

it springeth be made manifest? If all parts of knowledge have been thought by wise men to be then most orderly delivered and proceeded in, when they are drawn to their first original¹; seeing that our whole question concerneth the quality of ecclesiastical laws, let it not seem a labour superfluous that in the entrance thereunto all these several kinds of laws have been considered, inasmuch as they all concur as principles, they all have their forcible operations therein, although not all in like apparent and manifest manner. By means whereof it cometh to pass that the force which they have is not observed of many.

[2.] Easier a great deal it is for men by law to be taught what they ought to do, than instructed how to judge as they should do of law: the one being a thing which belongeth generally unto all, the other such as none but the wiser and more judicious sort can perform. Yea, the wisest are always touching this point the readiest to acknowledge, that soundly to judge of a law is the weightiest thing which any man can take upon him². But if we will give judgment of the laws under which we live; first let that law eternal be always before our eyes, as being of principal force and moment to breed in religious minds a dutiful estimation of all laws, the use and benefit whereof we see; because there can be no doubt but that laws apparently good are (as it were) things copied out of the very tables of that high everlasting law; even as the book of that law hath said concerning itself, "By me kings reign, and" by me "princes decree justice"³. Not as if men did behold that book and accordingly frame their laws; but because it worketh in them, because it discovereth and (as it were) readeth itself to the world by them, when the laws which they make are righteous. Furthermore, although we perceive not the goodness of laws made, nevertheless sith things in themselves may have that which we peradventure discern not, should not this breed a fear in our hearts, how we speak or judge in the worse part concerning that, the unadvised

¹ Arist. Phys. lib. i. cap. i. [τὸ εἶδέναι καὶ τὸ ἐπίστασθαι συμβαίνει περὶ πάσας τὰς μεθόδους, ὧν εἰσιν ἀρχαὶ ἢ αἰτία ἢ στοιχεῖα, ἐκ τοῦ ταῦτα γνωρίζειν τότε γὰρ οἰόμεθα γνωρίσωμεν ἕκαστον, ὅταν τὰ αἰτία γνωρίσωμεν καὶ μέχρι τῶν στοιχείων.]
² Arist. Ethic. x. [c. 10.] Τὸ κρίναι ὀρθῶς μέγιστον. Intelligit de legum qualitate iudicium.
³ Prov. viii. 15.

disgrace whereof may be no mean dishonour to Him, towards whom we profess all submission and awe? Surely there must be very manifest iniquity in laws, against which we shall be able to justify our contumelious invectives. The chiefest root whereof, when we use them without cause, is ignorance how laws inferior are derived from that supreme or highest law.

[3.] The first that receive impression from thence are natural agents. The law of whose operations might be haply thought less pertinent, when the question is about laws for human actions, but that in those very actions which most spiritually and supernaturally concern men, the rules and axioms of natural operations have their force. What can be more immediate to our salvation than our persuasion concerning the law¹ of Christ towards his Church? What greater assurance of love towards his Church, than the knowledge of that mystical union, whereby the Church is become as near unto Christ as any one part of his flesh is unto other? That the Church being in such sort his he must needs protect it, what proof more strong than if a manifest law so require, which law it is not possible for Christ to violate? And what other law doth the Apostle for this allege, but such as is both common unto Christ with us, and unto us with other things natural; "No man hateth his own flesh, but doth love and cherish it"²? The axioms of that law therefore, whereby natural agents are guided, have their use in the moral, yea, even in the spiritual actions of men, and consequently in all laws belonging unto men howsoever.

[4.] Neither are the Angels themselves so far severed from us in their kind and manner of working, but that between the law of their heavenly operations and the actions of men in this our state of mortality such correspondence there is, as maketh it expedient to know in some sort the one, for the other's more perfect direction. Would Angels acknowledge

¹ [The context leads to the suspicion that Hooker wrote "the love of Christ." But the original edition reads "lawe," and the list of errata at the end, which is carefully made, as appears, by the author himself, offers no correction: neither does

Dr. Spenser's edition, at least the reprint of it in 1632.—Spenser's ed. 1604, reads as the first ed. "lawe." It is no doubt the right reading.—1886.]

² Ephes. v. 29.

themselves "fellow-servants¹" with the sons of men, but that both having one Lord, there must be some kind of law which is one and the same to both, whereunto their obedience being perfecter is to our weaker both a pattern and a spur? Or would the Apostles, speaking of that which belongeth unto saints as they are linked together in the bond of spiritual society², so often make mention how Angels therewith are delighted, if in things publicly done by the Church we are not somewhat to respect what the Angels of heaven do? Yea, so far hath the Apostle Saint Paul proceeded, as to signify³, that even about the outward orders of the Church which serve but for comeliness, some regard is to be had of Angels, who best like us when we are most like unto them in all parts of decent demeanour. So that the law of Angels we cannot judge altogether impertinent unto the affairs of the Church of God.

[5.] Our largeness of speech how men do find out what things reason bindeth them of necessity to observe, and what it guideth them to choose in things which are left as arbitrary; the care we have had to declare the different nature of laws which severally concern all men, from such as belong unto men either civilly or spiritually associated, such as pertain to the fellowship which nations, or which Christian nations, have amongst themselves, and in the last place such as concerning every or any of these God himself hath revealed by his Holy Word: all serveth but to make manifest, that as the actions of men are of sundry distinct kinds, so the laws thereof must accordingly be distinguished. There are in men operations, some natural, some rational, some supernatural, some politic, some finally ecclesiastical: which if we measure not each by his own proper law, whereas the things themselves are so different, there will be in our understanding and judgment of them confusion.

As that first error sheweth, whereon our opposites in this cause have grounded themselves. For as they rightly maintain that God must be glorified in all things, and that the actions of men cannot tend unto his glory unless they be framed after his law; so it is their error to think that the only law which God hath appointed unto men in that behalf

¹ Apoc. xix. 10.² 1 Pet. i. 12; Ephes. iii. 10; 1 Tim. v. 21.³ 1 Cor. xi. 10.

is the sacred Scripture. By that which we work naturally, as when we breathe, sleep, move, we set forth the glory of God as natural agents do¹, albeit we have no express purpose to make that our end, nor any advised determination therein to follow a law, but do that we do (for the most part) not as much as thinking thereon. In reasonable and moral actions another law taketh place; a law by the observation whereof² we glorify God in such sort, as no creature else under man is able to do; because other creatures have not judgment to examine the quality of that which is done by them, and therefore in that they do they neither can accuse nor approve themselves. Men do both, as the Apostle teacheth; yea, those men which have no written law of God to shew what is good or evil, carry written in their hearts the universal law of mankind, the Law of Reason, whereby they judge as by a rule which God hath given unto all men for that purpose³. The law of reason doth somewhat direct men how to honour God as their Creator; but {how to glorify God in such sort as is required, to the end he may be an everlasting Saviour,} this we are taught by divine law, which law both ascertaineth the truth and supplieth unto us the want of that other law. So that in moral actions, divine law helpeth exceedingly the law of reason to guide man's life; but in supernatural it alone guideth.

Proceed we further; let us place man in some public society with others, whether civil or spiritual; and in this case there is no remedy but we must add yet a further law. For although even here likewise the laws of nature and reason be of necessary use, yet somewhat over and besides them is necessary, namely human and positive law, together with that law which is of commerce between grand societies, the law of nations, and of nations Christian. For which cause the law of God hath likewise said, "Let every soul be "subject to the higher powers⁴." The public power of all societies is above every soul contained in the same societies. And the principal use of that power is to give laws unto all that are under it; which laws in such case we must obey, unless there be reason shewed which may necessarily enforce that the law of Reason or of God doth enjoin the contrary.

¹ Psalm cxlviii. 7, 8, 9. ² Rom. i. 21. ³ Rom. ii. 15. ⁴ Rom. xiii. 1.

Because except our own private and but probable resolutions be by the law of public determinations overruled, we take away all possibility of sociable life in the world. A plainer example whereof than ourselves we cannot have. How cometh it to pass that we are at this present day so rent with mutual contentions, and that the Church is so much troubled about the polity of the Church? No doubt if men had been willing to learn how many laws their actions in this life are subject unto, and what the true force of each law is, all these controversies might have died the very day they were first brought forth.

[6.] It is both commonly said, and truly, that the best men otherwise are not always the best in regard of society. The reason whereof is, for that the law of men's actions is one, if they be respected only as men; and another, when they are considered as parts of a politic body. Many men there are, than whom nothing is more commendable when they are singled; and yet in society with others none less fit to answer the duties which are looked for at their hands¹. Yea, I am persuaded, that of them with whom in this cause we strive, there are whose betters amongst men would be hardly found, if they did not live amongst men, but in some wilderness by themselves. The cause of which their disposition so unframable unto societies wherein they live, is, for that they discern not aright what place and force these several kinds of laws ought to have in all their actions. Is there question either concerning the regiment of the Church in general, or about conformity between one church and another, or of ceremonies, offices, powers, jurisdictions in our own church? Of all these things they judge by that rule which they frame to themselves with some show of probability, and what seemeth in that sort convenient, the same they think themselves bound to practise; the same by all means they labour mightily to uphold; whatsoever any law of man to the contrary hath determined they weigh it not. Thus by following the law of private reason, where the law of public should take place, they breed disturbance.

[7.] For the better inuring therefore of men's minds with

¹ Πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐν μὲν τοῖς οἰκείοις πρὸς ἕτερον ἀδυνατοῦσι. Arist. Ethic. lib. v. cap. 3.
τῇ ἀρετῇ δύνανται χρῆσθαι, ἐν δὲ τοῖς

the true distinction of laws, and of their several force according to the different kind and quality of our actions, it shall not peradventure be amiss to shew in some one example how they all take place. To seek no further, let but that be considered, than which there is not any thing more familiar unto us, our food.

What things are food and what are not we judge naturally by sense¹; neither need we any other law to be our director in that behalf than the selfsame which is common unto us with beasts.

But when we come to consider of food, as of a benefit which God of his bounteous goodness hath provided for all things living²; the law of Reason doth here require the duty of thankfulness at our hands, towards him at whose hands we have it. And lest appetite in the use of food should lead us beyond that which is meet, we owe in this case obedience to that law of Reason, which teacheth mediocrity in meats and drinks. The same things divine law teacheth also, as at large we have shewed it doth all parts of moral duty, whereunto we all of necessity stand bound, in regard of the life to come³.

¹ Job xxxiv. 3.

² Psalm cxlv. 15, 16.

³ [Chr. Letter, p. 13: "If from sound and sincere virtues (as you say) full joy and felicitie ariseth, and that we all of necessitie stand bound unto all partes of morall duetie in regarde of life to come, and God requireth more at the handes of men unto happines, then such a naked beleefe, as Christ calleth the worke of God: alas what shall we poore sinful wretches doe, &c." Hooker, MS. note: "Repent, and believe." And again, Chr. Letter, ib.: "Tell us . . . whether there been not other sufficient causes to induce a Christian to godlines and honestie of life, such as is the glorie of God our Father; his great mercies in Christ; his love to us; example to others, but that we must do it to merit or to make perfitt tha which Christ hath done for us." Hooker, MS. note: "Your godfathers and godmothers have much to answeere unto God for not seing you better catechised.

"A thing necessarie as you graunt

"that by good workes we should seeke God's glory, shew ourselves thankfull for his mercyes in Christ, answer his loving kindnes to wardes us, and give other men good example. If then these things be necessarie unto eternall life, and workes necessarily to be done for these ends, how should workes bee but necessary unto the last end, seing the next and neerest cannot be attained without them? "And is there neither heaven nor hell, neither reward nor punishment hereafter, to be respected here in the leading of our lives? "When thapostle doth deterre from sinne, are his arguments only these? only these his reasons when he stirreth unto workes of righteousness?"

"See Euseb. Emisenus where he speaketh of Dorcas hir garments made for the poor." (De Init. Quadrag. Bibl. Patr. Colon. 1618, v. 551. "Orationibus," inquit, 'et eleemosynis purgantur peccata:.' per utramque ergo rem, sed maxime per eleemosynam, Dei misericordia requirenda est. Opor-

But of certain kinds of food the Jews sometime had, and we ourselves likewise have, a mystical, religious, and supernatural use, they of their paschal lamb and oblations, we of our bread and wine in the Eucharist; which use none but divine law could institute.

Now as we live in civil society, the state of the commonwealth wherein we live both may and doth require certain laws concerning food¹; which laws, saving only that we are members of the commonwealth where they are of force, we should not need to respect as rules of action, whereas now in their place and kind they must be respected and obeyed.

Yea, the selfsame matter is also a subject wherein sometime ecclesiastical laws have place; so that unless we will be

“tet itaque ut sibi res utraque con-
“sentiat: illa rogat, hæc impetrat;
“illa quodammodo iudicis audien-
“tiam deprecatur, hæc gratiam pro-
“meretur; illa ostium pulsatur, hæc
“aperit; illa prodit desiderium, hæc
“desiderii procurat effectum: illa
“supplicat, sed supplicantiem ista
“commendat. Sic laudabilis Tabi-
“tha, quæ in Actibus Apostolorum
“interpretata dicitur *Dorcas*, in ope-
“ribus bonis vitæ diem claudens,
“evolante anima corpus relinquens,
“cum jam omnibus et operationis
“et vitæ renuntiasset officiis, flentes
“accurrunt viduæ, pauperes adgre-
“gantur tunicas et vestes quas
“faciebat illis *Dorcas* cælo osten-
“dentes, conveniunt Deum: testi-
“monia meritorum clamant; de-
“functa operatrice, vox operum
“bona: quæ in sæculo gesserat
“consequuntur animam in aliud
“sæculum; consequuntur et revol-
“vuntur; reditque de loco mortis
“ad vitam præstitam. Itaque in-
“dumenta pauperibus hic osten-
“duntur, illic operantur; hic adhuc
“præbent usum, illic jam tribuunt
“præmium: quam mira et pretiosa
“merita largitatis! Hic adhuc uten-
“tium algentes humeros calefacie-
“bant, etiam illic largitricis animam
“refrigerabant. Unde et nos,
“charissimi, animas nostras morti
“obnoxias piis operibus suscitemus.
“Dabunt absque dubio æternam
“vitam, quæ aliquoties etiam tem-

“porariam reddiderunt.” Who was
author of this Homily is uncertain:
evidently not Eusebius of Emesa.
It might be Salvian, Eucherius of
Lyons, or some other Father of the
Gallican Church in the fourth or
fifth century. See Cave, Hist. Lit.
i. 157, and E. P. B. vi.)

On this whole subject Hooker
says, “Looke S. Augustin’s booke,
“‘De Fide et Operibus.’” (of which
the following is a specimen: “Hoc
“est enim evangelizare Christum,
“non tantum dicere quæ sunt cre-
“denda de Christo, sed etiam quæ
“observanda ei qui accedit ad com-
“pagem corporis Christi; immo vero
“cuncta dicere quæ sunt credenda de
“Christo, non solum cujus sit filius,
“unde secundum divinitatem, unde
“secundum carnem genitus, quæ
“peressus et quare, quæ sit virtus
“resurrectionis ejus, quod donum
“Spiritus promisit dederitque fide-
“libus; sed etiam qualia membra,
“quibus sit caput, quærat, instituat,
“diligat, liberet, atque ad æternam
“vitam honoremque perducatur. Hæc
“cum dicuntur, aliquando brevius
“atque constrictius, aliquando latius
“et uberius, Christus evangelizatur;
“et tamen non solum quod ad fidem,
“verum etiam quod ad mores fide-
“lium pertinet, non prætermittitur.”
t. vi. 172, F. c. ix. see also c. x.—
xiv.)]

¹ [See 5 Eliz. c. 5. § 14, 15; 27
Eliz. c. 11; 35 Eliz. c. 7. § 22.]

authors of confusion in the Church, our private discretion, which otherwise might guide us a contrary way, must here submit itself to be that way guided, which the public judgment of the Church hath thought better. In which case that of Zonaras concerning fasts may be remembered. “Fastings
“are good, but let good things be done in good and con-
“venient manner. He that transgresseth in his fasting the
“orders of the holy fathers,” the positive laws of the Church
of Christ, must be plainly told, “that good things do lose the
“grace of their goodness, when in good sort they are not
“performed¹.”

And as here men’s private fancies must give place to the
higher judgment of that Church which is in authority a
mother over them; so the very actions of whole churches have,
in regard of commerce and fellowship with other churches,
been subject to laws concerning food, the contrary unto which
laws had else been thought more convenient for them to
observe; as by that order of abstinence from strangled and
blood² may appear; an order grounded upon that fellowship
which the churches of the Gentiles had with the Jews.

Thus we see how even one and the selfsame thing is under
divers considerations conveyed through many laws; and that
to measure by any one kind of law all the actions of men
were to confound the admirable order, wherein God hath
disposed all laws, each as in nature, so in degree, distinct from
other.

[8.] Wherefore that here we may briefly end: of Law there
can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom
of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in heaven
and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care,
and the greatest as not exempted from her power, both³ Angels
and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each
in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent,
admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.

¹ [Καλὸν μὲν ἡ νηστεία· τὰ δὲ κατὰ
καλῶς γινέσθω. Εἰ δὲ τις θεσμοὺς
ἀποστολικούς ἢ πατέρων ἀγίων παρα-
βαίων νηστεύει, ἀκούσεται] ὅτι οὐ
καλὸν τὸ καλόν, ὅταν μὴ καλῶς γίνηται.
Zonar. in Can. Apost. 66. p. 34.
[ap. Beverig. Synod. t. i. p. 43.]

Probably Hooker has here respect
to the schismatical fasts which were
practised by many of the Puritans.]

² Acts xv. 20.

³ “But,” 1st ed., corrected in
Spenser’s ed. 1604 to “both.”
1886.