

THE FOURTH BOOK.

CONCERNING THEIR THIRD ASSERTION, THAT OUR FORM OF CHURCH POLITY IS CORRUPTED WITH POPIISH ORDERS, RITES, AND CEREMONIES, BANISHED OUT OF CERTAIN REFORMED CHURCHES, WHOSE EXAMPLE THEREIN WE OUGHT TO HAVE FOLLOWED.

THE MATTER CONTAINED IN THIS FOURTH BOOK.

- I. How great use Ceremonies have in the Church.
- II. The first thing they blame in the kind of our Ceremonies is, that we have not in them ancient apostolical simplicity, but a greater pomp and stateliness.
- III. The second, that so many of them are the same which the Church of Rome useth; and the reasons which they bring to prove them for that cause blame-worthy.
- IV. How when they go about to expound what Popish Ceremonies they mean, they contradict their own arguments against Popish Ceremonies.
- V. An answer to the argument whereby they would prove, that sith we allow the customs of our fathers to be followed, we therefore may not allow such customs as the Church of Rome hath, because we cannot account of them which are of that Church as of our fathers.
- VI. To their allegation, that the course of God's own wisdom doth make against our conformity with the Church of Rome in such things.
- VII. To the example of the eldest Churches which they bring for the same purpose.
- VIII. That it is not our best polity (as they pretend it is) for establishment of sound religion, to have in these things no agreement with the Church of Rome being unsound.
- IX. That neither the Papists upbraiding us as furnished out of their store, nor any hope which in that respect they are said to conceive, doth make any more against our ceremonies than the former allegations have done.
- X. The grief which they say godly brethren conceive at such ceremonies as we have common with the Church of Rome.
- XI. The third thing for which they reprove a great part of our ceremonies is, for that as we have them from the Church of Rome, so that Church had them from the Jews.
- XII. The fourth, for that sundry of them have been (they say) abused unto idolatry, and are by that mean become scandalous.

- XIII. The fifth, for that we retain them still, notwithstanding the example of certain Churches reformed before us, which have cast them out.
- XIV. A declaration of the proceedings of the Church of England for the establishment of things as they are.

I. SUCH was the ancient simplicity and softness of spirit which sometimes prevailed in the world, that they whose words were even as oracles amongst men, seemed evermore loth to give sentence against any thing publicly received in the Church of God, except it were wonderful apparently evil; for that they did not so much incline to that severity which delighteth to reprove the least things it seeth amiss, as to that charity which is unwilling to behold any thing that duty bindeth it to reprove. The state of this present age, wherein zeal hath drowned charity, and skill meekness, will not now suffer any man to marvel, whatsoever he shall hear reproved by whomsoever. Those rites and ceremonies of the Church therefore, which are the selfsame now that they were when holy and virtuous men maintained them against profane and deriding adversaries, her own children have at this day in derision. Whether justly or no, it shall then appear, when all things are heard which they have to allege against the outward received orders of this church. Which inasmuch as themselves do compare unto "mint and cummin"¹, granting them to be no part of those things which in the matter of polity are weightier, we hope that for small things their strife will neither be earnest nor long.

BOOK IV.
Ch. i. 1, 2.
How great use Ceremonies have in the Church.

[2.] The sifting of that which is objected against the orders of the Church in particular, doth not belong unto this place. Here we are to discuss only those general exceptions, which have been taken at any time against them.

First therefore to the end that their nature and the use whereunto they serve may plainly appear, and so afterwards their quality the better be discerned; we are to note, that in every grand or main public duty which God requireth at the

¹ Matt. xxiii. 23. "The doctrine and discipline of the Church, as 'cummin,' ought not to be neglected." T. C. l. iii. p. 171.

hands of his Church, there is, besides that matter and form wherein the essence thereof consisteth, a certain outward fashion whereby the same is in decent sort administered. The substance of all religious actions is delivered from God himself in few words. For example's sake in the sacraments¹. "Unto the element let the word be added, and they both do "make a sacrament," saith St. Augustine. Baptism is given by the element of water, and that prescript form of words which the Church of Christ doth use; the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is administered in the elements of bread and wine, if those mystical words be added thereunto. But the due and decent form of administering those holy sacraments doth require a great deal more.

[3.] The end which is aimed at in setting down the outward form of all religious actions is the edification of the Church. Now men are edified, when either their understanding is taught somewhat whereof in such actions it behoveth all men to consider, or when their hearts are moved with any affection suitable thereunto; when their minds are in any sort stirred up unto that reverence, devotion, attention, and due regard, which in those cases seemeth requisite. Because therefore unto this purpose not only speech but sundry sensible means besides have always been thought necessary, and especially those means which being object to the eye, the liveliest and the most apprehensive sense of all other, have in that respect seemed the fittest to make a deep and a strong impression: from hence have risen not only a number of prayers, readings, questionings, exhortings, but even of visible signs also; which being used in performance of holy actions, are undoubtedly most effectual to open such matter, as men when they know and remember carefully, must needs be a great deal the better informed to what effect such duties serve. We must not think but that there is some ground of reason even in nature, whereby it cometh to pass that no nation under heaven either doth or ever did suffer public actions

¹ [In Joan. Tract. 80. § 3. t. iii. "mundat? Detrahe verbum, et quid pars ii. 703. "Jam vos mundi estis "propter verbum quod locutus sum "vobis." Quare non ait, 'mundi "estis propter baptismum quo loti "estis, nisi quia et in aqua verbum

"est aqua nisi aqua? Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum, etiam ipsum tanquam "visibile verbum."]

which are of weight, whether they be civil and temporal or else spiritual and sacred, to pass without some visible solemnity: the very strangeness whereof and difference from that which is common, doth cause popular eyes to observe and to mark the same. Words, both because they are common, and do not so strongly move the fancy of man, are for the most part but slightly heard: and therefore with singular wisdom it hath been provided, that the deeds of men which are made in the presence of witnesses should pass not only with words, but also with certain sensible actions, the memory whereof is far more easy and durable than the memory of speech can be.

The things which so long experience of all ages hath confirmed and made profitable, let not us presume to condemn as follies and toys, because we sometimes know not the cause and reason of them. A wit disposed to scorn whatsoever it doth not conceive, might ask wherefore Abraham should say to his servant, "Put thy hand under my thigh and swear¹:" was it not sufficient for his servant to shew the religion of an oath by naming the Lord God of heaven and earth, unless that strange ceremony were added? In contracts, bargains, and conveyances, a man's word is a token sufficient to express his will. Yet "this was the ancient manner in "Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to establish "all things; a man did pluck off his shoe and gave it his "neighbour; and this was a sure witness in Israel²." Amongst the Romans in their making of a bondman free, was it not wondered wherefore so great ado should be made? The master to present his slave in some court, to take him by the hand, and not only to say in the hearing of the public magistrate, "I will that this man become free," but after these solemn words uttered, to strike him on the cheek, to turn him round, the hair of his head to be shaved off, the magistrate to touch him thrice with a rod, in the end a cap and a white garment to be given him. To what purpose all this circumstance³? Amongst the Hebrews how strange and in outward appearance almost against reason, that he which was bound to make himself a perpetual servant, should not only testify

¹ Gen. xxiv. 2.

² Ruth iv. 7.

³ [See Persius, Sat. v. 75, &c.

Festus, voc. "manumitti." Isidor. Orig. ix. 4.]

BOOK IV. so much in the presence of the judge, but for a visible token
Ch. i. 4. thereof have also his ear bored through with an awl¹! It
were an infinite labour to prosecute these things so far as they
might be exemplified both in civil and religious actions. For
in both they have their necessary use and force. "The sen-
sible things which religion hath hallowed, are resemblances
framed according to things spiritually understood, whereunto
they serve as a hand to lead, and a way to direct²."

[4.] And whereas it may peradventure be objected, that to
add to religious duties such rites and ceremonies as are sig-
nificant, is to institute new Sacraments³; sure I am they will
not say that Numa Pompilius did ordain a sacrament, a sig-
nificant ceremony he did ordain, in commanding the priests
"to execute the work of their divine service with their hands
as far as to the fingers covered; thereby signifying that
fidelity must be defended, and that men's right hands are
the sacred seat thereof⁴." Again we are also to put them
in mind, that themselves do not hold all significant ceremonies
for sacraments, insomuch as imposition of hands they deny to be
a sacrament, and yet they give thereunto a forcible signification;
for concerning it their words are these: "The party ordained
by this ceremony was put in mind of his separation to the
work of the Lord, that remembering himself to be taken as it
were with the hand of God from amongst others, this might
teach him not to account himself now his own, nor to do
what himself listeth, but to consider that God hath set him
about a work, which if he will discharge and accomplish, he
may at the hands of God assure himself of reward; and if
otherwise, of revenge⁵." Touching significant ceremonies,

¹ Exod. xxi. 6.

² Τὰ μὲν αἰσθητῶς ἱερὰ τῶν νοητῶν ἀπεικονίσματα, καὶ ἐπ' αὐτὰ χειραγωγία καὶ ὁδός. Dionys. p. 121. [de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 2. no. 3. § 2. t. i. 255. Antwerp. 1634.]

³ [See Beza's Letter to Grindal in Adm. 5. "They sinned righte-
grievously, as often as they
brought any Sacramentalles (that
is to say, any ceremonies to im-
port signification of spiritual
things) into the Church of God."]

⁴ "Manu ad digitos usque invo-
luta rem divinam facere, signifi-

"cantes fidem tutandam, sedemque

"ejus etiam in dextris sacratam
"esse." Liv. lib. i. [c. 21.]

⁵ Eccles. disc. fol. 51. ["Desig-
natus hac ceremonia monebatur se
ad opus Domini separari, et e reli-
quo populo ad illam procurationem
"Dei ipsius manu quasi decerpi at-
que delibari: ut jam non amplius
"se sui juris esse sciret, ut agat quod
"velit, sed a Deo ad opus suum ad-
hibitum, cujus illum perfecti atque
"absoluti remuneratorem, contempti
"autem et neglecti ultorem atque
"vindicem habiturus esset."]

some of them are sacraments, some as sacraments only. Sacra-
ments are those which are signs and tokens of some general
promised grace, which always really descendeth from God
unto the soul that duly receiveth them; other significant
tokens are only as Sacraments, yet no Sacraments: which is
not our distinction, but theirs. For concerning the Apostles'
imposition of hands these are their own words; "manuum
"signum hoc et quasi Sacramentum usurparunt;" "they used
"this sign, or as it were sacrament¹."

II. Concerning rites and ceremonies there may be fault,
either in the kind or in the number and multitude of them.
The first thing blamed about the kind of ours is, that in many
things we have departed from the ancient simplicity of Christ
and his Apostles; we have embraced more outward stateliness,
we have those orders in the exercise of religion, which they
who best pleased God and served him most devoutly never
had. For it is out of doubt that the first state of things was
best, that in the prime of Christian religion faith was soundest,
the Scriptures of God were then best understood by all men,
all parts of godliness did then most abound; and therefore it
must needs follow, that customs, laws, and ordinances devised
since are not so good for the Church of Christ, but the best
way is to cut off later inventions, and to reduce things unto
the ancient state wherein at the first they were². Which
rule or canon we hold to be either uncertain or at leastwise
unsufficient, if not both³.

[2.] For in case it be certain, hard it cannot be for them to
shew us, where we shall find it so exactly set down, that we
may say without all controversy, "these were the orders of
"the Apostles' times, these wholly and only, neither fewer
"nor more than these." True it is that many things of this
nature be alluded unto, yea many things declared, and many
things necessarily collected out of the Apostles' writings.
But is it necessary that all the orders of the Church which
were then in use should be contained in their books? Surely
no. For if the tenor of their writings be well observed, it
shall unto any man easily appear, that no more of them are
there touched than were needful to be spoken of, sometimes

¹ Fol. 52.

² Lib. Eccles. Disc. et T. C. lib.

iii. p. 181.

³ [See before, Preface, iv. 4.]

BOOK IV. by one occasion and sometimes by another. Will they allow
 Ch. ii. 3. then of any other records besides? Well assured I am they
 are far enough from acknowledging that the Church ought to
 keep any thing as apostolical, which is not found in the
 Apostles' writings, in what other records soever it be found.
 And therefore whereas St. Augustine affirmeth that those
 things which the whole Church of Christ doth hold, may well
 be thought to be apostolical although they be not found
 written¹; this his judgment they utterly condemn. I will
 not here stand in defence of St. Augustine's opinion, which is,
 that such things are indeed apostolical, but yet with this ex-
 ception, unless the decree of some general council have haply
 caused them to be received²: for of positive laws and orders
 received throughout the whole Christian world, St. Augustine
 could imagine no other fountain save these two. But to let
 pass St. Augustine; they who condemn him herein must needs
 confess it a very uncertain thing what the orders of the Church
 were in the Apostles' times, seeing the Scriptures do not
 mention them all, and other records thereof besides they
 utterly reject. So that in tying the Church to the orders of
 the Apostles' times, they tie it to a marvellous uncertain rule;
 unless they require the observation of no orders but only those
 which are known to be apostolical by the Apostles' own writ-
 ings. But then is not this their rule of such sufficiency, that
 we should use it as a touchstone to try the orders of the
 Church by for ever.

[3.] Our end ought always to be the same; our ways and
 means thereunto not so. The glory of God and the good of
 His Church was the thing which the Apostles aimed at, and
 therefore ought to be the mark whereat we also level. But
 seeing those rites and orders may be at one time more which

¹ Tom. vii. de Bapt. contra Do-
 natist. lib. v. cap. 23. [t. ix. 156.
 "Apostoli nihile inde præceperunt:
 "sed consuetudo illa quæ oppone-
 "batur Cypriano ab eorum tra-
 "ditione exordium sumpsisse cre-
 "denda est, sicut sunt multa quæ
 "universa tenet Ecclesia, et ob hoc
 "ab Apostolis præcepta bene cre-
 "duntur, quanquam scripta non re-
 "periantur." T. C. l. i. p. 31. [18.]
 "If this judgment of St. Augustine

"be a good judgment and sound,
 "then there be some things com-
 "manded of God which are not in
 "the Scriptures; and therefore there
 "is no sufficient doctrine contained
 "in Scripture whereby we may be
 "saved. For all the command-
 "ments of God and of the Apostles
 "are needful for our salvation."

² Vide Ep. 118. [al. 54. t. ii.
 124. A.]

at another are less available unto that purpose, what reason is
 there in these things to urge the state of one only age as a
 pattern for all to follow? It is not I am right sure their mean-
 ing, that we should now assemble our people to serve God in
 close and secret meetings; or that common brooks or rivers
 should be used for places of baptism; or that the Eucharist
 should be ministered after meat; or that the custom of church
 feasting should be renewed; or that all kind of standing pro-
 vision for the ministry should be utterly taken away, and their
 estate made again dependent upon the voluntary devotion of
 men. In these things they easily perceive how unfit that
 were for the present, which was for the first age convenient
 enough. The faith, zeal, and godliness of former times is
 worthily had in honour; but doth this prove that the orders
 of the Church of Christ must be still the selfsame with theirs,
 that nothing may be which was not then, or that nothing
 which then was may lawfully since have ceased? They who
 recall the Church unto that which was at the first, must neces-
 sarily set bounds and limits unto their speeches. If any thing
 have been received repugnant unto that which was first
 delivered, the first things in this case must stand, the last give
 place unto them. But where difference is without repugnancy,
 that which hath been can be no prejudice to that which is.

[4.] Let the state of the people of God when they were in
 the house of bondage, and their manner of serving God in a
 strange land, be compared with that which Canaan and Jeru-
 salem did afford, and who seeth not what huge difference
 there was between them? In Egypt it may be they were right
 glad to take some corner of a poor cottage, and there to serve
 God upon their knees, peradventure covered in dust and
 straw sometimes. Neither were they therefore the less ac-
 cepted of God, but he was with them in all their afflictions,
 and at the length by working their admirable deliverance
 did testify, that they served him not in vain. Notwithstanding
 in the very desert they are no sooner possessors of some little
 thing of their own, but a tabernacle is required at their hands.
 Being planted in the land of Canaan, and having David to be
 their king, when the Lord had given him rest from all his
 enemies, it grieved his religious mind to consider the growth
 of his own estate and dignity, the affairs of religion continuing

still in their former manner: "Behold now I dwell in an "house of cedar-trees, and the ark of God remaineth still "within curtains¹." What he did purpose it was the pleasure of God that Salomon his son should perform, and perform it in manner suitable unto their present, not their ancient estate and condition. For which cause Salomon writeth unto the king of Tyrus, "The house which I build is great and wonderful, for great is our God above all gods²." Whereby it clearly appeareth that the orders of the Church of God may be acceptable unto him, as well being framed suitable to the greatness and dignity of later, as when they keep the reverend simplicity of ancienter times. Such dissimilitude therefore between us and the Apostles of Christ in the order of some outward things is no argument of default.

Our orders and ceremonies blamed, in that so many of them are the same which the Church of Rome useth.

III. Yea, but we have framed ourselves to the customs of the church of Rome; our orders and ceremonies are papistical. It is espied that our church founders were not so careful as in this matter they should have been, but contented themselves with such discipline as they took from the church of Rome³. Their error we ought to reform by abolishing all popish orders. There must be no communion nor fellowship with Papists, *neither in doctrine, ceremonies, nor government*. It is not enough that we are divided from the church of Rome by the single wall of doctrine, retaining as we do part of their ceremonies and almost their whole government⁴; but government or ceremonies or whatsoever it be which is popish, away with it. This is the thing they require in us, the utter relinquishment of all things popish.

Wherein to the end we may answer them according unto their plain direct meaning, and not take advantage of doubtful speech, whereby controversies grow always endless; their main position being this, that "nothing should be placed "in the Church but what God in his word hath com-

¹ 2 Sam. vii. 2.

² 2 Chron. ii. 5.

³ Eccles. Disc. fol. 12. ["Video "architectos Ecclesie nostrae in ea "restauranda soli doctrinae intentos, "de disciplina non laborasse, et talem fere qualem a Papistis accepit retinere."] T. C. lib. i. p. 131. [102. Whitg. Def. 474.]

⁴ T. C. i. 20. [al. 8, 9. ap. Def.

54. "Judge whether they be more "joined with the Papists which "would have no communion with "them, neither in ceremonies, nor "doctrine, nor government; or they "which forsaking their doctrine retain part of their ceremonies and "almost all their government: that "is, they that separate themselves "by three walls or by one."]

"manded¹," they must of necessity hold all for popish which the church of Rome hath over and besides this. By popish orders, ceremonies, and government, they must therefore mean in every of these so much as the Church of Rome hath embraced without commandment of God's word: so that whatsoever such thing we have, if the church of Rome hath it also, it goeth under the name of those things that are popish, yea although it be lawful, although agreeable to the word of God. For so they plainly affirm, saying², "Although the "forms and ceremonies which they" (the church of Rome) "used were not unlawful, and that they contained nothing "which is not agreeable to the word of God, yet notwithstanding "neither the word of God, nor reason, nor the examples of the eldest churches both Jewish and Christian do "permit us to use the same forms and ceremonies, being "neither commanded of God, neither such as there may not "as good as they, and rather better, be established." The question therefore is, whether we may follow the church of Rome in those orders, rites, and ceremonies, wherein we do not think them blameable, or else ought to devise others, and to have no conformity with them, no not so much as in these things. In this sense and construction therefore as they affirm, so we deny, that whatsoever is popish we ought to abrogate.

[2.] Their arguments to prove that generally all popish orders and ceremonies ought to be clean abolished, are in sum these: ³"First, whereas we allow the judgment of "St. Augustine, that touching those things of this kind which "are not commanded or forbidden in the Scripture, we are "to observe the custom of the people of God and decree of "our forefathers⁴; how can we retain the customs and "constitutions of the papists in such things, who were "neither the people of God nor our forefathers?" Secondly⁵, "although the forms and ceremonies of the church of Rome "were not unlawful, neither did contain any thing which is "not agreeable to the word of God, yet neither the word "of God, nor the examples of the eldest churches of God, "nor reason, do permit us to use the same, *they being heretics*

¹ T. C. i. 25. [al. 13. Def. 76. from Answ. 20.]

² T. C. lib. i. p. 131. [102.]

³ T. C. lib. i. p. 30. [17.]

⁴ [Ep. 36. 2. t. ii. 68.]

⁵ T. C. lib. i. p. 131. [102.]