commend itself unto the world by that easiness and facility which is in it: but a law or a pattern it is not, as some do imagine, for all men to follow that will do good in the Church of Christ.

[17.] Our Lord and Saviour himself did hope by disputation to do some good, yea by disputation not only of but against, the truth, albeit with purpose for the truth. That Christ should be the son of David was truth; yea against this truth our Lord in the gospel objected, “If Christ be the son of David, how doth David call him Lord?” There is as yet no way known how to dispute, or to determine of things disputed, without the use of natural reason.

If we please to add unto Christ their example, who followed him as near in all things as they could; the sermon of Paul and Barnabas set down in the Acts, where the people would have offered unto them sacrifice; in that sermon what is there but only natural reason to disprove their act? “O men, why “do you these things? We are men even subject to the “selfsame passions with you: we preach unto you to leave “these vanities and to turn to the living God, the God that “hath not left himself without witness, in that he hath done “good to the world, giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling “our heart with joy and gladness.”

Neither did they only use reason in winning such unto Christian belief as were yet thereto unconverted, but with believers themselves they followed the selfsame course. In that great and solemn assembly of believing Jews how doth Peter prove that the Gentiles were partakers of the grace of God as well as they, but by reason drawn from those effects, which were apparently known amongst them? “God which knoweth “hearts hath borne them witness in giving unto them the “Holy Ghost as unto us?”

The light therefore, which the “star of natural reason” and wisdom casteth, is too bright to be obscured by the mist of a word or two uttered to diminish that opinion which justly hath been received concerning the force and virtue thereof, even in matters that touch most nearly the principal duties of men and the glory of the eternal God.

[18.] In all which hitherto hath been spoken touching the

\[\text{acts xii. 36; ii. 34.}\]
\[\text{1 pet. iii. 15.}\]
force and use of man's reason in things divine, I must crave that I be not so understood or construed, as if any such thing by virtue thereof could be done without the aid and assistance of God's most blessed Spirit. The thing we have handled according to the question moved about it; which question is, whether the light of reason be so pernicious, that in devising laws for the Church men ought not by it to search what may be fit and convenient. For this cause therefore we have endeavoured to make it appear, how in the nature of reason itself there is no impediment, but that the selfsame Spirit, which revealeth the things that God hath set down in his law, may also be thought to aid and direct men in finding out by the light of reason what laws are expedient to be made for the guiding of his Church, over and besides them that are in Scripture. Herein therefore we agree with those men, by whom human laws are defined to be ordinances, which such as have lawful authority given them for that purpose do probably draw from the laws of nature and God, by discourse of reason aided with the influence of divine grace. And for that cause, it is not said amiss touching ecclesiastical canons, that "by instinct of the Holy Ghost they have been made, and "consecrated by the reverend acceptation of all the world."

IX. Laws for the Church are not made as they should be, unless the makers follow such direction as they ought to be guided by: wherein that Scripture standeth not the Church of God in any stead, or serveth nothing at all to direct, but may be let pass as needless to be consulted with, we judge it "profane, impious, and irreligious to think. For although it were in vain to make laws which the Scripture hath already made, because what we are already there commanded to do, on our parts there resteth nothing but only that it be executed; yet because both in that which we are commanded, it concerneth the duty of the Church by law to provide, that the looseness and slackness of men may not cause the commandments of God to be unexecuted; and a number of things there are for which the Scripture hath not provided by any law.

1 Violatores, 25. q. i. [Decret. Gratian, caus. xxv. quest. i. c. 6. in Corp. Jur. Canon. Paris. 1618. p. 313. "Violatores canum volum-
"tarii graviter a sanctis patribus ju-
dicatur, et a Sancto Spiritu (in-
"stincto cujus, et dono dictati sunt)
damnatur."

but left them unto the careful discretion of the Church; we are to search how the Church in these cases may be well directed to make that provision by laws which is most convenient and fit. And what is so in these cases, partly Scripture and partly reason must teach to discern. Scripture comprehending examples and laws, laws some natural and some positive: examples there neither are for all cases which require laws to be made, and when there are, they can but direct as precedents only. Natural laws direct in such sort, that in all things we must for ever do according unto them; Positive so, that against them in no case we may do any thing, as long as the will of God is that they should remain in force. Howbeit when Scripture doth yield us precedents, how far forth they are to be followed; when it giveth natural laws, what particular order is thereunto most agreeable; when positive, which way to make laws unrepugnant unto them; yea though all these should want, yet what kind of ordinances would be most for that good of the Church which is aimed at, all this must be by reason found out. And therefore, "to refuse the conduct "of the light of nature," saith St. Augustine, "is not folly alone "but accompanied with impiety."

[2.] The greatest amongst the School-divines, studying how to set down by exact definition the nature of an human law, (of which nature all the Church's constitutions are,) found not which way better to do it than in these words: "Cut of the "precepts of the law of nature, as out of certain common and "undenomestable principles, man's reason doth necessarily "proceed unto certain more particular determinations; which "particular determinations being found out according unto the "reason of man, they have the names of human laws, so that "such other conditions be therein kept as the making of laws "doth require." that is, if they whose authority is thereunto required do establish and publish them as laws. And
the truth is, that all our controversy in this cause concerning
the orders of the Church is, what particulars the Church may
appoint. That which doth find them out is the force of man's
reason. That which doth guide and direct his reason is first the
general law of nature; which law of nature and the moral law
of Scripture are in the substance of law all one. But because
there are also in Scripture a number of laws particular and
positive, which being in force may not by any law of man be
violated; we are in making laws to have thereunto an especial
eye. As for example, it might perhaps seem reasonable unto
the Church of God, following the general laws concerning the
nature of marriage, to ordain in particular that cousin-germans
shall not marry. Which law notwithstanding ought not to be
received in the Church, if there should be in Scripture a law
particular to the contrary, forbidding utterly the bonds of
marriage to be so far forth abridged. The same Thomas there-
fore whose definition of human laws we mentioned before,
doth add thereunto this caution concerning the rule and canon
wherby to make them: human laws are measures in respect
of men whose actions they must direct; howbeit such measures
they are, as have also their higher rules to be measured by,
which rules are two, the law of God, and the law of nature.
So that laws human must be made according to the general
laws of nature, and without contradiction unto any positive
law in Scripture. Otherwise they are ill made.

[3.] Unto laws thus made and received by a whole church,
they which live within the bosom of that church must not
think it a matter indifferent either to yield or not to yield
obedience. Is it a small offence to despise the Church of
God? My son keep thy father's commandment, saith
Salomon, and forget not thy mother's instruction: bind
them both always about thine heart. It doth not stand
with the duty which we owe to our heavenly Father, that to
the ordinances of our mother the Church we should shew our-
selves disobedient. Let us not say we keep the command-
ments of the one, when we break the law of the other:

1 Quest. 95. Art. 3. [t. xi. p. i. “scil. divina lex, et lex nature, ut
regula, vel mensura, regulata, vel mensurata quadam superiori men-
sura; quae quidem est duplex, ut 206. “lex humana est quaedam ex supradictis patet.”]
2 1 Cor. xi. 22.
3 Prov. vi. 20.

unless we observe both, we obey neither. And what doth let
but that we may observe both, when they are not the one to
the other in any sort repugnant? For of such laws only we
speak, as being made in form and manner already declared,
can have in them no contradiction unto the laws of Almighty
God. Yea that which is more, the laws thus made God
himself doth in such sort authorize, that to despise them is to
despise in them Him. It is a loose and licentious opinion
which the Anabaptists have embraced, holding that a Christ-
ian man's liberty is lost, and the soul which Christ hath
redeemed unto himself injudiciously drawn into servitude under
the yoke of human power, if any law be now imposed besides
the Gospel of Jesus Christ: in obedience whereunto the
Spirit of God and not the constraint of man is to lead us,
according to that of the blessed Apostle, “Such are as are led by
the Spirit of God they are the sons of God,” and not such as
live in the slumber unto men. Their judgment is therefore
that the Church of Christ should admit no law-makers but the
Evangelists. The author of that which causeth another thing
to be, is author of that thing also which thereby is caused.
The light of natural understanding, wit, and reason, is from
God; he it is which thereby doth illuminate every man
entering into the world. If there proceed from us any thing
afterwards corrupt and naught, the mother thereof is our
own darkness, neither doth it proceed from any such cause
whereof God is the author. He is the author of all that we
think or do by virtue of that light, which himself hath given.
And therefore the laws which the very heathens did gather
to direct their actions by, so far forth as they proceeded from
the light of nature, God himself doth acknowledge have
proceeded even from himself, and that he was the writer of
them in the tables of their hearts. How much more then he
the author of those laws, which have been made by his
saints, endowed further with the heavenly grace of his Spirit,
and directed as much as might be with such instructions as
his sacred word doth yield! Surely if we have unto those
laws that dutiful regard which their dignity doth require, it
will not greatly need that we should be exhorted to live in
obedience unto them. If they have God himself for their

1 Rom. vii. 14. 2 John i. 9. 3 Rom. i. 19, ii. 15.
BOOK III. author, contempt which is offered unto them cannot choose but redound unto him. The safest and unto God the most acceptable way of framing our lives therefore is, with all humility, lowliness, and singleness of heart, to study, which way our willing obedience both unto God and man may be yielded even to the utmost of that which is due.

X. Touching the mutability of laws that concern the regiment and polity of the Church; changed they are, when either altogether abrogated, or in part repealed, or augmented with farther additions. Wherein we are to note, that this question about the changing of laws concerneth only such laws as are positive, and do make that now good or evil by being commanded or forbidden, which otherwise of itself were not simply the one or the other. Unto such laws it is expressly sometimes added, how long they are to continue in force. If this be nowhere express, then have we no light to direct our judgments concerning the changeableness or immutability of them, but by considering the nature and quality of such laws. The nature of every law must be judged of by the end for which it was made, and by the aptness of things therein prescribed unto the same end. It may so fall out that the reason why some laws of God were given is neither opened nor possible to be gathered by wit of man. As why God should forbid Adam that one tree, there was no way for Adam ever to have certainly understood. And at Adam's ignorance of this point Satan took advantage, urging the more securely a false cause because the true was unto Adam unknown. Why the Jews were forbidden to plough their ground with an ox and an ass, why to clothe themselves with mingled attire of wool and linen, both it was unto them and to us it remaineth obscure. Such laws perhaps cannot be abrogated saving only by whom they were made: because the intent of them being known unto none but the author, he alone can judge how long it is requisite they should endure. But if the reason why things were instituted may be known, and being known do appear manifestly to be of perpetual necessity; then are those things also perpetual, unless they cease to be effectual unto that purpose for which they were at the first instituted. Because when a thing doth cease to be available unto the end which gave it being, the continuance of it must then of necessity appear superfluous. And of this we cannot be ignorant, how sometimes that hath done great good, which afterwards, when time hath changed the ancient course of things, doth grow to be either very hurtful, or not so greatly profitable and necessary. If therefore the end for which a law provideth be perpetually necessary, and the way whereby it provideth perpetually also most apt, no doubt but that every such law ought for ever to remain unchangeable.

[2.] Whether God be the author of laws by authorizing that power of men whereby they are made, or by delivering them made immediately from himself, by word only, or in writing also, or howsoever; notwithstanding the authority of their Maker, the mutability of that end for which they are made doth also make them changeable. The law of ceremonies came from God: Moses had commandment to commit it unto the sacred records of Scripture, where it continueth even unto this very day and hour: in force still, as the Jew surmiseth, because God himself was author of it, and for us to abolish what he hath established were presumption most intolerable. But (that which they in the blindness of their obdurate hearts are not able to discern) sith the end for which that law was ordained is now fulfilled, past and gone; how should it but cease any longer to be, which hath no longer any cause of being in force as before? “That which necessity “of some special time doth cause to be enjoined bindeth no “longer than during that time, but doth afterwards become “free.”

Which thing is also plain even by that law which the Apostles assembled at the council of Jerusalem did from thence deliver unto the Church of Christ, the preface whereof to authorize it was, “To the Holy Ghost and to us it hath “seemed good:” which style they did not use as matching themselves in power with the Holy Ghost, but as testifying

1 Deut. xxii. 10, 11. [Spencer, evidence, that these were prohibi-
(de Legg. Hebræor. lib. ii. c. 31, tions of Sabean ceremonies.] 
33.) conjectures, but without direct

1 "Quod pro necessitate tem-

poris statuum est, cessante neces-
sitate, debet cessare pariter quod 
"urgebat." l. q. 1. Quod pro neces-
sit. [i.e. Decr. Gratiani, pars 1, 
causa 1, qu. 1, c. 41. in Corp. Jur. 
Canon. 116.]

2 Acts xv. 28.
the Holy Ghost to be the author, and themselves but only utterers of that decree. This law therefore to have proceeded from God as the author thereof no faithful man will deny. It was of God, not only because God gave them the power whereby they might make laws, but for that it proceeded even from the holy motion and suggestion of that secret divine Spirit, whose sentence they did but only pronounce. Notwithstanding, as the law of ceremonies delivered unto the Jews, so this very law which the Gentiles received from the mouth of the Holy Ghost, is in like respect abrogated by decease of the end for which it was given.

[3.] But such as do not stick at this point, such as grant that what hath been instituted upon any special cause needeth not to be observed, that cause ceasing, do notwithstanding herein fail; they judge the laws of God only by the author and main end for which they were made, so that for us to change that which he hath established, they hold it execrable pride and presumption, if so be the end and purpose for which God by that mean provideth be permanent. And upon this they ground those ample disputed concerning orders and offices, which being by him appointed for the government of his Church, if it be necessary always that the Church of Christ be governed, then doth the end for which God provided remain still; and therefore in those means which he by law did establish as being fittest unto that end, for us to alter any thing is to lift up ourselves against God, and as it were to countermand him. Wherein they mark not that laws are instruments to rule by, and that instruments are not only to be framed according unto the general end for which they are provided, but even according unto that very particular, which riseth out of the matter whereon they have to work.

1 Counterp. p. 8. [Cisin in his “Answer to the Abstract,” had produced the change of time in celebrating the Eucharist, from the evening after supper, to the morning before the first meal, as an instance of the authority left with the Church to vary matters of discipline. The author of the Counter-poison replies, “As it is a mere circumstance of time, so the alteration hath ground in the Scripture, because one and the same time is not always kept. Acts ii. 42; xx. 7, 11, &c. Neither can that be said to be according to the institution, which being done upon a particular cause (as all divers agree) should not be observed where that cause causeth.” T. C. ii. 465. “Neither any man, nor all men in the world, could have put down the temporal ministries of Apostles, Evangelists, &c., which the Lord ordained, unless the Lord himself had withdrawn them.”]