such was the Temper, such the Support of these Christian Soldiers, these *true Champions* of the *Christian Faith*!

Indeed this Consideration was one of the greatest Cordials that kept up their Spirits under the saddest Sufferings, that they were assured of a Reward in Heaven. Amongst us (says *Cyprian*) there flourishes

A a

Strength

Ad Demet.  
p. 202.

Part II. Strength of *Hope*, Firmness of *Faith*, a Mind erect amongst the Ruins of a tottering Age, and immovable *Virtue*, a *Patience* serene and cheerful, and a Soul always *secure* and certain of its *God*. As for Want or Danger, what are these to *Christians*, to the Servants of God, whom *Paradise* invites, and the Favour and Plenty of the *Heavenly Kingdom* expects and waits for? They are always glad, and rejoice in God, and resolutely bear the Evils and Miseries of the World, while they look for the Rewards and Prosperities of another Life. The great

*Prepar. E-*  
*vang. l. 1.* *Philosophers* (as *Eusebius* observes) as much as they  
*c. 4. p. 13.* talk of *Immortality*, yet by their Carriage they shewed, that they looked upon it but as a trifling and childish *Fable*: Whereas (says he) amongst us, even *Girls* and *Children*, the most unlearned, and (measured by the Eye) the meanest and most despicable Persons, being assisted by the Help and Strength of our Blessed *Saviour*, do rather by their *Actions* than their *Words*, demonstrate and make good this Doctrine of the *Immortality* of the Soul.

*Fragm. ep.*  
*oper. part.*  
*1. p. 528.* This *Julian* confesses of the *Christians*, tho' according to his Custom, he gives them bad Words, calls them *Atheists* and irreligious Persons; that being acted by some evil Spirits, they persuade themselves, that Death is by all Means to be desired, and that they shall immediately *fly* to *Heaven*, as soon as their Souls are freed from the *Fetters* of the Body. Hence it was, that in those Times *Christians* were wont to sing *Hymns* and *Psalms* at the *Funerals* of the Dead, to signify, that they had attained their *Rest*, the End of their Labours, the Retribution of their Troubles, the Reward and the Crown of their Conflicts and Sufferings, as *Chrysostom* tells us; Part of which *Psalms*, he elsewhere tells us, were, *Return unto thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee: and, I will fear no Evil, because thou*

*Hom. 51.*  
*de SS. Bern.*  
*Ex Profd.*  
*Tom. 1.*  
*p. 563.*  
*Hom. 4. ad*  
*Hebr. p.*  
*1785.*

*thou art with me*: and again, *Thou art my Refuge from the Trouble that compasses me about*. For the same Reason, as being a Sign of Joy and Chearfulness, he there tells us, that they carried *Lights burning before the Corpse*. By all which, he tells us, they signified, that they carried forth *Christians as Champions to the Grave*, glorifying God, and giving Thanks to him, that he had *crowned the deceased Person*, that he had delivered him from his Labours, that he had taken him to himself, and set him beyond the Reach of Storms and Fears.

But to return: There was scarce any one Instance of Religion, wherein Primitive Christianity did more openly *approve* it self to the World, and more evidently *insult* over *Paganism*, than the generous Courage and Patience of its Professors. By this they commended both the *Truth* and *Excellency* of their Religion, and conquered their very Enemies into an embracing of it. Hear how *Lactantius* pleads the Argument, and triumphs in the Goodness of his Cause; by reason (says he) of our strange and wonderful Courage and Strength, *new Additions* are made to us; for when the People see Men torn in Pieces with infinite Variety of Torments, and yet maintain a Patience *unconquerable*, and able to tire out its Tormenters; they begin to think (what the Truth is) that the *Consent* of so many, and the *Perseverance* of dying Persons cannot be in vain; nor that *Patience* it self, were it not from God, could hold out under such Racks and Tortures: *Thieves*, and Men of *robust* Body, are not able to bear such tearing in Pieces; they groan and cry out, and are overcome with Pain, because not endued with a Divine Patience; but our very *Children*, and *Women* (to say nothing of our *Men*) do with Silence conquer their Tormenters; nor can the hottest Fire force the least Groan from them. Let the *Romans* go now

Chap. 7.  
Psal. 16. 1.  
Psal 24. 4.  
Ib. p. 1784.

De Justit. 1. 5. c. 13. p. 495.



Part. II. and boast of their *Mutius* and *Regulus*, of the one for delivering himself up to his Enemy, to be put to *Death*, because he was ashamed to *live* a Prisoner; of the other, for burning his Hand at the Command of the Enemy to save his Life. Behold! with us the *weaker* Sex, and the most *tender* Age can suffer all Parts of their Body to be torn and burnt; not out of *Necessity*, because they might not escape if they would, but out of *Choice*, because they believe in God. This is that true *Vertue* which Philosophers indeed vainly *boast* of, but never really *possessed*. This, and more to the same Purpose, that eloquent *Apologist* there urges, to the great Honour of his Religion. By the Force of such Arguments *Justin Martyr* confesses, That he was brought over from being a *Platonick* Philosopher to be a *Christian*: for when he saw the *Christians*, whom he had so often heard accused and traduced, undauntedly going to *die*, and embracing the most terrible Executions that were prepared for them; *I thought with my self* (says he) *that it was not possible such Persons should wallow in Vice and Luxury; it being the Interest of all wicked and voluptuous Persons to shun Death, to dissemble with Princes and Magistrates, and to do any Thing to save their Lives.*

This certainly could not but be a huge Satisfaction to all prudent and considerate Men, that the *Christians* were guided by *better* Principles than ordinary, and that they were fully assured, that *theirs* was the *true* Religion, and that they taught nothing but what they firmly believed to be true. For to maintain such Patience and Constancy even unto *Adv. Cels. Death* (says *Origen*, speaking of the *Apostles* propagating the Doctrine of *Christ*) is not the *Fashion* of those who feign Things of their own Heads; but is a manifest Argument to all candid and ingenuous Readers, that they knew what they writ to be true, when

when they so cheerfully endured so many, and such grievous Things, only for the Sake of the Son of God, in whom they had believed. No Dangers could affright them, no Threatnings or Torments could baffle them out of their Profession. Therefore when *Celsus* accused the *Christians* for a fearful Sort of Men, and such as loved their Carcasses well; *Ori-* Lib. 7. p. 357.  
*gen* answers, No such Matter, *We can as cheerfully lay down our Bodies to suffer for Religion, as the hardiest Philosopher of you all can put off his Coat.* And indeed the Gospel did mightily prosper and triumph in the Midst of these dreadful Sufferings; Men rationally concluding, that there must be something more than *Humane* in that Doctrine, for which so many thus deeply ventured. So *Tertullian* tells *Scapula*, in the Conclusion of his Book: *It is to no Purpose to think this Sect will fail, which you will see to be the more built up, the faster it is pulled down; for who is there, that beholding such eminent Patience, cannot but have some Scruples started in his Mind, and be desirous to enquire into the Cause of it; and when he ouce knows the Truth, be himself moved to close with it, and embrace it?* Therefore *Julian the Apostate*, out of a cursed Policy, refused many times openly to put the *Christians* to Death; partly because he envied them the Honour of being *Martyrs*, partly because he saw that they were like *new-mown Grass*, the oftner it was cut down the thicker it sprang up again. C. 1. p. 72. Naz. in Jul Inveſt. 1. p. 72.

I shall add no more concerning this Subject, but the Testimony which the very *Enemies* of *Christians* gavethem in this Case. *Julian* the Emperor (whom we so lately mentioned, and who fought against *Christians* with their own *Weapons*, making Use of those *Scriptures* which he had studied while ne was amongst them) when the *Christians* complained to him of those Oppressions and Injuries which the Governours of *Provinces* laid upon them, made light

Part II. of it, and dismissed them with this virulent Sarcasm ;  
 ~~~~~ Your Christ (says he) has given you a Law, that when  
 Frag. Epist. you suffer unjustly, you should bear it resolutely, and when  
 loc. supra oppressed and injured, should not answer again. And  
 laudat. so certainly they did, undergoing all Kinds of Mis-  
 eries, and Death it self, with so unconcerned a Mind,  
 that elsewhere he censures them for this very Reason,  
 Euseb. Hist. to be acted by the Spirit of the Devil. Hence Porphyry,  
 Eccl. l. 6. in a Book that he wrote against the Christians, calls  
 c. 19. p. their Religion τὸ βάρβαρον τὸ λημμα, a Piece of barbarous  
 220. Boldness : Barbarous, because so different from the  
 way of Worship amongst the Greeks, with whom e-  
 very Thing was barbarous that agreed not with their  
 Principles and Institutions : Boldness, because the  
 Christians shewed such an undaunted Courage in  
 bearing Miseries and Torments, chusing to die a  
 thousand times rather than to deny Christ, and sa-  
 crifice to the Gods. For this Reason, the Heathen  
 in M. Felix stiles the Christians, Men of an undone,  
 M. Fel. furious, and desperate Party ; respecting their fear-  
 p. 7. less and resolute Carriage under Sufferings, for so  
 he explains himself presently after: Is it not a strange  
 Folly, and an incredible Boldness? They despise Tor-  
 ments that are present, and yet fear those that are fu-  
 ture and uncertain ; and while they fear to die after  
 Death, in the mean time they are not afraid to die. So  
 Lib. 4. c. 7. sillily do they flatter themselves, and cajole their Fears by  
 p. 500. a deceitful Hope of some unknown Comforts that shall arise  
 to them. This, Arrian, in his Collection of Epictet-  
 us's Dissertations, confesses to be true of those, whom  
 (according to Julian's Stile) he calls the Galileans,  
 that they underwent Torments and Death with a  
 mighty Courage ; but which he makes to be the Ef-  
 fect only of Use, and a customary bearing Sufferings.  
 The Emperor M. Antoninus confesses also the Mat-  
 ter of Fact, That the Christians did thus readily and  
 resolutely die, but ascribes it not to Judgement and a  
 rational

Τὸν αἰς  
 ἑαυτοῦ, l.  
 11. sect. 3.  
 p. 106.

rational Consideration, but to *meer Stubbornness* and Chap. 7.  
*Obstinacy*. And in an *Epistle* that he wrote to the  
*Common Council of Asia*, in Favour of the *Christians*,  
 whom his Officers there did grievously vex and op- Apud Euf.  
 Hist. Eccl  
 Lib. 4. c  
 press, gives them this Testimony; That they could 13. p. 126.  
 have no greater Kindness done them than to be cal-  
 led in Question, and that they had much rather  
 be *put to Death* for their Religion, than to have their  
*Lives* spared to them: By which Means they be-  
 came Conquerors, chusing rather to part with their  
 Lives, than to do what you impose upon them. Let  
 me advise you (says he) who are ready to despond  
 with every *Earthquake* that happens to you, to com-  
 pare your selves with them: They in all their Dan-  
 gers are securely confident in their God; while you  
 at such a time *neglect* the Gods, and have little or  
 no Regard either to other Rites, or to the Worship  
 of that immortal Deity, but banish the *Christians*  
 that worship him, and persecute them unto Death.  
 So forcibly did the Majesty of *Truth* extort a Con-  
 fession from its greatest Enemies.

*The End of the Second Part.*





# Primitive Christianity :

OR THE

# RELIGION

OF THE

# Ancient Christians,

IN THE

# First AGES of the GOSPEL.

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PART III.

*Of their Religion as respecting other Men.*

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CHAP. I.

Of their Justice and Honesty.

*Christian Religion admirably provides for Moral Righteousness. Do as you would be done by, the great Law of Christ: This Rule highly prized by Severus the Emperor. The first Christians accounted Honesty and an upright Carriage a main Part of their Religion. Their Candour and Simplicity in their Words; abhorring Lyes and Mental*

**Primitive Christianity.**

*tal Reservations, though it might save their Lives. Their Veracity such, as no need to be put to their Oaths. Some few of the Fathers against all Swearing: Allowed by the greatest Part in weighty Cases. That they took Oaths, proved from Athanasius, and their taking the Sacramentum Militare. The Form of the Oath out of Vegetius. The same expressly affirmed of the more antient Christians by Tertullian. Why refusing to swear by the Emperor's Genius. Oaths wont to be taken at the Holy Sacrament upon the Communion-Table, or the Holy Gospels. Some against all Oaths, only to prevent a Possibility of Perjury. Bearing false Witness, condemned and strictly punished by the antient Church. A famous Instance of Divine Vengeance pursuing three false Accusers. Christians careful in the Conduct of their Actions. Their Integrity in Matters of Distributive Justice; in Commutative Justice, avoiding all Fraud and Overreaching. St. Augustine's Instance. Nicostratus forced to fly, to avoid the Punishment of Cheating and Sacrilege. The Christians unjustly accused of Sacrilege by the Heathens. The Occasion of it. Pliny's Testimony of the Honesty of Christians. Theft and Rapine severely condemned. Christians for Doing all the Good they could. Their Care to right and relieve the Oppressed. The Gentiles charged Christians with Murder, and Eating Man's Flesh. A brief Representation of the several Answers returned to it by the Christian Apologists. The true Rise of*

of the Charge found to spring from the barbarous and inhuman Practices of the Gnosticks, mentioned by Irenæus and Epiphanius. Chap. I.

**H**AVING given some Account of the Religion of the ancient *Christians*, both as it respected their *Piety* towards God, and their sober and virtuous *Carriage* towards themselves; we come in the last place to consider it in reference to their *Carriage* towards others, which the *Apostle* describes under the Title of *Righteousness*: Under which he comprehends all that Duty and Respect wherein we stand obliged to others; whereof we shall consider these following Instances: Their *Justice* and *Integrity* in Matters of Commerce and Traffick; their *mutual Love* and *Charity* to one another; their *Unity* and *Peaceableness*; and their *Submission* and *Subjection* to *Civil Government*.

I begin with the first, their *Just and Upright Carriage* in their *outward Dealings*. One great Design of the *Christian Law*, is to establish and ratify that great *Principle*, which is one of the *prime and fundamental* Laws of Nature, *To hurt no Man*, and to *render to every one his due*; to teach us to carry ourselves as becomes us in our Relations towards Men. Next to our Duty towards God, the Gospel obliges us to be *Righteous to Men*, sincere and upright in all our Dealings, *not going beyond, nor defrauding one another in any Matter*; to put away *Lying*, and to *speak Truth to each other as Fellow-Members* of the same *Christian Brotherhood and Society*. It settles that *Golden Rule* as the *Fundamental Law* of all just and equitable Commerce, *That all things whatsoever we would that Men should do to us, we should even do so to them, this being the Sum of the Law and the Prophets*; than which, as no Rule could have been  
- more



Part III. more *equitable* in it self, so none could possibly have been contrived more short and plain, and more accommodate to the common Cases of Human Life.

*Lambrid.*  
*in vit.*  
*Alex. Sev.*  
*c. 43. p.*  
568.

Upon the account of these, and such like excellent Precepts, *Alexander Severus*, the Roman Emperor, had so great an Honour for our *Saviour*, that he was resolv'd to build a *Temple* to him, and to receive him into the Number of their *Gods*: And though he was over-ruled in this by some, who having consulted the Oracle, told him, That if it were done, all Men would become *Christians*, and the Temples of the Gods would be left naked and empty; yet in his

*Ibid. c. 29.*  
p. 540.

most private *Chappell*, he had the *Image* of *Christ*, amongst those of many noble *Heroes*, and *deified* Persons, to whom he paid religious Adoration every Morning; and particularly for this Precept, *That what we would not have done to our selves, we should*

*Ibid. c. 51.*  
p. 577.

*not do to others* (which his own *Historian* confesses he learned either from the *Jews* or *Christians*; but most certainly from the *Christians*, in whose *Mouths* it so often was, and in whose *Gospel* it was so plainly written.) He so highly valued it, that in all publick Punishments he caused it to be proclaimed by a *Common Cryer*; nay, was so hugely fond on't, that he caused it to be written upon the *Walls* of his *Palace*, and upon all his publick *Buildings*; that, if possible, every Room in his *Court*, and every Place in the *City*, might be a silent *Chancery* and *Court of Equity*.

So vast a Reverence had the very *Enemies* of Christianity for the *Gospel* upon this account, that it so admirably provides for the Advance of Civil Righteousness and Justice amongst Men; which, however it has been slighted by some, even amongst *Christians*, under the Notion of *Moral Principles*, yet without it all other *Religion is but vain*; it being a strange piece of Folly, for any to dream of being *Godly* without

out being honest; or to think of being a *Disciple* of Chap. 1. the first, while a Man is an *Enemy* to the second Table. Sure I am, the *Christians* of old looked upon Honesty and an upright Carriage, as a considerable Part of their Religion; and that to speak *Truth*, to keep their *Words*, to perform *Oaths* and *Promises*, to act sincerely in all their *Dealings*, was as sacred and as dear to them as their Lives and Beings. *Speech* being the great Instrument of mutual Commerce and Traffick, shall be the first Instance of their Integrity. They ever used the greatest Candour and Simplicity in expressing their Mind to one another, not pretending what was *false*, nor concealing what was *true*; *yea, yea*, and *nay, nay*, was the usual Measure of their Transactions: A *Lye* they abhorred as *bad* in all, as *monstrous* in a *Christian*, as directly opposite to that *Truth*, to which they had consigned and delivered up themselves in Baptism, and therefore would not tell one, tho' it were to save their Lives. When the Heathens charged them with Folly and Madness that they would so resolutely suffer, when a Parcel of fair Words might make way for them to escape; telling them, 'Twas but doing or saying as they were bid, and that they might secure their Consciences by *mental* Reservations: *Tertullian* lets them know, that they rejected the Motion with the highest Scorn, as the plain Artifice and Invention of the *Devil*. When we are most severely examined (says *Justin Martyr*) *Apol. 1. p. 43.* we never *deny* ourselves; counting it *impious* in any thing to dissemble or deny the Truth, as we know the contrary is acceptable unto God: And though we could (as they told the *Emperors*) when questioned *Ib. Apol. 2. p. 57.* *evade* or *deny* it, yet we scorn to live upon any Terms, by which we must be forced to maintain our Lives by *Lies* and *Falshood*.

This honest and ingenuous Simplicity they practised to that Exactness and Accuracy, that for a *Christian*

Part III. *stian* to be put to his *Oath*, was accounted a Disparagement to his *Fidelity* and *Truth*. So *Clement* *Stromat.* *Alexandrinus* tells us: He that approves himself and is tried (*says he*) in this [*i. e.* the *Christian*] Way of *Piety* and *Religion*, is far from being forward either to *lye* or *swear*: For an *Oath* is a determinative *Affertion*, with a calling *God* to witness for the *Truth* of it. But how shall any one that is faithful, so far render himself *unfaithful*, or unworthy of *Belief*, as to need an *Oath*, and not rather make the *Course* of his *Life* a *Testimony* to him as firm and positive as an *Oath*, and demonstrate the *Truth* of his *Affertions* by the constant and immutable *Tenour* of his *Words* and *Actions*? It's enough therefore (as he presently after adds) for every good *Man*, either by way of *Affirmation* or *Denial* to give this Assurance, ἀληθῶς λέγω, *I speak truly*, to satisfy any that apprehend not the *Certainty* of what he says: For towards those that are without, he ought to have such a *Conversation* as is most worthy of *Belief*, so as no *Oath* should be required of him; and towards himself and those of his *Party*, to preserve such an even and equitable *Temper* of *Mind*, as is a *Piece* of voluntary *Justice*. This and much more he discourses to the same Purpose.

For this and some other Reasons, but especially from some mistaken Places of *Scripture*, where 'tis said, *Swear not at all*; some of the antient *Fathers* held all taking of an *Oath* *unlawful*: But besides that those few that did, were not herein *constant* to themselves, the far greatest Part were of another *Mind*, and understood the *Prohibition* either of swearing by *Creatures* (which was the Case of the *Jews*, and which our *Saviour* and *St. James* principally aim at) or of *light*, *rash*, and false *Swearing*. For otherwise, that the *Primitive Christians* did not think it

it unlawful to take an Oath in serious and necessary Cases, is most evident. *Athanasius*, speaking of his *Accusers*, whom he desired might be put to their Oath, tells us, That the best way to attest the Truth of what is spoken, is to call God to witness; that this (*says he*) is the Form of Swearing, which *we Christians* are wont to use. And indeed though we had no other Argument, it would be plain enough from hence, that they served in the Wars, and frequently bore Arms even under the Heathen Emperors; which 'tis evident they could not do, without first taking a Military Oath to be true to their General, and to die rather than desert their Station. And this *Vegetius* an *Heathen Author*, though living in the Time of the younger *Valentinian*, expressly reports of them, That when their Names were entered upon the *Muster-Roll*, they were wont to take an Oath, the particular Form whereof he there sets down, *viz.* That they swore by God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the Majesty of the Emperor; which, next to God, is to be loved and honoured by Mankind. This agrees very well with that Account which *Tertullian* had long before given of the *Christians*, when being accused by their Enemies of High-Treason, amongst other Reasons, because they refused to swear by their Emperors; he answers, That though they would not swear by the Emperor's *Genius*, (their *Genii*, or Tutelar Deities being nothing else but *Devils*) yet they did swear by the Emperor's *Safety*, a Thing more august and venerable than all the *Genii* in the World: In the Emperor's they own God's Institution and Authority, and would therefore have that to be safe which he had appointed, and accordingly accounted it the Matter of a lawful Oath; but for the *Demons* or *Genii* (*says he*) we use *adjurare*, to adjure them, so as to cast them out of Men; *non dejurare*, not to Swear by them, and thereby confer the Honour

Chap. 1.

*Apolog. ad Constantium Imper. Tom. 1. p. 528.*

*Dere militar. lib. 1. c. 5. p. 33.*

*Apol. c. 23. p. 28.*

Part III. nour of *Divinity* upon them. For the same Reason they denied to swear by the *Fortune* of the *Emperor*, because amongst the Heathens she was accounted a *Deity*, and honoured with Religious Worship.

Thus we see, that they refused not to ensure and ratify their Faith by the Formality of an Oath, to which that they might add the greater Reverence and Solemnity, they were wont many Times to take it at the receiving of the *Holy Sacrament*, as we find in the Case of *Novatus* and his Followers; for taking their Hands wherein they held the Sacramental Elements within his own, he caused them to swear by the *Body* and *Blood* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, that they would not desert him. But because this may be thought to have been only the Artifice of an *Heretick*, to bind his Followers the faster to his Party; *St. Chrysostom* (though himself no good Friend to taking Oaths) sufficiently assures us, 'twas customary to come into the Church, and to swear upon the *Communion-Table*, taking the Book of the *Holy Gospels* into their Hands. The same appears from the Case proposed to *Gregory Nazianzen*, by *Theodoret Bishop of Tyana*, and by the Instance of *Evagrius, Nazianzen's Arch-Deacon* at *Constantinople*, who had it revealed to him in a Vision, That some Persons lay in wait for him, and that therefore he must presently be gone; the Person that revealed it, assuring him he would knock off those Fetters that were upon him, if he would swear to him upon the *Holy Gospels*, that he would immediately depart; which was accordingly done. And as their Caution was great in taking of an Oath, so their Care was no less in making of it good; they knew that in this solemn Transaction they did in a more peculiar manner call God as a Witness of what they said, and a Revenger in Case of Falshood and the Violation of it: This made them greatly afraid of *Perjury*, which they

*Enseb. H. Eccl. lib. c. 43. p. 245.*

*Ad Pop. Antioch.*

*Hom. 15. Tom. 1. p. 178, 179.*

*Epist. 219 p. 908. Sozom. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 30. p. 686. vid. Annot. Hen. Vales. p. 145. col. 2.*

they looked upon as a Sin of a deeper and more than ordinary Dye: And one Reason, I conceive, why some of the Antients were against all Swearing (and \* *Clemens Alexandrinus* and † *Lactantius* confirm me in it) was, because they would not come so much as within the Danger or Possibility of Perjury. Such as have sworn rashly, or in unlawful Cases, || *St. Basil* earnestly exhorts to Repentance, and that they would not persist in an obstinate Defence of their Impiety; and for such as were guilty of Perjury, he appointed that they should be suspended and banished from the Communion for *Eleven Years* together.

Chap. 1.  
 \* ὁ μὲν δὲ ἴμ-  
 μνδὲ ὁ μ-  
 νύς, πολλὰ  
 γε δὲ ἐ-  
 πορήσει.  
 Loc. supra  
 laudat.  
 † Hic non  
 pejerabit,  
 ne deum  
 ludibrio  
 habeat: sed

*ne jurabit quidem: Ne quando vel necessitate, vel consuetudine in perjuriu[m] cadat.* Lactant. Epitom. cap. 6. p. 744.

|| *Epist. Canon. ad Amphil. can. 29. p. 31. tom. 3. Can. 64. p. 36.*

The like Severity, though not altogether so great, they used in case of *Bearing false Witness*. If any Christian falsely accused another before the Church, (for in those Days they allowed no Appeals to Heathen Tribunals) he was to be punished, *i. e.* suspended the Communion, the only Punishment the Church in those Days could inflict, according to the Nature of the Crime which he charged upon the other; according to the Decree of the *Illiberine Council*, if he made good his Charge: Yet if he had concealed it a considerable Time before he revealed it, he was to be suspended for *two Years*; the Reason probably being, because by this Delay the Criminal Person had Opportunity to infect others, by propagating his vicious Example to them. But that they might not set the Door open, and give Encouragement to busy and malicious Tempers, they ordained, That though the Person should be really guilty of the Crimes he was charged with, yet if the Accuser did not sufficiently prove it in *Conventu Clericorum*, before the *Ecclesiastical Senate*, he should be punished

Conc. Illi-  
 ber. Can.  
 74. p. 79.  
 ubi vid. not.  
 Albasp.

B b with

Part. III. with a *five Years* Suspension. And because then they had an Honour and Veneration for *Ministers* above all other Men, they ordained, That whosoever should

*Ibid. Can. 75. p. 81.* falsely accuse a *Clergy-man, Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon* with any Crime, which he could not make good, should not be received into Communion, even at the *Hour of Death*. The Truth is, they were exceeding tender of any Man's Reputation, readier to add to it than to detract from it, or to fasten any undue Imputation upon him. St. *Basil* commending *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, has this of him amongst the rest: Out of Regard (*says he*) to the Threatning of our Lord, he durst never call his *Brother, Fool*; no Anger, Wrath, or Bitterness proceeded out of his Mouth; Slandering he hated as a Quality greatly opposite to a State of Salvation; *Pride and Envy* were Strangers to that innocent and guiltless Soul, he never approached the *Altar till first reconciled to his Brother*: All false and artificial Speeches, and such as are cunningly contrived for the Slander and Detraction of others, he greatly abominated; well knowing, that every Lye is the *Spawn and Issue of the Devil*, and that God has threatned to *destroy all those that speak Lyes*. And so indeed he oftentimes does even in this

*Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 9. p. 210.* World, not respiting such Persons to the *Tribunals* of the other World; whereof we meet with this memorable Example. *Narcissus* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, a Man of admirable Piety and Holiness of Life, shined with so glorious a Lustre in the Place where he lived, that the Brightness of his Conversation offended the fore Eyes of other Men: Three more especially, not able to bear the eminent Strictness of his Life, and being themselves guilty of very great Enormities, thought to *escape themselves by accusing him*. Whereupon they laid a very heinous Crime to his Charge, and to beget the greater Credit with them that heard it, solemnly ratified it with their

their Oaths: The first, imprecating upon himself that he might be burnt, if it were not true: The second, that his Body might be consumed by some noisome and pestilent Disease: The third, that he might lose his Sight. The good Man thought, notwithstanding all this, he stood right in the Thoughts of all true Christians, who knew his Life to be too clear and unblameable, to be sullied with the Breath of such vile Fellows; yet not being able to bear it, he withdrew himself to an Hermit's Life in the Wilderness. But the restless Eye of the Divine Vengeance quickly overtook these perjured Wretches, and caught them in their own Snares; the first, by a little Spark that casually, and whereof no Account could be given, happened in his House, was in the Night himself, Family, and House universally burnt to Ashes; the second was from Head to Foot over-run and consumed by such a Disease as he had wished upon himself; the third, that saw all this, and feared the righteous and inevitable Vengeance of God upon himself, confessed the whole Plot and Combination, and testified his Repentance with so deep a Sorrow, that with the Multitude of his Tears he lost his Sight.

We have seen how exact the Christians were about their Words, that they should be harmless and inoffensive, and the true Conveyances of their Minds; nor were they less careful about the Conduct of their Actions, whether of distributive or commutative Justice. For Matters of distributive Justice, so far as it concerns a fair Hearing and impartial Determining of Tryals and Causes, rewarding the Good, and punishing the Bad, they had little Opportunity to shew themselves; Christians in the first Ages being seldom invested with any External Authority and Power, till the Empire submitted to Christianity, and then we find them executing their Places with the most unbiassed Uprightness and Integrity. St. Basil speaking



Part III. of an excellent Person (though he names him not) who was sent to be Governour of *Neocæsarea*, where he was Bishop, but presently undermined and outed by the Accusation of some that could not bear his free and impartial Carriage, and his Temper so extremely opposite to Flattery, says this of him; That he was a most rigid *Observer* of Justice, courteous and easy of Access to them that were *oppressed*; but his Presence severe and terrible to the *Injurious* and Transgressors of the Law: He was the same to *Rich* and *Poor*, equally at leisure for both: Of all Men, he exceedingly abhorred taking Bribes, never favouring any beyond the Equity of his Cause; and which was above all, he was one that designed to reduce *Christianity* to its ancient Dignity and Perfection. The

*In Laud. Patr. Orat.* same *Nazianzen* reports of his own *Father*, and reckons it one of the excellent Properties for which he accounted him a *Christian*, even before he embraced *Christianity*, that he so exactly observed Justice himself, and so impartially administered it to others, that though he went through very great Offices in the State, yet he made not one Farthing's Addition to his own Revenue, though he saw some before his Eyes, who with *Briareus's* Hands laid hold upon the publick Treasures, and therewith filled their own Coffers.

In Matters of *commutative* Justice, and ordinary Transactions between Man and Man, they observed the Rule, *To deal with others as they would be dealt with themselves*: They took no Advantage of any Man's *Ignorance* or *Unskilfulness*, so as to grasp that Commodity at a far *Under-rate*, of which they knew the *Seller* did not understand the true Price and Value; and that if he did, he would not part with it at such a Price. To this Purpose \**St. Augustine* tells us, he knew a Man (probably he means himself, though

\* *De Trin. lib. 13. c. 3. tom. 3. col. 407.*

out of Modesty he conceals it) who having a *Book of- Chap. 1!*  
 fered him to be sold by one that understood not the *Price*  
*Price* of it, at a very under Rate, took the Book,  
 but gave him the *full Price* according to its just Rate  
 and Value, which was a great deal more than the  
 Seller asked for it. And the Truth is, in such Cases  
 Advantage cannot honestly be taken of Men's Weak-  
 ness or Mistake; because no Man, if he understood  
 the true Worth and Value of his Commodity, can be  
 supposed willing to part with it at a too under Rate.  
 And if they were thus far from craftily *over-reaching*,  
 much more from secretly or openly *invading* of what  
 was another's Right and Property; no Cheating or  
 Couzenage, no Acts of Dishonesty and Deceit were al-  
 lowed, or practised amongst them; or if any such  
 were discovered, they were immediately protested  
 against by the whole Society of Christians. *Cornelius*  
*Bishop of Rome*, giving *Cyprian* an Account of *Novatus* *Epist. 48.*  
 the Heretick and his Companions, tells him of one *p. 62. vid.*  
*Nicostratus*, that not only cheated his *Lady and Patro- Resp. Cy-*  
*ness*, whose Estate and Revenues he managed, but car- *prian. Ep.*  
 ried away a great Part of the Treasures of the Church *sequent.*  
 (whereof he was *chief Deacon*) the Portion and  
 Maintenance of poor Widows and Orphans; (a Crime  
 says he, reserved for perpetual Punishment, *i. e.* for  
 the Judgement of God in the other World, being too  
 great for any in this) whereupon he was forced to fly  
 from *Rome* into *Africk*, to avoid the Shame and Pro-  
 secution of his Rapine and Sacrilege: Though when  
 he came there, they did not only *refuse* to admit  
 him into Communion, but openly *exposed* the Wic-  
 kedness of him and his Confederates to the Abhorren-  
 cy of all Men. By which may appear the Falsity of  
 that Charge of *Sacrilege* which the *Gentiles* brought  
 against the *Christians*: To which, though certainly it  
 primarily respected their declared Enmity against  
 the *idolatrous Temples* and Worship of the *Heathens*,

Part III. yet *Tertullian* answers, You look upon us (says he) as *sacrilegious* Persons, and yet never found any of *Ad Scap.* us guilty of *Wrong* or *Injury*, of any *Rapine* and *Violence*, much less of *Sacrilege* and *Impiety*. No, they are your *own* Party, that I wear by and worship your Gods, and yet rob their Temples; that are no *Christians*, and yet are found to be *sacrilegious*. And afterwards he adds this further *Vindication* of them :

1b. c. 4.  
7. 1.

As for us (says he) we deny not any *Pledge* that's left with us, we *adulterate* no Man's Marriage-Bed, we piously *educate* and train up Orphans, and relieve the *Necessities* of the *Indigent*, and *render no Man Evil for Evil*. If there be any that *dissemble* our Religion, let them look to it, we *disown* them for being of our Party : Why should we be worse thought of for others Faults ? Or why should a Christian answer for any Thing but what concerns his own Religion, which no Man in so long a time has proved to be cruel or incestuous ? Nay, when we are burnt and most severely dealt with, 'tis for the greatest *Innocency*, *Honesty*, *Justice*, *Modesty* ; for our *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, and our *Piety* to the Living God. And that these were not a Parcel of good Words which the *Christians* spoke in their own behalf, will appear, if we consider the *Testimony* which *Pliny* (who was far from being partial to them) gives of them : For being commanded by the Emperor *Trajan* to give him an Account of the *Christians*, he tells him, That after the strictest Examination which he could make even of those that had renounced *Christianity*, he

*Lib. 10. c. p.* found this to be the greatest Fault that they were guilty  
97. p. 290. of, that they used harmlessly to meet to worship Christ, and at those Meetings to bind themselves by a *Sacrament* [or an Oath] that they would not do any *Wickedness*, that they might be firmer obliged not to commit *Theft*, *Robberies*, *Adulteries*; not to falsify their Words, or to deny any Thing wherewith they were intrusted, when it was required of them.

Gregory

Gregory Bishop of *Neocæsarea*, in a *Canonical* Chap. 1. Epistle which he wrote to rectify several Disorders and Irregularities which had happened amongst the *Christians* of those Parts, by reason of the Inroads and Devastations which the *Goths* and other *barbarous* Nations had made amongst them; does amongst other Things especially take notice, how *uncomely* in it self, how *unsuitable* to *Christians* it is to covet, and to grasp what is *another Man's*; how inhuman to spoil the oppressed, and to enrich our selves by the Blood and Ruines of our miserable Brethren. And whereas some might be apt to plead, They did not steal, but only take up what they found; he tells them this Excuse would not serve the Turn; that whatever they had found of their *Neighbours*, nay, though it were their *Enemies*, they were bound to restore it, much more to their *Brethren*, who were Fellow-Sufferers with them in the same Condition. Others thought it Warrant enough to keep what they found, though belonging to others, having been such *deep Losers themselves*. But this (he tells them) is to justify one Wickedness with another; and because the *Goths* had been *Enemies* to them, they would become *Goths* and *Barbarians* unto others. Nor did they only keep themselves from doing *Injuries* to others; they were ready to do them all the *Right*, all the *Kindness* that lay in their Power, especially to vindicate the Poor and Helpless from the Power and Violence of those that were too mighty for them. Therefore when the Fathers of the *Synod of Sardis* took notice, that some Bishops used to go to Court upon By Errands, and private Designs of their own, they ordained, That no Bishop should go to Court, unless either immediately summoned by the *Emperor's* Letters, or that their Assistance was required to help the *oppressed*, to right *Widows* and *Orphans*, and to rescue them from the unjust Grasps of potent

Can. 2, 3, 4,  
5. p. 119,  
120.

Can. 7, 8.

Part III. and merciless Oppressors; and that in these Cases they should be ready (either by *themselves*, or some deputed by them) to present their Petitions, to plead their Cause, and to lend them all the Assistance they were able to afford.

I should not in this Place have taken any notice how far the ancient Christians were from *Murder*, and offering Violence to any Man's *Life*, but that it was a common *Charge* brought against them by the *Gentiles*, That they used to *kill* and *devour* an Infant at their *Christian Meetings*, especially when any was first to be initiated into their Assemblies. The

*M. Fel.* Story is thus dressed up by the acute Heathen in *M.*  
*p. 8. vid.* *Felix*: An Infant being covered all over with *Meal*,  
*Tert. Ap.* (the better to deceive the unwary) is set before him  
*c. 9. p. 9.* that is to be initiated and taken in: He, ignorant of what it really is, is appointed to cut it up, which he effectually does by many secret and mortal Wounds; whereupon they greedily lick up the Blood, and ravenously tear off and snatch away the several Parts of it. And with this Sacrifice their Confederacy and Combination is made, and by the Conscience of so great a Villany they are mutually obliged to Silence: Such Sacred Rites as these being more horrid and barbarous than the highest Sacrileges in the World. To this monstrous and horrid Charge, the *Christians* returned these Answers;

*Tert. Ap.* That they appealed to the common Faith of Man-  
*c. 9. p. 8.* kind, whether they could really believe them to be  
*M. Fel.* guilty of these Things, so abhorrent to all the Prin-  
*p. 25.* ciples of Human Nature, and to the Christians known Principles and Practices in all other Things; that they should measure the *Christians* by themselves, and if they themselves could not be guilty of such Things, they should not suspect it by the *Christians*, who were endued with the same Principles of Humanity with other Men: That they were so far from being Friends to *Murder* or *Man-slaughter*, that

*Athenag.*  
*leg. pro*  
*Christian.*  
*p. 38. B.*

*M. Fel. b.* far from being Friends to *Murder* or *Man-slaughter*, that

that they held it unlawful to be present at the *Gla-Chap 1.*  
*diatory Sports*, were Mens Lives were so wontonly sa-  
 crificed to the Pleasure and Curiosity of the People :  
 That they accounted it Murder for any Woman, by *Athenag.*  
 evil Arts, to procure *Abortion*, to stifle the *Embryo*, *ib. M. Fel.*  
 to kill a Child in a manner before it be alive ; it be- *ib. Tert. ib.*  
 ing much at one to *binder* Life, as to *take it away*, *p. 5.*  
 to kill a Man, or destroy what *would be* one, seeing  
 he truly destroys the *Fruit* that kills it in the *Seed* :  
 That it was not likely they should delight in *Man's* *M. Fel. p.*  
*Blood*, who never tasted any Blood at all, *abstain-* *26. Tert.*  
*ing from Things strangled, and from Blood.* And that *ib. p. 10.*  
 the very *Heathens* themselves confessed this, when  
 amongst the several *Arts* they used to discover whe-  
 ther Men were *Christians*, they used to offer them  
*Bladders* full of *Blood*, knowing that they held it  
 unlawful to *taste* any ; and therefore it was migh-  
 tily improbable they should thirst after *human* Blood,  
 who abhorred even the *Blood of Beasts*. That they *Athenag.*  
 heartily believed the *Resurrection* of the Dead ; and *ibid.*  
 therefore would not make themselves the *Sepulchres*  
 of those Bodies which were to *rise* again, and feed  
 upon them, as they did upon other Bodies which  
 were to have no *Resurrection* : That the Truth was,  
 if this Charge was true of any, it was true only of  
 the *Gentiles* themselves, amongst whom these Things  
 were daily *allowed* and *practised* ; that *Saturn* (one of  
 their chief *Deities*) did not only expose, but *eat* his  
 own Children ; to him, *Infants* in *Africk* were offer-  
 ed in *Sacrifice* by their own Parents ; a Custom that  
 openly continued till the *Proconsulship* of *Tiberius*,  
 which though he abolished, yet it continued still in  
 Corners in *Tertullian's* Days. To his Son *Jupiter* *Ibid.*  
 they offered *human* Sacrifices, even in *Rome* it self,  
 and that even to the Time of *M. Felix*, as he him- *De Abst. 1.*  
 self testifies ; which is no more than what *Porphyrus* *2. sect 56.*  
 himself (after he had reckoned up in how many *p. 95.*

Parts

Part III. Parts of the World *human* Sacrifices were in use) confesses was done at *Rome* in the Feast of *Jupiter Latialis* even in his Time. Many other Instances of such barbarous Practices are there produced by those two *Apologists*, which they urge with great Advantage upon their Adversaries, whom they challenged to make any such Thing good against them.

And no sooner did Discipline begin to be regularly settled, but their Principles herein were every where confirmed by the *Canons* of the Church, either private or publick. The Woman that industriously made her self *miscarry*, was adjudged to be guilty of *Murder*, and condemned to the same Punishment, a *ten Years Penance*; which was adjudged to be the Case of any that brought forth upon the Way, and exposed her Infant. By the Law of the State, made by the Emperor *Valentinian*, whosoever, whether Man or Woman, killed an Infant, was to be subject to the same capital Punishment as if he had killed an *adult* Person; which may very well be understood even of *Infants* killed in the *Womb*, the Punishment whereof was formerly for the most Part no more than Banishment. He that was guilty of wilful Murder, was, by *St. Basil's* Rule, to undergo a *twenty Years Penance* before he was admitted to the Sacrament; though by several Passages in *Tertullian*, it appears that *Homicides* in his Time were more severely treated by the Church; for they were not only bound to a perpetual Penance, but were not absolved at Death. But this Severity shortly after began to relax, and such Persons, though obliged to Acts of Repentance all their Life, yet at Death were absolved and admitted to Communion, as is expressly provided by the Decree of the *Ancyran Council*.

Thus clear did the *Christians* all along stand from any just Suspicion of that gross Piece of *Inhumanity* which

*Basil. ep.*

*Can. Con.*

2. p. 22.

*Ib. Can. 33.*

p. 32.

*Cod. Theod.*

l. 9. tit. 14.

l. 1.

*Can. 56.*

p. 36.

*Can. 20.*

which their Enemies so confidently charged upon them. As for the *Rise* and *Occasion* of this malicious Charge, it was doubtless of the same Growth with that of their *incestuous Mixtures* (spoken of before) both springing from the abominable Practice of some *filthy Hereticks*, who sheltered themselves under the *Name of Christians*; *Epiphanius* particularly reporting of the *Gnosticks* what the Heathens generally charged upon Christians; for he tells us of them, That at their Meetings they were wont to take an *Infant* begotten in their *promiscuous Mixtures*, and beating it in a *Mortar*, to season it with *Honey* and *Pepper*, and some other *Spices* and *Perfumes*, to make it *palatable*, and then, like *Swine* or *Dogs*, to devour it; and after to conclude all with *Prayer*: And this they accounted their *perfect Passover*. I am not ignorant that a learned Man will by no Means believe, that any of the ancient *Hereticks* did ever arrive to so much *Barbarousness* and *Inhumanity*, as to be guilty of such Things, and conceives them to have been *feigned* merely out of *Hatred* to those pestilent *Hereticks*; but there is little Reason to suspect the Truth of it, *Epiphanius* assuring us, That he had the Account that he gives, from the Mouths of the *Gnosticks* themselves; and that many of the *Women* who were deceived into those abominable Errors, did not only discover these Things to him, but that he himself in his younger Years, while he was in *Egypt*, had been assaulted by them, and by all the Arts of *Flattery* and *Persuasion*, of *Wontonnels* and *Immodesty*, had been set upon to join himself to them. And certainly, it is not imaginable, that a Person so venerable for *Learning* and *Piety*, as *Epiphanius* was, should impose upon us by feigning so gross and notorious a *Falshood*. Besides, whoever reads *Irenaeus*, in whole Time these *Heresies* were most rife and predominant, and considers the Account that he gives

Chap. 1.  
*Her. 36. p. 43. vid. de Phryg. seu Quintilian. Her. 48. p. 181. de Montanist. Zon. & Balsam. in Can. 7. Corc. Const. Desid. Herald. Not. ad M. Fal. p. 76. Ibid. p. 48.*



Part III. gives of them, which he mainly received from the Persons of their own Party, after they were returned back to the Church; will see little Reason either to think any Wickedness too great for them to boggle at, or to doubt of the Truth of what he reports concerning them.

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## C H A P. II.

### Of their admirable Love and Charity.

*The excellent Temper of the Christian Religion. The Gospel principally enjoins Kindness and Charity. The Primitive Christians eminently of this Spirit. They accounted all Brethren; but Christians more especially. Their mutual Love noted and recorded by their Enemies. Their mighty Zeal and Charity for the Souls of Men, to recover them from Vice and Errour to Truth and Vertue. This the Matter of their daily Prayer, and most serious Endeavours, even towards their greatest Enemies. Pamphilus's Charity in bestowing Bibles freely upon the Poor. Preachers maintained for converting the Gentile Phœnicians to Christianity. The famous Story of St. John's hazarding himself for the regaining a young Man debauched by bad Companions. Monica's Care and Sollicitude about St. Augustine. Some that have sold themselves for Slaves, that they might convert their Heathen or Heretical Masters. Christians not shy of communicating the Knowledge of their Religion.*

*Religion. Their Charity as it respected the* Chap. 2.  
*Necessities of the outward Life : This noted in*  
*several Instances of Charity. Their liberal*  
*providing for the Poor. The Bounty of parti-*  
*cular Persons : Divers Instances of it. The*  
*immense Charity of Epiphanius. Exemplary*  
*Vengeance upon some that abused it. The Poor*  
*accounted the Treasure and Ornaments of the*  
*Church ; represented in the Case of Laurentius*  
*the Deacon, and a Story related by Palladius.*  
*Their visiting and assisting the Sick in their*  
*own Persons ; eminently noted in the Empress*  
*Placilla, and the Lady Fabiola. The Chri-*  
*stians Care of their Brethren in a great Plague*  
*at Alexandria. Persons appointed on purpose*  
*to cure and attend the Sick. The Parabolani,*  
*who ; their Office and Number. Redemption*  
*of Captives. Great Sums contributed by Cy-*  
*prian and his People for it. Church-Plate sold*  
*to redeem Christians, nay, captived Enemies.*  
*Christians embondaging themselves to redeem*  
*others. The strange Charity of Paulinus Bi-*  
*shop of Nola, making himself a Slave to ran-*  
*som a poor Widow's Son. Their Care about the*  
*Bodies of the Dead. Decent Burial very fit*  
*and desirable. A Piece of Piety remarkable in*  
*the Christians of those Times. Their Abstaining*  
*from the common Custom of burning the Dead,*  
*as barbarous. The great Cost they laid out upon*  
*their Funerals in embalming, intombing, &c.*  
*The Copiotæ, who. What their Office and Or-*  
*ders. The Decani, or Deans in the Church of*  
Con-

**Primitive Christianity.**

Constantinople: *Their Number and Duty. Their Providing fit Places for Sepulture. Their Coemeteria, or Burying-places in the Fields. Burying in Cities and Churches, when brought in, and to whom first granted. Their Coemeteria under Ground. What Kind of Places they were. The great Number, and vast Capacities of them. A particular Account of one out of Baronius, discovered in his Time. How the Christians were enabled to all these Acts of Charity. At first all in Common: After by usual Contributions. The standing Stock or Treasury of the Church. This Charity of Christians largely attested by Julian and Lucian. Their Love and Charity universal. Doing Good to Enemies, an Excellency proper to Christians. This manifested in several remarkable Instances. Plainly acknowledged by Julian himself. The whole summed up in an elegant Discourse of Lactantius concerning Mercy and Charity.*

**T**HAT the *Christian Religion* was immediately designed to improve and perfect the Principles of human Nature, appears as from many other Instances of it, so especially from this, That it so strictly enjoins, cherishes and promotes that natural *Kindness and Compassion*, which is one of the prime and essential Inclinations of Mankind. Wherever the Gospel is cordially complied with, it begets such a sweet and gracious Temper of Mind, as makes us Humble, Affable, Courteous and Charitable, ready and disposed to every good Work, prompt



prompt to all Offices of Humanity and Kindness ; it files off the Ruggedness of Mens Natures, banishes a rude, churlish, and Pharisaical Temper, and infuses a more calm and treatable Disposition. It commands us to *live and love as Brethren, to love without Hypocrisy, to have fervent Charity amongst our selves, and to be kindly affectioned one towards another.* It lays the Sum of our Duty towards others in this, *To love our Neighbour as our selves.* This our Saviour seems to own as his proper and peculiar Law, and has ratified it with his own solemn Sanction: *A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another ; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.* And then makes this the great visible Badge of all those who are truly Christians : *By this shall all Men know that you are my Disciples, if you have Love one to another.*

And so indeed it was with those first and best Ages of Religion ; for no sooner did the Gospel fly abroad into the *World*, but the Love and Charity of Christians became notorious, even to a *Proverb* ; the Heathens taking Notice of the Christians of those Times with this particular Remark, *See how these Christians love one another !* They were then united in the most happy *Fraternity* (a Word much used by *Christians* in those Days, and objected against them by the *Heathens*) they lived as *Brethren*, and accounted themselves such, not only as being sprung from one common Parent (for in this respect that they had Nature for their common *Mother*, they acknowledge the very *Heathens* to be *Brethren*, though otherwise little deserving the Name of *Men*) but upon much higher Accounts, *viz.* that they had one and the same God for their *Father*, drank all of the same Spirit of Holiness, were brought out of the same *Womb* of Darknes and Ignorance into the same

*Tert. Ap. c. 39. p. 31.*

*Id. ib. M. Fel. p. 26.*

Part III. same Light of Truth, that they were Partakers of  
 the same Faith, and Co-heirs of the same Hope :

*De mort. Peregrin.* This *Lucian* himself confesses of them, and that it  
 was one of the great Principles that their Master  
 p. 764. instilled into them, That they should all become  
 tom. 2. *Brethren*, after once they had thrown off the Reli-  
 gion of the *Gentiles*, and had embraced the Wor-  
 ship of their great crucified Master, and given up  
 themselves to live according to his Laws. The Truth  
 is; so ready, entire, and constant was their Kindness  
 and Familiarity, that the Heathens accused them  
 for having *privy* Marks upon their Bodies, whereby  
 they fell in Love with each other at first Sight. In-  
 deed they never met but they embraced one another  
 with all the Demonstrations of a hearty and sincere  
 Affection, saluting each other with an *holy Kiss*,  
 not only in their own Houses, but at their religi-  
 ous Assemblies, as a Badge and Bond of that Chri-  
 stian Fellowship and Communion that was main-  
 tained amongst them.

*M. Fel. ib.*  
 & p. 7.

But the Love and Kindness of those *Christians* of  
 Old did not lie only in a smooth complimentary  
 Carriage, or in a Parcel of good Words, *Depart in*  
*Peace, be you warmed or filled*; but in the real Exer-  
 cises of Charity and Mercy. Now because the two  
 great Objects of *Charity* are the Good of Mens Souls,  
 and their outward and bodily Welfare and Happi-  
 ness; we shall find, that the Primitive Christians  
 were highly eminent and exemplary for both these.  
 The Soul being of a much higher and nobler Nature,  
 and consequently infinitely more precious and valu-  
 able than the Body, they were accordingly infinitely  
 careful and solicitous to save Mens Souls, *to recover*  
*them out of the Snare of the Devil*, and the Paths of  
 Ruin, by making them *Christians*, and bringing them  
 over to the *Knowledge of the Truth*; for this they pray-  
 ed daily and earnestly. *We Christians* (says *Cyprian*

to

to the *Proconsul*) serve the one and true God that made Heaven and Earth, and pray to him Night and Day, not only for our selves, but for all Men, and for the Safety of the Emperors themselves. From this, no Injuries nor Unkindnesses could discourage them. *Justin Martyr* tells the *Jews*, That they prayed for them, and all others that were unjustly their Enemies, that repenting of their Wickednesses, and ceasing to blaspheme *Christ Jesus*, who by the Greatness of his Works, the Uncontrolableness of the Miracles performed in his Name, the Excellency of his Doctrines, and the Clearness of the Prophecies fulfilled in him, appeared to be altogether innocent and unblameable; and that rather believing in him, they might, together with *Christians*, be saved by him at his second glorious Coming, and not be condemned by him to everlasting Flames. We pray for you (says he) that *Christ* would have Mercy upon you; for he hath taught us to pray for our Enemies, to love them, and be merciful to them. And afterwards, when he had reckoned up all those wicked and malicious Artifices which the *Jews* had used both against *Christ* and *Christians*; yet notwithstanding all this (says he) we are so far from hating either you, or those who at your Suggestion believe these Things of us, that we pray that all of you may repent, and obtain Mercy from God, the gracious and compassionate Parent of the World. The *Gnosticks* were the greatest Scandal that ever was to *Christianity*, and the Occasion of many of those Persecutions, and most of those horrible Calumnies which the Heathens brought upon the *Christians*, and yet see how *Irenaeus* treats them! We pray for them (says he) and beg of them not to continue in the Pit which they have digged to themselves, but to depart from their sottish and idle Vanities, to turn to the Church of God, that *Christ* may be

Chap. 2.  
Night and  
Passio Cyp.  
vit. ejus  
annex. p.  
17.  
Dial. cum  
Trypt. p.  
254.  
Ib. p. 243.  
Ib. p. 3331  
Ado. Her.  
l. 3. c. 46.  
p. 314.  
formed

Part III. *formed in them*, and that they may know the only true God, the Creator of the World. This we beg of them, loving them to better Purpose than they think they love themselves: For our Love is true and wholesome (if they will receive it) like a sharp Plaister indeed, but it will eat away the proud Flesh, take down the Swelling and Vanity of their Minds; for which Cause we will not cease by all Means to apply it to them. The same *Origen* tells *Celsus*, That though both *Jews* and *Gentiles* turned their backs upon the Doctrine of *Christ*, and charged them for being *Impostors* and *Deceivers*; yet they would not give over thus *honestly* to deceive Men, to make them of loose Persons to become sober and temperate, or to bring them on towards it; of dishonest, to make them righteous; of unwise, to make them prudent, at least to bring them into the Way to these things; of fearful and timorous, to render them hearty and couragious, especially as oft as they are to contend for their Religion and Piety towards God. How earnestly and passionately does *Cyprian* beg of the Proconsul *Demetrian* and the *Gentiles* to provide for their Happiness and Safety, to accept of the Counsels and Assistance which the *Christians* offered, who loved them not the worse for all the Torments and Sufferings they laid upon them; that they returned Kindness for Hatred, and by the Miseries they endured, shewed to them the Way to Heaven; that now was the time to make their Peace with God, and to secure Salvation; that there was no Place for *Repentance* on the other side the Grave, the *Stations* of the other World being fixed and unchangeable; that therefore they should believe and live so, that they might eternally rejoice with them, whom they did now so afflict and persecute.

In pursuance of this Design, they spared neither Pains nor Cost, that they might instruct Men in the Way

Lib. 2. p.  
110.

Ad Demet.  
p. 204.

Way to Heaven. It is said of *Pamphilus the Martyr*, Chap. 21 that amongst other Instances of his Charity, he used freely and readily to bestow *Bibles* upon all that were willing to read; for which Purpose he had always great Numbers of those Holy Volumes by him; that as Occasion served he might distribute and bestow them: By these Means mercifully furnishing those with these Divine Treasures, whose Purles could not otherwise reach to the Price of the Scriptures, far dearer in those Days than they are since *Printing* came into the World. We find *St. Chrysostom* so zealous for converting the *Gentiles* to *Christianity*, that for this very End he maintained many *Presbyters* and *Monks* in *Phoenicia*, partly at his own Charge, and partly by the Assistance of pious and well-disposed Persons, whose only Work it was to *catechise* and instruct the *Heathens* in the Principles of the *Christian Faith*; and that the Business might succeed more effectually, he procured a Law from the Emperor *Arcadius* (yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*) directed to *Eutychian*, *Prefect of the East*, That the *Pagan Temples* should be orderly taken down, that so they being destroyed, the whole Matter of the *Gentile Superstition* might be abolished. Upon the executing of which Law great Mutinies were raised by the Country-People, many of the *Monks* wounded, and some slain, and the rest wholly disheartned to proceed in the Business (these doubtless being those very *Monks* against whom *Libanius* so severely declaims, for so mercilessly destroying the *Pagan Temples*.) Whereupon *Chrysostom* (who was then in Banishment) writes to them to bear up with a *Christian and Invincible Patience*, encourages them resolutely to go on in so good a Work; tells them, That God would not be wanting to stand by them, and to reward them in this and the other Life; and promises them (though his *Incomes* at this time were very small) that their

Hier. adv.  
Ruffin. tom.  
2. p. 199.  
& Euseb.

Theod. Hist.  
Ecc. 1.5. c.  
29. p. 299.

Lib. 16. tit.  
10. de Pag.  
Sacrif. &  
Temp. l. 17.

Orat. de  
Temp. p. 10  
Ep. 123.  
tom. 4. p.  
756.



**Part. III.** former Pensions should be paid them, and all Things necessary provided for them. And indeed with how much Care and Sollicitude the good Man's Mind was filled, about this Business, he sufficiently intimates in a Letter written to another Person, whom he had employed about this Affair. Nor did they in those Times regard *Ease* or *Safety* any more than they did *Cost* and *Charges* in this Matter. exposing themselves to any Dangers, that they might do Good to the Souls of Men.

*Ad. Ruffin.*  
*Presbyt. ep.*  
126. p. 763.

*Euf. Hist.*  
*Eccl. l. 3.*  
c. 23. p. 92.

I might easily shew, That this Consideration had a great Influence upon the Sufferings of the Primitive Martyrs, willingly running any Hazards, cheerfully enduring any Miseries, that they might gain others to the Faith, and prevent their eternal Ruin. But that famous Story of St. *John* the Apostle shall serve instead of many, the *Sum* of which is this: Coming to a Place near *Ephesus*, in his Visitation of the Churches, he espied a *Youth* of a comely Shape and pregnant Parts, and taking hold of him, delivered him to the *Bishop* of the Place, with this Charge, (which he repeated once and again) *I commend this Person to thee, to be looked to with all Care and Diligence, and that in the Presence of Christ and the Church.* The *Bishop* undertook the Charge, received the young Man into his House, instructed him, and at last baptized him. Which being done, he thought he might remit a little of the Strictness of his Care; but the young Man making an ill Use of his Liberty, fell into bad Company, by whose Arts and Snares he was seduced into Ways of Riot and Wickedness; till despairing of all Hope of Pardon from God, he let loose the Reins to all manner of Exorbitancy; and agreeing with his Confederates, they combined themselves into a Society of Highway-men, and made him their *Captain*, who quickly became as far beyond the rest in Fierceness and Cruelty, as he was in Power and Authority.

thority. St. John upon Occasion returning some Chap. 2.  
 while after to the same Place, after he had dispatched  
 his other Business, required from the Bishop the Pledge  
 he had left with him; who wondring, and not know-  
 ing what he meant; *I mean (said St. John) the Young  
 Man, it is the Soul of my Brother that I require.* The  
 old Man, with a dejected Look, and Tears in his Eyes,  
 answered, *He is dead:* And being demanded by what  
 Kind of Death? answered, *He is dead to God;* for,  
 alas! he is become a *Villain*, and instead of the Church,  
 is fled with his Companions to the Mountains to be  
 a Thief and a Robber. The Apostle rentng his  
 Clothes, and bewailing that he had so ill betruſted  
 his Brother's Soul, immediately called for a Horse  
 and a Guide, and made Haſte to the Mountains;  
 where being taken by thoſe that ſtood *Sentinel*, he  
 begged to be brought before their *Captain*, who  
 ſtood ready armed ſome way off; but as ſoon as he  
 perceived it was St. John that was coming towards  
 him, he began to be aſhamed, and to run as faſt as  
 he could. The Apoſtle, not regarding his own Age  
 and Weakneſs, followed after with all his Might;  
 and when his Legs could not overtake him, he ſent  
 theſe paſſionate Exclamations after him; *Why, O my  
 Son, doſt thou fly from thy aged and unarmed Father?  
 Take Pity of me, and fear not, there is yet Hope of Salva-  
 tion for thee. I will undertake with Chriſt for thee;  
 if need be, I will freely undergo Death for thee, as  
 our Lord did for us, and lay down my own Life to ran-  
 ſom thine; only ſtay and believe me, for I am ſent by  
 Chriſt.* With that he ſtaid, and with a dejected  
 Look, throwing away his Arms, he trembled, and  
 diſſolved into Tears; he embraced the aged A-  
 poſtle with all poſſible Expreſſions of Sorrow and  
 Lamentation, as if again *baptized* with his own  
 Tears. St. John aſſured him, he had obtained his  
 Pardon of *Chriſt*, and having faſted and prayed with  
 him

Part III. him and for him, and with all the Arts of Con-  
 solation refreshed his shattered and disconsolate  
 Mind, brought him into, and restored him to the  
 Church.

This Story, though somewhat long, I was the  
 willinger to produce, both because so remarkable  
 in it self, and so great a Testimony of that mighty  
*Tenderness* and *Compassion* which they had for the  
 Souls of Men; for whose sake they thought they  
 could never do, never venture far enough. St. *Augu-*  
*stine* tells us, what infinite Pains his Mother *Monica*  
 took about the Conversion of her Husband *Patricius*;  
 how unweariedly she sought to endear her self to  
 him, by all the Arts of a meek, prudent, and sober  
 Carriage; how submissively she complied with his  
 rigorous and untoward Humours, how diligently she  
 watched the aptest Times of Insinuation, never leav-  
 ing, till at last she gained him over to the Faith.  
 Nor was her Care and Sollicitude less for her Son *Au-*  
*gustine*, who being hurried away with the Lewdness  
 of Youth, and intangled with the Impieties of  
 the *Manichean* Heresy, was the hourly Subject of her  
 Prayers and Tears. She plied him with daily Coun-  
 sels and Intreaties, implored the Help and Assistance  
 of good Men, and importuned Heaven for the Success  
 of all; not being able to gain any Quiet to her Mind,  
 till St. *Ambrose* (with whom she had often advised a-  
 bout it) sent her away with this Assurance, *That it*  
*was not possible that a Child of so many Tears should perish.*  
 No sooner was his Conversion wrought, but her Spi-  
 rit was at ease, and she now desired no more. Him-  
 self tells us, *That discoursing with her alone some*  
*few Days before her Death, concerning the State of*  
*the Blessed, and the Joys of Heaven, she at last broke*  
*off with this Farewel: For my Part, Son, I have now*  
*no further Hopes or Pleasures in this World; there*  
*was but one Thing for which I desired to live, that I*  
*might*

Confess. 1.  
 9. c. 9. p.  
 155. tom.  
 1.

Ib. c. 10.

might see thee a Catholick Christian before I died; this my good God has abundantly blessed me with, having let me see thee despising the Felicities of this Life, and entred into his Family and Service; so that what do I make any longer here? Nay, so great a Zeal had they for the Good of Souls in those Days, That many did not stick to engage themselves in temporal Slavery, for no other End but to deliver others from spiritual Bondage. Thus Serapion, called *Sindonites* (because he had never wore more than one poor linnen Garment) one of the Primitive *Asceticks*, sold himself to a *Gentile Player*, that served the Theatre; with whom he lived and underwent the meanest Offices, till he had converted him, his Wife, and whole Family to Christianity, who upon their Baptism restored him to his Liberty: whereupon he freely returned them back the Money which he had received as the Price of his Servitude, which by mutual Consent was given to the Poor. Coming afterwards to *Lacedæmon*, and hearing that a principal Person of the City, a very good Man otherwise, was infected with the *Manichean* Heresy; one of the first Things he did, was to insinuate himself into his Family, selling himself to be his Slave; in which Condition he remained for two Years together, till he had brought his Master, and his whole Family, off from that pernicious Heresy, and restored them to the Church; who did not only bless God for it, but treated him not as a *Servant*, but with that Kindness and Reverence that is due to a *Brother* and a *Father*. This was the good Spirit and *Genius* of those Days; they entirely studied and designed the Happiness of Men, were willing and desirous freely to impart the Treasures of the Gospel, and wished, That in that respect all Mankind were as rich and happy as themselves, So far were they from that malicious Imputation

Part III. which *Celsus* fastned upon them, That if all Men would become *Christians* they would not admit it ! To which *Origen* flatly returns the *Lye* ; and tells him, the Falseness of it might appear from this, That *Christians* (as much as in them lay) were not backward to propagate their Doctrine through the whole World ; and that some of them had peculiarly undertaken to go up and down, not only in Cities, but in Towns and Villages, to bring over others to the true Religion. And that they did not this out of any Designs of *Gain* or Interest to themselves, was plain, because they often refused to receive *necessary* Accommodations from others ; or if they did, they were such only as were barely and absolutely necessary for the present Turn, whenas far greater Liberalities have been offered to them. Nay, some of the ancient *Canons* expressly require, That no Man, who has either *Hereticks* or *Infidels* in his Family, shall be admitted to the Order either of *Bishop*, *Presbyter*, or *Deacon*, who has not first converted those Persons to the true Christian Faith.

Having seen what Kindness and Charity they expressed to Mens *Souls*, we come next to that which respected their *Bodies*, and the Necessities of the outward Life: This they shewed in several Instances ; we shall consider some of the most material. In the first Place, they took special Care to provide for the *Poor*, and such as were unable to help themselves : This, *Cyprian* in his Retirement gave especially in Charge to the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* of his Church, that by all Means they should mind the *Poor*, and furnish them with whatever was necessary for them. *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, testifies of the Church of *Rome*, That they did not only eminently provide for their own *Poor*, but with great *Liberality* administer to the Necessities of other Churches, plentifully relieving whatever indigent Brethren came to them, or wherever

*Orig. cont.*  
*Cels. l. 3.*  
p. 116.

*Conc. Car.*  
3. *Can. 1.*

*Ep. 5. p. 13.*

*Eus. Hist.*

*Ecc. l. 4.*

n. 23. p.

145.

wherever they were, though at the greatest distance Chap. 2.  
 from them. And of the Church of *Antioch*, *Chryso-*  
*stom* tells us, That in his time, though the Revenues of *Hom. 67.*  
 it were but small, yet besides its *Clergy*, besides *Stran-*  
*gers*, *Lepers*, and such as were in *Bonds*, it daily main-  
 tained above *three thousand* Widows and Maids. In-  
 deed the Bounty of those Times was almost incredi-  
 ble. *St. Cyprian*, upon his turning Christian, sold his  
 Estate to relieve the Wants of others; and could not  
 be restrained from it, either by the Persuasions of o-  
 thers, or the Consideration of what he might be re-  
 duced to himself. After his Entrance upon the Mini-  
 stry, his Doors were open to all that came; from  
 whom no Widow ever returned empty: To any that  
 were Blind, he would be their Guide to direct them;  
 that were Lame, he was ready to lend his Assistance  
 to support them; none were oppressed by Might, but  
 he was ready to defend them. *Cæsarius*, *St. Basil's*  
 Brother, made only this short *Will* when he died; *I Sophron.ep.*  
*will that all my Estate be given to the Poor.* *Nazianzen* 84. p. 156.  
 reports of his Father, That he was so kind to the  
 Poor, that he did not only bestow the *Surplusage* of  
 his Estate upon them, but even Part of what was re-  
 served for *necessary* Uses: Of his Mother, That an O-  
 cean of Wealth would not have filled her unsatisfied  
 desire of doing Good; and that he had often heard her  
 say, That if it were lawful, she could willingly have  
 sold her *Self* and *Children*, to have expended the  
 Price upon the Uses of the Poor: And of his Sister  
*Gorgonia*, that she was immensely liberal; *Job-like*,  
 her Gate was open to every Stranger; she was *Eyes*  
 to the *Blind*, *Feet* to the *Lame*, and a *Mother* to *Or-*  
*phans*; her Estate was as common to the Poor, and  
 as much at their need, as every one's is to himself;  
 dispersing and scattering abroad, and according to  
 the Counsel of our *Saviour*, *laying up her Treasure in*  
*Heaven.*

*Vit. ejus*  
*per Paul.*  
*Diac. p. 11.*  
 12.

*Basil. ad.*  
*Sophron.ep.*  
 84. p. 156.  
*tom. 3.*  
*Orat. 19.*  
 p. 298.

*Ibid. p.*  
 299.

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Part III. They gave not only according to, but beyond their Ability; trusting to the Goodness and Fidelity of Heaven to supply what wanted, which many Times made the Return, with Overplus, by ways uncommon and extraordinary. Sozomen relates of Epiphanius Bishop of Salamine in Cyprus, That having spent all his own Estate in pious and charitable Uses, in relieving the Needy, and such as were by Ship-wreck and the Mercy of the Sea, cast upon the Coast; he freely dispensed and distributed the Goods and Treasures of his Church (which by the Bounty of charitable Persons from all Parts, who thought they could not better lodge their Estates, than in the Hands of so good a Man, was very rich and wealthy) and that with so liberal a Hand, that the Steward or Guardian of the Church, finding its Stock begin to grow very low, with some Repentment told him of it, charging him as too profuse and open-handed: All which notwithstanding, he remitted nothing of his accustomed Bounty to the Poor. At length, all being spent, a Stranger on a sudden comes into the Steward's Lodgings, and delivers into his Hands a great Purse of Gold, without any Discovery either who it was that brought it, or who it was that sent it. And indeed so vast and universal was the Charity of this good Man, that it sometimes made him liable to be imposed upon by crafty and designing Persons, whereof the Historian, in the same Place, gives this remarkable Instance: A couple of Beggars meeting Epiphanius, and knowing the Charitableness of his Temper, to draw the greater Alms from him, agreed to put this Trick upon him. One of them lies along upon the Ground, feigning himself to be dead, the other standing by him, passionately bewailed the Death of his Companion and his own Poverty, not able to give him Burial. Epiphanius pitied the Man, persuaded him

to

to bear his Loss patiently, and not to expect that his Companion should in this World rise any more, bid him take care for his Burial, and withal gave him what was sufficient for it. No sooner was he gone out of Sight, but the Beggar comes to his Companion, jogs him with his Foot, and commends him for so ingeniously acting the Cheat : Rise (said he) and with what we have got, let's be merry and jolly to Day. But alas! the Comedy was turned into a Tragick Scene, the Man was really dead, and could not be recovered by all his Cries or stirring: Which his Companion no sooner perceived, but with all haste makes after the Bishop, cries and tears his Hair, confesses the Cheat, and begs that his Companion might be restored to Life; but all in vain. The Bishop bids him to be content, and tells him, that God would not undo what he had done : Leaving a fair Warning to Men (says the Historian) that the great God, who sees and hears all Things, reckons those Mockeries that are put upon his Servants, as if done to himself. But this only upon occasion of that great Charity which they then upon all Occasions extended to the Poor. The Truth is, they then looked upon the Poor as the Treasure and Ornament of the Church, by whom, as by Bills of Exchange, they returned their Estates into the other World. When Detius the Emperor, demanded of Laurentius the Deacon of the Church of Rome, the Church's Treasures, he promised, after three Days, to produce them; in which Time, having gathered together the Blind and the Lame, the Infirm, and the Maim, at the Time appointed, he brought them into the Palace; and when the Emperor asked for the Treasures he had promised to bring with him, he shews him his Company : Behold ! (said he) these are the Treasures of the Church, those Eternal Treasures which are never diminished, but increase; which are dispersed

Chap. 2.

Æt. Laurent. apud Sur. ad diem 10 Aug. Tom. 4. vid. Ambr. Offic. lib. 2. c. 28. Tom. 1.



Part III. *sed to every one, and yet found in all.* This Passage brings to my Mind (though it more properly *Hist. Lauf.* belongs to the next Instance of *Charity*) what *Palladius* relates of *Macarius*, a *Presbyter*, and Governour of the *Hospital* at *Alexandria*: There was a *Virgin* in that *City* very rich, but infinitely covetous and uncharitable: She had been oft attempted and set upon by the *Persuasions* of good Men, but in vain; at last he caught her by this Piece of *pious* Policy; He comes to her, and tells her, that a Parcel of *Jewels*, *Emeralds* and *Jacinths*, of inestimable Value, were lodged at his House; but which the Owner was willing to part with for five hundred Pieces of Money; and advises her to buy them. She catching at the Offer, as hoping to gain considerably by the Bargain, delivered him the Money, and intreated him to buy them for her, knowing him to be a Person of great Piety and Integrity. But hearing nothing from him a long time after, till meeting him in the Church, she asked him what were become of the *Jewels*? He told her, he had laid out the Money upon them (for he had expended it upon the Uses of the *Hospital*) and desired her to come and see them; and if the Purchase did not please her, she might refuse it. She readily came along with him to the *Hospital*, in the upper Rooms whereof the *Women* were lodged, in the lower the *Men*. He asked her which she would see first, the *Jacinths*, or the *Emeralds*; which she leaving to him, he brought her first into the upper Part, where the *Lame*, *Blind*, and *Cripple-Women* were disposed; and *See*, said he, *the Jacinths that I spoke of!* Then carrying her down into the lower Rooms, he shewed her the *Men* in the like Condition, and told her, *These are the Emeralds that I promised, and Jewels more precious than these, I think, are not to be found.* And now, said he, *if you like not your Bargain, take your Money back again.*

again. The Woman blushed, and was troubled to think she should be haied to that, which she ought to have done freely for the Love of God. Afterwards she heartily thanked *Macarius*, and betook herself to a more Charitable and Christian Course of Life.

Next to this, their Charity appeared in *visiting* and assisting of the Sick; contributing to their Necessities, refreshing their tired Bodies, curing their Wounds or Sores with their own Hands. The Sick (saith the antient Author of the Epistle in *Justin Martyr*, if it be not *Justin* himself) are not to be neglected; nor is it enough for any to say, I have never learnt to serve and give Attendance: For he that shall make his Delicacy or Tenderness unaccustomed to any Hardness, to be an Excuse in this Case, let him know it may soon be his own; and then he'll quickly discern the Unreasonableness of his own Judgement, when the same shall happen to him, that he himself has done to others. But there were no such nice and squeamish Stomachs, in the good *Christians* of those Times. St. *Hierom* tells us of *Fabiola*, a Roman Lady, a Woman of considerable Birth and Fortunes, That she sold her Estate, and dedicated the Money to the Uses of the Poor: She built an Hospital, (and was the first that did so) wherein she maintained and cured the Infirm and Miserable, or any Sick that she met withal in the Streets: Here was a whole *Rendezvous* of Cripples, hundreds of Diseases and Distempers here met together, and her self at hand to attend them; sometimes carrying the diseased in her Arms, or bearing them on her Shoulders; sometimes washing and dressing those filthy and noisom Sores, from which another would have turned his Eyes with Contempt and Horror; otherwhile preparing them Food, or giving them Physick with her own Hand. The like

we

Epist. ad  
Zen. & Se-  
ren. p. 514.

Epitaph.  
Fabiola ad  
Ocean. p.  
199. tom.

Part III. we read of *Placilla* the *Empress*, Wife to the younger *Theodosius*, that she was wont to take all possible Care *Theod. H.* for the Lame or Wounded, to go home to their Houses, *Eccl. lib.* carry them all necessary Conveniences, and to attend, *5. c. 18.* and assist them, not by the ministry of her Servants *p. 160.* and Followers, but with her own Hands. She constantly visited the common *Hospitals*, attended at sick Beds for their Cure and Recovery, tasted their Broths, prepared their Bread, reached them their Provisions, washed their Cups with her own Hands, and underwent all other Offices, which the very meanest of the Servants were to undergo. Thus also the *Historian* reports of *Deogratias*, the aged Bishop of *Carthage*, under the *Vandalick* Persecution, That having sold all the Plate belonging to the Church, *Vandal. lib. 1. fol.* to ransom the captive *Christians*, and wanting Places *5. p. 2.* conveniently to bestow them, he lodged them in two large Churches, provided for the Needy; took care of the Sick, himself every Hour visiting them both by Day and Night, with Physicians attending him to superintend their Cure and Diet suitable to their several Cases, going from Bed to Bed, to know what every one stood in need of. Nay, how often did they venture to relieve their Brethren, when labouring under such Distempers as seemed immediately to breathe *Death* in their Faces? Thus in that sad and terrible Plague at *Alexandria*, which though it principally raged amongst the *Gentiles*, yet seized also upon the *Christians*: Many of the Brethren (says the *Historian*) out of the excessive Abundance of their *Kindness* and *Charity*, without any Regard to their own Health and Life, boldly ventured into the thickest Dangers; daily visiting, attending, instructing, and comforting their sick and infected Brethren, till themselves expired and died with them. Nay, many of them, whom they thus attended, recovered and lived, while they who had looked to them, died themselves; as if by

*Euseb. H.*  
*Eccl. lib. 7.*  
*c. 22. p.*  
269.

a strange and prodigious *Charity* they had willingly taken their Diseases upon them, and died themselves to save them from Death. Thus 'twas with the *Christians*, while the *Gentiles*, in the mean time, put off all Sense of Humanity: When any began to fall sick amongst them, they presently cast them out, shunned their dearest Friends and Relations, left them half dead in the Highways, and took no Care of them, either alive or dead.

And that this Work of Charity might be the better managed amongst *Christians*, they had in many Places (and particularly in this of *Alexandria*) certain Persons, whose proper Office it was to attend and administer to the Sick: They were called *Parabolani*, (because, especially in pestilential and infectious Distempers, they did *παραβάλλεσθαι*, cast themselves into an immediate hazard of their Lives) and were peculiarly deputed, *ad curanda debilium ægra corpora*, (as the Law of the younger *Theodosius* expresses it) to attend and cure the Bodies of the Infirm and Sick. Their Numbers, it seems, were very great; insomuch, that upon any tumultuary Occasions, they became formidable even to the Courts of Civil Judicature: Upon Complaint whereof made to the Emperor, *Theodosius* reduced their Number to five hundred; which being found too little, by a second Constitution he enlarged it to six hundred. The Truth is, these *Parabolani* were a Kind of *Clergy-Physicians*; for that they were under an Ecclesiastical Cognizance is plain, being reckoned up with the *Clergy*: And accordingly, by the latter Constitution of *Theodosius*, are appointed to be chosen by, and to be immediately subject to the *Bishop* of the Place.

*Cod. Theod. lib. 16. tit. 2. de Episcopis, &c. S. 42, 43.*

A third Instance of their Love and Charity, (and which *St. Ambrose* calls the highest Piece of Liberty) was their Care of those that were in Captivity, groaning under the merciless Tyranny and Oppression

*Offic. lib. 2. c. 15. p. 42.*

Part III. fion of their Enemies, to *relieve* them under, and *redeem* them out of their Bondage and Slavery. *Cy-  
Epist.* 60. *prian*, in a Letter to the Bishops of *Numidia*, about  
*p.* 96. this very thing, The Redemption of those *Christians*  
amongst them that had been taken Captive by the  
*Barbarians*; elegantly bewails their Misery, and ear-  
nestly presses their Redemption; and as a help to-  
wards it, sent them *Sestertium centum millia num-  
mum*: Which *Rigaltius* computes to twenty five  
thousand Pounds *French*, though others, more truly,  
reduce it to a much lower Sum, *viz.* seven thou-  
sand five hundred, or two thousand five hundred  
Crowns; Which he and his People had liberally  
contributed to it. Of *Acaſius* Bishop of *Amida*, we  
read in *Socrates*, That when the *Roman* Army had ta-  
ken seven thousand *Persians* captive, and would nei-  
ther release them without a Ransom, nor yet give them  
Food to keep them alive; this good Bishop, with  
the Consent of the Clergy of his Church, caused all  
the Gold and Silver *Plate*, and Vessels that belonged  
to their Church to be melted down; ransomed the  
Wretches, fed them, and then freely sent them  
home to their own Prince: With which *generous*  
Charity the King of *Persia* (as he well might) was  
strangely amazed, finding that the *Romans* knew how  
to conquer an Enemy by *Kindness*, no less than by  
Force of *Arms*. The like *St. Ambrose* relates of him-  
self, that he caused the *Communion-Plate* of his  
Church to be broke in Pieces, to redeem *Christians*  
taken captive by the Enemy; for which, though he  
was blamed by the *Arian* Party, yet he elegantly  
defends the Fact, as not only a justifiable, but a pro-  
per and eminent Act of Charity. And indeed 'tis  
the only Case wherein the *Imperial* Constitutions  
make it lawful to *sell* or *pawn* the *Plate* and Gifts  
belonging to the Church; it being otherwise made  
*Sacrilege* to receive them, and the things absolutely  
forfeited

*Rigalt.* in  
*loc.*

*Gronov. de  
pecun. vet.  
lib. 2. c. 2.  
p. 131.*

*H. Eccl. lib.  
7. c. 21.  
p. 360.*

*Ibid. c. 28.  
p. 50.*

*Phot. No-  
mocan.  
Tit. 6.  
σερ. εκ-  
κλινς. χ  
(κευων,  
&c. κεφ. β.  
p. 43.*

forfeited by those that brought them. This was very great, but yet we meet with a *stranger* Charity than this in the Primitive Church; some that have parted with their own Liberty to purchase Freedom unto others. So St. *Clemens* assures us, in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*: *We have known many amongst our selves* (says he) *who have delivered themselves into Bonds and Slavery, that they might restore others to their Liberty; many who have hired out themselves Servants unto others, that by their Wages they might feed and sustain them that wanted.* Of which this one strange Instance shall suffice. Under the *Vandalick* Persecution, many *Christians* were carried Slaves out of *Italy* into *Africk*, for whose Redemption *Paulinus* then Bishop of *Nola* had expended his whole Estate; at last a Widow comes to him, intreats him to give her as much as would ransom her only Son, then Slave to the King of the *Vandals* Son-in-Law. He told her he had not one Penny left, nothing but his own Person, and that he would freely give her to make her best of, and to procure her Son's Ransom. This the Woman looked upon, from a Person of his Quality, as rather a *Deriding* her Calamity, than a *Pitying* of her Case: But he assured her he was in Earnest, and at last induced her to believe him; whereupon they both took Shipping for *Africk*, whither they were no sooner come, but the good Bishop addressed himself to the Prince, begged the Release of the Widow's Son, and offered himself in his Room. The Issue was, The Woman had her Son restored her, and *Paulinus* became the Prince's Slave, who employed him in the dressing and keeping of his Garden. How he afterwards ingratiated himself into the Favour of his Master, and came to be discovered to him who he was; how the Prince set him at Liberty, and gave him Leave to ask what he would, which he made no farther Use of than to

Pag. 70.

Greg. Mag. dial. lib. 3. c. 1 p. 98. Edit col. 1610.

Part III. beg the Release of all his Country-men then in Bondage, which was accordingly granted, and all joyfully sent home with their Ships laden with Corn and Provisions; I omit as not pertinent to my Purpose: They that are desirous to know more of it, may read it in the Dialogues of St. *Gregory*, from whence I have borrowed the Story. This certainly was Charity with a Witness, an Act that will find more to admire and commend it, than to imitate and follow it.

A fourth Instance of Primitive Charity, was the great Care they took about the *Bodies* of the *Dead*, in giving them *decent*, and, where they could, *honourable* Burial. All Men naturally have a Kindness for their Bodies, and therefore desire, That what has so long been the Mansion of an *immortal* Tenant, may upon its dislodging be orderly taken down, and the Ruins of it laid up with Honour and Safety. Man's Body, besides that it is the Cabinet of an invaluable Jewel, is a curious Piece of Artifice, *fearfully and wonderfully made*, the excellent Contrivance of the Divine Omniscience, and in that respect challenges not to be carelessly thrown aside, or rudely trampled in the Dirt. This seems to be the common Sense of Mankind, it being the Care and Practice of almost all Nations in the World, religiously to enshrine the Remains of their deceased Friends in Tombs and Sepulchres; thinking it but reasonable to testify so much Kindness to their departed Friends, as to honour their Memories, and to secure from rude barbarous Violence, what they left behind them when they put off Mortality. Sure I am, this was eminently the Care of *Christians*; no Dangers or Threatnings could affright them from doing this Office to their deceased Brethren, especially such as had been *Martyrs* and *Champions* for the Truth. The *Roman* Clergy in an Epistle to them of *Carthage*, reckons it as one of the greatest Instances of Charity, above

Epist. 2. inter Ep. Cyp.  
p. 9.

above that of relieving the Poor, ministring to the Sick, or the fest which they there enumerate and reckon up: tells them, That it could not be neglected without great Danger, and that Fidelity in this Matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him. *Dionysius*, Bithop of *Alexandria*, speaking of the Plague that raged there (which was mentioned but now) commends the *Christians* for assisting their sick dying Brethren, that they closed their Eyes, laid them out, washed their Bodies, dressed and adorned them up for Burial, and carried them out upon their own Shoulders; which they cheerfully did, notwithstanding the imminent Danger that attended it, and that it was not long before others were called to do the same Offices for them. Their Bodies they decently committed to the Ground, for they abhorred the Custom so common among the *Gentiles* of burning the Bodies of the Dead; which they did, not (as the Heathens objected) because they thought that their Bodies once burnt to Ashes would be difficultly brought to a *Resurrection* (a Doctrine which they strenuously asserted, and held fast as the main Pillar of their Comfort and Confidence) but because they looked upon it as *inhuman* and *barbarous*, and contrary to the more ancient and better Usage of Mankind in this Matter. *Tertullian* calls this Way of Burial by *Inhumation*, a Piece of Piety, and tells us they abstained from burning the Corpse, not as some did, because they thought that some Part of the Soul remained in the Body after Death; but because it favoured of Savageness and Cruelty. Therefore their Enemies, to do them the greater Spite, did not only put them to death, but very often burnt their dead Bodies, and sprinkled their Ashes into the Sea; partly to hinder them from a decent Burial, and partly (as in that Tumult at *Alexandria* under *Julian*) that nothing might be left of them to be honoured

Chap 2.

*Ibid. ubi supra.*

*Min. Fabr. p. 928.*

*De anim. c. 51. p. 303.*

*Ju- Am. Marcellin. lib. 20. p. 4627.*



Part III. honoured as the Remains of Martyrs. As Christianity got Ground, this more civil Way of Inhumation did not only take Place, but rooted out the contrary Custom, even among the *Gentiles* themselves: For

*Cod. Theod.* though the Emperor *Theodosius the Great* gives some Intimation of it, as remaining in his Time, yet not long after it wholly ceased; as is expressly acknowledged by *Macrobius*, who lived in the Time of the younger *Theodosius*.

*p.* 514.

Nor did they ordinarily content themselves with a bare Interment, but prepared the Body for its Funeral with costly *Spices*, and rich Odours, and Perfumes; not sparing the best Drugs and Ointments which the *Sabeans* could afford, as *Tertullian* plainly testifies. They who while alive generally abstained from whatever was curious and costly, when dead were embalmed and entombed with great Art and Curiosity. Whence *Eunapius* (much such a Friend

*Apol. l.* 42.

*p.* 34.

*De vit.*

*Philos. in*

*vit. Aedes-*

*p.* 65.

to Christianity as *Julian* or *Porphyry*) derides the *Monks* and *Christians* of *Egypt* for honouring the seasoned and embalmed *Bones* and *Heads* of *Martyrs*; such (*says he*) as the Courts of Justice had condemned, and put to Death for their innumerable Villanies. This Cost the *Christians*, doubtless, bestowed upon the Bodies of their Dead, because they looked upon Death as the Entrance into a better Life, and laid up the Body as the *Candidate* and Expectant of a joyful and happy Resurrection. Besides, hereby they gave some Encouragement to Suffering, when Men saw how much Care was taken to honour and secure the Reliques of their Mortality, and that their Bodies should not be persecuted after Death.

*Aff. SS.*

*Tharac.*

*Prob. &*

*Andron. a-*

*pud Baron.*

*ad Ann.*

299. tom.

2.

This their Enemies knew very well, and therefore many times denied them the Civility and Humanity of Burial, to strike the greater Dread into them.

Thus *Maximus* the President threatned *Tharacus* the Martyr, That although he bore up his Head so high upon

upon the Confidence, that after his Death his Body should be wound up and embalmed with Ointments and odoriferous Spices; yet he would defeat his Hopes, by causing his Body to be burnt, and sprinkling his Ashes before the Wind. Chap 2.

Thus, after they had put *Polycarp* to death, they burnt his Body out of spite to the *Christians*, who had begged it of the Proconsul, only to give it a solemn Interment; whereupon gathering his Bones, which the Mercy of the Fire had spared, they decently committed them to the Earth, and there used to meet to celebrate the Memory of that pious and holy Man. *Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. 4. c. 15. p. 135*

During those Times of Persecution, they were very careful to bury the Bodies of the *Martyrs*, some making it their particular Business by Stealth to inter those in the Night, who had suffered in the Day: This they did with great Hazard and Danger, many of them (as appears from the ancient *Martyrologies*) suffering Martyrdom upon this very Account. Afterwards, when the Church was settled, there was a particular Order of Men called *Copiatæ*, (either ἀπὸ τῆς κοπιᾶδας, from the Pains they took, or else ἀπὸ τῆς κοπιᾶσειν, because they committed the Bodies of the Dead to the Grave, the Place of *Ease* and *Rest*) appointed for this Purpose about the Time of *Constantine*, or to be sure his Son *Constantius*, in two of whose Laws they are expressly mentioned, and in the latter said to be lately instituted. Their Office (as *Epiphanius* tells) was to wrap up and bury the Bodies of the Dead, to prepare their Graves, and to inter them: And because Inhumation and giving Burial to the Dead was ever accounted, in a more peculiar manner, a Work of Piety and Religion, therefore these Persons were reckoned, if not strictly *Clergymen*, at least in the Clergy-relation, being both Laws of *Constantius* enumerated with, and in-

Part III. vested in the same Immunities with the Clergy.

By the Author in St. *Hierom* they are stiled *Fossarii*,  
*De Sept.* Grave-makers, and by him placed in the first and  
*Ordin. Eccl.* lowest Order of the *Clerici*, and exhorted to be like  
*tom. 4 p. 81* good old *Tobit* in Faith, Holiness, Knowledge, and  
 Vertue. In the great Church of *Constantinople* they

*Lib. 6. tit.* were called *Decani*, or *Deans* (but quite distinct  
*de Decanis* from the *Palatine Deans*, spoken of in the *Theodosian*  
*h. 1.* *Code*, and frequently elsewhere; who were a mili-  
 tary Order, and chiefly belonged to the *Emperor's*  
 Palace) they were one of the *Collegia*, or Corpora-  
 tions of the City. Their Number was very great;

*Constantine* is said to have appointed no less than  
 MC. of them: But by a Law of *Honorius* and *The-*  
*odosius*, they were reduced to DCCCCL; till after-


*Lib. 1. C.* wards *Anastafius* brought them back to their former  
*tit. 2. de* Number, which was also ratified and confirmed by  
*SS. Eccles.* *Justinian*. Their particular Duties and Offices, both  
*l. 4.*

as relating to the Dead, and all other Things, are  
*Novel. Ju-* largely described in two *Novel* Constitutions of his  
*stin. 43. p.* to that Purpose.  
*114. & 59.*

Nor did they only take Care that the Body might  
 be prepared for its Funeral, but to provide for it a  
 decent and convenient *Sepulcher*, wherein it might be  
 honourably and securely laid up; a Thing which had  
 been always practised by the more sober and civili-  
 zed Part of Mankind. The Burying-places (called  
*Polyandria*, *Cryptæ*, *Arenaria*, but most commonly  
*Cæmeteria* or *Dormitories*, because, according to the  
 Notions which the Scriptures give us of the Death  
 of the Righteous, *Christians* are not so properly  
 said to die as to sleep in the Lord, and their Bodies  
 to rest in the Grave in Expectation of a joyful Re-  
 surrection) were generally in the *Fields* or *Gardens*;

it being prohibited by the *Roman* Laws, and especi-  
*Apud. Cic.* ally an ancient Law of the *XII Tables*, to bury with-  
*de leg. lib.* in the City Walls. This held for some Centuries  
*2. p. 288,*  
*vol. 4.*

after

after *Christianity* appeared in the World, and longer Chap. 2.  
 it was before they buried within Churches; within   
 the *Out-parts* whereof to be interred, was a Privilege  
 at first granted only to *Princes* and Persons of the  
 greatest Rank and Quality. *Chrysofom* assures us, Hom 26.in  
 That *Constantius* the *Emperor* reckoned he did his Cap. 12.2.  
 Father *Constantine the Great* a peculiar Honour, when ad Cor. p.  
 he obtained to have him buried in the *Porch* of the 929.  
 Church, which he had built at *Constantinople*, to the  
 Memory of the *Apostles*, and wherein he had ear-  
 nestly desired to be buried, as *Eusebius* tells us; and De vit.  
 in the same, many of his Successors were interred: Const. lib.4.  
 It not being in Use then, nor some hundred Years c.71.p.562.  
 after, for Persons to be buried in the *Body* of the  
 Church, as appears from the *Capitula* of *Charles the* Lib. 1. cap.  
*Great*, where Burying in the Church, which then 159. fol.  
 it seems had crept into some Places, is strictly for- 27. p. 1.  
 bidden.

During the first Ages of *Christianity*, while the  
 Malice of their Enemies persecuted them both *a-*  
*live* and *dead*, their *Cœmeteria* were ordinarily *under*  
*Ground*; imitating herein the Custom of the *Jews*,  
 whose Sepulchers were in Caverns and Holes of  
 Rocks; though doubtless the *Christians* did it to  
 avoid the Rage and Fury of their Enemies, not so  
 much upon the Account of *Secrecy*; for their frequent  
 retiring to those Places was so notorious, as could  
 not escape the Observation of their Enemies, and  
 therefore we sometimes find the *Emperor's* Officers  
 readily coming thither; but it was upon the Account  
 of that *Sacredness* and Religion that was reckoned  
 to be due to Places of this nature; it being account-  
 ed by all Nations a Piece of great Impiety, *Manes*  
*temerare sepultos*, to disturb and violate the Ashes of  
 the Dead. They were large *Vaults* dug in dry sandy  
 Places, and arched over, and separated into many  
 little *Apartments*, wherein on either side the Bodies

Part III. of the Martyrs lay in distinct Cells, each having an  
 ~~~~~ *Inscription* upon Marble, whereon his *Name, Quality,*  
*Prudent.* and probably the *Time and Manner* of his *Death*  
*Peri. Steph.* were engraven: Though in the Heats of Persecu-  
*Pass. Hip-* tion they were forced to bury great Numbers toge-  
*pol. Mart.* ther in one common Grave; (*LX Prudentius* tells us  
*Hym. 11.* he observed; ) and then not the Names, but only the  
*p. 139.* Number of the Interred was written upon the Tomb.  
 Indeed the Multitudes of Martyrs that then suffered,  
 required very large Conveniencies of Interment.  
 And so they had; insomuch, that the last Publisher  
 of the *Roma Subterranea* attires us, That though  
 those *Cæmeteria* were under Ground, yet were they  
 many times double, and sometimes treble, two or  
 three Stories one still under another.

By reason thereof they must needs be very dark,  
 having no Light from without, but what peeped  
 in from a few little Crannies, which filled the Place  
 with a Kind of sacred Horrour, as *St. Hierom* in-  
 forms us; who, while a Youth, when he went to  
 School at *Rome*, used upon the Lord's-day to visit  
 these solemn Places. Built they were by pious and  
 charitable Persons (thence called after their Names)  
 for the Interment of Martyrs, and other Uses of  
 the Church: For in these Places *Christians* in Times  
 of Persecution were wont to hide themselves, and  
 to hold their Religious Assemblies, when banished  
 from their Publick Churches, as I have formerly  
 noted. Of these about *Rome* only, *Baronius* out of  
 the Records in the *Vatican* reckons up *XLIII*, and  
 others to the Number of *threescore*. We may take  
 an Estimate of the rest by the Account which *Baro-*  
*Ad Ann.* *nius* gives of one called the *Cæmtery of Priscilla.*  
*326. tom 2,* discovered in his Time, *An. 1578*, in the *Via Salaria*  
*Ad Ann.* *130. vid.* about three Miles from *Rome*, which he often viewed  
*ad Ann. 57.* and searched: It is (*says he*) strange to report, the  
*tom. 1.* Place by reason of the Vastness and Variety of A-  
*num. 112.* partments,

partments, appearing like a *City under ground*. At Chap. 2, the Entrance into it there was a principal Way, or Street much larger than the rest, which on either hand opened into divers other Ways, and those again divided into many lesser Ways and Turnings, like Lanes and Alleys within one another. And as in Cities there are void open Places for the *Markets*; so here there were some larger Spaces for the holding (as occasion was) of their religious Meetings, wherein were placed the *Effgies* and Replastations of Martyrs, with Places in the Top to let in *Light*, long since stopt up. The Discovery of this Place caused great wonder in *Rome*, being the most exact and perfect *Cemetery* that had been yet found out. Thus much I thought good to add upon occasion of that singular Care, which Christians then took about the Bodies of their Dead. If any desire to know more of these venerable Antiquities, they may consult *Onuphrius de Cœmeteriis*, and especially the *Latin Edition of the Roma Subterranea*, where their largest Curiosity may be fully satisfied in these Things.

Edit. a  
Paul.  
Aringio.  
Rom. 1651  
& Co.  
1659.

Many other Instances of their Charity might be mentioned; their ready entertaining Strangers, providing for those that laboured in the Mines, marrying poor Virgins, and the like; of which to treat particularly, would be too vast and tedious. To enable them to do these charitable Offices, they had not only the extraordinary Contributions of particular Persons, but a common *Stock* and Treasury of the Church. At the first going abroad of the Gospel into the World, so great was the Piety and Charity of the Christians, that the *Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul, neither said any of them, that ought of the Things which he possessed was his own, but they had all Things common; neither was there any among them that lacked: For as many as were Possessors of Lands or Houses, sold them, and brought*

Part III. brought the Prices of the Things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet, and Distribution was made unto every Man according as he had need. But

1 Cor. 16. Church: We find St. Paul giving order to the Churches of Galatia and Corinth for weekly Offerings for the Saints; that upon the first Day of the Week (when they never failed to receive the Sacrament) they should every one of them lay by him in Store according as God bath prospered him. This Custom, Justin Martyr as-

Apol. 2. p. 98, 99. sures us, still continued in his Time: For describing the Manner of their Assemblies on the Lord's Day, he tells us, That those who are able and willing contributed what they saw good; and the Collection was lodged in the Hands of the Bishop or President, and by him distributed for the Relief of Widows and Orphans, the Sick or Indigent, the Imprisoned or Strangers, or any that were in need. In the next Age they were reduced to Monthly Offerings, as

Ap. l. c. 39. appears from Tertullian, who gives us this Account of them in his Time; That at their Religious Assemblies upon a Monthly Day (or oftener if a Man will, and be able) every one according to his Ability laid by somewhat for charitable Uses, (they put it into a kind of poor Man's Box, called Arca, that stood in the Church) this they did freely, no Man being forced or compelled to it; leaving it behind them as a Stock to maintain Piety and Religion: For 'tis not spent (says he) upon Feasts or Drinking-Bouts, or to gratify Gluttony and Intemperance, but laid out in relieving the Needy, burying the Dead, providing for Orphans, supporting the Aged, recruiting the Spoiled, supplying the Imprisoned, and those that were in Mines, Bonds, or Slavery for the Profession of Christianity.

Histor. This was the Fruit of Primitive Devotion! Palladius tells us of two Brothers, Paesius and Esaias, Sons

L. v. fac. c. 25- p. 41.

Sons of a wealthy Merchant, That their Father being dead, and they resolving upon a more strict and religious Course of Life, could not agree upon settling their Estates in the same Way. At last dividing their Estates, they disposed them thus: The one gave away his whole Estate at once, settling it upon *Monasteries, Churches, and Prisons*, for the Relief of such as were in Bonds; and betaking himself to a Trade for a small Maintenance for himself, gave himself up to Prayer, and the severer Exercises of Religion. The other kept his Estate in his own Possession, but built a *Monastery*, and taking a few Companions to dwell with him, entertained all *Strangers* that came that way, took Care of the *Sick*, entertained the *Aged*, gave to those that needed, and every *Saturday* and *Lord's-Day* caused two or three Tables to be spread for the Refreshment and Entertainment of the *Poor*; and in this excellent Way spent his Life.

Now that this Account that we have given of the admirable Bounty and Charity of the ancient Christians is not *precarious*, and merely what the Christians tell us of themselves, we have the Testimony of two open Enemies of Christianity, *Julian* and *Lucian*, both bitter Enemies to Christians, and the fiercer, because both, as 'tis supposed, Apostates from them: And their Testimony is considerable upon a double Account, partly because having lived amongst the Christians, they exactly knew their Ways and Manners; and partly because being Enemies to them, they would be sure to speak no more in their Commendation than what was true. *Julian* speaking of the *Galileans*, tells us, That by their Charity to the Poor they begot *πολύ τῆς ἀδελότητος* <sup>Misopoz.</sup> P. 99. *θαῦμα*, the greatest Admiration of their Religion in the Minds of Men. And in an Epistle to the *High-Priest* of *Galatia*, bewailing the desolate State of the

Hea-



Part III. *Heathen World*, the Ruin of their Temples, and the great Declension of *Paganism* at that Time, notwithstanding all his Endeavours to make it succeed under the Influences of his Government; he advises the High-Priest to promote the *Gentile Interest* by the same Method, which the wicked Religion of the Christians did thrive by, *i. e.* by their Bounty to Strangers, their Care in burying of the Dead, and their Holiness of Life And elsewhere, *The Poor*

*Fragm. E-* (says he) *having no Care taken of them, the wicked Galileans know very well how to make their Advantage of it; for they give themselves up to Humanity and Charity,*

*and by these plausible and insinuating Ways, strengthen and increase their wicked and pernicious Party: Just as Men cheat little Children with a Cake, by two or three of which they tempt them to go along with them, till having got them from home, they clap them under Hatches, transport and sell them; and so for a little seeming Pleasure, they are condemned to Bitterness all their Life: And no otherwise (says he) 'tis with them, they first inveigle honest-minded Men with what they call their Feasts of Love, Banquets, Ministry and Attendance upon Tables; and then seduce them into their Wickedness and Impiety. This, as at once it shews his Venom and Malice according to the Humour of the Man, so it openly bears Witness out of the Mouth of an Enemy, to the most excellent and generous Spirit of the Gospel. The other Testimony is that of *Lucian* (who if not a Christian himself, for *Suidas's*  $\delta\eta\mu\omega\nu\beta\epsilon\tau\tau\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\ \epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\lambda\alpha$  does no way intimate him to have been a Christian Preacher, notwithstanding what the Generality of Writers have inferred thence; was yet however intimately acquainted with the Affairs of Christians) who bringing in his Philosopher *Peregrinus*, amongst other Sects joining himself to the Christians, tells us what Care they took of him; when cast into Prison, they improved*

*In voc.*  
*λυσικαυδός.*

*De mort.*  
*Peregrin.*  
*p762, 763.*  
*tom. 2.*

proved all their Interest to have him released: But Chap. 2. when this could not be granted, they officiously used all possible *Service* and *Respect* towards him; in the Morning, old Women, Widows, and Children flocked early to the Prison-Doors; and the better Sort got leave of the Keepers to sleep with him in the Prison all Night: Then they had several Sorts of *Barquets*, and their *Sacred Discourses*. Nay, some were sent in the Name of the rest, even from the Cities of *Asia* to assist and encourage him; who brought him great Sums of *Money*, under pretence of his Imprisonment: It being incredible what Readiness they shew, when any such Matter is once *ibid. p. 764.* noised abroad, and how little they spare any Cost in it. After which he tells us of them in general, That they equally condemn all the Advantages of this Life, and account them common, foolishly taking up their *Principles* about these Things without any accurate Search into them; insomuch that if any *subtle* and *crafty* Fellow, that knows how to improve his Advantage, come amongst them, he grows very rich in a little Time, by making a Prey of that simple and credulous People.

There's one Circumstance yet behind, concerning the *Love* and *Charity* of those Times, very worthy to be taken Notice of; and that is the universal Extent of it: They did good to all, though more especially to them of the Household of Faith; i. e. to Christians. They did not confine their Bounty merely within the narrow Limits of a *Party*, this or that Sect of Men, but embraced an Object of Love and Pity, wherever they met it. They were kind to all Men, yea to their bitterest Enemies, and that with a Charity as large as the Circles of the Sun, that visits all Parts of the World, and shines as well upon a stinking Dung-hill, as upon a pleasant Garden. 'Tis certainly the strange and supernatural Doctrine of our Saviour,

You

Part III. You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy: But I say unto you, love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. This indeed is the proper Goodness and Excellency of Christianity, as Tertullian observes; it being common to all Men to love their Friends, but peculiar only to Christians to love their Enemies. Athenagoras, I remember, principally makes use of this Argument to prove the Divinity of the Christian Religion, and challenges all the great Masters of Reason and Learning among the Heathens to produce any, either of themselves or their Disciples, of so pure and refin'd a Temper, as could instead of hating, love their Enemies, bear Curses and Revilings with an undisturbed Mind, and instead of reviling again, to bless and speak well of them, and to pray for them who lay in wait to take away their Lives. And yet this did Christians; they embraced their Enemies, pardoned and prayed for them; according to the Apostle's Rule, When their Enemy hungred they fed him, when he thirsted they gave him Drink, and would not be overcome of Evil, but overcame Evil with Good. When Nazianzen (then Bishop of Constantinople) lay sick, a young Man came to his Bed's feet, and taking hold of his Feet, with Tears and great Lamentation passionately begged Pardon of him for his Wickedness; the Bishop asking what he meant by it, was told, That this was the Person that had been suborned by a wicked Party to have murdered him, and now being stricken with the Conscience of so great a Wickedness, came to bewail his Sin. The good Man immediately prayed to Christ to forgive him, desiring no other Satisfaction from him, than that henceforth he would forsake that Heretical Party, and sincerely serve God as became a Christian. Thus when Paul the

Ad Scap.  
c. 1. p. 69.  
Leg. pro  
Christian.  
p. 11.

Vit. ejus  
per Greg.  
Presb.

the Martyr was hastening to his Execution, he only begged so much Respite till he might pray (which accordingly he did) not only for the Peace and Happiness of *Christians*, but for the Conversion of *Jews* and *Samaritans*; for the *Gentiles*, that they might be brought out of Error and Ignorance to the Knowledge of God and the true Religion: He prayed for the People that attended his Execution; nay (such was his vast Goodness and Charity) for the very Judge that condemned him; for the *Emperors*, and the very Executioner that stood ready to cut off his Head, earnestly begging of God *not to lay that great Wickedness to their Charge*. Nay, they did not think it enough *not to return Evil for Evil*, or barely to forgive their Enemies, unless they did them all the *Kindness* that lay in their Power. *Polycarp* plentifully feasted the very Officers that were sent to apprehend him; the same which *St. Mamas* the Martyr is also said to have done, treating the Soldiers with the best Supper he had, when sent by *Alexander*, the cruel President of *Cappadocia*, to seize upon him. And we read of one *Pachomius*, an Heathen Soldier, in the first Times of *Constantine*, That the Army being well near starved for want of necessary Provisions, and coming to a City that was most inhabited by *Christians*, they freely and speedily gave them whatever they wanted for the Accommodation of the Army. Amazed with this strange and unwonted Charity, and being told, that the People that had done it were *Christians*, whom they generally preyed upon, and whose Profession it was *to hurt no Man, and to do good to every Man*; he threw away his Arms, became an *Anchoret*, and gave up himself to the strictest Severities of Religion. This also *Julian* the Emperor plainly confesses; for urging *Arsacius*, the Chief Priest of *Galatia*, to take Care of the Poor, and to build Hospitals in every City

Chap. 2.  
Euseb. de Mart.  
Paul. c. 8.  
p. 332.

Euseb. l. 4. c. 15. p. 130.  
Mart. ejus apud Sur. ad 17 Aug. tom. 4. ex. S. Metaphr.

Metaphr. in vit. Pachom. apud Sur. ad diem 14 Maii, to. 3.

Ubi prius, for

Part III. for the Entertaining of poor Strangers and Travellers, both of their own and other Religions; he adds, *For it's a Shame* (says he) *that when the Jews suffer none of theirs to beg, and the wicked Galileans relieve not only their own, but also those of our Party, that we only should be wanting in so necessary a Duty.* So prevalent is Truth, as to extort a Confession from its most bitter and virulent Opposers. Of this I shall only add one Instance or two more, proper enough to be inserted here. *Eusebius*, speaking of that dreadful Plague and Famine that happened in the *Eastern* Parts under the Emperor *Maximinus*, wherein so many whole Families miserably perished, and were swept away at once; he adds, That at this Time the Care and Piety of the *Christians* towards all, evidently approved it self to all the *Gentiles* that were about them; they being the only Persons that during this sad and calamitous State of Things performed the real Offices of *Mercy* and *Humility*; partly in ordering and *burying* of the Dead, (Thousands dying every Day, of whom no Care was taken) partly in gathering together all the *Poor* that were ready to starve, and distributing Bread to every one of them: The Fame whereof filled the Ears and Mouths of all Men, who extolled the *God of the Christians*, and confessed that they had shewed themselves to be the only truly Pious and Religious Persons. And indeed the Charity was the more remarkable, in that the *Christians* at this very Time were under a most heavy Persecution. Thus in the terrible Plague that in the Times of *Gallus* and *Volusian* raged so much through the whole World (and that more or less for Fifteen Years together) especially at *Carthage*, when innumerable Multitudes were swept away every Day, and the Streets filled with the Carcasses of the Dead, which seemed to implore the Help of the *Living*, and

to

*Hist. Eccl.*  
l. 9. c. 8.  
p. 357.

to challenge it as their Right by the common Laws Chap. 2. of Human Nature; but all in vain, every one trembling, flying and shifting for themselves, deserting their nearest Friends and Kindred, none staying, unless it were to make a Prey. In this sad and miserable Case, *Cyprian* (then Bishop of the Place) calls the *Christians* together, instructs them in the Duties of Mercy and Charity, puts them in mind, that it was no great wonder if their Charity extended to their own Party; the way to be perfect, was to do something more than *Heathens* and *Publicans*; to overcome Evil with Good; to imitate the Divine Benignity, to love our Enemies, and (according to our Lord's Advice) to pray for the Happiness of them that persecute us: That God continually made his Sun to rise, and his Rain to fall, not only for the Advantage of his own Children, but for all other Men's; and that therefore they should imitate the Example of such a Father, who professed themselves to be his Children. Immediately upon this, they unanimously agreed to assist their common Enemies, every one lending help according to his Rank and Quality. Those who by reason of their Poverty could contribute nothing to the Charge, did what was more; they personally wrought and laboured, an Assistance beyond all other Contributions. By which large and abundant Charity great Advantage redounded not to themselves only of the Household of Faith, but universally unto all.

I shall sum up what hath been said upon this Argument, in that elegant Discourse which *Lactantius* hath concerning Works of Mercy and Charity. Since human Nature (*says he*) is weaker than that of other Creatures, who come into the World armed with Offensive and Defensive Powers, therefore our Wise Creator has given us a tender and merciful Disposition, that we might place the Safeguard of our Lives in mutual Assistances of one another.

E e

For

Pent. in  
vit. Cypr.  
p. 13.

Lact. Epi-  
tom. c. 7.  
p. 746.

Part III. For being all created by *one God*, and sprung from *one common Parent*, we should reckon our selves *a-kin*, and obliged to love all Mankind; and (that our Innocency may be perfect) not only not to do an *Injury* to another, but not to revenge one when done to our selves; for which reason also we are commanded to *pray for our very Enemies*. We ought therefore to be kind and sociable, that we may help and assist each other. For being our selves obnoxious to Misery, we may the more comfortably hope for that *help* in case we need it, which our selves have given unto others. And what can more effectually induce us to relieve the Indigent, than to put our selves into their *stead*, who beg help of us? If any be hungry, let us *feed* him; is he naked, let us *clothe* him; is he wronged by a powerful Oppressor, let us *rescue* and relieve him. Let our Doors be open to *Strangers*, and such who have not where to lay their Head. Let not our Assistance be wanting to *Widows* and *Orphans*: And (which is a mighty Instance of Charity) let us *redeem* the Captives, *visit* and assist the Sick, who are able to take no Care of themselves; and for Strangers, and the Poor (in case they die) let us not suffer them to want the Conveniency of a *Grave*. These are the Offices and the Works of Mercy, which whoever does, offers up a true and grateful Sacrifice to God; who is not pleased with the *Blood of Beasts*, but the *Charity of Men*: Whom therefore he treats upon their own Terms, has *Mercy* on them whom he sees *merciful*, and is *inexorable* to those who *shut up their Bowels* against them that ask them. In order therefore to our thus pleasing God, let us make light of Money, and transmit it into the *heavenly Treasures*, where *neither Moth nor Rust* doth corrupt, nor *Thieves break through and steal*, nor Tyrants are able to seize and take it from us; but where it shall be kept to our Eternal Advantage under the *Custody* of God himself.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Of their Unity and Peaceableness.

*The Laws of Christ tend to beget a Peaceable Disposition. This seen in our Saviour himself, in his Apostles, and the whole Body of Christians. The Account Justin Martyr gives of them. The World over-run with Quarrels before Christ's Coming. The happy Alteration that succeeded upon his appearance in it. This particularly urged by Eusebius, How much Christians contributed to the Peace and Quietness of the World. Their Unity among themselves. Canonical Epistles; the several Sorts of them; Συνακτικαί, Ἀπολυτικαί, Ἐισηγητικαί. What their Nature and Tendency. Differences presently endeavoured to be healed. The great Care and Sollicitude of Constantine that way. An eminent Instance of Condescension and Self-denial in Gregory Nazianzen for the Peace of the Church. Difference in Rituals and lesser Matters no hindrance of Peace and Christian Communion: Manifested in the Case of Polycarp and Anicetus Bishop of Rome. Christians not provoked by every trifling Quarrel. The difference in this respect between them and the best Philosophers.*

**T**H E Primitive Christians being of such a Meek, Compassionate, and Benevolent Temper as we have represented them, it cannot be



Part III. thought but that they were of a very quiet Disposition and *peaceable* Conversation; and the having been so large in that, will excuse me for being shorter in this. When our blessed *Saviour* came to establish his Religion in the World, he gave a *Law* suitable to his *Nature*, and to the *Design* of his Coming into the World, and to the Exercise of his Government, as he is *Prince of Peace*; a Law of Mildness and Gentleness, of Submission and Forbearance towards one another. We are commanded to follow *Peace with all Men*; to follow after the Things that make for Peace; as much as in us lies to live peaceably with all Men. We are forbidden all Feuds and Quarrels; enjoined not to revenge our selves, but to give place unto Wrath; to let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking be put away from us, with all Malice; to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgives us. These are the Laws of Christianity, which whenever they are duly entertained, produce the most gentle and good-natured Principles, the most innocent and quiet Carriage. This eminently appeared in the Life of our Blessed Saviour, who was the most incomparable Instance of Kindness and Civility, of Peace and Quietness; we never find him all his Life treating any with Sharpness and Severity but the Scribes and Pharisees, who were a Pack of surly, malicious, ill-natured Fellows, and could be wrought upon by no other Methods; otherwise his Mildness and Humility, the Affability and Obligingness of his Conversation, and his remarkable Kindness to his greatest Enemies, were sufficiently obvious both in his Life and Death: And such was the Temper of his Disciples and Followers, this excellent Spirit (like Leaven) spreading it self over the whole Mass of Christians, turning the *Bryar*

into a Myrtle-Tree, and the Vulture into a Dove. Chap. 3. See the Account which *Justin the Martyr* gives of them. We who formerly valued our Money and Estates before all Things else, do now put them into a common Stock, and distribute them to those that are in need. We, who once hated each other, and delighted in mutual Quarrels and Slaughters, and according to the Custom refused to sit at the same Fire with those who were not of our own Tribe and Party; now, since the Appearance of Christ in the World, live familiarly with them, pray for our Enemies, and endeavour to persuade those that unjustly hate us, to order their Lives according to the excellent Precepts of Christ, that so they may have good Hope to obtain the same Rewards with us from the great Lord and Judge of all Things.

But for the better Understanding of this, it may be useful to observe what a remarkable Alteration in this respect the Christian Religion made in the World. Before Christ's Coming, the World was generally over-run with Feuds and Quarrels, mighty and almost implacable Animosities and Divisions reigning amongst Jews and Gentiles; the Jews looked upon the Gentiles as Dogs and Out-casts, refused all Dealings with them, even to the Denial of Courtesies of common Charity and Civility, such as to tell a Man the Way, or to give him a Draught of Water; they reproached them as the vilest and most profligate Part of Mankind, Sinners of the Gentiles, as the Apostle calls them, according to the usual Stile and Title. Nor did the Gentiles less scorn and deride the Jews, as a pitiful and contemptible Generation, stopping their Noses, and abhorring the very Sight of them, if by chance they met them; they looked upon them as an unsociable People, as Enemies of all Nations, that did not so

*Job. 4. 9.*  
*Juv. Sat. 14. p. 430.*

*Gal. 2. 15.*

Part. III. much as wish well to any ; nay, as *Haters* even of Mankind ; as *Tacitus* and their *Enemies* in *Josephus* represent them. The Effect of all which was, that they oppressed and persecuted them in every Place, trod them as Dirt under their Feet, till at the last the *Romans* came, and finally took away both their Place and Nation. Thus stood the Case between them till the Arrival of the *Prince of Peace* ; who partly by his *Death*, whereby he broke down the *Partition-Wall* between *Jew* and *Gentile* ;

Hist. lib. 5. cap. 4, 5. p. 535. Ἐθνῶν ἀμικλον, ἀσύμφυλον, ἕτ' ἑθνοκρασίαν τὴν αὐτὴν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἔχον, ἕτ' νόμοις χρώμενον ὁμοίους, ἐχθρὸν δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἕθεσι, καὶ ἐπίσηδύμασι τῶν σὺ λαῶν καὶ ἀπασιν ἀνθρώποις — δυσμενὲς ἔθνῶν, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀλλόκοτον.

Jof. Antiq. Judaic. lib. 11. c. 6. Vid. Esther. 3. 8. Vid. Cic. pro Flac. p. 368. tom. 2.

partly by the healing Nature and Tendency of his *Doctrine* ; partly by the quiet and peaceable Carriage of his Followers, did quickly extirpate and remove those mutual Feuds and Animosities, and silence those passionate and quarrellome Divisions that were amongst them.

*Prepar. Evang. l. 1. c. 4. p. 10.*  
 II. Vide *Athanas. de Verb. Incarn. p. 78. tom. 1.*  
 This Argument *Eusebius* particularly prosecutes, and shews, That while the Nations were under *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, they were filled with Wars and Troubles, and all the Effects of barbarous Rage and Fury : But that after the Divine and Peaceable *Doctrine* of our Saviour came abroad, those Differences and Calamities began to cease, according to the Predictions that were of him, That there should be *Righteousness and Abundance of Peace in his Days* ; that *Men should beat their Swords into Ploughshares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks* ; that *Nation should not lift up Sword against Nation, nor learn War any more* : That this must needs be in some measure the Effect of his *Appearance* ; his *Doctrine* being so fitly calculated to soften the rough and brutish Manners of Men, and to train them up in milder and more humane

humane Institutions. And a little after, he makes it an uncontrollable Argument of the Truth and Excellency of the *Christian* Doctrine, That it teaches Men to bear the Reproaches and Provocations of Enemies with a generous and unshaken Mind, and to be able not to revenge our-selves, by falling foul upon them with the like Indignities and Affronts ; to be above Anger and Passion, and every inordinate and unruly Appetite ; to administer to the Wants and Necessities of the Helpless, and to embrace every Man as our Kindred and Country-man ; and though reputed a Stranger to us, yet to own him, as if by the Law of Nature he were our nearest Friend and Brother. How much their Religion contributed to the Publick Tranquillity, by forbidding *Pride, Passion, Covetousness*, and such Sins as are the great Springs of Confusion and Disturbance, *Justin Martyr* tells the Emperors : As for Peace (says he) we above all Men in the World promote and further it ; forasmuch as we teach, That no Wicked Man, no Covetous or Treacherous Person, no Good or Vertuous Man can lie hid from the Eye of God ; but that every Man is travelling either towards an Eternal Happiness or Misery, according to the Desert and Nature of his Works : And did all Men know and believe this, no Man would dare for a few Moments to deliver up himself to Vice and Wickedness, knowing it would lead him on to the Condemnation of Everlasting Fire ; but would rather by all Means restrain himself, and keep within the Bounds of Vertue, that he might obtain the Rewards that are dispensed by God, and avoid the Punishments that are inflicted by him. The truth is, our blessed *Lord* came not to inspire Men with Principles of Revenge and Passion, to teach them to *return Evil for Evil*, but to encourage Love and Gentleness, to teach Men to overcome

Ap. 2. p. 59.

Part III. by Suffering, and to obtain the Reward by Meekness and Patience, *Isidore the Pelusiote*, treating of that place, *To him that smites thee on the right Cheek, turn the other also*, has this short Discourse upon it: The great King of Heaven came down from above to deliver to the World the Laws of an Heavenly Conversation; which he has proposed in a Way of Conflict and Striving, quite contrary to that of the *Olympick Games*. There, he that fights and gets the better, receives the *Crown*; here, he that is stricken and bears it meekly, has the Honour and Applause: There, he that returns Blow for Blow, here, he that *turns the other Cheek* is celebrated in the *Theatre of Angels*; for the Victory is measured not by Revenge, but by a wise and generous Patience. This is the *new Law* of Crowns, this is the new Way of Conflicts and Contentions.

Such was the Temper, such the Carriage of *Christians* towards their *Enemies*, and them that were without: Within themselves they maintained the most admirable Peace and Harmony, and were in a manner of *one Heart and Soul*. They lived in the strictest Amity, and abhorred all Division as a Plague and Fire-brand. But because Mens Understandings not being all of one *Size*, nor all Truths alike plain and evident, Differences in Mens *Judgements* and *Opinions* must needs arise; no Schism ever arose in the Church about any of the more considerable Principles of Religion, but it was presently bewailed with the universal Resentment of all pious and good Men, and the Breach endeavoured to be made up; no ways left unattempted, no Methods of Persuasion omitted that might contribute to it.

When *Novatus* (or rather *Novatian*) had made *Eus. Hist.* some Disturbance in the Church of Rome, concerning *Ecl. l. 6.* the Receiving the lapsed into Communion, *Dionysius* 452. 247. (the good Bishop of *Alexandria*) writes to him to  
extin-

extinguish the Schism; telling him, 'Tis better to suffer any thing than that the Church of God should be rent in Pieces: That it's no less glorious, and probably more illustrious, to suffer Martyrdom to keep Divisions out of the Church, than to die for not sacrificing to Idols; for in the one Case a Man suffers *Martyrdom* only upon his own Account, but in the other, he suffers for the Advantage and Benefit of the whole Church. And *Cyprian* positively asserts (according to the *Apostle's* Resolution of the Case) *De Unit. Eccl. p. 184.* That without this Unity and Charity a Man cannot enter into Heaven; and that although he should deliver up himself to the *Flames*, or cast his Body to wild Beasts, yet this would not be the Crown of his Faith, but the Punishment of his *Falshood*; not the glorious *Exit* of a religious Vertue, but the Issue of Despair: Such an one may be killed, but he cannot be crowned.—He that rents the Unity of the Church, destroys the Faith, disturbs the Peace, dissolves Charity, and profanes the *Holy Sacrament*. How severely they branded all Schism and Division in the Church, how industriously they laboured to take up all Controversies amongst *Christians*, and to reconcile dissenting Brethren, to maintain Concord and Agreement amongst themselves, and to prevent all Occasions of Quarrel and Dissention, might easily be made appear out of the Writers of those Times. Hence those *Canonical Epistles* (as they called them) wherewith Persons were wont to be furnished, when going from one Place to another; of which there were especially three Sorts. First, *Συναγικαί*, or *Commendatory Epistles*, mentioned by *St. Paul*, and were in use amongst the Heathens. They were granted to *Clergy-men* going into another *Dioceſs*, by the Bishop that ordained them, testifying their Ordination, their Soundness and Orthodoxy in the Faith, the Innocency and Unblamableness of their Lives. To those

Part III. those that had been under, or had been suspected of *Excommunication*, declaring their Absolution, and recommending them to be received in the number of the *faithful*. Lastly, they were granted to all, whether *Clergy* or *Laity*, that were to *travel*, as *Tickets of Hospitality*, that where-ever they came, upon producing these Letters they might be known to be *Catholic* and *Orthodox*, and as such received and entertained by them. A Piece of Prudence which *Julian the Apostate* admired in the *Christian* Constitution, the like whereto he endeavoured to establish in his Pagan Reformation. The second Sort were *Ἀπολυτικά*, Letters *Dimissory*, whereby Leave was given to Persons going into another *Diocels*, either to be ordained by the Bishop of that *Place*, or if ordained already, to be admitted and *incorporated* into the *Clergy* of that Church. Upon which Account the antient *Councils* every where provide, That no Stranger shall either receive Ordination at the Hands of another Bishop, or exercise any Ministerial Act in another *Diocels*, without the Consent and *Dimissory* Letters of the Bishop of that Place from whence he comes. The third were *Ἐιρηνικά*, Letters of Peace, granted by the *Bishop*, to the Poor that were oppressed, and such as fled to the Church for its Protection and Assistance; but especially to such of the *Clergy* as were to go out of one *Diocels* into another: It being directed to the Bishop of that *Diocels*, that he would receive him, that so he might take no Offence, but that peaceable Concord and Agreement might be maintained between them. By these Arts the Prudence of those Times sought to secure the Peace of the Church, and, as much as might be, prevent all Dissentions that might arise: And where Matters of any greater moment fell out, how quickly did they flock together to compose and heal them?

Hence those many *Synods* and *Councils* that were convened

conveened to umpire Differences, to explain or *de-* Chap. 3.  
*fine* Articles of Faith, to condemn and suppress the *www*  
 Disturbers of the Church, and Innovators in Religion. What infinite Care did the good Emperor  
*Constantine* take for composing the *Arian* Controversies, which then began first to infect and over-  
 run the World? How much his Heart was set up-  
 on it, his solicitous Thoughts taken up about it;  
 how many troublesome Days, and restless Nights it  
 cost him; with what strong and Nervous Argu-  
 ments, what affectionate Intreaties he presses it;  
 may be seen in that excellent Letter (yet extant in *De vit.*  
 his Life) which he wrote to the *Authors* of those *Const. l. 2.*  
 impious and unhappy Controversies. But when *c. 64. &*  
 this would not do, he summoned the great Council *seq. p. 473.*  
 of *Nice*, consisting of *three hundred and eighteen Bishops*; *Ib. l. 3. c. 12.*  
 and in his Speech at the opening of that Council, *p. 489.*  
 conjured them by all that was dear and sacred to a-  
 gree, and to compose those Dissentions which were  
 risen in the Church; which, he seriously protested,  
 he looked upon as more grievous and dangerous  
 than any War whatever, and that they created  
 greater Trouble and Inquietude to his Mind, than  
 all the other Affairs of his Empire. And when se-  
 veral of the Bishops then in Council, had pre-  
 ferred *Libels* and Accusations one against another,  
 without ever reading them, he bundled and sealed  
 them all up together, and having reconciled and  
 made them Friends, produced the Papers, and im-  
 mediately threw them into the Fire before their Faces.  
 So passionately desirous was that good Prince to  
 extinguish the Flames, and to redeem the Peace of  
 the Church at any rate. Were any *ejected* and  
 thrown out of the Church, of which there might  
 be a Suspicion of private Grudges, or Designs, the  
*Nicene* Council wisely provided, That in every  
 Province a *Synod* should be held twice a Year; where  
 all



Part III. all the Bishops meeting together, might discuss the  
 Case, and compose the Difference: Or (as *Joseph*  
 the *Egyptian*, in his *Arabick* Version of that *Canon*,  
 tells us) an *Arbitrator* was to be appointed between  
 the differing Parties to take up the Quarrel, that it  
 might not be a Scandal to Religion.

Nor did there want meek and peaceable-minded  
 Men, who valued the *publick* Welfare before any *pri-  
 vate* and personal Advantage, and could make their  
 own particular Concerns strike Sail, when the Peace  
 and Interest of the Church called for it. When great  
 Contests and Confusions were raised by some per-  
 verse and unquiet Persons about the See of *Constanti-  
 nople*, (then possessed by *Gregory Nazianzen*) he him-  
 self stood up in the Midst of the Assembly, and told  
 the Bishops, how unfit it was, that they who were  
 Preachers of Peace to others, should fall out amongst  
 themselves; begged of them even by the *Sacred*  
*Trinity*, to manage their Affairs calmly and peace-  
 ably: And, *If I* (says he) *be the Jonas that raises the*  
*Storm, throw me into the Sea, and let these Storms and*  
*Tempests cease; I am willing to undergo whatever you*  
*have a mind to; and tho' innocent and unblameable, yet*  
*for your Peace and Quiet sake, am content to be ban-*  
*ished the Throne, and to be cast out of the City: Only,*  
*according to the Prophet's Counsel, be careful to love*  
*Truth and Peace.* And therewith freely resigned his  
 Bishoprick, though legally settled in it by the express  
 Command and Warrant of the Emperor, and the  
 universal Desires and Acclamations of the People.

Vit. Greg.  
 Naz. per  
 Greg.  
 Presb.

The same excellent Temper ruled in *St. Chryso-  
 stom*, one of his Successors in that *See*; when having  
 elegantly pressed the Unity of the Church, and re-  
 futed those petty Cavils which his Adversaries had  
 made against himself: *But if you* (says he to his  
 People) *suspect these Things of us, we are ready to de-*  
*liver up our Place and Power to whomsoever you will;*  
 only

Hom. II. in  
 Ep. ad Eph.  
 p. 1110.

only let the Church be preserved in Peace and Unity. Chap 3. This was the brave and Noble Disposition of Mind, to which St. *Clemens* sought to reduce the *Corinthians*, after they had fallen into a little Schism and Disorder; Who is there among you (says he) of that generous Temper, that *compassionate* and *charitable* Disposition? Let him say, if this *Sedition*, these *Schisms* and *Contentions* have arisen through my means, or upon my *account*, I'll depart and be gone whithersoever you please, and will do what the People shall command; only let *Christ's* Sheep-fold, together with the *Elders* that are placed over it, be kept in peace.

*Ep. ad Cor.*  
p. 69.

Nay, when good Men were most zealous about the Main and Foundation-Articles of Faith, so as sometimes rather to hazard *Peace*, than to betray the *Truth*; yet in Matters of *Indifferency*, and such as only concerned the *Rituals* of Religion, they mutually bore with one another, without any Violation of that Charity which is the great Law of Christianity. Thus in that famous Controversy about the keeping of *Easter*, so much agitated between the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches, *Irenæus* in a Letter to *Pope Victor* (who of all that ever sat in that Chair, had raised the greatest stir about it) tells him, That Bishops in former times, however they differed about the Observation of it, yet always maintained an intire *Concord* and Fellowship with one another: the Churches being careful to maintain a *peaceable* Communion, tho' differing in some particular Rites and Ceremonies; yea, even when their Rites and Customs seemed to clash, by meeting together at the same Place. Thus when *Polycarp* came to *Rome* from the Churches of the *East*, to treat with *Pope Anicetus* about this and some other Affairs, though they could not satisfy each other to yield the

*Enf. Hist.*  
*Ecc. l. 5. c.*  
24. p. 193.

*Controversy,*

Part III. *Controversy*, yet they *kissed* and embraced one another with mutual *Endearments*, received the *Holy Communion* together; and *Anicetus* (to do the greater Honour to *Polycarp*) gave him leave to celebrate and consecrate the *Eucharist* in his Church; and at last they parted in great Peace and Friendship: The Difference of the Observation not at all hindring the Agreement and Harmony of the Churches; it being agreed amongst them by common

*Hist. Eccl.* Comment (says *Sozomen* speaking of this Passage) that  
 l. 7. c. 19. in keeping this Festival, they should each follow  
 p. 734. their own *Custom*, but by no means break the *Peace* and *Communion* that was between them: For they reckoned it (says he) a very foolish and *unreasonable* thing, that they should fall out for a few Rites and Customs, who agreed in the main Principles of Religion.

The *Christians* of those Times had too deeply imbibed that Precept of our Saviour, *Love one another as I have loved you*, to fall out about every nice and trifling Circumstance; no, when highliest provoked and affronted, they could *forbear* and *forgive* their *Enemies*, much more their *Brethren*; and were not like the *waspish Philosophers* amongst the *Heathens*, who were ready to fall foul upon one another for every petty and inconsiderable Difference of Opinion that was amongst them. So *Origen* tells *Celsus*: Both amongst your *Philosophers* and *Physicians* (says he) there are *Sects* that have perpetual Feuds and Quarrels with each other; whereas we who have entertained the Laws of the Blessed *Jesus*, and have learnt both to speak and to do according to his Doctrine, *blest them that revile us; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat*. Nor do we speak dire and dreadful things against those that differ from us in *Opinion*, and do not presently embrace those Things which we have entertained; but

*Lib.* 5. p.  
273.

but (as much as in us lies) we leave nothing unat-tempted that may persuade them to change for the better, and to give up themselves only to the Service of the Great Creator, and to do all things as those that must give an account of their Actions. In short, *Christians* were careful not to offend either *God* or *Men*, but to keep and maintain Peace with both : Thence that excellent Saying of *Ephrem Syrus*, the famous Deacon of *Edeffa*, when he came to die ; *In my whole Life* (said he) *I never reproached my Lord and Master, nor suffered any foolish Talk to come out of my Lips ; nor did I ever curse or revile any Man, or maintain the least Difference or Controversy with any Christian in all my Life.*

Chap. 3.  
 Vit. Ephr.  
 Syr. per  
 Greg. Nyss.  
 tom. 2.  
 p. 1033.

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C H A P. IV.

Of their Obedience and Subjection to Civil Government.

*Magistracy the great Band of the Publick Peace. This highly secured by Christianity. The Laws of Christ that way express and positive. Made good in his own Practice, and the Practice of his Apostles. The same Spirit in succeeding Ages, manifested out of Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Tertullian, and Origen. Praying for Rulers and Emperors a solemn part of their publick Worship. Their ready Payment of all Customs and Tributes, and their Faithfulness in doing it. Christians such even under the heaviest Oppressions and Persecutions, and that, when they had power to have righted and re-  
 venged*

**Primitive Christianity.**

*venged themselves. An excellent Passage in Tertullian to that purpose. The Temper of the Christian Soldiers in Julian's Army. The famous Story of Mauricius, and the Theban Legion under Maximianus, reported at large out of Eucherius Lugdunensis. The Injustice of the Charge brought against them by the Heathens, of being Enemies to Civil Government. Accused of Treason. Of their refusing to swear by the Emperor's Genius. Their denying to sacrifice for the Emperor's Safety, and why they did so. Their refusing to own the Emperors for Gods, and why. Their not Observing the Solemn Festivals of the Emperors, and the Reasons of it. Accused of Sedition, and holding unlawful Combinations. An Account of the Collegia and Societies in the Roman Empire. Christianity forbidden upon that account. The Christian Assemblies no unlawful Conventions. A vast Difference between them and the unlawful Factions forbidden by the Roman Laws. Their confident Challenging their Enemies to make good one Charge of Disturbance or Rebellion against them: Their Laws and Principles quite contrary. The Heathens themselves guilty of Rebellions and Factions, not the Christians. The Testimony given them by Julian the Emperor. A Reflection upon the Church of Rome, for corrupting the Doctrine and Practice of Christianity in this Affair. Their Principles and Policies in this matter. Bellarmin's Position,*

tion, That 'tis lawful to depose Infidel and Heretical Princes, and that the Primitive Christians did it not to Nero, Dioclesian, &c. only because they wanted Power, censured and refused. This contrary to the avowed Principles of honest Heathens.

**H**OW much Christian Religion, transcribed into the Lives of its Professors, contributes to the Happiness of Men, not only in their single and private Capacities, but as to the publick Welfare of Human Societies, and to the common Interests and Conveniencies of Mankind; we have already discovered in several Instances. Now because Magistracy and Civil Government is the great Support and Instrument of external Peace and Happiness, we shall in the last Place consider, how eminent the first Christians were for their Submission and Subjection to Civil Government. And certainly, there is scarce any particular Instance wherein Primitive Christianity did more triumph in the World, than in their exemplary Obedience to the Powers and Magistrates under which they lived; honouring their Persons, revering their Power, paying their Tribute, obeying their Laws, where they were not evidently contrary to the Laws of Christ; and were they were, submitting to the most Cruel Penalties they laid upon them, with the greatest Calmness and Serenity of Soul. The truth is, one great Design of the Christian Law is to secure the Interests of Civil Authority. Our Saviour has expressly taught us, *That we are to give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, as well as unto God the things which are God's.* And his Apostles spoke as plainly as Words could speak it, *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God: the Powers that be, are ordained of God.*

F f

Whoso-

Part III. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you Tribute also; for they are God's Ministers, attending continually upon this very Thing. Render therefore to all their Dues, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* Where we may take notice both of the *Strictness* and *Universality* of the Charge, and (what is mainly material to observe) this Charge given the *Romans*, at that time when *Nero* was their *Emperor*, who was not only a *Heathen* Magistrate, but the *first Persecutor* of *Christians*; a Man so prodigiously brutish and tyrannical, that the World scarce ever brought forth such a Monster, *ὄντιον ἢ μορφήν ἀνθρώπου*, as the Orator truly stiles him, *A Beast in the shape of a Man*. The same Apostle, amongst other Directions given to *Titus* for the Discharge of his Office, bids him put the People in mind to be subject to *Principalties and Powers*, and to obey *Magistrates*. *St. Peter* delivers the same Doctrine, to a tittle; *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governours as unto them that are sent by him for the Punishment of evil-doers, and for the Praise of them that do well; for so is the Will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men.*

*Themist.  
Crat. 5.  
p. 144.*

Such are the *Commands*, and such was the *Practice* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*. When a *Tax* was demanded of him, though he was the *Son of God*, he refused not to pay *Tribute* unto *Cæsar*, even when it put him to the expence and charge of a *Miracle*. When arraigned for his *Life* at *Pilate's Bar*, he freely owned his *Authority*, and cheartfully submitted to that wicked and unrighteous *Sentence*, though able to com-  
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mand more than *twelve Legions of Angels* for his Rescue and Deliverance. The *Apostles*, though unjustly scourged before the *Council*; yet made no tart Reflections, but *went away rejoicing*. When *Herod* had cut off *St. James's Head*, and consigned *Peter* in Prison to the same Butchery and Execution, what *Arms* did the Christians use? rise up and put him out of the Throne, scatter *Libels*, raise *Tumults* or *Factions* in the City? Oh! no, the Church's weapons were *Prayers* and *Tears*, their only Refuge in those evil times.

Nor did this excellent Spirit die with the Apostles; we find the same Temper ruling in the succeeding Ages of Christianity. The Christians (says one of the *Just Mart Ancients*) obey the Laws that are made, and by the *Epist ad Diogn.* Exactness of their Lives, go beyond that Accuracy, *p. 497.* which the Law requires of them; they love all Men though all Men study to afflict and persecute them.

Are there any (as *Athnegoras* concludes his Address *Leg. pro Christian.* to the *Emperors*) more devoted to you than we? *p. 39.* who pray for the Happiness of your Government, that, according to Right and Equity, the *Son* may succeed his *Father* in the Empire, that your Dominions may be enlarged, and that all Things may prosper that you take in Hand: and this we do, as that which turns both to yours and our own Advantage, that so *under you leading a quiet and peaceable Life*, we may cheerfully obey all those Commands which you lay upon us. *St. Polycarp*, a little before his Martyr- *Apud Euf.* dom, wrote to the *Christians* at *Philippi*, earnestly ex- *l. 3. c. 36.* horting them to obey their Rulers, and to exer- *p. 132.* cise all Patience and *Long-suffering* towards them.

And when he stood before the *Proconsul*, he told him, *Ib. l. 4. c. 15.* That this was the great Law of *Christianity*, that we *p. 132.* are commanded by God to give all due Honour and Obedience to Princes and Potentates; such as is not *prejudicial* to us; *i. e.* (for so doubtless he means) such as is not *contrary* to the Principles of our Re-



Part. III. ligion. *Tertullian* tells us, 'Twas a solemn Part of the Church-Service in his Time, to pray for the Happiness and Prosperity of the Princes under whom they lived: *We pray* (says he) *for the Emperors, for the Grandees and Ministers of State, for the Prosperity of the Age, for the Quietness of Affairs, for the Continuance of their Lives and Government; that God would give them a long Life, a secure Reign, an undisturbed House, powerful Armies, faithful Senators, honest Subjects, a quiet People, and indeed whatever they can wish for, either as Men or Emperors.* They that think (says he) that we are not solicitous about the Safety of Princes, let them look into the Commands of God recorded in our *Scriptures*, which we freely expose to the View of all; there they will find that we are enjoined to pray for the *Happiness* of our very *Enemies* and *Persecutors*: And who are so much such, as they? And yet we are plainly and particularly commanded to pray for *Kings, for Princes, and all that are in Authority, that the State of Things may be quiet and peaceable.* A Christian being an *Enemy* to no *Man*, is much less to his *Prince*. Thus when *Celsus* seemed to object, as if the *Christians* refused to help the *Emperors* in their Wars, *Origen* answers, That they did really assist and help them, and that rather with *Divine* than *Human* Weapons, according to the Command of the *Apostle*; *I exhort, that, first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and Giving of thanks be made for all Men, for Kings and all that are in Authority.* And he tells him, That the more eminent any *Man* is for *Piety* and *Religion*, he will be able to afford greater Assistance to his *Prince*, than a great many armed *Soldiers* that stand ready to fight for him, and to destroy his *Enemies*.

For all *Customs* and *Tributes*, none ever paid them more freely than they. For your *Taxes* and *Tributes* (says *Justin Martyr* to the *Emperors*) we are, above all

Lib. 8. p.  
426.

Ap. c. 39.  
P. 31.  
Ibid. c. 31.

all other Men, every where ready to bring them in to your Collectors and Officers; being taught so to do by our great Master, who had those that asked the question, Whether they might pay Tribute unto *Cæsar*? to give unto *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*, and unto *God* the Things that are *God's*. For which Reason we worship none but *God*: And as for you, in all other things we cheerfully serve you, acknowledging you to be *Emperors* and Governours of Men, and praying that, together with your Imperial Power, you may have a wise and discerning Judgement and Understanding. If the *Emperor* command me to pay Tribute (says another of their *Apologists*) I am ready to do it; if my *Lord* command me to serve and obey him, I confess my Obligation to it. Man is to be served with that Respect that is due to Man; but *God* only, who is invisible and incomprehensible is to be religiously feared and honoured: If commanded to deny him, I must disobey, and die rather than be found perfidious and ungrateful to him. So *Tertullian* tells them, That although they refused to pay Taxes rated upon them for Maintenance of the *Heathen Temples*, yet for all other Tributes they had cause to give the *Christians* thanks for so faithfully paying what was due, it being their Principle to abstain from defrauding of others; inso-much, that should they examine their Accounts how much of the Assessments was lost by the Fraud and Couzenage of them of their own Party, they would easily find that the *Christians* denial to pay that one Tax, was abundantly compensated and made up in their honest Payment of all the rest. The truth is, they were admirably exact and conscientious, as in all their Actions, so especially in those that related to the Publick, and concerned their Duty and Obedience to their Rulers and Governours.

Nor were they thus only in prosperous Times,

F f 3

but

Chap. 4.


*Tatian Orat. contra Grec. p.*

144

*Ap. c. 42.*

*p. 34.*

Part III. but under the heaviest Persecutions ; as indeed the  
 Rod was seldom off their Backs. The last mentioned  
 Cap. 30. *Apologist* bids their Judges go on to butcher them, and  
 p. 27. tells them, they did but force those *Souls* out of their  
*Bodies*, which were praying to God for the Empe-  
 Ad Demet. ror's Happiness, even while their Officers were do-  
 p. 202. ing it. And *Cyprian* tells the *Proconsul*, That as  
 badly as they were used, yet they ceased not to pray  
 for the Overthrow and Expulsion of the common E-  
 nemies, for seasonable Showers, and either for the  
 removing or mitigating Publick Evils ; begging of  
 God day and night, with the greatest Instance and  
 Importunity, for the Peace and Safety of their Perse-  
 cutors ; endeavouring to pacify and propitiate God,  
 who was angry with the Iniquities of the Age. Nor  
 were they thus kind and good-natured, thus submis-  
 sive and patient, for want of Power, and because they  
 Ap. c. 37. knew not how to help it : *Tertullian* answers in this  
 p. 30. Case, That if they thought it lawful to return evil  
 for evil, they could in one Night, with a few Fire-  
 brands, plentifully revenge themselves ; that they  
 were no small and inconsiderable Party, and that they  
 needed not to betake themselves to the little Arts of  
 skulking Revenges, being able to appear in the capacity  
 of open Enemies ; that though of but Yesterday's  
 standing, yet they had filled all Places, all Offices of the  
 Empire ; and what Wars were they not able to ma-  
 nage, who could so willingly give up themselves to be  
 slain, did not the Law of Christianity oblige them  
 to be killed rather than to kill ? Nay, that they need  
 not take up Arms and rebel ; for their Party was  
 so numerous, that should they but agree together to  
 leave the *Roman Empire*, and to go into some remote  
 Corner of the World, the Lois of so many Mem-  
 bers would utterly ruin it ; and they would stand  
 amazed and affrighted at that Solitude and Desolation  
 that would ensue upon it, and have more Enemies  
 than

than loyal *Subjects* left amongst them : whereas now Chap. 4. they had the fewer *Enemies*, for having so many  *Christians*.

The *Christians* then opposed not their *Enemies* with the Points of their *Swords*, but with solid *Arguments* and mild *Intreaties*. Thus when *Julian Naz.* in the *Emperor* urged in his *Army*, which was almost veff. 1. in Jul. p. 94. wholly made up of *Christians*, to wicked *Councils* and the practices of *Idolatry*, they withstood him only with *Prayers* and *Tears*; accounting this (says my *Author*) to be the *only* *Remedy* against *Persecution*. So far were they from resisting or *rebeling*, that they could quietly *die* at the *Emperor's* *Command*, even when they had power lying at their foot. I cannot in this place omit the memorable Instance of the *Thebean Legion*, being so Mart. SS. exceedingly *apposite* and pertinent to my purpose, and Marcii & socior. ab Eucher. Lugdunens. conscript. apud Smr. ad diem 22. Sept. p. 220. &c Edit. Color. so remarkable as no *Age* can furnish out such another Instance. I shall set down the *Story* entirely out of the *Author* himself, the *Account* of their *Martyrdom* written by *Eucherius* *Bishop* of *Lyons*, who assures us he received the *Relation* from very *credible* hands; and it is thus:

*Maximianus* *Cesar* (whom *Dioclesian* had lately taken to be his *Colleague* in the *Empire*) a bad 1618. *Man*, and a bitter *Persecutor* of the *Christians*, was sent into *France*, to suppress a *Mutiny* and *Rebellion* risen there. To strengthen his *Army*, there was added to it a *Band* of *Christians*, called the *Thebean Legion*, consisting (according to the manner of the *Romans*) of *six thousand six hundred sixty six* faithful, expert and resolute *Soldiers*. Coming to *Ostodurus* (a *Place* in *Savoy*) and being ready to offer *Sacrifice* to the *Gods*, he causes his *Army* to come together, and commands them under a great *Penalty* to swear by the *Altars* of the *Gods*, that they would unanimously fight against their *Enemies*,

Part III. mies, and persecute the *Christians* as *Enemies* to the  
 ——— Gods : Which the *Toebcan Legion* no sooner understood, but they presently withdrew to *Aganunum*, (a Place eight Miles off, called at this day *St. Maurits*, from *Mauricius* the Commander of the *Legion*, a Place equally pleasant and strong, being encompassed about with craggy and inaccessible Rocks) to avoid, if it might be, the wicked and sacrilegious Command, and to refresh themselves, tired with so long a March. But the Emperor taking Notice of the Army as they came to swear, quickly missed the *Legion*; and being angry, sent Officers to them to require them forthwith to do it: who enquiring what it was they were commanded to do, were told by the Messengers, That all the Soldiers had offered Sacrifices, and had taken the fore-mentioned Oath, and that *Cæsar* commanded them to return presently and do the like. To whom the Heads of the *Legion* mildly answered, That for this reason they left *Ostodurus*, because they had heard they should be forced to sacrifice; that being *Christians*, and that they might not be defiled with the Altars of *Devils*, they thought themselves obliged to worship the *living* God, and to keep that Religion which they had entertained in the *East*, to the last Hour of their Life : That as they were a *Legion*, they were ready to any Service in the War; but to return to him to commit Sacrilege, as he commanded, they could not yield.

With this Answer the Messengers returned, and told the Emperor, that they were resolved not to obey his Commands; who being transported with Anger, began thus to vent his Passion: *Do my Soldiers think thus to slight my Royal Orders, and the holy Rites of my Religion? Had they only despised the Imperial Majesty, it would have called for publick Vengeance; but together with the Contempt of me, an Affront*

front is offered to Heaven, and the Roman Religion is Chap 4.  
 as much despised as I am. Let the obstinate Soldiers know, That I am not only able to vindicate my self, but to revenge the Quarrel of my Gods. Let my faithful Servants make haste, and dispatch every Tenth Man, according as the fatal Lot shall fall upon him. By this equal Death, let those whose Lot it shall be to die first, know how able Maximian is severely to revenge both himself and his Gods. With that the Command is given, the Executioners sent, the Emperor's Pleasure made known, and every Tenth Man is put to death; who cheerfully offered their Necks to the Executioners, and the only Contention amongst them was, who should first undergo that glorious Death. This done, the Legion is commanded to return to the rest of the Army. Whereupon Mauricius the General of the Legion, calling it a little aside, thus bespake them: I congratulate (most excellent Fellow-Soldiers) your Courage and Valour, that for the Love of Religion, the Command of Cæsar has made no Impression upon you; you have seen your Fellow-Soldiers, with Minds full of Joy, undergoing a glorious Death: How much afraid was I, lest being armed (and how easy is it for such to do so) you should, under a Pretence of defending them, have endeavoured to hinder their happy Funerals?— See, I am encompassed round with the Bodies of my Fellow-Soldiers, whom the dismal Executioner has torn from my Side; I am besprinkled with the Blood of the Saints; my Clothes dyed with the Reliques of their sacred Blood: And shall I doubt to follow their Death, whose Example I so much congratulate and admire? Shall I concern my self to think what the Emperor commands, who is equally subject to the same Law of Mortality with my self?— I remember we once took this military Oath, that with the utmost Hazard of our Lives we  
 would

Part III. would defend the Common-wealth; this we then engaged to the *Emperors*, though no *heavenly Kingdom* was promised to us: And if we could promise this out of *Devotion* to a military Service, what then is to be done when Christ promises so much to them that engage with him? Let us willingly expose our Lives to this most precious Death; let us shew a masculine Courage and an unviolated Faith. Methinks I see those blessed Souls standing before *Christ's Tribunal*, whom the *Emperor's Officer* just now banished out of their Bodies: That's the true Glory which will recompense the shortness of this Life with a blessed Eternity. Let us by the Messengers unanimously return this Answer to the Emperor: *We acknowledge, Cæsar, that we are your Soldiers, and took up Arms for Defence of the Empire; nor did we ever basely betray our Trust, or forsake our Station, or deserved that the Brand either of Fear or Cowardice should be set upon us; nor should we stick now to obey your Commands, did not the Laws of Christianity, wherein we have been instructed, forbid us to worship Devils, and to approach the polluted Altars of the Gods. We understand you are resolved either to defile us with sacrilegious Worship, or to terrify us with a Decimation: Spare any further Search concerning us; know we are all Christians, our Bodies we yield subject to your Power, but our Souls we reserve intire for Christ the Author, and the Saviour of them.*

This was no sooner spoken, and universally agreed to by the *Legion*, but it was carried to the *Emperor*; who, exasperated with such a generous Resolution, commanded a *second Decimation*, which was immediately executed, and the rest, as before, commanded to return to *Octodurus*. Hereupon *Exuperius* the *Ensign*, catching up his Colours, thus addressed himself to them: You see me (*most excellent Fellow-Soldiers*)

*Soldiers*) holding these *Ensigns* of secular Warfare: Chap. 4  
 But these are not the *Arms* that I call you to, these are not the Wars to which I excite your Courage and Valour; 'tis another kind of Fighting that we are to chuse; they are not these *Swords* that must make our Way into the *Heavenly Kingdom*; we stand in need of an undaunted Mind, and invincible Defence, a maintaining the Faith which we have given to God, to the very last.—Let the dismal Executioner go and carry this Message to his bloody Master, and tell him thus: We are, O *Emperor*, your *Soldiers*, but withal, (which we freely confess) the *Servants of God*; to you we owe military *Service*, to him *Innocency*; from you we have received *Wages* for our Labours, from him we had our very *Lives* and *Beings*: We cannot herein obey the Emperor, so as to deny God, the Author of our Lives, yea, and of yours too, whether you will or no. Nor is it, Sir, any Despair (which is always stoutest in greatest Straits) that makes us thus resolute against you; we have (you see) *Arms*, and yet make no Resistance, chusing rather to die than to overcome, and desirous rather to perish *innocent*, than to live rebellious and revengeful. If you have a mind to appoint us to any greater and severer Torments, we are ready for them. *Christians* we are, and therefore cannot persecute those that are so. You must needs acknowledge the unconquerable Courage of this *Legion*: We throw down our Arms; your Officer will find our Right Hands naked, but our Breast armed with a true Catholick Faith. Kill us, and trample on us, we undauntedly yield our Necks to the Executioner's Sword: These Things are the more pleasant to us, while setting light by your sacrilegious Attempts, we hasten apace to the Heavenly Crown.

Maxi-



Par. III.

— V — *Maximianus* being told this, and despairing now to break their Constancy, commands his whole Army to fall upon them, and cut them off; which they did accordingly, without any Difference of Age or Person, mangling their Bodies, and then taking the Spoils: The *Emperor* having so appointed, that whoever killed any of the *Legion*, should have the Spoils of him whom he killed. And thus they died with their Swords in their Hands, when they might have preserved their Lives (especially in a Place so advantageous) by force of Arms, or to be sure have sold them at the dearest Rate. This Story I have been willing to set down the more at large, because so remarkable in all its Circumstances, and containing the most unparalleled Instance of Christian Piety and Submission, (next to that of our Blessed *Saviour*) that I think was ever known in the World.

Menol. Gr.

ἐν ἡμερῶν.

αὐτῶν.

sub. lit.

λ.

Apud. Sur.

ad diem

28. Jul.

tom. 4.

This is the Account of those noble Martyrs; only, to prevent Mistakes, we are to take Notice, that there was another *Mauritius* Commander of a *Legion* in the *East* (mentioned in the *Greek Menologies*) who together with Seventy of his Soldiers was condemned by, and suffered under this self-same *Emperor Maximianus*, for refusing to do Sacrifice; their Martyrdom being recorded by *Simeon Metaphrastes*, but the Account quite different both as to *Persons* and *Things* from that which is here related.

By what has been said, we may see the Injustice of that Charge which the *Heathens* sometimes laid upon the *Christians*, that they were *Disturbers* of the Peace, and *Enemies* to Civil Government; an Indictment so purely false, and without any Shadow of a real Pretence to cover it, that the ingenious Heathen in *Minutius Felix* (though raking up all the Calumnies he could find, and putting the deepest Dye upon every Charge which Wit and Eloquence could put upon it) yet had not the Face so much

as

as once to mention it. But however, as groundless Chap. 4. as it was, they were frequently charged with it. *~~~~~* Sometimes they were accused of *Disloyalty* and *Treason*, either because they would not *swear* by the Emperor's *Genius*, or not sacrifice for his *Safety*, or not worship the *Emperors* as *Divi*, or Gods, or not celebrate their *Festivals* in the same way with others. For the first, their refusing to *swear* by the Emperor's *Genius*, we have heard before what *Tertullian* answers to it, That it was in Effect to give *divine Honour* to *Devils*. To the second, their not *sacrificing* for the Emperor's *Safety*, he answers, *Ap. c. 30. p. 27.* That none *sacrificed* to so good Purpose as they, for that they offered up Prayers to the True, Living and Eternal God, for the Safety of the *Emperor*; that God whom the *Emperors* themselves did above all others desire should be propitious and favourable to them, as from whom they knew they derived their Government. For the third, their refusing to own the *Emperors* for Gods, he tells them, They *lb. c. 33. p. 28. Vide Theoph: Antioch. l. 1. p. 76.* could not do it, partly because they would not lye in saying so, partly because they durst not by doing it *mock* and deride the *Emperor*; nay, that he himself would not be willing to be stiled *God*, if he remembered that he was a *Man*, it being *Man's* Interest to yield to *God*: That the Title of *Emperor* was great enough, and that he could not be called *God*, without being denied to be *Emperor*; that he was therefore *Great*, because *less* than *Heaven*; and that if he would needs be a *Deity*, he must first conquer *Heaven*, lead *God* in *Triumph*, set *Guards* in *Heaven*, and impose *Tribute* upon that *Place*. *lb. c. 30.* For the last, their not observing the solemn *Festivals* of the *Emperors*, for which they were accounted *lb. c. 35. p. 28.* Enemies to the Publick, they pleaded, That their *Reigion* and their *Conscience* could not comply with that *Vanity*, that *Luxury*, and *Debauchery*, and all

Part. III. all manner of Excess and Wickedness that was committed at those Times; that the publick Joy was expressed by that which was a publick *Dishonour*, and those things accounted *honourable* upon the solemn Days of Emperors, which were *unjust* and uncomely to be done upon any Days; and that there was little Reason they should be accused for not observing that, where *Looseness* of Manners was accounted *Loyalty*, and the Occasion of *Luxury* a part of *Religion*.

Otherwhiles they were accused of *Sedition*, and holding *unlawful Combinations*, which arose upon the Account of their Religious Assemblies, which their Enemies beheld as *Societies* erected contrary to the *Roman* Laws. That we may the better apprehend what these *Societies* were, (in the number whereof they reckoned the *Christian Meetings*) and how condemned by the *Roman* Laws, we are to know, That in the Infancy of the *Roman* Commonwealth, *Numa Pompilius*, to take away the Difference between the *Sabines* and the *Romans*, divided the People into *Colleges* and little Corporations, (answerable to which are our *City-Companies*) according to their several *Trades* and Occupations, Goldsmiths, Dyers, Potters, Curriers, &c. which together with the City, increased to a great Number; *Plut. in vit. Num. p. 71.* (*Panciroll* out of both *Codes* gives us Account of thirty six) to these he assigned their several Halls, Times of Meeting, and sacred Rites, and such Immunities as were most proper for them. But besides these appointed by Law, several *Colleges* in imitation of them were erected in the most parts of the *Empire*, partly for the more convenient Dispatch of Business, but principally for the Maintenance of mutual Love and Friendship. All these *Societies* had their solemn Meetings, and customary *Feasts*, which in time degenerated into great Excess and *Luxury*; *Append. ad Notit. Imper. fol. 197.* insomuch

insomuch that *Varro* in his time complained, that the Excess and Prodigality of their Suppers made Provisions dear; and much more Reason had \* *Ter-* Chap. 4. Collegio-  
*tullian* to complain of it in his time. Answerable to these Colleges amongst the Romans, were the *εταίρειαι* rum cœne  
or Societies amongst the Grecians, who also had their *ἀνδρεία* immutabi-  
stated and common Feasts; such were the *συσίτια* at *Lacedæmon*, and les inten-  
amongst the Grecians, the *συσίτια* at *Lacedæmon*, and dunt arnos  
so in other States of Greece. But these Meetings apud Jac.  
(those of them especially that were not settled ei- Gothofr. in  
ther by the Decree of the Senate, or the Constitu- C.Th. l. 16.  
tion of the Prince) partly by reason of their Num- tit. 10.  
ber, and the great Confluence to them, partly by \* Apol. c.  
reason of their luxurious Feasting, began to be looked 39. p. 32.  
upon by the State with a jealous Eye, especially af-  
ter that the *Common-wealth* was turned into a *Mo-*  
*narchy*; the Emperors beholding them as fit *Nurse-* Vide l. 47.  
*ries* to plant and breed up treasonable and rebellious ff. tit. 22.  
*Designs*, and therefore frequently forbade them under de colleg.  
very severe Penalties. Thus *Julius Cesar*, who first laid & corporib.  
the Foundation of the Empire, reduced these Colleges Sueton. in  
to the antient Standard, putting down all that were vit. Jul.  
*supernumerary* and *illegal*; wherein he was also fol- Cæs. c. 42.  
lowed by his Successor *Augustus*: And the succeeding p. 50. in  
Emperors very often put out strict *Edicts* against Aug. c. 32.  
them, prohibiting them as dangerous and unlawful p. 155.  
Combinations.

Under the Notions of these Societies it was, that the Christian Congregations came to be forbidden; several Persons confederated into a Combination, and constantly meeting at a common Feast, rendering them suspicious to their Enemies. Hence *Pliny* giving the Emperor an Account of the *Christians*, and especially of their assembling at their solemn Feasts of Love, tells him, That they had forborn ever since, according to his Commands, he had

Part III. had published an *Edict* to forbid the *Heteriæ* or *Societies*. And indeed the *Christian Assemblies*, whereat they usually had the *Lord's Supper*, and their *Love-jeasts*, looking somewhat like those *illegal Meetings*, (especially as beheld with the Eye of an *Enemy*) it was the less wonder, if the Heathens accused them of hatching *Treason*, and the Magistrates proceeded against them as *Contemners* and *Violators* of the *Law*.

But to this the *Christians* answered, That their *Meetings* could not be accounted amongst the *unlawful Factions*, having nothing common with them; that indeed the *Wisdom* and *Providence* of the *State* had justly prohibited such *Factions* to prevent *Seditions*, which might thence easily over-run and disquiet all *Councils*, *Courts*, *Pleadings*, and all *Meetings* whatsoever. But no such thing could be suspected of the *Christian Assemblies*, who were frozen as to any *ambitious Designs* of *Honour* or *Dignity*, *Strangers* to nothing more than *publick Affairs*, and had renounced all *Pretences* to *external Poms* and *Pleasures*: That if the *Christian Assemblies* were like others, there would be some reason to condemn them under the *Notion* of *Factions*; but to whose *Prejudice* (say they) did we ever *meet* together? We are the same when *together*, that we are when *asunder*; the same *united*, as is every *single Person*, hurting no *Man*, grieving no *Man*; and therefore that when such *honest*, *good*, *pious*, and *chaste Men* meet together, it was rather to be called a *Council* than a *Faction*. To which *Origen* adds, That seeing in all their *Meetings* they sought nothing but *Truth*, they could not be said to conspire against the *Laws*; seeing they designed nothing but to get from under the *Power* and *Tyranny* of the *Devil*, who had procured those *Laws* only to establish his *Empire* faster in the *World*.

For

For elsewhere he bids *Celsus*, or any of his Party, Chap. 4. shew any thing that was *sedition* amongst *Christians*: That their Religion arose not at first (as he *Lib. 3. p.* falsely charged it) out of Sedition, might appear in <sup>115</sup> that their *Legislator* had so severely forbidden Killing and Murder; and that the Christians would never have entertained such mild Laws, as gave their Enemies opportunities to kill them like Sheep delivered to the Slaughter, without making the least Resistance. Thus *Amobius* confidently challenges the *Ado. Gent.* *Heathens*, Whether they could reject *Christianity* upon the account of its raising Wars, Tumults, and Seditions in the World? No, those were Things which they may find nearer home. You *defame* us (says *Tertullian*) with Treason against the *Emperor*, and yet never could any *Abinians*, *Nigrians*, or *Cassians* (Persons that had mutinied and rebelled against the Emperors) be found amongst the *Christians*; they are those that swear by the *Emperor's Genius*, that have offered Sacrifice for their Safety, that have often condemned Christians; these are the Men that are found Traitors to the *Emperors*. A Christian is no Man's Enemy, much less his *Prince's*; knowing him to be constituted by God, he cannot but love, revere, and honour him, and desire that he and the whole *Roman Empire* may be safe, as long as the World lasts. We worship the *Emperor*, as much as is either *lawful* or *expedient*, as one that is next to God; we *sacrifice* for his Safety, but to his and our God; and so as he has commanded, *only* by Holy Prayer: for the great God needs no Blood or sweet Perfumes; these are the *Banquets* and Repast of *Devils*, which we do not only reject but expel at every turn. But to say more concerning this, were to light a *Candle* to the *Sun*. \* *Julian* the *Emperor* (though no good Friend to *Christians*, yet) thus far does them right, That if they see any

Lib. 3. p. 115

Ado. Gent. l. 2. p. 20

\* *Ἰλιὸν ὁ εἰς τις αἰς τὸν βασιλέα ἐπιδοίειν αὐτὸν ἀντὶ τῶν πῶτος, αὐτὸν μάλιστ' ἀπολαύειν.*  
*Julian. Fragm. Ep. oper. c. 1. p. 528.*

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one

Part III. one *mutinying* against his *Prince*, they presently *punish* him with great Severities.

And here we may with just reason reflect upon the Iniquity of the Church of *Rome*, which in this Instance of Religion has so abominably debauched the Purity and Simplicity of the *Christian* Faith. For they not only exempt the *Clergy* (where they can) from the Authority and Judgement of the *secular* Powers, whereby horrible Enormities do arise; but generally teach, That a Prince once *excommunicated*, his Subjects are absolved from all Fealty and Allegiance, and he may with Impunity be deposed or made away. How shall such a Prince be thundered against with Curies and Deprivations; every bold and treacherous *Priest* be authorized to brand his Sacred Person with the odious Names of *Infidel*, *Heretick* and *Apostate*; and be *Apostolically* licensed to slander and *belibel* him, and furnished with Commissions to free his Subjects from their Duty and Allegiance; and to allure them to take up Arms against him? And if these Courses fail, and Men still continue loyal, they have Disciples ready by *secret* or *sudden* Arts to send him out of the World. And if any Man's Conscience be so nice as to boggle at it, his Scruples shall be removed; at worst, it shall pass for a *venial* Crime, and the *Pope* perhaps, (with the Help of a Limitation, that it be done for the Interest of the *Catholick* Cause) by his *Omnipotence* shall create it meritorious.

*De Rom.*  
*Pont. l. 5.*  
*c. 7. Col.*  
891.

Cardinal *Bellarmino* (whose Wit and Learning were employed to uphold a tottering Cause) maintains it stiffly, and in express Terms, That if a *King* be an *Heretick* or an *Infidel* (and we know what they mean by that, nay, he particularly names the *reformed* Princes of *England* amongst his Instances) and seeks to draw his Dominions unto his Sect; it is not only *lawful*, but *necessary*, to deprive him of

of his Kingdom. And although he knew that the whole Course of Antiquity would fly in the face of so bold an *Affertion*, yet he goes on to assert, That the Reason why the *Primitive Christians* did not attempt this upon *Nero*, *Dioclesian*, *Julian* the *Apostate*, and the like, was not out of *Conscience*, or that they boggled out of a Sense of Duty, but because they wanted *Means* and *Power* to effect it. A bold Piece of *Falseness*, this and how contrary to the plain and positive *Laws of Christ*, to the meek and *Primitive Spirit* of the Gospel! But by the *Cardinal's* leave, it could not be for want of *Power*; for if (as *Seneca* observes) he may be Master of any Man's Life that undervalues his own, it was then as easy for a *Christian* to have slain *Nero*, or *Dioclesian*, as it was of later Times for *Gerard* to pistol the Prince of *Orange*, or *Ravillac* to stab the King of *France*. Nay, take one of his own Instances, *Julian* the *Apostate*, a Prince bad enough, and that left no Method unattempted to seduce his Subjects to *Paganism* and *Idolatry*: yet though the greatest Part of his Army were *Christians*, they never so much as whispered a treasonable Design against him, using no other *Arms* (as we noted out of *Nazianzen*) but *Prayers* and *Tears*. Had *St. Paul* been of their Mind, he would have told the *Christian Romans* quite another Story, and instead of bidding them be subject to *Nero*, not only for *Wrath*, but for *Conscience sake*, would have instructed them to take all Opportunities to have murdered or deposed him. But I shall not reckon up the Villanies they have been guilty of, of this kind, nor pursue the odious and pernicious Consequences of their Doctrine and Practice. Thus much I could not but take notice of, being so immediately opposite to the whole Tenour of the Gospel, and so great a Scandal to Christianity. And I verily believe, That had the *Primitive Christians* been no



Part III. better *Subjects* than their *Emperors* were *Princes* ;  
 — had they practised on them those bloody *Artifices*  
 which have been common amongst those that call  
 themselves the only *Catholicks* ; that barbarous Deal-  
 ing would have been a greater curb to the flourishing  
 of the *Gospel*, than all the *ten Persecutions*. For  
 how could an impartial *Heathen* ever have believed  
 their *Doctrine* to have been of *God*, had their *Ac-*  
*tions* been so contrary to all *Principles* of *Natural*  
*Divinity* ? Sure I am, *Pagan Rome* was in this case  
 more *Orthodox* ; and their *Pontiffes* far better *Doc-*  
*tors* of *Divinity*. Their *Lex Julia* (as *Ulpian*, their  
 great *Lawyer* tells us) allotted the same *Penalty* to  
*Sacrilege* and *Treason* ; placing the one the very next  
 step to the other : thereby teaching us, That they  
 looked upon *Treason* against the *Prince*, as an *At-*  
*front* next to that which was immediately done a-  
 gainst the *Majesty* of *Heaven*. And *Marcellus*, the  
 great *Statelman* in *Tacitus*, lays it down for a *Max-*  
*im*, That *Subjects* may wish for good *Princes*, but ought  
 to bear with any. And shame it is, that any should  
 call themselves *Christians*, and yet be found  
 worse than they ; their *Principles* and *Practices* more  
 opposite to the known *Laws* of *God* and *Nature*, more  
 destructive to the *Peace* and *Welfare* of *Mankind*.

Lib. 7. de  
 Offic. pro-  
 cons. in l.  
 1. ff. ad  
 leg. Jul.  
 maj.

Hist. l. 4.  
 c. 8. 489

C H A P.

## C H A P. V.

Of their Penance, and the Discipline  
of the Ancient Church.

*This, wby last treated of. The Church as a Society founded by Christ, has its distinct Laws and Privileges. What the usual Offences. that came under the Church's Discipline. All Immorality open or confessed. Lapsing into Idolatry, the great Sin of those Times. How many ways usually committed. The Traditores who, and their Crime. What Penalties inflicted upon delinquent Persons. Delivering over to Satan, what. This extraordinary coercive Power, why vested in the Church. The common and standing Penalty by Excommunication. This practised among the ancient Gauls. An Account of it out of Cæsar. In use among the Jews. Thence derived to the Christians. This Punishment how expressed by Church-Writers. Managed according to the Nature of the Fault. The Rigour of it sometimes mitigated. Delinquent Clergymen degraded, and never admitted but to Lay-Communion. Instances of it. An Account of the Rise of Novatianism, and the Severity of its Principles. Stiled Cathari. Condemned by the Synod at Rome. Offenders in what manner dealt with. The Procedure of the Action described by Tertullian. Penitents how behaving themselves during their Suspension.*



## Primitive Christianity.

*The greatest not spared. The Case of Philip-  
pus and Theodosius. This Severity why used.  
Penances called Satisfaction, and why. The  
Use of the word [Satisfaction] in the ancient  
Fathers. Penitents how absolved. After what  
Time. In the Power of Bishops to extend or  
shorten these Penitentiary Humiliations. Four  
particular Cases observed, wherein the Time of  
Penance might be shortned. In what sense  
Communion is denied by some ancient Canons to  
Penitents at the Hour of Death. This Disci-  
pline administred primarily by Bishops. By his  
Leave, Presbyters, and (in necessity) Deacons  
might absolve. The publick Penitentiary when,  
and why insituted: when and why laid aside.  
Penitents taken into Communion by Martyrs  
and Confessors. This Power abused to excess.  
Cyprian's Complaint of the excessive Numbers  
of Libels of Peace, granted by the Martyrs to  
the Lapsed without the Knowledge of the Bishop.  
The Form of these Pacifick Libels exemplified  
out of Cyprian. Other Sorts of Libels. The  
Libellatici, who. The Thurificati. Several sorts  
of Libellatici. The Libellatici properly so  
called. Their Manner of Address to the Hea-  
then Magistrate, to procure their Exemption  
from Sacrificing. That they did not privately  
deny Christ, proved against Baronius. The  
Piety and Purity of the Primitive Church,  
Matter of just Admiration.*

Having

**H**AVING travelled through the several Stages of Chap. 5. the Subject I had undertaken, I should here have ended my Journey, but that there is one Thing yet remains, which was not properly reducible under any particular Head, being of a general relation to the whole; that is, to consider what Discipline was used towards Offenders in the antient Church: only premising this, That the *Christian Church* being founded and establish'd by *Christ* as a *Society* and *Corporation*, distinct from that of the *Commonwealth*, is by the very nature of its Constitution (besides what positive Ground and Warrant there may be for it in *Scripture*) invested with an inherent Power (besides what is borrowed from the *Civil Magistrate*) of censuring and punishing its Members that offend against the Laws of it, and this in order to the maintaining its Peace and Purity, For without such a fundamental Power as this, 'tis impossible that as a Society it should be able to subsist; the very nature of a Community necessarily implying such a Right inherent in it. Now for the better understanding what this Power was, and how exercised in the first Ages of the *Church*, we shall consider these four Things: What were the usual *Crimes* that came under the *Discipline* of the Antient Church; what *Penalties* were inflicted upon delinquent Persons; in what *Manner* Offenders were dealt with; and by whom this Discipline was administered.

*First*, What the usual *Crimes* and *Offences* were, which came under the Discipline of the antient Church. In the general, they were any Offences against the *Christian Law*, any Vice or *Immorality* that was either *publick* in it self, or made known, and made good to the Church. For the Holy and Good Christians of those times were *infinitely* careful to keep the Honour of their Religion unspotted, to stifle every Sin in its birth; and by bringing *Offen-*

Part III. ders to publick Shame and Penalty, to keep them from propagating the malignant Influence of a bad Example. For this Reason they watched over one another, told them *privately* of their *Faults* and *Failures*, and (when that would not do) brought them before the *Cognizance* of the Church. 'Tis needless to reckon up particular Crimes, when none were spared: Only because in those Days (by reason of the violent Heats of Persecution) the great *Temptation* which the weaker and more unsettled Christians were exposed to, was to deny their Profession, and to offer *Sacrifice* to the Heathen Gods; therefore lapsing into *Idolatry*, was the most common Sin that came before them; and of this they had very frequent Instances, it being that which for some Ages mainly exercised the Discipline of the Church. This Sin of *Idolatry*, or denying *Christ*, in those times was usually committed these three ways: Sometimes by exposing the *Scriptures* to the Rage and Malice of their Enemies, which was accounted a virtual Renouncing Christianity. This was especially remarkable under the *Dioclesian* Persecution in the *African* Churches. For *Dioclesian* had put forth an *Edict*, That *Christians* should deliver up their *Scriptures* and the Writings of the Church to be burnt. This Command was prosecuted with great Rigour and Fierceness, and many Christians to avoid the Storm delivered up their Bibles to the Scorn and Fury of their Enemies. Hence they were stiled *Traditores* (of whom there is frequent *Mention* in *Optatus* and *St. Augustine*) with whom the *Orthodox* refusing to join after the Persecution was over, the Difference broke out into Schism and Faction, and gave birth to that unhappy Sect of *Donatists*, which so much exercised the Christian Church. Otherwhiles, Christians became guilty of *Idolatry* by *actual* Sacrificing or Worshipping Idols; these were called *Thurificati*,  
from

from their burning *Incense* upon the Altars of the Heathen Deities, and were the grossest and vilest Sort of *Idolaters*. Others again fell into this Sin, by basely corrupting the Heathen Magistrate, and purchasing a *Warrant* of security from him, to exempt them from the Penalty of the Law, and the necessity of sacrificing and denying *Christ*; these were called *Libelatici*, of whom we shall speak more afterwards.

Secondly, What *Penalties* and Punishments were inflicted upon delinquent Persons: And they could be no other than such as were agreeable to the Nature and Constitution of the Church; which as it transacts only in *spiritual* Matters, so it could inflict no other than *spiritual* Censures and Chastisements. 'Tis true indeed, That in the first Age especially, the *Apostles* had a Power to inflict *bodily* Punishments upon Offenders, which they sometimes made use of upon great Occasions; as *St. Peter* did towards *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, striking them dead upon the place, for their notorious Couzenage and gross Hypocrisy. And *St. Paul* punished *Elymas* with Blindness, for his perverse and malicious Opposition of the Gospel: And this doubtless he primarily intends by his *delivering over Persons unto Satan*; for no sooner were they excommunicated and cut off from the Body of the Faithful, but *Satan*, as the common *Serjeant* and Jaylor seized upon them, and either by actual possessing, or some other Sign upon their Bodies, made appear that they were delivered over into his Power. This could not but strike a mighty Terror into Men, and make them stand in awe of the *Censures* of the Church: And questionless the main Design of the Divine Providence in affording this *extraordinary* Gift, was to supply the Defect of civil and coercive Power, of which the Church was then wholly destitute, and therefore needed some more than *ordinary* Assistance, especially at its first Constitution; some visible

Part III. *sible and sensible Punishments*, to keep its Sentence and *Determinations* from being slighted by bold and contumacious Offenders. How long this miraculous Power lasted in the *Church*, I know not; or whether at all beyond the *Apostles Age*. The common and standing *Penalty* they made use of, was *Excommunication* or *Suspension* from *Communion* with the *Church*; the *cutting off* and casting out an offending Person as a *rotten* and infected Member, till by *Repentance* and wholesome *Discipline* he was *cured* and restored; and then he was re-admitted into *Church-society*, and to a *Participation* of the *Ordinances* and *Privileges* of *Christianity*.

De Bell.  
Gall. l. 6.  
p. 135.

This Way of punishing by *Excommunication*, was not originally instituted by our *Lord*, or his *Apostles*, but had been antiently practised both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*. 'Twas commonly practised by the *Druides* (as *Cæsar*, who lived amongst them, informs us) who when any of the People became irregular and disorderly, presently *suspended* them from their *Sacrifices*. And the Persons thus suspended, were accounted in the Number of the most *impious* and *execrable* Persons. All Men stood off from them, shunned their *Company* and *Converse* as an *Infection* and a *Plague*; they had no *Benefit* of *Law*, nor any *Honour* or *Respect* shewn unto them: And of all *Punishments*, this they accounted most *extreme* and *severe*. So far he, giving an *Account* of this *Discipline* amongst the antient *Gauls*. In the *Jewish Church* nothing was more *familiar*; their three famous Degrees of *Excommunication*, נידוי *Niddui*, כרעם *Cherem*, שמתה *Shammatha*, are so commonly known, that 'twere impertinent to insult upon them. From the *Usage* of the *Jewish*, it was, amongst other *Rites*, adopted into the *Christian Church*, practised by the *Apostles*, and the *Churches* founded by them (whereof we have

Instances

Instances in the *New Testament*) but brought to **Chap. 5.**  
 greater *Perfection* in succeeding Times. 'Twas *va-*  
*riously* expressed by the antient Writers, though  
 much to the same purpose. Such Persons are said  
*abstineri*, to be kept back, a Word much used by  
 Cyprian and the *Synod of Illiberis*; ἀφορίζεσθαι, to  
 be *separated*, or to be separated from the Body of  
 Christ, as St. *Augustine* oft expresses it; ἐκκλησιαστικῆς  
 κοινωνίας ἀνασπάσειν, to be *wholly cut off* from Com-  
 munion, as 'tis in the *Apostolick Canons*. Sometimes  
 ἐπιπέσει ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, as the *Laodicean Synod* calls *Can. 28.*  
 it, to be *thrown out* of the Church, to be *anathema-*  
*tized*, and without the Communion and Pale of the *Epist. ad*  
 Church, as the Fathers of the Council of *Gangra* *Armen. E-*  
 have it. *pisc. præ-*  
*fix. Conc.*  
*Gangr.*

This Suspension, and the Penance that accom-  
 panied it, was greater or less, longer or shorter, ac-  
 cording to the Nature of the Crime; sometimes two,  
 three, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty *Years*, and  
 sometimes for the whole Life; nay, in some Cases it  
 was not taken off at Death, but Persons were left  
 to the Judgment of God, without any *Testimony* of  
 their Reconciliation to the Church. Though here-  
 in the Severity was mitigated, not only by private  
 Bishops, but by the great Council of *Nice*; which  
 ordained, That penitent Persons should not be de-  
 nied the Communion at the Hour of Death. Of  
 all which Cases, or the most material of them,  
 we have in the foregoing Discourse produced parti-  
 cular Instances in their proper Places. If the Per-  
 son offending happened to be in *Orders*, he for-  
 feited his Ministry; and though upon his Repen-  
 tance he was restored to Communion, yet it was  
 only as a *Lay-person*, never recovering the Honour  
 and Dignity of his Office. Thus *Cornelius* Bishop *Apud. Euf.*  
 of *Rome* giving *Fabius* of *Antioch* an Account of the *Hist. Eccl.*  
*Clanular* and *Schismatical* Ordination of *Novatian*, *l. 6. c. 43.*  
 tells *p. 243.*



Part III. tells him, That one of the Bishops that *ordained* him returned after to the Church, with Tears bewailing his Offence; whom, at the Instance of the People, he received into *Lay-Communion*. The same

*Epist.* 52. *Cyprian* writing about this very Case, relates of *Trophimus* (who was either the very Bishop mentioned by *Cornelius*, or one of his Collegues) that returning to the Church with great Demonstrations of Repentance he was re-admitted, but no otherwise than in the Capacity of a Lay-man. And speaking else-

*Epist.* 68. where of *Basilides's* Repentance, he tells us, He had no Thoughts of retaining his *Bishoprick*; making account he was very well dealt with, if upon his Repentance he might but communicate as a *Layman*, and be received amongst the Number of the *Faithful*.

This, *St. Basil* tells us, was an ancient *Canon* and Practice of the Church, and accordingly ordains, *Can.* 3. p. That a *Deacon* guilty of Fornication should be deposed from his Office; and being thrust down into the Rank of the Laity, should in that quality be admitted to Communion.

*Can.* 10. *Conc. Nic.* Indeed they strove by all ways imaginable to discourage Sin, never thinking the Curb strong enough, so they might but keep Persons within the Bounds of Order and Regularity; insomuch, that by some the String was stretched too far, and all Pardon denied to them that had sinned. This uncomfortable Doctrine was, if not first coined, yet mainly vended by the *Novatian* Party. For *Novatus*, *St. Cyprian's* Presbyter, being suspended by him for his vile Enormities, fled over to *Rome*, and there joined himself to *Novatian*, a Presbyter of that Church (these two Names are frequently confounded by the *Greek* Writers) who ambitiously sought to make himself Bishop, and to thrust out *Cornelius* newly elected into that See; but not being able to compass his Design, between them they started this amongst

amongst other *heretical* Opinions, That the lapsed Chap. 5.  
 (who through fear of Suffering had fallen in the  
 time of Persecution) were not to be admitted to  
 Repentance; and that though they should ever so oft  
 confess their Sins, and ever so sincerely forsake  
 them, yet there was no Hope of Salvation for them: *Euf. ubi*  
 At least-wise (for so I incline to understand them) *supr. p. 242.*  
 that it was not in the Power of the Church to ab- *Epiph. Har.*  
 solve or give them any hopes of Pardon, leaving *59. contra*  
 them to the Judgment of God; styling themselves *Catharos,*  
 (and not only, as *Balsamon* affirms, ironically stiled *p. 214.*  
 by others) by the Name of *Cathari*, the pure and un- *In Can 8.*  
 defiled Party. But they were herein presently con- *Conc. Nic.*  
 demned by a *Synod* of sixty Bishops, and more than  
 as many Presbyters and Deacons gathered at *Rome*  
 (and the Decree consented to and published by the  
 rest of the Bishops in their several *Provinces*) con-  
 cluding, That *Novatus* and his Party, and all that  
 had subscribed to his most *inhuman* and merciless O-  
 pinion, should be cast out of the Church; and that  
 the Brethren, who in that sad Calamity had fallen  
 from their Profession, should be healed and restored  
 by the Arts and Methods of Repentance. Which  
 brings us to consider,

*Thirdly*, How and in what *Manner* Offenders  
 were dealt with, both as to their *Suspension* and *Pe-*  
*nance*, and as to their *Absolution*. This Affair was u- *Ap. c. 39.*  
 sually managed after this Order: At their publick As- *p. 31.*  
 semblies (as we find in *Tertullian*) amongst other  
 Parts of their holy Exercises, there were Exhorta-  
 tions, Reproofs, and a *divine Censure*; for the Judg-  
 ment is given with great Weight, as amongst those  
 that are sure that God beholds what they do: And  
 this is one of the highest *Præludiums* and Forerun-  
 ners of the *Judgment* to come, when the delinquent  
 Person is banished from the *Communion* of *Prayers*,  
*Assemblies*, and all holy *Commerce*. By this Passage  
 we

Part. III. we clearly see, that the first thing in this solemn  
 Action, was to make *Reproofs* and *Exhortations*, thereby  
 to bring the Offender to the Sight and Acknowledg-  
 ment of his Faults; then the *Sentence* or *Censure* was  
 passed upon him, whereby he was suspended not only  
 from the Communion of the Holy *Eucharist*, but  
 from all holy Commerce in any (especially *publick*)  
 Duty of Religion. We cannot imagine, that in e-  
 very Person that stood under this Capacity, a formal  
 Sentence was always denounced against him; it  
 being many times sufficient, that the Fact he had  
 done was evident and *notorious*, as in the case of the  
*laps'd* that had offer'd Sacrifice; for in this case the  
 Offender was look'd upon as *ipso facto* excommuni-  
 cate, and all religious *Commerce* forborn towards him.  
 'Tis true, that in some Cases the *Martyrs* (as we  
 shall see more anon) finding such *laps'd* Persons  
 truly penitent, did receive them into *private* Com-  
 munion: So did those *Martyrs Dionysius Alexandri-  
 nus* speaks of, in his Letter to *Fabius* Bishop of *Antioch*;  
 they took the Penitents that had fallen into  
 Idolatry into their Company, and communicated  
 with them both at *Prayers* and *Meals*; but to *pub-  
 lick* Communion they were never admitted, till they  
 had exactly fulfilled the Discipline of the Church,  
 which principally consisted in many severe Acts of  
 Repentance and Mortification, more or less accord-  
 ing to the Nature of the Offence.

*Eus. Hist.  
 Eccl. l. 6. c.  
 42. p. 241.*

*Tert. de  
 pœnitent.*

*c. 9. p. 127.*

*Vide Eus.*

*l. 5. c. 28.*

*p. 197.*

During this Space of *Penance*, they appeared in  
 all the Formalities of Sorrow and Mourning, in a  
 sordid and squalid Habit, with a sad Countenance,  
 and a Head hung down, with *Tears* in their Eyes,  
 standing without at the *Church-doors*, (for they  
 were not suffer'd to enter in) falling down upon  
 their Knees to the Ministers as they went in, and  
 begging the Prayers of all good Christians for them-  
 selves, with all the Expressions and Demonstrations  
 of

of a sorrowful and dejected Mind, reckoning the lower Chap. 5. they lay in Repentance, the higher it would exalt them; the more sordid they appeared, the more they should be cleansed and purified; the less they spared themselves, the more God would spare them. At these times also they made open Confession of their Faults, this being accounted the very Spring of Repentance, and without which they concluded it could not be real: *Out of Confession Ibid.* (says Tertullian) is born Repentance, and by Repentance God is pacified. And therefore without this, neither Riches nor Honour would procure any Admission *Ib. l. 6.* into the Church. Thus Eusebius reports, That *c. 34.* when Philippus the Emperor would have gone in *p. 232.* with the rest of the Christians upon Easter-Eve, to have partaked of the Prayers of the Church; the Bishop of the Place would by no means suffer it, unless he first made confession of his Sins, and passed through the Order of the Penitents, being guilty of very great and enormous Sins; which 'tis said he very willingly submitted to, testifying by his Actions his real and religious Fear of the Divine Majesty. This Story, though, as to the main of it, it might be true, yet as fastened upon Philip the Emperor, I have formerly shewed it to be false; and that it's rather meant of one Philippus, who was Governour in Egypt, and professed himself a Christian: But however this was, 'tis certain that a Person as great as he, Theodosius the Great, for his bloody and barbarous Slaughter of the Thessalonians, was by St. Ambrose Bishop of Milan suspended, brought to publick Confession, and forced to undergo a severe Course of Penance for eight Months together; when after great Demonstrations of a hearty Sorrow and sincere Repentance, not more rigidly imposed upon him, than readily and willingly received by him, after his usual Prostrations in the Church, (as if unworthy

Part III. worthy either to stand or kneel) crying out in the Words of *David*, *My Soul cleaveth unto the Dust*, quicken thou me according to thy Word; after having often torn his Hair, beat his Forehead, watered his Cheeks with Tears, and humbly begged Peace and Pardon, he was absolved, and restored to Communion with the Church: of which Passage, they who would know more, may find the Story largely related by *Theodoret*.

*H. ff. Eccl.*  
l. 5. c. 15.

This Severity was used towards Offenders, partly to make them more sensible of their Sins, partly to fright and deter others; but principally to give Satisfaction both to God and his Church, concerning the Reality and Sincerity of their Repentance. Hence it is that these Penances, in the Writings of the Fathers, are to often called *Satisfactions*: for when ever those Fathers use the Word, 'tis either with respect to *Men* or *God*; if to *Men*, then the meaning

*Aug. En-*  
*chirid.* c.  
65. tom. 3.

is, That by these external Acts of Sorrow and Mortification they satisfy the Church of their Repentance, and make reparation for those Offences and Scandals which they had given by their Sins: If to *God*, then 'tis taken for the Acknowledgement of a Man's Fault, and the begging of Pardon and Remission. Thus *Cyprian*, speaking of the State of impenitent Sinners aggravates it by this, that they do *peccare, nec satisfacere*; sin, but make no Satisfaction; i. e. (as in the very next Words he explains it) they do

*Ib. p. 173.*

not *peccata desistere*, confess and bewail their Sins. And before, discoursing about God's being the only Object of Tears and Sorrow for Sin, which is to be addressed to God and not Man; he tells us, 'tis God that is to be appeased by Satisfaction, that he being greatly offended, is to be intreated by a long and full Repentance, as being alone able to pardon those Sins that are committed against him. So that the Satisfaction which they reckoned they made

to

to God, consisted in seeking to avert his Displeasure, Chap. 5. and to regain his forfeited Favour by a deep Contrition and Sorrow for Sin, by a real Acknowledgment and forsaking of their Faults, and by an humble giving to God the Glory both of his Mercy and his Justice. Thence Confession is called by *Tertullian* the *Counsel* or Intendment of Satisfaction. And a little after he describes it thus: *Confession* (says He) is that whereby we acknowledge our Offence to God, not as if he were ignorant of it, but in as much as by *Confession* Satisfaction is forwarded, by *Confession* Repentance is produced, and by *Repentance* God is appeased. The same both he, *Cyprian*, and others frequently use in the same Sense; which I note the rather, because of that absurd and impious Doctrine, so current amongst the Papists, and which they pretend to derive from these very Fathers, That by Works of Penance, *Compensation* is made to God for the Debt of Punishment that was contracted; whereby, at least, the temporal Penalties due to Sin are *meritoriously* expiated and done away. But this, besides that it is flatly repugnant to the Doctrine of *Antiquity*, how much 'tis derogatory to the Honour of Divine Grace, and the infinite Satisfaction of the Son of God, I shall not now stand to dispute. To return therefore: This Term of Penance was usually exacted with great Rigour, and seldom dispensed with, no Indulgence or Admission being granted till the full time was completed. Therefore *Cyprian* smartly chides with some *Presbyters*, who had taken upon them to absolve the Lapsed before their time: And that whereas in lesser Offences Men were obliged to the just time of Penance, and to observe the Order of Discipline; they in a Crime of so heinous a Nature, had hand over head admitted them to Communion, before they had gone through their Penance and Confession, and fulfilled the regular Customs and Orders of the Church.

*Tert. penit. c. 18. p. 126, 127.*

*Ep. 9. p. 21.*

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Part III. The Time of Penance being ended, they addressed themselves to the Governours of the Church for *Ab-Cypr. ep. 11* solution; hereupon their Repentance was taken into p. 24. Examination, and being found to be sincere and real, they were openly re-admitted into the Church, by the Imposition of the Hands of the Clergy: The Party to be absolved kneeling down between the Knees of the *Bishop*, or, in his Absence, of the *Presbyter*, who laying his Hand upon his Head solemnly blessed and absolved him. Whence doubtless sprang that absurd and senseless Calumny which the *Heathens* laid upon the *Christians*, That they were wont *Sacerdotis colere genitalia*; so forward were they to catch at any Reproach which the most crooked and malicious Invention could insinuate and suggest. The Penitent being absolved, was received with the universal Joy and Acclamation of the People, as one returned from the State of the *Dead* (for such, 'tis plain, they accounted them while under a State of Guilt, especially the Lapsed; as *Cyprian* positively affirms them to be) being embraced by *Id. Epist. 27. p. 39.* his Brethren, who blessed God for his Return, and *Vid. Epist. 46. p. 60.* many times wept for the Joy of his Recovery: Who upon his Absolution was now restored to a Participation of the *Lord's-Supper*, and to all other Acts of Church-Communion, which by his Crimes he had forfeited, and from which he had been suspended, till he had given satisfactory Evidence of his Repentance, and Purpose to persevere under the exact Discipline of Christianity. This was the ordinary way wherein they treated *Criminals* in the Primitive Church; but in Cases of Necessity (such as that of Danger of Death) they did not rigidly exact the set Time of Penance, but absolved the Person, that so he might die in the Peace and Communion of the Church. The Story of *Sera-pion at Alexandria* we have formerly mentioned, who

*Eus. Hist. Eccl. 6. c. 44. p. 246.*

who being suddenly surprized with Death while he was under the State of Penance, and not being able to die till he had received Absolution; sent for the Presbyter to testify his Repentance and absolve him: But he being also at that time sick, sent him a Part of the consecrated Elements, which he had by him; upon the receiving whereof, he breathed out his Soul with great Comfort and Satisfaction, that he now died in Communion with the Church.

The Truth is, the Time of these Penitentiary Humiliations often varied according to the Circumstances of the Case; it being much in the Power of the Bishops and Governours of the Church to shorten the time, and sooner to absolve and take them into Communion; the medicinal Virtue of Repentance, lying not in the Duration, but the Manner of it, as St. Basil speaks in this very Case. A Learned Man has observed to my Hand, four particular Cases wherein they were wont to anticipate the usual time of Absolution: The first was, (what I observed but now) when Persons were in danger of Death; this was agreed to by Cyprian and the Martyrs, and the Roman Clergy, and the Letters (as he tells us) sent through the whole World to all the Churches.

This also was provided for by the great Council of Nice, That as for those that were at the point of Death, the antient and canonical Rule should be observed still, That when any were at the point of Death, they should by no means be deprived of the last and necessary Viaticum, i: e. the Holy Sacrament, which was their great Symbol of Communion. And here, for the better understanding some Passages, it may not be unuseful once for all to add this Note; That whereas many of the antient Canons (of the Illiberine Council especially) positively deny Communion to some Sorts of Penitents even at the



Part III. *hour* of Death, they are not to be understood, as if the Church mercileſly denied all *Indulgence* and *Absolution* to any Penitent at ſuch a time; but only that it was thought fit to deny them the uſe of the *Eucharift*, which was the great *Pledge* and *Teſtimony* of their *Communion* with the Church.

The ſecond Caſe was in time of *imminent* Perſecution, conceiving it but fit at ſuch times to diſpenſe with the Rigour of the Diſcipline, that ſo *Penitents* being received to the *Grace* of Chriſt, and to the *Communion* of the Church, might be the better armed and enabled to *contend earnestly* for the *Faith*.

Ep. 54.  
p. 76.

This was reſolved and agreed upon by *Cyprian* and a whole Council of *African* Biſhops, whereof they give an *Account* to *Cornelius* Biſhop of *Rome*; That in regard *Perſecution* was drawing on, they held it convenient and neceſſary, that *Communion* and *Reconciliation* ſhould be granted to the *Lapsed*, not only to thoſe that were a *dying*, but even to the *living*; that they might not be left naked and unarmed in the time of *Battle*, but be able to defend themſelves with the *Shield* of *Chriſt's* Body and Blood. For how (ſay they) ſhall we teach and perſuade them to ſhed their Blood in the *Cauſe* of *Chriſt*, if we deny them the Benefit of his Blood? How ſhall we make them fit to drink the *Cup* of *Martyrdom*, unleſs we firſt admit them in the Church to a right of *Communication*, to drink of the *Cup* of the Blood of Chriſt? A third Caſe wherein they relaxed the Severity of this *Diſcipline*, was, when great *Multitudes* were concerned, or ſuch *Persons* as were likely to draw great Numbers after them: In this Caſe they thought it *prudent* and *reasonable* to deal with *Persons* by ſomewhat milder and gentler Methods, leſt by holding them to Terms of Rigour and Austerity, they ſhould provoke them to fly off either to *Heathens* or to *Hereticks*. This Courſe

*Cyprian*

*Cyprian* tells us he took ; he complied with the Necessity of the Times, and like a wise Physician yielded a little to the Humour of the Patient, to provide for his Health, and to cure his Wounds; and quotes herein the Example of *Cornelius* of *Rome*, who dealt just so with *Trophimus* and his Party : And elsewhere, That out of an earnest Desire to regain and resettle the Brethren, he was ready to connive at many things, and to forgive any thing, and did not examine and exact the greatest Crimes with that full Power and Severity that he might ; inso-much that he thought he did almost offend himself in an over-liberal remitting other Mens Offences. Lastly, in absolving Penitents, and mitigating the Rigours of their Repentance, they used to have respect to the Person of the Penitent, to his Dignity, or Age, or Infirmary, or the Course of his past Life ; sometimes to the Greatness of his Humility, and the Impression which his present Condition made upon him. Thus the *Ancyran* Council impowers Bishops to examine the manner of Men's Conversation and Repentance, and accordingly either to moderate or enlarge their time of Penance ; but especially that regard be had to their Conversation both before and since their Offence, that so Clemency and Indulgence may be extended to them. So for the Case of Persons of more than ordinary Rank and Dignity, or of a more tender and delicate Constitution, *Chryso-stom* determines, That in chastising and punishing their Offences, they be dealt withal in a more peculiar manner than other Men ; lest by holding them under over-rigorous Penalties, they should be tempted to fly out in Despair, and so throwing off the Reins of Modesty, and the Care of their own Happiness and Salvation, should run headlong into all manner of Vice and Wickedness. So wisely did the Prudence and Piety of those Times deal with

Ep. 52. ubi prius.

Ep. 55. p. 85.

Can. 5. Vi.  
Conc. Nic.  
Can. 12.

De sacerdot. l. 2. c. 4. p. 18. tom. 4.

Part. III. Offenders; neither letting the Reins so loose as to patronize *Presumption*, or encourage any Man to sin, nor yet holding them so strait as to drive Men into *Despair*.

The fourth and last *Circumstance* concerns the *Persons* by whom this *Discipline* was administered. Now though 'tis true, that this *Affair* was managed in the *publick* Congregation, and seldom or never done without the *Consent* and *Approbation* of the

*Apol. c. 39.* People (as *Cyprian* more than once and again expressly tells us;) yet was it ever accounted a *ministerial* Act, and properly belonged to them. *Tertullian*, speaking of Church-Censures, adds, That the *Elders* that are approved, and have attained that Honour, not by Purchase but Testimony, *preside* there-

*Inter epist. in.* And *Firmilian* Bishop of *Cæsarea* in *Cappadocia*, in *Cyp. 146.* a Letter to *St. Cyprian*, speaking of the *Majores natu*, the *Seniors* that *preside* in the Church, tells us, That to them belongs the Power of *Baptizing*, *Imposing Hands*, (*viz.* in *Penance* and *Ordination*.) By the Bishop it was primarily and usually administered; the *determining* the time and manner of *Repentance*, and the conferring *Pardon* upon the penitent Sinner, being Acts of the *highest* Power and Jurisdiction, and therefore reckoned to appertain to the *highest* Order in the Church. Therefore it is provided by the *Illiberine* Council, that *Penance* shall be prescribed by none but the *Bishop*; only in Case of *Necessity*, such as *Sickness* and *Danger* of *Death*, by *Leave* and *Command* from the Bishop, the *Presbyter* or *Deacon* might impose *Penance* and absolve.

*Can. 32.*  
*p. 40.*

*Epist. 12.* Accordingly we find *Cyprian*, amongst other Directions to his Clergy how to carry themselves towards the *Lapsed*, giving them this; That if any were overtaken with *Sickness* or present *Danger*, they should not stay for his coming, but the sick Person should make *Confession* of his Sins to the next *Presbyter*.

*p. 25. Vid.*  
*Conc. 2.*  
*Carthag.*  
*Can. 4.*

byter, or if a Presbyter could not be met with, to Chap. 5.  
 a Deacon; that so laying Hands upon him, he might  
 depart in the Peace of the Church.

But though while the Number of *Christians* was small, and the Bounds of particular *Churches* little, Bishops were able to manage these and other Parts of their Office in their own Persons, yet soon after the Task began to grow too great for them; and therefore about the time of the *Decian* Persecution, when Christians were very much multiplied, and the Number of the Lapsed great, it seemed good to the Prudence of the Church, partly for the Ease of the Bishop, and partly to provide for the Modesty of Persons, in being brought before the whole Church to confess every Crime; to appoint a *public Penitentiary* (some Holy, Grave and Prudent *Presbyter*) whose Office it was to take the Confession of those Sins which Persons had committed after *Baptism*, and by Prayers, Fastings, and other Exercises of Mortification, to prepare them for Absolution. He was a kind of *Censor morum*, to inquire into the Lives of Christians, to take an Account of their Failures, and to direct and dispose them to Repentance. This Office continued for some Hundreds of Years, till it was *abrogated* by *Nectarius* (St. *Chrysoptom's* Predecessor in the *See* of *Constantinople*) upon the occasion of a notorious Scandal that arose about it. A Woman of good Rank and Quality had been with the *Penitentiary*, and confessed all her Sins committed since Baptism; he enjoined her to give up her self to Fasting and Prayer: But long after she came to him and confessed, That while she was conversant in the Church to attend upon those Holy Exercises, she had been tempted to commit Folly and Lewdness with a *Deacon* of the Church; whereupon the *Deacon* was immediately cast out; But the People being exceedingly troubled

Part III. at the Scandal, and the Holy Order hereby exposed to the Scorn and Derision of the *Gentiles*, *Nectarius*, by the Advice of *Eudæmon* a Presbyter of that Church, wholly took away the Office of the publick *Penitentiary*; leaving every one to the Care and Liberty of his own Conscience, to prepare himself for the Holy Sacrament. This Account *Socrates* assures us he had from *Eudæmon's* own Mouth. And *Sozomen* adds, That almost all Bishops followed *Nectarius's* Example, in abrogating this Office.

But besides the ordinary and standing Office of the Clergy, we find even some of the Laity, the *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, that had a considerable hand in *absolving* Penitents, and restoring them to the Communion of the Church. For the *understanding* of which, we are to know, That as the *Christians* of those times had a mighty Reverence for *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, as the great Champions of Religion, so the *Martyrs* took upon them to dispense in extraordinary Cases; for it was very customary in Times of Persecution for those, who through fear of suffering had lapsed into *Idolatry*, to make their Address to the *Martyrs* in Prison, and to beg Peace of them, that they might be restored to the Church: Who considering their *Petitions*, and weighing the *Circumstances* of their Case, did frequently grant their Requests, mitigate their Penance, and by a *Note* signified under their Hands, signify what they had done, to the Bishop; who taking an Account of their Condition, absolved and admitted them to Communion, Of these *Libelli*; or Books granted by the *Martyrs* to the *Lapsed*, there is mention in

Ep. 10, 11, *Cyprian* at every turn; who complains they were  
 12. & *ali-* come to that excessive Number, that *thousands* were  
 bi. Ep. 14 granted almost *every day*. This many of them took  
 p. 27. upon them to do with great Smartness and Authority, and without that Respect that was due to the  
 Bishops,

Bishops, as appears from the *Note* written to *Cyprian* Chap. 5: by *Lucian*, in the name of the *Confessors*; which be-  
 cause 'tis but short, and withal shews the Form and  
 Manner of those *pacifick Libels*, it may not be  
 amiss to set it down; and thus it runs: *All the*  
*Confessors to Cyprian the Bishop, greeting. Know that*  
*we have granted Peace to all those, of whom you have*  
*had an account what they have done, how they have*  
*behaved themselves since the Commission of their Crimes,*  
*and we would that these Presents should be by you im-*  
*parted to the rest of the Bishops. We wish you to main-*  
*tain Peace with the holy Martyrs. Written by Lucian*  
*of the Clergy, the Exorcist and Reader being present.*  
 This was look'd upon as very peremptory and magi-  
 sterial; and therefore of this Confidence and Pre-  
 sumption, and Carelessness in promiscuously granting  
 these *Letters of Peace*, *Cyprian* not without reason  
 complains, in an *Epistle to the Clergy of Rome*.

Besides these *Libels* granted by the *Martyrs*, there  
 were other *Libelli* granted by *Heathen Magistrates*,  
 (of which it may not be impertinent to speak a lit-  
 tle) whence the lapsed that had them, were com-  
 monly called *Libellatici*, and they were of several  
 Sorts: Some writing their Names *in libellis*, in Books,  
 and professing themselves to worship *Jupiter, Mars*,  
 and the rest of the *Heathen Gods*, presented them to  
 the *Magistrate*; and these did really sacrifice, and  
 pollute not their *Souls* only, but their *Hands* and their  
*Lips*, with unlawful Sacrifice, as the *Clergy of Rome*  
 expresses it in a *Letter to St. Cyprian*; these were  
 called *Tburificati*, and *Sacrificati*, from their having  
 offered *Incense* and *Sacrifices*. Somewhat of this na-  
 ture was that *Libel* which *Pliny* speaks of in his *Epistle*  
 to the *Emperor Trajan*, presented to him while  
 he was *Proconsul of Bithynia*; containing a *Cata-*  
*logue of the Names of many, some whereof had been*  
*accused to be Christians and denyed it; others con-*  
*fessed*

Part III. fessed they had been so some Years since, but had re-  
 nounced it; all of them adoring the Images of the  
 Gods and the Emperor's Statue, offering Sacrifice,  
 and blaspheming Christ: and were accordingly dis-  
 missed and released by him. Others there were, who  
 did not themselves sign or present any such *Libels*,  
 but some Heathen Friends for them, (and sometimes  
 out of kindness they were encouraged to it by the  
 Magistrates themselves) and were hereupon re-  
 leased out of Prison, and had the favour not to be  
 urged to sacrifice. Nay, *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*  
 speaks of some Masters, who, to escape themselves,  
 compelled their *Servants* to do sacrifice for them; to  
 whom he appoints a three Years Penance for that sin-  
 ful compliance and dissimulation. A third Sort there,  
 was, who finding the edge and keenness of their  
*Judges* was to be taken off with a Sum of *Money*,  
 freely confessed to them, That they were Christians  
 and could not sacrifice, prayed them to give them a  
*Libel* of Dismission, for which they would give them  
 a suitable Reward. These were most properly called  
*Libellatici* and *Libellati*. *Cyprian* acquaints us with  
 the manner of their Address to the Heathen Magi-  
 strate, bringing in such a Person thus speaking for  
 himself: I have both read and learnt from the Ser-  
 mons of the *Bishop*, That the Servant of God is not  
 to sacrifice to Idols, nor to worship Images; where-  
 fore that I might not do what was unlawful, having  
 an opportunity of getting a *Libel* offered, (which  
 yet I would not have accepted, had it not offered it  
 self) I went to the Magistrate, or caused another to  
 go in my Name, and tell him, That I was a *Christi-  
 an*, and that it was not lawful for me to sacrifice,  
 nor to approach the Altars of the Devils; that there-  
 fore I would give him a Reward to excuse me, that  
 I might not be urged to what was unlawful. These,  
 though not altogether so bad as the *Sacrificati*,  
 yet

Ep. 31. p.  
44.

Can. 7.  
Synodic.  
tom. 2.  
part. 1. p.  
12a

yet *Cyprian* charges as guilty of *implicit* Idolatry having defiled their Consciences with the purchase of these Books, and done that by *consent* which others had *actually* done.

I know *Baronius* will needs have it (and he boasts that all that had written before him were mistaken in the Case) That these *Libellatici* were not exempted from denying Christ, nor gave Money to that end; that they only requested of the Magistrate, That they might not be compelled to offer Sacrifice; that they were ready to deny *Christ*, and were willing to give him a Reward to dispense with them only so far, and to furnish them with a *Libel* of Security; and that they did really deny him before they obtained their *Libel*. But nothing can be more plain, both from this and several other Passages in *Cyprian*, than that they did not either *publicly* or *privately* sacrifice to Idols, or *actually* deny Christ; and therefore bribed the Magistrate that they might not be forced to do what was unlawful. And hence *Cyprian* argues them as guilty by their *Wills* and *Consent*, and that they had *implicitly* denied Christ: How? by *actually* doing it? No, but by *pretending* they had done what others were really guilty of. Certainly the *Cardinal's* Mistake arose from a not right understanding the several Sorts of the *Libellatici*, the first whereof (as we have shewn) did *actually* sacrifice and deny Christ.

And now having taken this View of the Severity of Discipline in the Ancient Church, nothing remains, but to *admire* and *imitate* their Piety and Integrity, their infinite Hatred of Sin, their Care and Zeal to keep up that Strictness and Purity of Manners, that had rendered their Religion so renowned and triumphant in the World. A Discipline, which how happy were it for the *Christian* World, were it again re-settled in its due Power and Vigour!

which

*Annal.*  
*Ecc. ad An.*  
*CCLIII.*  
*num. XX.*  
*& seq.*  
*tom. 2.*



Part III. which particularly is the *Judgment and Desire* of our own Church concerning the Solemn *Quadragesimal Penances and Humiliations* : *In the Primitive Church* (says the *Preface to the Commination*) *there was a godly Discipline, That at the Beginning of Lent, such Persons as stood convicted of notorious Sin, were put to open Penance, and punished in this World, that their Souls might be saved in the Day of the Lord ; and that others, admonished by their Example, might be the more afraid to offend. Which said Discipline it is much to be wished might be restored again.*

20 JU 66



***FINIS.***

# A CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX

OF THE

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According to the Vulgar Computation.

With an Account of the Editions of their Works.

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| Isidorus Pelusiotæ                         | 430                | { Hist. Relig.       | { Genev. 1612    |
| Jo. Cassianus                              | 440                | { de Cur. Græc. aff. | { Par. 1555      |
| Socrates                                   | }                  | Mats. Theb. Leg.     | Heidel. 1592     |
| Sozomenus                                  |                    | Epist.               | apud Sur. 1617   |
|  |                    | de Persec. Vand.     | Hanov. 1569      |
|  |                    | Chronic.             | Par. 1569        |
|  |                    | Opera.               | apud Uffer.      |
|  |                    | { Bibliothec.        | { Par. 1640      |
|  |                    | { Nomocan.           | { Rothom. 1613   |
| Theodoretus                                | 440                | Martyrolog.          | Par. 1615        |
|  |                    | Lexic.               | apud Sur. 1618   |
| Eucherius Lugdunensis                      | 440                | Vit. Naz.            | Genev. 1618      |
| Sidonius Appollinaris                      | 486                | Vitæ Sanctorum.      | apud Naz.        |
| Sidonius Appollinaris                      | 486                | Schol. in Can.       | apud Sur. 1618   |
| Victor Uvicensis                           | 490                | Epitom. Can.         | Par. 1618        |
| Jo. Malela                                 | 600                | Epitom. Can.         | ap. Jus. Gr. Ro. |
| Gregorius M.]                              | 600                | Schol. iq. Can.      | in Synodic.      |
| Photius                                    | 858                |                      |                  |
| Ado Viennensis                             | 870                |                      |                  |
| Suidas                                     | 880                |                      |                  |
| Gregorius Presbyter                        | 940                |                      |                  |
| Simeon Metaphrastes                        | 1030               |                      |                  |
| Jo. Zonaras                                | 1118               |                      |                  |
| Const. Harmenopolus                        | 1115               |                      |                  |
| Alexius Aristenus.                         | 1166               |                      |                  |

| <i>Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers.</i> | <i>Flour. A. D.</i> | <i>Books.</i>      | <i>Editions.</i> |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Theodosius Balsamon                         | 1191                | Schol. in Can.     | in Synodic.      |
| Nicephorus Callistus                        | 1310                | Hist. Eccl.        | Par. 1630        |
| Matthæus Balastares                         | 1335                | Nomocan. Alphab.   | Oxon. 1672       |
| Josephus Ægyptius                           | 1390                | Paraphras. Arab. 3 | Oxon. 1672       |
| Josephus the Jew                            | 70                  | Conciliorum 3      | Genev. 1611      |
|   |                     | Antiquit. Jud.     |                  |

| <i>Heathen Writers.</i> | <i>Flour. A. D.</i> | <i>Books.</i>      | <i>Editions.</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| M. Varro                | } ante Chr. Nat.    |                    |                  |
| M. T. Cicero            |                     |                    |                  |
| Jul. Cæsar              |                     |                    |                  |
| C. Tacitus              |                     |                    |                  |
| C. Tacitus              | 98                  |                    | Amst. 1649       |
| Plinius Secundus        | 100                 | Epistol.           | L. Bat. 1653     |
| Suetonius               | 110                 | Vitæ Cæsar.        | L. Bat. 1651     |
| Brutius, Chronograph.   |                     |                    | apud Euseb.      |
| Plutarchus              | 110                 | Opera.             | Par. 1624        |
| Celsus Epicureus        | 110                 | Scrm. Verus.       | apud Orig.       |
| Lucianus                | 110                 | Opera              | Salm. 1618       |
| Galenus                 | 150                 | Oper. edit. Græc.  | Ven. 1525        |
| Arrianus                | 150                 | in Epictet.        | Cant. 1655       |
| M. Antoninus Imp.       | 161                 | de rebus suis.     | Cant. 1652       |
| Dion. Cassius           | 224                 | Hist. Rom.         | Hanov. 1606      |
| Ulpianus J. C.          | 230                 | de Offic. Procon.  | in Digest.       |
| Porphyrius              | 280                 | de Abstinent.      | Cant. 1655       |
| Lampridius              | 290                 | Vit. Alex. Sev.    | Hist. August.    |
| Vulcatius Gallicanus    | 290                 | Vit. Avid. Coff.   | L. Bat. 1661     |
| Julianus Imp.           | 361                 | Opera              | Par. 1630        |
| Entropius               | 364                 | Hist. Rom.         | int. Script. H.  |
|                         |                     |                    | Aug. 1568        |
| Emapius                 | 370                 | de Vit. Philosoph. | Gen. 1616        |
| Libanius                | 370                 | Orationes.         | Par. 1627        |
| Ammianus Marcellinus    | 370                 | Hist. Rom.         | inter H. Aug.    |
|                         |                     |                    | Script. 1568     |
| Vegetius                | 370                 | de re Milit.       | Wesel. 1670      |
| Symmachus               | 380                 | Epistol.           | Lugd. 1598       |
| Zosimus                 | 410                 | Histor. Nov.       | ad calc. Herod.  |
|                         |                     |                    | Lugd. 1611       |
| Macrobius               | 422                 | Saturnal.          | L. Bat. 1628     |
| Simplicius              | 530                 | Com. in Epict.     | L. Bat. 1640     |

*Council*

| <i>Councils</i>          | <i>Holden A. D.</i> | <i>Councils</i>              | <i>Holden A. D.</i> |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
|                          |                     | <b>Concilium</b>             |                     |
| Africanum sub Cypriano.  |                     | Constantinopolitan. Gen. II. | 381                 |
| contra Novatum           | 250                 | Carthaginense I.             | 390                 |
| Aliud sub Cypriano de    |                     | Carthaginense II.            | 397                 |
| Hæret. Baptiz.           | 260                 | Carthaginense III.           | 398                 |
| Aliud sub Cypriano       | 263                 | Carthaginense IV.            | 400                 |
| Antiochenum contra Paul. | } 267               | Epheſinum Generale III.      | 431                 |
| Samof.                   |                     | Arauficanum                  | 441                 |
| Illiberinum.             | 305                 | Chalcedonenſe Generale IV.   | 451                 |
| Neocæſarienſe            | 314                 | Aurelianenſe                 | 502                 |
| Ancyranum                | 315                 | Agathenſe                    | 505                 |
| Nicænum Generale I.      | 325                 | Toletanum IV.                | 633                 |
| Arelatenſe L.            | 326                 | Sextum in Trulla             | 680                 |
| Gangrenſe                | 340                 | Myrtyrologium                | } Romarum.          |
| Antiochenum              | 341                 | Rituale                      |                     |
| Sardienſe                | 347                 | Mænologium                   | } Græcorum          |
| Laodicenum               | 365                 | Euchologium                  |                     |

*Roman Emperors, whose Laws and Edicts are cited in this Book.*

| <i>Began their Reigns A. Chr.</i> | <i>Began their Reigns A. Chr.</i> |                      |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----|
| Nero                              | 54                                | Constantinus Magnus. | 306 |
| Trojan                            | 98                                | Constantius          | 337 |
| Adrian                            | 118                               | Julianus             | 361 |
| Antoninus Pius                    | 138                               | Jovianus             | 364 |
| Marcus Antoninus                  | 161                               | Valentinianus        | 361 |
| Alexander Severus                 | 222                               | Valens               | 364 |
| Decius                            | 251                               | Gratianus            | 375 |
| Valerianus                        | 255                               | Theodosius Magnus    | 379 |
| Diocleſianus                      | 284                               | Arcadius             | 383 |
| Maximianus                        | 286                               | Honorius             | 395 |
| Constantius Chlorus               | } 304                             | Theodosius junior.   | 408 |
| Galerius                          |                                   | Anaſtaſius           | 491 |
| Maximinus                         |                                   | Juſtinianus          | 527 |
| Licinius                          |                                   | Carolus Magnus       | 608 |

*Late Writers.*

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| R. Bellarminus      | Cl. Salmaſius     |
| Cæſar Baronius      | J. G. Voffius     |
| Ant. Gallonius      | Jac. Gothofredus  |
| Gabr. Albaſpinæus   | Leo Allatius      |
| Jan. Gruterus       | Paulus Aringhius  |
| H. Caſaubonus       | Joan. Fronto      |
| Nic. Fuller         | Joan. Forbes      |
| Jof. Mede           | Arch-Biſhop Uſher |
| Nic. Rigaltius      | Biſhop Taylor     |
| Onuphrius Panvinius | Dr. Hammond       |
| Deſid. Heraldus     | Herb. Thorndike   |
| Edw. Breerwood      | Mr. Daille.       |
| Joan. Gronovius     |                   |





