In what sense Philosophy is unscriptural.

Tertullian on heathen Philosophy.

be made wiser by reasons drawn from the public persuasions, which are crafted in men's minds; so they be used to further the truth, not to bolster error; so they make with, "not against, that which God hath determined. For there are some things even of nature, as the immortality of the soul unto many, our God unto all. I will therefore myself also use the sentence of some such as Plato, pronouncing every soul immortal. I myself too will use the secret acknowledgment of the commonalty, bearing record of the "God of gods. But when I hear men allege, 'That which "is dead is dead;' and, 'While thou art alive be alive;' and, "'After death an end of all, even of death itself;' then will "I call to mind both that the heart of the people with God is accounted dust, and that the very wisdom of the world is pronounced folly. If then an heretic fly also unto such "vicious popular and secular conceits, my answer unto him "shall be, 'Thou heretic, avoid the heathen; although in this "ye be one, that ye both belie God, yet thou that dost this "under the name of Christ, differest from the heathen, in that "thou seemest to thyself a Christian. Leave him therefore "his conceits, seeing that neither will he learn thine. Why "dost thou having sight trust to a blind guide; thou which "hast put on Christ take raiment of him that is naked? If "the Apostle have armed thee, why dost thou borrow a "stranger's shield? Let him rather learn of thee to acknowl- "edge, than of thou to renounce the resurrection "of the flesh.'" In a word, the Catholic Fathers did good

1 [Tert. de Resur. Carnis. c. 3.]
2 "Est quidem et de communibus sensibus sapere in Dei rebus, sed in testimonium veritatis, non in adjutorium falsi; quod sit secundum divinam, non contra divinam dispositionem. Quamquam enim et tamen in me dialecticam criminatus es, quo falleres imperfectos, esque laudares qui disputandos mecum congregi noluerant. Sed tu videlicet non dialectica uteris, cum contra nos scribis?"
3 [T. i. 9, 11.]
4 [T. i. 9, 11.]
unto all by that knowledge, whereby heretics hindering the truth in many, might have furthered therewith themselves, but that obstinately following their own ambitious or otherwise corrupted affections, instead of framing their wills to maintain that which reason taught, they bent their wits to find how reason might seem to teach that which their wills were set to maintain. For which cause the Apostle saith of them justly, that they are for the most part "αὐθεντάρχες," men condemned even in and of themselves. For though they be not all persuaded that it is truth which they withstand, yet that to be error which they uphold they might undoubtedly the sooner a great deal attain to know, but that their study is more to defend what once they have stood in, than to find out sincerely and simply what truth they ought to persist in for ever.

[9.] Fourthly, There is in the world no kind of knowledge, whereby any part of truth is seen, but we justly account it precious; yea, that principal truth, in comparison whereof all other knowledge is vile, may receive from it some kind of light; whether it be that Egyptian and Chaldean wisdom mathematical, wherewith Moses and Daniel were furnished; or that natural, moral, and civil wisdom, wherein Salomon excelled all men; or that rational and oratorial wisdom of the Grecians, which the Apostle St. Paul brought from Tarsus; or that Judical, which he learned in Jerusalem sitting at the feet of Gamaliel: to detract from the dignity thereof were to injury even God himself, who being that light which none can approach unto, hath sent out these lights wherein we are capable, even as so many sparkles resembling the bright fountain from which they rise.

But there are that bear the title of wise men and scribes and great disputers of the world, and are nothing in deed less than what in show they most appear. These being wholly addicted unto their own wills, use their wit, their learning, and all the wisdom they have, to maintain that which their

1 Tit. iii. 11.
2 Acts ii. 22; Dan. i. 17.
3 1 Kings iv. 29, 30.
4 Acts xxiv. 3.
5 To injury, v. for 'to injure.'
6 "Those that are in authority, and princes themselves, ought to take great heed how they injure any man by word or deed, and whom they injure," Danet's Comines.
8 I am strangely injured by the Archbishop," Hugh Broughton in Strype's WHitg. iii. 367. Cf. infra, V. xvi. 1.
9 God's Word not exclusive of Reason.

obstinate hearts are delighted with, esteeming in the frantic error of their minds the greatest madness in the world to be wisdom, and the highest wisdom foolishness. Such were both Jews and Grecians, which professed the one sort legal, and the other secular skill, neither enduring to be taught the mystery of Christ: unto the glory of whose most blessed name, whoso study to use both their reason and all other gifts, as well which nature as which grace hath endued them with, let them never doubt but that the same God who is to destroy and confound utterly that wisdom falsely so named in others, doth make reckoning of them as of true Scribes, Scribes by wisdom instructed to the kingdom of heaven, not Scribes against that kingdom hardened in a vain opinion of wisdom; which in the end being proved folly, must needs perish, true understanding, knowledge, judgment and reason continuing for evermore.

[10.] Fifthly, Unto the word of God, being in respect of that end for which God ordained it perfect, exact, and absolute in itself, we do not add reason as a supplement of any main or defect therein, but as a necessary instrument, without which we could not reap by the Scripture's perfection that fruit and benefit which it yieldeth. "The word of God is a twoedged "sword," but in the hands of reasonable men; and reason as the weapon that slew Goliath, if they be as David was that use it. Touching the Apostles, He which gave them from above such power for miraculous confirmation of that which they taught, endued them also with wisdom from above to teach that which they so did confirm. Our Saviour made choice of twelve simple and unlearned men, that the greater their lack of natural wisdom was, the more admirable that might appear which God supernaturally endued them with from heaven. Such therefore as knew the poor and silly estate wherein they had lived, could not but wonder to hear the wisdom of their speech, and be so much the more attentive unto their teaching. They studied for no tongue, they spake with all; of themselves they were rude, and knew not so much as how to premeditate; the Spirit gave them speech and eloquent utterance.

But because with St. Paul it was otherwise than with the
rest, inasmuch as he never conversed with Christ upon earth as they did; and his education had been scholastical altogether, which theirs was not; hereby occasion was taken by certain malignants, secretly to undermine his great authority in the Church of Christ, as though the gospel had been taught him by others than by Christ himself, and as if the cause of the Gentiles’ conversion and belief through his means had been the learning and skill which he had by being conversant in their books; which thing made them so willing to hear him, and him so able to persuade them; whereas the rest of the Apostles prevailed, because God was with them, and by miracle from heaven confirmed his word in their mouths. They were mighty in deeds: as for him, being absent, his writings had some force; in presence, his power not like unto theirs. In sum, concerning his preaching, their very byword was, λόγος ἐκ ουρανῶν, add to speech, empty talk: his writings full of great words, but in the power of miraculous operations his presence not like the rest of the Apostles.

Hereupon it riseth that St. Paul was so often driven to make his apologies. Hereupon it riseth that whatsoever time he had spent in the study of human learning, he maketh earnest protestation to them of Corinth, that the gospel which he had preached amongst them did not by other means prevail with them, than with others the same gospel taught by the rest of the Apostles of Christ. “My preaching,” saith he, “hath not been in the persuasive speeches of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith may not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” What is it which the Apostle doth here deny? Is it denied that his speech amongst them had been persuasive? No: for of him the sacred history plainly testifieth, that for the space of a year and a half he spake in their synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Grecians. How then is the speech of men made persuasive? Surely there can be but two ways to bring this to pass, the one human, the other divine. Either St. Paul did only by art and natural industry cause his own speech to be credited; or else God by

1 [Chr. Letter, p. 43. “In all your books, although we finde manie goodthings, manie truths and fine points bravely handled, yet in all your discourse, for the most part, Aristotle the patriarch of philosophers (with divers other humane writers) and the ingenious schoolmen, almost in all points have some finger: reason is highlie set up against Holie Scripture, and reading against preaching.” Hooker, MS. note. “If Aristotle and the schoolmen be such perilous creatures, you must needs think yourself an happie man, whome God hath so farreily blest from too much knowledge in them. Remember heer S. Jerome’s Epistle in his own defense.” (To Magnus, t. ii. 326. He pleads precedent, scriptural and ecclesiastical, for his use of profane learning.) “Forget not Picus Mirandula’s judgment of the schoolmen;” (Opp. i. 79. “Ut a nostris, ad quos postremo philosophia pervexit, nunc exordiar; est in Joanne Scoto vegetum quiddam atque discursum, in Thomam solidum et aquabile, in Aegidio tersum et exemplum.” Dei’s judgment of Aristotle.” (For his opinion of the use of logic, see Epist. 67.) “As also Calvin’s judgment of philosophy. Epist. 90, ad Buce-
Reason requisite for Grace to work upon:

[11.] Sixthly, Yea, whatsoever our hearts be to God and to his truth, believe we or be we as yet faithless, for our conversion or confirmation the force of natural reason is great. The force whereof unto those effects is nothing without grace. What then? To our purpose it is sufficient, that whatsoever doth serve, honour, and obey God, whosoever believeth in Him, that man would no more do this than innocents and infants do, but for the light of natural reason that shineth in him, and maketh him apt to apprehend those things of God, which being by grace discovered, are effectual to persuade reasonable minds and none other, that honour, obedience, and credit, belong of right unto God. No man cometh unto God to offer him sacrifice, to pour out supplications and prayers before him, or to do him any service, which doth not first believe him both to be, and to be a rewarder of them who in such sort seek unto him. Let men be taught this either by revelation from heaven, or by instruction upon earth; by labour, study, and meditation, or by the only secret inspiration of the Holy Ghost; whatsoever the mean be they know it by, if the knowledge thereof were possible without discourse of natural reason, why should none be found capable thereof but only men; nor men till such time as they come unto ripe and full ability to work by reasonable understanding? The whole drift of the Scripture of God, what is it but only to teach Theology? Theology, what is it but the science of things divine? What science can be attained unto without the help of natural discourse and reason? “Judge you of that which I speak,” saith the Apostle. In vain it were to speak any thing of God, but that by reason men are able somewhat to judge of that they hear, and by discourse to discern how consonant it is to truth.

[12.] Scripture indeed teacheth things above nature, things which our reason by itself could not reach unto. Yet those things also we believe, knowing by reason that the Scripture is the word of God. In the presence of Festus a Roman, and of King Agrippa a Jew, St. Paul omitting the one, who neither knew the Jews’ religion nor the books whereby they were taught it, speakest unto the other of things foreshewed by Moses and the Prophets and performed in Jesus Christ; intending thereby to prove himself so unjustly accused, that unless his judges did condemn both Moses and the Prophets, him they could not choose but acquit, who taught only that fulfilled, which they so long since had foretold. His cause was easy to be discerned; what was done their eyes were witnesses; what Moses and the Prophets did speak their books could quickly shew; it was no hard thing for him to compare them, which knew the one, and believed the other. “King Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets? I know thou dost.” The question is how the books of the Prophets came to be credited of King Agrippa. For what with him did authorize the Prophets, the like with us doth cause the rest of the Scripture of God to be of credit.

[13.] Because we maintain that in Scripture we are taught all things necessary unto salvation; hereupon very childishly it is by some demanded, what Scripture can teach us the sacred authority of the Scripture, upon the knowledge whereof our whole faith and salvation dependeth? As though there were any kind of science in the world which leadeth men into knowledge without presupposing a number of things already known. No science doth make known the first principles whereon it buildeth, but they are always either taken as plain and manifest in themselves, or as proved and granted already, some former knowledge having made them evident. Scripture teacheth all supernatural revealed truth, without the knowledge whereof salvation cannot be attained. The main principle whereupon our belief of all things therein contained dependeth, is, that the Scriptures are the oracles of God himself. This in itself we cannot say is evident. For then all men that hear it would acknowledge it in heart, as they do when they hear that “every whole is more than any part of that whole,” because this in itself is evident. The

\[1 \text{“acquire,” A. B. 1886.} \]
\[2 \text{Acts xxvi. 27.} \]
\[3 \text{[Compare II. iv. 2.] 1886.} \]
other we know that all do not acknowledge when they hear it. There must be therefore some former knowledge presupposed which doth herein assure the hearts of all believers. Scripture teacheth us that saving truth which God hath discovered unto the world by revelation, and it presumeth us taught otherwise that it itself is divine and sacred.

[14.] The question then being by what means we are taught this; some answer that to learn it we have no other way than only tradition; as namely that so we believe because both we from our predecessors and they from theirs have so received. But is this enough? That which all men's experience teacheth them may not in any wise be denied. And by experience we all know, that the first outward motive leading men so to esteem of the Scripture is the authority of God's Church. For when we know the whole Church of God hath that opinion of the Scripture, we judge it even at the first an impudent thing for any man bred and brought up in the Church to be of a contrary mind without cause. Afterwards the more we bestow our labour in reading or hearing the mysteries thereof, the more we find that the thing itself doth answer our received opinion concerning it. So that the former inducement prevailing somewhat with us before, doth now much more prevail, when the very thing hath ministered farther reason. If infidels or atheists.

1 [Chr. Letter, p. 9. io. “Have we not here good cause to suspect the underpropping of a popish principle concerning the Churches authorise above the Holy Scripture, to the disgrace of the English Church?”]

Hooker, MS. note. “I am sore to see you in the groundes and elements of your religion so scenerly instructed.”

“Fides nimirum authoritate docentis. Dicam autem confirmitatem habet in authoritatem personae virtute miraculorum. Id quod omnino necessarium est propeter ea qua docet supra et preter naturalem rationem: quia omni probabilior argumento, mendosa nimirum, quae fidei facit. Atque hoc Apostolus de se testatur, cum efficaciam falsae seriosam suum assisit non vi humane persusiosis, sed assistentis Spiritus ad opera miraculosa perstessa. Vide Tertullian contra Gent. p. 637.”

chance at any time to call it in question, this giveth us occasion to sift what reason there is, whereby the testimony of the Church concerning Scripture, and our own persuasion which Scripture itself hath confirmed, may be proved a truth infallible. In which case the ancient Fathers being often constrained to shew, what warrant they had so much to rely upon the Scriptures, endeavoured still to maintain the authority of the books of God by arguments such as unbelievers themselves must needs think reasonable, if they judged thereof as they should. Neither is it a thing impossible or greatly hard, even by such kind of proofs so to manifest and clear that point, that no man living shall be able to deny it, without denying some apparent principle such as all men acknowledge to be true.

Wherefore if I believe the Gospel, yet is reason of singular use, for that it confirmeth me in this my belief the more: if I do not as yet believe, nevertheless to bring me to the number of believers except reason did somewhat help, and were an instrument which God doth use unto such purposes, what should it boot to dispute with infidels or godless persons for their conversion and persuasion in that point?

[15.] Neither can I think that when grave and learned men do sometime hold, that of this principle there is no proof but by the testimony of the Spirit, which assureth our hearts therein, it is their meaning to exclude utterly all force which any kind of reason may have in that behalf; but I rather incline to interpret such their speeches, as if they had more expressly set down, that other motives and inducements, be they never so strong and consonant unto reason, are notwithstanding uneffectual of themselves to work faith concerning this principle, if the special grace of the Holy Ghost concur not to the enlightening of our minds. For otherwise I doubt not but men of wisdom and judgment will grant, that the Church, in this point especially, is furnished with reason, to stop the mouths of her impious adversaries; and that as it were altogether bootless to allege against them what the Spirit hath taught us, so likewise that even to our own selves it needeth caution and explication how the testimony of the Spirit may be discerned, by what means it may be known; lest men think that the Spirit of God doth testify those things.