Our Rites not scandalous per se, nor at first.

"either thrice or but once in baptism, can be no way a thing reprehensible esse nullatenus potest, infantem in baptismate vel ter vel semel mergere: quando et in tribus mersionibus personarum Trinitas, et in una postest divinitatis singularitas design. nat. 11. 352."


Difference between St. Paul's Case and ours:

outward obedience of laws and orders: because such may misconstrue the meaning of our ceremonies, and so take them as though they were in every sort the same they have been, shall this be thought a reason sufficient whereon to conclude that some law must necessarily be made to abolish all such ceremonies?

[6.] They answer, that there is no law of God which doth bind us to retain them. And St. Paul's rule is, that in those things from which without hurt we may lawfully abstain, we should frame the usage of our liberty with regard to the weakness and imbecility of our brethren. Wherefore unto them which stood upon their own defence saying, "All things "are lawful unto me;" he replieth, "but all things are not "expedient" in regard of others. "All things are clean, all "meats are lawful; but evil unto that man that eateth "offensively. If for thy meat's sake thy brother be grieved, "thou walkest no longer according to charity. Destroy not "him with thy meat for whom Christ died. Dissolve not for "food's sake the work of God." We that are strong must "bear the imbecilities of the impotent, and not please our- "selves." It was a weakness in the Christian Jews, and a main of judgment in them, that they thought the Gentiles polluted by the eating of those meats which themselves were afraid to touch for fear of transgressing the law of Moses; yea, hereat their hearts did so much rise, that the Apostle had just cause to fear, lest they would rather forsake Christianity than endure any fellowship with such as made no conscience of that which was unto them abominable. And for this cause mention is made of destroying the weak by meats, and of dissolving the work of God, which was his Church, a part of the living stones whereof were believing Jews. Now those weak brethren before-mentioned are said to be as the Jews were, and our ceremonies which have been abused in the church of Rome to be as the scandalous meats, from which the Gentiles are exorted to abstain in the presence of Jews, for fear of averting them from Christian faith. Therefore, as charity did bind them to refrain from that for their brethren's sake, which otherwise was lawful enough for them; so it bindeth us for our brethren's sake likewise to abolish such ceremonies, although we might lawfully else retain them.

[7.] But between these two cases there are great odds. For neither are our weak brethren as the Jews, nor the ceremonies which we use as the meats which the Gentiles used. The Jews were known to be generally weak in that respect; whereas contrariwise the imbecility of ours is not common unto so many, that we can take any such certain notice of them. It is a chance if here and there some one be found; and therefore seeing we may presume men commonly otherwise, there is no necessity that our practice should frame itself by that which the Apostle doth prescribe to the Gentiles.

Again, their use of meats was not like unto our of ceremonies, that being a matter of private action in common life, where every man was free to order that which himself did; but this a public constitution for the ordering of the Church: and we are not to look that the Church should change her public laws and ordinances, made according to that which is judged ordinarily and commonly fittest for the whole, although it chance that for some particular men the same be found inconvenient; especially when there may be other remedy also against the sores of particular inconveniences. In this case therefore where any private harm doth grow, we are not to reject instruction, as being an unmeet plaster to apply unto it; neither can we say, that he which appointeth teachers for physicians in this kind of evil, is "As if a man would set "one to watch a child all day long lest he should hurt him- "self with a knife; whereas by taking away the knife from "him, the danger is avoided, and the service of the man "better employed." For a knife may be taken away from a child, without depriving them of the benefit thereof which have years and discretion to use it. But the ceremonies which children do abuse if we remove quite and clean, as it is by some required that we should, then are they not taken from children only, but from others also; which is as though because children may perhaps hurt themselves with knives,

1 Vide Harmenop. [Harmenopuli Promptuarium Juris] (Groekt jurist and canonist, 1320-1383. His Προ- χυρον ήμων was first printed 1540, and by Gothofr. 1587) lib. ii. tit. 1.
we should conclude, that therefore the use of knives is to be taken quite and clean even from men also.

[8.] Those particular ceremonies, which they pretend to be so scandalous, we shall in the next Book have occasion more thoroughly to sift, where other things also traduced in the public duties of the Church whereunto each of these appertaineth, are together with these to be touched, and such reasons to be examined as have at any time been brought either against the one or the other. In the meanwhile against the conveniency of curing such evils by instruction, strange it is that they should object the multitude of other necessary matters, wherein preachers may better bestow their time, than in giving men warning not to abuse ceremonies: a wonder it is, that they should object this, which have so many years together troubled the Church with quarrels concerning these things, and are even to this very hour so earnest in them, that if they write or speak publicly but five words, one of them is lightly about the dangerous estate of the church of England in respect of abused ceremonies. How much happier had it been for this whole Church, if they which have raised contention therein about the abuse of rites and ceremonies, had considered in due time that there is indeed store of matters fitter and better a great deal for teachers to spend time and labour in! It is through their importunate and vehement asseverations, more than through any such experience which we have had of our own, that we are forced to think it possible for one or other now and then, at leastwise in the prime of the reformation of our church, to have stumbled at some kind of ceremony: wherein forasmuch as we are contented to take upon their credit, and to think it may be; sith also they pretend the same to be so dangerous a snare to their souls that are at any time taken therein; they must give our teachers leave for the saving of those souls (be they never so few) to intermingle sometime with other more necessary things admonition concerning these not unnecessary. Wherein they should in reason more easily yield this leave, considering that hitherto we shall not need to use the hundredth part of that time, which themselves think very needful to bestow in making most bitter invectives against the ceremonies of the Church.

XIII. But to come to the last point of all; the church of England is grievously charged with forgetfulness of her duty, which duty had been to frame herself unto the pattern of their example that went before her in the work of reformation. For “as the churches of Christ ought to be most unlike the synagogue of Antichrist in their indifferent ceremonies; so they ought to be most like one unto another and for preservation of unity to have as much as possible may be all the same ceremonies. And therefore St. Paul to establish this order in the church of Corinth, that they should make their gatherings for the poor upon the first day of the Sabbath, (which is our Sunday,) allegeth this, for a reason: That he had so ordained in other churches.” Again, “As children of one father and servants of one family, so all churches should not only have one diet in that they have one word, but also wear as it were one livery in using the same ceremonies.” Thirdly, “This rule did the great council of Nice follow, when it ordained, that where certain at the feast of Pentecost did pray kneeling, they should pray standing: the reason whereof is added, which is, that one custom ought to be kept throughout all churches. It is true that the diversity of ceremonies ought not to cause the churches to dissent one with another; but yet it maketh most to the avoiding of dissension, that there be amongst them an unity not only in doctrine, but also in ceremonies. And therefore our form of service is to be amended, not only for that it cometh too near that of the

1 T. C. lib. iii. p. 177. “It is not so convenient that the minister, having so many necessary points to bestow his time in, should be driven to spend it in giving warning of not abusing them, of which although they were used to the best there is “no profit.” [See also i. 36, ap. Whitg. Defence, 277. The words are, “A counsel not so convenient, that the ministers and pastors, which have so many necessary points to bestow their time on, and to inform the people of, should be driven to cut off their time appointed thereto, to teach them not to abuse these things, which if they use never so well, they can gain nothing.”]


3 1 Cor. xvi. 1.

4 Can. 20. The canon of that council which is here cited doth provide against kneeling at prayer on Sundays, or for fifty days after Easter on any day, and not at the feast of Pentecost: only. [ii. 202, 226; iv. 450.]
doth require them to be even as like as they may be without breaking any positive ordinance of God. For the ceremonies whereof we speak, being matter of positive law, they are indifferent, if God have neither himself commanded nor forbidden them, but left them unto the Church's discretion. So that if as great uniformity be required as is possible in these things; seeing that the law of God forbiddeth not any one of them, it followeth that from the greatest unto the least they must be in every Christian church the same, except mere impossibility of so having it be the hinderance. To us this opinion seemeth over extreme and violent: we rather incline to think it a just and reasonable cause for any church, the state whereof is free and independent, if in these things it differ from other churches, only for that it doth not judge it so fit and expedient to be framed therein by the pattern of their example, as to be otherwise framed than they. That of Gregory unto Leander is a charitable speech and a peaceable: "In una fide nil officit ecclesiae sanctæ consuetudo diversa: "Where the faith of the holy Church is one, a difference in customs of the Church doth no harm." That of St. Augustine to Casulansus is somewhat more particular, and toucheth what kind of ceremonies they are, wherein one church may vary from the example of another without hurt: "Let the faith of the whole Church, how wide soever it have spread itself, be always one, although the unity of belief be famous for variety of certain ordinances, whereby that which is rightly believed suffereth no kind of let or impediment." Calvin goeth further, "As concerning rites in particular, let the sentence of Augustine take place, which leaveth it free unto all churches to receive each their own custom. Yea some time it profiteth and is expedient that there be difference, lest men should think that religion is tied to outward ceremonies. Always provided that there be not any emulation, nor that churches delighted with novelty affect to have that which others have not."

1 Epist. lib. i. p. 41.
2 Ep. 86. al. 36. c. 9.
3 ["Sit ergo una fides universe, que ubique dilatatur, Ecclesiae... etiam ipsa fidei unitas quibusdam diversa observationibus celebratur, quibus nullo modo quod in fide verum est impeditur." t. ii. 77.]
4 [Ed. 54. t. ii. 124.]
5 Respons. ad Med. ["Responsio

1 T. C. lib. i. p. 182, 183.
2 [By Whitgift. Def. 481.]
3 Rom. xvi. 5, 7.
4 1 Cor. xiv. 36.
5 [T. C. iii. 183.]
6 [T. C. i. 104.]
Difference of Rites owned to be no Plea for Schism.

[4.] They which grant it true that the diversity of ceremonies in this kind ought not to cause dissension in churches, must either acknowledge that they grant in effect nothing by these words; or if any thing be granted, there must as much be yielded unto, as we affirm against their former strict assertion. For if churches be urged by way of duty to take such ceremonies as they like not of, how can dissension be avoided? Will they say that there ought to be no dissension, because such as be urged ought to like of that whereunto they are urged? If they say this, they say just nothing. For how should any church like to be urged of duty, by such as have no authority or power over it, unto those things which being indifferent it is not of duty bound unto them? Is it their meaning, that there ought to be no dissension, because, that which churches are not bound unto, no man ought by way of duty to urge upon them; and if any man do, he standeth in the sight of both God and men most justly blameable, as a needless disturber of the peace of God's Church, and an author of dissension? In saying this, they both condemn their own practice, when they press the church of England with so strict a bond of duty in these things; and they overthrow the ground of their practice, which is, that there ought to be in all kind of ceremonies uniformity, unless impossibility hinder it.

[5.] For proof whereof it is not enough to allege what St. Paul did about the matter of collections, or what noblemen do in the liversies of their servants, or what the council of Nice did for standing in time of prayer on certain days: because though St. Paul did will them of the church of Corinth 1 every man to lay up somewhat by him upon the Sunday, and to reserve it in store, till himself did come thither to send it unto the church of Jerusalem for relief of the poor there; signifying withal, that he had taken the like order with the churches of Galatia; yet the reason which he yieldeth of this order taken both in the one place and the other, sheweth the least part of his meaning to have been that whereunto his words are writhed. "Concerning collection for the saints, (he meaneth them of Jerusalem,) as I have given order to the church of Galatia, so likewise do ye," saith the Apostle; "that is, in every first of the week let each of you lay aside by himself, and reserve according to that which God hath blessed him with, that when I come collections be not then to make; and that when I am come, whom you shall choose, "them I may forthwith send away by letters to carry your beneficence unto Jerusalem." Out of which words to conclude the duty of uniformity throughout all churches in all manner of indifferent ceremonies will be very hard, and therefore best to give it over.

[6.] But perhaps they are by so much the more loth to forsake this argument, for that it hath, though nothing else, yet the name of Scripture, to give it some kind of countenance more than the next of livery coats afforded them. For neither is it any man's duty to clothe all his children or all his servants with one weed, nor theirs to clothe themselves so, if it were left to their own judgments, as these ceremonies are left of God to the judgment of the Church. And seeing churches are rather in this case like divers families than like divers servants of one family; because every church, the state whereof is independent upon any other, hath authority to appoint orders for itself in things indifferent: therefore of the two we may rather infer, that as one family is not abridged of liberty to be clothed in friar's-grey for that another doth wear clay-colour, so neither are all churches bound to the selfsame indifferent ceremonies which it liketh sundry to use.

[7.] As for that canon in the council of Nice, let them but reserve it in store, till himself did come thither to send it unto the church of Jerusalem for relief of the poor there; signifying withal, that he had taken the like order with the churches of Galatia; yet the reason which he yieldeth of this order taken both in the one place and the other, sheweth the least part of his meaning to have been that whereunto his words are writhed. "Concerning collection for the saints, (he meaneth them of Jerusalem,) as I have given order to the church of Galatia, so likewise do ye," saith the Apostle; "that is, in every first of the week let each of you lay aside by himself, and reserve according to that which God hath blessed him with, that when I come collections be not then to make; and that when I am come, whom you shall choose, "them I may forthwith send away by letters to carry your beneficence unto Jerusalem." Out of which words to conclude the duty of uniformity throughout all churches in all manner of indifferent ceremonies will be very hard, and therefore best to give it over.

1 I Cor. xvi. 1. 2 T. C. lib. i. p. 133. 104.