

BOOK IV. positive laws the Apostles did bring in between the churches of Jews and Gentiles, it was in those things only which might either cease or continue a shorter or a longer time, as occasion did most require; the second, that they did not impose upon the churches of the Gentiles any part of the Jews' ordinances with bond of necessary and perpetual observation, (as we all both by doctrine and practice acknowledge,) but only in respect of the conveniency and fitness for the present state of the Church as then it stood. The words of the council's decree concerning the Gentiles are, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no more burden saving only those things of necessity, abstinence from idol-offerings, from strangled and blood, and from fornication¹." So that in other things positive, which the coming of Christ did not necessarily extinguish, the Gentiles were left altogether free.

[6.] Neither ought it to seem unreasonable that the Gentiles should necessarily be bound and tied to Jewish ordinances, so far forth as that decree importeth. For to the Jew, who knew that their difference from other nations which were aliens and strangers from God, did especially consist in this, that God's people had positive ordinances given to them of God himself, it seemed marvellous hard, that the Christian Gentiles should be incorporated into the same commonwealth with God's own chosen people, and be subject to no part of his statutes, more than only the law of nature, which heathens count themselves bound unto. It was an opinion constantly received amongst the Jews, that God did deliver unto the sons of Noah seven precepts: namely, first, to live in some form of regiment under public laws; secondly, to serve and call upon the name of God; thirdly, to shun idolatry; fourthly, not to suffer effusion of blood; fifthly, to abhor all unclean knowledge in the flesh; sixthly, to commit no rapine; seventhly, and finally, not to eat of any living creature whereof the blood was not first let out².

¹ [Acts xv. 28.]

² Lib. qui Seder Olam inscribitur. [Or "The World's Order," being a summary of events and dates from the creation to the War of Bar Cochab, supposed to have been written about A.D. 130. Wolf. Bibl. Hebr. i. 491. ed. 1715. The passage

cited is cap. 5, p. 16. ed. Meyer. Amstelæd. 1699. "From the Red sea they journeyed unto Marah . . . There were given unto Israel ten precepts; [Exod. xv. 23, 25.] "seven of them, concerning which commandment had been given to the sons of Noah.] יין ו.

BOOK IV. If therefore the Gentiles would be exempt from the law of Moses, yet it might seem hard they should also cast off even those things positive which were observed before Moses, and which were not of the same kind with laws that were necessarily to cease. And peradventure hereupon the council saw it expedient to determine, that the Gentiles should, according unto the third, the seventh, and the fifth, of those precepts, abstain from things sacrificed unto idols, from strangled and blood, and from fornication. The rest the Gentiles did of their own accord observe, nature leading them thereto.

[7.] And did not nature also teach them to abstain from fornication? No doubt it did. Neither can we with reason think, that as the former two are positive, so likewise this, being meant as the Apostle doth otherwise usually understand it¹. But very marriage within a number of degrees being not only by the law of Moses, but also by the law of the sons of Noah (for so they took it) an unlawful discovery of nakedness; this discovery of nakedness by unlawful marriages such as Moses in the law reckoneth up², I think it for mine own part more probable to have been meant in the words of that canon, than fornication according unto the sense of the law of nature. Words must be taken according to the matter whereof they are uttered. The Apostles command to abstain from blood. Construe this meaning according to the law of nature, and it will seem that homicide only is forbidden. But construe it in reference to the law of the Jews about which the question was, and it shall easily appear to have a clean other sense, and in any man's judgment a truer, when we expound it of eating and not of shedding blood. So if we speak of fornication, he that knoweth no law but only the law of nature must needs make thereof a narrower construction, than he which measureth the same by a law, wherein sundry kinds

"[the judgments]: 2. ברכת השם "time the Sabbath, and (ריינין) judg-
"[the malediction of the name (of
"God)]: 3. עבודת אילים," (more
usually עבודה ורה "strange wor-
"ship,") "the worship of idols]:
"4. שפיכות דמים [the shedding of
"blood]: 5. גילוי עריות [the dis-
"covery of nakedness]: 6. הגול [ra-
"pine]: 7. אבר מן החי [partaking
"of any member of a living creature.]
"Israel added unto these at that

ments," (on the difference between
this and the first precept see Sel-
den, de Jure Nat. et Gent. ap.
Heb. vii. 5, p. 809.) "and the hon-
"ouring of parents." The whole
passage is quoted and illustrated by
Selden, lib. i. c. 10. p. 123.]

¹ Heb. xiii. 4; 1 Cor. v. 11; Gal.
v. 19.

² Lev. xviii.

BOOK IV. even of conjugal copulation are prohibited as impure, unclean, Ch. xi. 8, 9. unhonourable. St. Paul himself doth term incestuous marriage fornication¹. If any do rather think that the Christian Gentiles themselves, through the loose and corrupt custom of those times, took simple fornication for no sin, and were in that respect offensive unto believing Jews, which by the Law had been better taught; our proposing of another conjecture is unto theirs no prejudice².

[8.] Some things therefore we see there were, wherein the Gentiles were forbidden to be like unto the Jews; some things wherein they were commanded not to be unlike. Again, some things also there were, wherein no law of God did let but that they might be either like or unlike, as occasion should require. And unto this purpose Leo saith³, "Apostolical ordinance (beloved,) knowing that our Lord "Jesus Christ came not into this world to undo the law, hath "in such sort distinguished the mysteries of the Old Testament, that certain of them it hath chosen out to benefit evangelical knowledge withal, and for that purpose appointed "that those things which before were Jewish might now be "Christian customs." The cause why the Apostles did thus conform the Christians as much as might be according to the pattern of the Jews, was to rein them in by this mean the more, and to make them cleave the better.

[9.] The Church of Christ hath had in no one thing so many and so contrary occasions of dealing as about Judaism: some having thought the whole Jewish Law wicked and damnable in itself; some not condemning it as the former sort absolutely, have notwithstanding judged it either sooner necessary to be abrogated, or further unlawful to be observed than truth can bear: some of scrupulous simplicity urging perpetual and universal observation of the law of Moses necessary,

¹ I Cor. v. 1.

² [Selden in the work above cited (which is throughout an elaborate commentary on the seven Noachical precepts) approves this construction of the word *πορνεία*: though he does not think that the council of Jerusalem was referring to those precepts: lib. vii. c. 12, p. 845.]

³ Leo in Jejun. Mens. Sept. Ser. 9. [vii. c. 1. "Apostolica institutio,

"dilectissimi, quæ Dom. Jesum
"Christum ad hoc venisse in hunc
"mundum noverat, ut legem non
"solveret sed impleret, ita Veteris
"Testamenti decreta distinxit, ut
"quædam ex eis, sicut erant condita,
"evangelicæ eruditioni profutura
"decerperet, et quæ dudum fuerant
"consuetudinibus Judaicæ fierent ob-
"servantiæ Christianæ.]"

as the Christian Jews at the first in the Apostles' times; some as heretics, holding the same no less even after the contrary determination set down by consent of the Church at Jerusalem; finally some being herein resolute through mere infidelity, and with open professed enmity against Christ, as unbelieving Jews.

To control slanderers of the Law and Prophets, such as Marcionites and Manichees were, the Church in her liturgies hath intermingled with readings out of the New Testament lessons taken out of the Law and Prophets; whereunto Tertullian alluding, saith of the Church of Christ¹, "It inter-
"mingleth with evangelical and apostolical writings the Law
"and the Prophets; and from thence it drinketh in that
"faith, which with water it sealet, clotheth with the Spirit,
"nourisheth with the Eucharist, with martyrdom setteth
"forward." They would have wondered in those times to hear, that any man being not a favourer of heresy should term this by way of disdain, "mangling of the Gospels and
"Epistles²."

[10.] They which honour the Law as an image of the wisdom of God himself, are notwithstanding to know that the same had an end in Christ. But what? Was the Law so abolished with Christ, that after his ascension the office of Priests became immediately wicked, and the very name hateful, as importing the exercise of an ungodly function³? No, as long as the glory of the Temple continued, and till the time of that final desolation was accomplished, the very Christian Jews did continue with their sacrifices and other parts of legal service. That very Law therefore which our Saviour was to abolish, did not *so soon* become unlawful to be

¹ Tertull. de Præscript. advers. Hæret. [c. 36. "Unum Deum
"novit Creatorem universitatis, et
"Christum Jesum ex Virgine Maria
"Filium Dei Creatoris, et carnis
"resurrectionem: legem et pro-
"phetas cum evangelicis et aposto-
"licis literis miscet, et inde potat
"fidem: eam aqua signat, Sancto
"Spiritu vestit, eucharistia pascit,
"martyrio exhortatur.]"

² T. C. lib. iii. p. 171. "What
"an abusing also is it to affirm the

"mangling of the Gospels and
"Epistles to have been brought
"into the Church by godly and
"learned men!"

³ T. C. lib. i. p. 216. "Seeing
"that the office and function of
"priests was after our Saviour
"Christ's ascension naught and
"ungodly; the name whereby they
"were called, which did exercise
"that ungodly function, cannot be
"otherwise taken than in the evil
"part."

BOOK IV. observed as some imagine; nor was it afterwards unlawful *so*
 Ch. xi. 11. *far*, that the very name of Altar, of Priest, of Sacrifice itself,
 should be banished out of the world. For though God do
 now hate sacrifice, whether it be heathenish or Jewish, so
 that we cannot have the same things which they had but with
 impiety; yet unless there be some greater let than the only
 evacuation of the Law of Moses, the names themselves may
 (I hope) be retained without sin, in respect of that proportion
 which things established by our Saviour have unto them
 which by him are abrogated. And so throughout all the
 writings of the ancient Fathers we see that the words which
 were do continue; the only difference is, that whereas
 before they had a literal, they now have a metaphorical use,
 and are as so many notes of remembrance unto us, that what
 they did signify in the letter is accomplished in the truth.
 And as no man can deprive the Church of this liberty,
 to use names whereunto the Law was accustomed, so neither
 are we generally forbidden the use of things which the Law
 hath; though it neither command us any particular rite, as it
 did the Jews a number, and the weightiest which it did com-
 mand them are unto us in the Gospel prohibited.

[11.] Touching such as through simplicity of error did
 urge universal and perpetual observation of the Law of
 Moses at the first, we have spoken already. Against Jewish
 heretics and false apostles teaching afterwards the selfsame,
 St. Paul in every epistle commonly either disputeth or giveth
 warning. Jews that were zealous for the Law, but withal
 infidels in respect of Christianity, and to the name of Jesus
 Christ most spiteful enemies, did while they flourished no
 less persecute the Church than heathens. After their estate
 was overthrown, they were not that way so much to be feared.
 Howbeit, because they had their synagogues in every famous
 city almost throughout the world, and by that means great
 opportunity to withdraw from the Christian faith, which to
 do they spared no labour; this gave the church occasion to
 make sundry laws against them. As in the council of Laodicea¹

¹ Conc. Laod. Can. 37, 38. ["Non oportet a Judæis azyma accipere, aut communicare impietate feriatia quæ mittuntur accipere, nec cum eis dies agere festos. 116.] T. C. lib. i. p. 132. [103.]

BOOK IV. "The festival presents which Jews or heretics use to send
 Ch. xi. 12. "must not be received, nor Holidays solemnized in their
 "company." Again, "from the Jews men ought not to re-
 "ceive their unleavened, nor to communicate with their
 "impieties." Which council was afterwards indeed con-
 firmed by the sixth general council. But what was the true
 sense or meaning both of the one and the other? Were
 Christians here forbidden to communicate in unleavened bread
 because the Jews did so being enemies of the Church¹?
 He which attentively shall weigh the words will suspect, that
 they rather forbid communion with Jews, than imitation of
 them: much more, if with these two decrees be compared a
 third in the Council of Constantinople, "Let no man either
 "of the clergy or laity eat the unleavened of the Jews, nor
 "enter into any familiarity with them, nor send for them
 "in sickness, nor take physic at their hands, nor as much
 "as go into the bath with them. If any do otherwise being a
 "clergyman, let him be deposed; if being a lay person, let
 "excommunication be his punishment²."

[12.] If these canons were any argument, that they which
 made them did utterly condemn similitude between the
 Christians and Jews in things indifferent appertaining unto
 religion, either because the Jews were enemies unto the
 Church, or else for that their ceremonies were abrogated;
 these reasons had been as strong and effectual against their
 keeping the feast of Easter on the same day the Jews kept
 theirs, and not according to the custom of the West church.
 For so they did from the first beginning till Constantine's
 time. For in these two things the East and West churches
 did interchangeably both confront the Jews and concur with
 them: the West church using unleavened bread, as the Jews
 in their passover did, but differing from them in the day
 whereon they kept the feast of Easter; contrariwise the
 East church celebrating the feast of Easter on the same day

¹ T. C. lib. iii. p. 176. ["What can be in itself more indifferent than these two, forbidden the Christians for that they were used of the enemies of the Church!"]
² Conc. Constantinop. vi. cap. 11. [Μηδεις τῶν ἐν ἱερατικῷ τάγματι ἢ λαϊκὸς τὰ παρὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἄζυμα ἐσθίειτω, ἢ τοιοῦτοι προσοικειούσθω, καὶ ἱατρείας παρ' αὐτῶν λαμβανέτω, ἢ ἐν βαλανείῳ παντελῶς τοῦτοι συλλουέσθω. Εἰ δὲ τις τοῦτο πράξαι ἐπιχειροίη, εἰ μὲν κληρικὸς εἶη, καθαρῆσθω· εἰ δὲ λαϊκὸς, ἀφοριζέσθω. κxv. 618.]

BOOK IV. with the Jews, but not using the same kind of bread which
Ch. xi. 12. they did. Now if so be the East church in using leavened
bread had done ill¹, either for that the Jews were enemies
to the Church, or because Jewish ceremonies were abrogated;
how should we think but that Victor the bishop of Rome
(whom all judicious men do in that behalf disallow) did
well to be so vehement and fierce in drawing them to the
like dissimilitude for the feast of Easter²? Again, if the
West churches had in either of those two respects affected
dissimilitude with the Jews in the feast of Easter, what
reason had they to draw the Eastern church herein unto them,
which reason did not enforce them to frame themselves unto
it in the ceremony of leavened bread? Difference in rites
should breed no controversy between one church and another;
but if controversy be once bred, it must be ended. The
feast of Easter being therefore litigious in the days of Con-
stantine, who honoured of all other churches most the church
of Rome, which church was the mother from whose breasts
he had drawn that food, which gave him nourishment to
eternal life; sith agreement was necessary, and yet impossible
unless the one part were yielded unto; his desire was that of
the two the Eastern church should rather yield. And to this
end he useth sundry persuasive speeches.

When Stephen the Bishop of Rome going about to shew
what the Catholic Church should do, had alleged what the
heretics themselves did, namely, that they received such as
came unto them, and offered not to baptize them anew;
St. Cyprian being of a contrary mind to him about the matter
at that time in question, which was, "Whether heretics con-
verted ought to be rebaptized, yea or no?" answered the
allegation of Pope Stephen with exceeding great stomach,
saying, "To this degree of wretchedness the church of God
"and Spouse of Christ is now come, that her ways she frameth
"to the example of heretics; that to celebrate the Sacraments

¹ [So it stands in the original Mr. Hanbury. The correction ap-
edition, p. 194. But it is most pears to have been Spenser's: at
likely an oversight, the sense re- least it occurs in the reprint of his
quiring "not done ill," or "done edition, 1622.]*
"well:" which reading has been ² [Euseb. v. 24.]
followed by all the editors except

[* The correction "had done well," is Spenser's, tacitly made in his edition of
1604; followed in the 4th edition, 1617.] 1886.

BOOK I "which heavenly instruction hath delivered, light itself doth
Ch. xii. "borrow from darkness, and Christians do that which Anti-
"christs do¹." →→→

Now albeit Constantine have done that to further a better
cause, which Cyprian did to countenance a worse, namely the
rebaptization of heretics, and have taken advantage at the odious-
ness of the Jews, as Cyprian of heretics, because the Eastern
church kept their feast of Easter always the fourteenth day of
the month, as the Jews did, what day of the week soever it
fell; or howsoever Constantine did take occasion in the hand-
ling of that cause to say, "It is unworthy to have any thing
"common with that spiteful nation of the Jews²." shall every
motive argument used in such kind of conferences be made a
rule for others still to conclude the like by, concerning all
things of like nature, when as probable inducements may lead
them to the contrary? Let both this and other allegations suit-
able unto it cease to bark any longer idly against that truth,
the course and passage whereof it is not in them to hinder.

XII. But the weightiest exception, and of all the most
worthy to be respected, is against such kind of ceremonies,
as have been so grossly and shamefully abused in the church
of Rome, that where they remain they are scandalous, yea,
Their ex-ception
against
such cere-
monies as
have been

¹ Cypr. ad Pomp. cont. Stephan. cap. 18. "Quid præstabilius, quidve
[Ep. 74. § 2. "Ad hoc enim "augustius esse poterat, quam ut
"malorum devoluta est Ecclesia "hoc festum, per quod spem im-
"Dei et sponsa Christi, ut hære- "mortalitatis nobis ostentatam ha-
"ticorum exempla sectetur, ut ad "bemus, uno modo et ratione apud
"celebranda sacramenta cœlestis "omnes integre sincereque obser-
"disciplinæ lux de tenebris mu- "varetur? Ac primum omnium
"tuetur, et id faciant Christiani, "indignum plane videbatur, ut
"quod Antichristi faciunt.]" "ritum et consuetudinem imitantes

² Socrat. Ecclesiast. Hist. lib. v. cap. 22. "Plerique in Asia minore
"antiquitus 14 die mensis, nulla "Judæorum (qui, quoniam suas
"ratione diei Sabbati habita, hoc "ipsorum manus immmani scelere
"festum observarunt. Quod dum "polluerunt, merito, ut scelestos
"faciebant, cum aliis, qui aliam ra- "decet, cæco animorum errore ten-
"tionem in eodem festo agendo "entur irretiti) istud festum sanc-
"sequebantur, usque eo nequaquam "tissimum ageremus. In nostra
"dissenserunt, quoad Victor epi- "enim situm est potestate, ut, illo-
"scopus Romanus, supra modum "rum more rejecto, veriore ac magis
"iracundia inflammatus, omnes in "sincero instituto (quod quidem
"Asia qui erant τεσσαρεσκαδεκά- "usque a prima passionis die
"τηραι appellati excommunicaverit. "hactenus recolimus) hujus festi
"Ob quod factum Irenæus episcopus "celebrationem ad posterorum se-
"Lugduni in Victorem per epi- "culorum memoriam propagemus.
"stolam graviter invecus est." "Nihil igitur sit nobis cum Judæ-
"orū turba, omnium odiosa max-
"ime." Euseb. de Vita Constant. lib. iii.

BOOK IV.
Ch. xii. 2.used by
the church
of Rome,
and are
said in that
respect to
be scandalous.

they cannot choose but be stumblingblocks and grievous causes of offence. Concerning this point therefore we are first to note, what properly it is to be scandalous or offensive; secondly, what kind of ceremonies are such; and thirdly, when they are necessarily for remedy thereof to be taken away, and when not.

[2.] The common conceit of the vulgar sort is, whensoever they see any thing which they mislike and are angry at, to think that every such thing is scandalous, and that themselves in this case are the men concerning whom our Saviour spake in so fearful manner, saying, "whosoever shall scandalize or "offend any one of these little ones which believe in me"¹ (that is, as they construe it, whosoever shall anger the meanest and simplest artisan which carrieth a good mind, by not removing out of the Church such rites and ceremonies as displease him), "better he were drowned in the bottom of the "sea." But hard were the case of the Church of Christ, if this were to scandalize. Men are scandalized when they are moved, led, and provoked unto sin. At good things evil men may take occasion to do evil; and so Christ himself was a rock of offence in Israel², they taking occasion at his poor estate and at the ignominy of his cross, to think him unworthy the name of that great and glorious Messiah, whom the Prophets describe in such ample and stately terms. But that which we therefore term offensive because it inviteth men to offend, and by a dumb kind of provocation encourageth, moveth, or any way leadeth unto sin, must of necessity be acknowledged actively scandalous.

Now some things are so even by their very essence and nature, so that wheresoever they are found they are not neither can be without this force of provocation unto evil; of which kind all examples of sin and wickedness are. Thus David was scandalous in that bloody act whereby he caused the enemies of God to be blasphemous³: thus the whole state of Israel scandalous, when their public disorders caused the name of God to be ill-spoken of amongst the nations⁴. It is of this

¹ Matt. xviii. 6.² 1 Pet. ii. 8.³ 2 Sam. xii. 14.⁴ Rom. ii. 24; Ezek. xxxvi. 20; Tertull. lib. de Virgin. Veland. [c. iii.

"Scandalum, nisi fallor, non bonæ rei sed malæ exemplum est, ædificans ad delictum. Bonæ res "neminem scandalizant, nisi malam "mentem."

BOOK IV.
Ch. xii. 3.

kind that Tertullian meaneth: "Offence or scandal, if I be not "deceived (saith he), is, when the example not of a good but "of an evil thing doth set men forward unto sin. Good things "can scandalize none save only evil minds:" good things have no scandalizing nature in them.

[3.] Yet that which is of its own nature either good or at least not evil, may by some accident become scandalous at certain times and in certain places and to certain men; the open use thereof nevertheless being otherwise without danger. The very nature of some rites and ceremonies therefore is scandalous, as it was in a number of those which the Manichees did use, and is in all such as the law of God doth forbid. Some are offensive only through the agreement of men to use them unto evil, and not else; as the most of those things indifferent which the heathens did to the service of their false gods, which another, in heart condemning their idolatry, could not do with them in show and token of approbation without being guilty of scandal given. Ceremonies of this kind are either devised at the first unto evil, as the Eunomian heretics in dishonour of the blessed Trinity brought in the laying on of water but once¹, to cross the custom of the church which in baptism did it thrice; or else having had a profitable use they are afterwards interpreted and wrested to the contrary, as those heretics which held the Trinity to be three distinct not persons but natures, abused the ceremony of three times laying on water in baptism unto the strengthening of their heresy². The element of water is in baptism necessary; once to lay it on or twice is indifferent. For which cause Gregory making mention thereof saith³, "To dive an infant

¹ [Sozom. vi. 26. φασὶ δὲ τινες, πρῶτον τοῦτον Εὐνόμιον τολμήσαι εἰσ- ηγήσασθαι, ἐν μία καταδύσει χρῆναι ἐπιτελεῖν τὴν θείαν βάπτισιν, καὶ παρα- χαράξει τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀποστόλων εἰσέτι νῦν ἐν πᾶσι φυλαττομένην παράδοσιν.]² [Concil. Tolet. iv. Can. 6, t. v. p. 1706. "Propter vitandum schis- matis scandalum, vel hæretici dog- matis usum, simplam teneamus "baptismi mersionem; ne videantur "apud nos, qui tertio mergunt, hæ- reticorum approbare assertionem "dum sequuntur et morem."]³ Epist. ad Leandrum Hisp. [lib.

i. ep. 43. "De trina vero mersione "baptismatis nil responderi verius "potest quam ipsi sensistis: quia "in una fide nihil officit ecclesiæ "consuetudo diversa. Nos autem "quod tertio mergimus, triduanæ "sepulturæ sacramenta signamus, "ut dum tertio infans ab aquis edu- citur, resurrectio triduanæ tempo- ris exprimatur. Quod si quis forte "etiam pro summæ Trinitatis vene- ratione æstimet fieri, neque ad "hoc aliquid obsistit, baptizandum "semel in aquis mergere: quia "dum in tribus subsistentiis una