

BOOK IV. read it and weigh it well. The ancient use of the Church
Ch. xiii. 7. throughout all Christendom was for fifty days after Easter,
— (which fifty days were called Pentecost, though most commonly
the last day of them which is Whitsunday be so called,) in
like sort on all the Sundays throughout the whole year their
manner was, to stand at prayer; whereupon their meetings
unto that purpose on those days had the name of Stations
given them¹. Of which custom Tertullian speaketh in this
wise; "It is not with us thought fit either to fast on the
"Lord's day, or to pray kneeling. The same immunity from
"fasting and kneeling we keep all the time which is between
"the feasts of Easter and Pentecost²." This being therefore
an order generally received in the Church; when some
began to be singular and different from all others, and that
in a ceremony which was then judged very convenient for
the whole church even by the whole, those few excepted
which brake out of the common pale: the council of Nice
thought good to enclose them again with the rest, by a law
made in this sort: "Because there are certain which will
"needs kneel at the time of prayer on the Lord's-day, and
"in the fifty days after Easter; the holy synod judging it
"meet that a convenient custom be observed throughout all
"churches, hath decreed that standing we make our prayers
"to the Lord³." Whereby it plainly appeareth that in
things indifferent, what the whole Church doth think con-
venient for the whole, the same if any part do wilfully
violate, it may be reformed and inrailed again by that general
authority whereunto each particular is subject; and that the
spirit of singularity in a few ought to give place unto public
judgment: this doth clearly enough appear, but not that all
Christian churches are bound in every indifferent ceremony
to be uniform; because where the whole hath not tied the
parts unto one and the same thing, they being therein left

¹ De Cor. Milit. c. 3. ["Die geniculis adorare, et jejunium
"Dominico jejunium nefas dici-
"mus, vel de geniculis adorare.
"Eadem immunitate a die paschæ
"in Pentecosten usque gaude-
"mus."]
² T. C. lib. i. p. 133. [104.]
 "This rule did the great council of
 "Nice follow, &c. Die Dominico et
 "per omnem Pentecosten, nec de

"geniculis adorare, et jejunium
 "solvere, &c. De Coro. Militis."

³ [Ἐπειδὴ τινὲς εἰσιν ἐν τῇ κυ-
 ριακῇ γόνοι κλινόντες, καὶ ἐν ταῖς τῆς
 Πεντηκοστῆς ἡμέραις ὑπὲρ τοῦ πάντα
 ἐν πάσῃ παροικία ὁμοίως παραφυλάτ-
 τεσθαι, ἐστῶτας ἔδοξε τῇ ἁγίᾳ συνόδῳ
 τὰς εὐχὰς ἀποδιδόναι τῷ Θεῷ. Can.
 20. ap. Routh, Scrip. Eccles. Opusc.
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each to their own choice, may either do as other do or else
 otherwise, without any breach of duty at all. BOOK IV.
 Ch. xiii. 8. —

[8.] Concerning those indifferent things, wherein it hath
 been heretofore thought good that all Christian churches
 should be uniform, the way which they now conceive to
 bring this to pass was then never thought on. For till now
 it hath been judged, that seeing the Law of God doth not
 prescribe all particular ceremonies which the Church of
 Christ may use; and in so great variety of them as may be
 found out, it is not possible that the law of nature and reason
 should direct all churches unto the same things, each deliber-
 ating by itself what is most convenient; the way to establish
 the same things indifferent throughout them all must needs
 be the judgment of some judicial authority drawn into one
 only sentence, which may be a rule for every particular
 to follow. And because such authority over all churches is
 too much to be granted unto any one mortal man, there yet
 remaineth that which hath been always followed as the best,
 the safest, the most sincere and reasonable way; namely,
 the verdict of the whole Church orderly taken, and set down
 in the assembly of some general council. But to maintain
 that all Christian churches ought for unity's sake to be uni-
 form in all ceremonies, and then to teach that the way of
 bringing this to pass must be by mutual imitation, so that
 where we have better ceremonies than others they shall be
 bound to follow us, and we them where theirs are better;
 how should we think it agreeable and consonant unto reason?
 For sith in things of this nature there is such variety of
 particular inducements, whereby one church may be led to
 think that better which another church led by other induce-
 ments judgeth to be worse: (for example, the East church
 did think it better to keep Easter-day after the manner of
 the Jews, the West church better to do otherwise; the
 Greek church judgeth it worse to use unleavened bread in the
 Eucharist, the Latin church leavened; one church esteemeth
 it not so good to receive the Eucharist sitting as standing.
 another church not so good standing as sitting; there being
 on the one side probable motives as well as on the other;) unless they add somewhat else to define more certainly what
 ceremonies shall stand for best, in such sort that all churches in

BOOK IV. the world shall know them to be the best, and so know them
Ch. xiii. 9. that there may not remain any question about this point, we
are not a whit the nearer for that they have hitherto said.

[9.] They themselves, although resolved in their own judgments what ceremonies are best, yet foreseeing that such as they are addicted unto be not all so clearly and so incomparably best, but others there are or may be at leastwise, when all things are well considered, as good, knew not which way smoothly to rid their hands of this matter, without providing some more certain rule to be followed for establishment of uniformity in ceremonies, when there are divers kinds of equal goodness; and therefore in this case they say, that the later churches and the fewer should conform themselves unto the elder and the moe¹. Hereupon they conclude, that forasmuch as all the reformed churches (so far as they know), which are of our confession in doctrine, have agreed already in the abrogation of divers things which we retain; our church ought either to shew that they have done evil, or else she is found to be in fault for not conforming herself to those churches, in that which she cannot deny to be in them well abrogated. For the authority of the first churches, (and those they account to be the first in this cause which were first reformed,) they bring the comparison of younger daughters conforming themselves in attire to the example of their elder sisters; wherein there is just as much strength of reason as in the livery-coats before-mentioned. St. Paul, they say, noteth it for a mark of special honour, that Epænetus was the first man in all Achaia which did embrace the Christian faith²; after the same sort he toucheth it also as a special preeminence of Junias³ and Andronicus, that in Christianity they were his ancients⁴; the Corinthians he pinched with this demand, "Hath the word of God gone out from you, or hath it lighted on you alone⁵?"

But what of all this? If any man should think that alacrity

¹ T. C. lib. iii. p. 183. "If the ceremonies be alike commodious, the latter churches should conform themselves to the first," &c. And again, "The fewer ought to conform themselves unto the moe."

² Rom. xvi. 5.

³ ["Junias," so A. B. 1617, as if

like "Amplias," &c. by mistaken analogy. He takes the gender to be determined by the following qualification: "τοῖς συγγενεῖς μου . . οἰκτιρῶν;" "*Cognatos et concaptivos meos qui . . .*;" but comp. v. 3.] 1886.

⁴ Rom. xvi. 7.

⁵ 1 Cor. xiv. 36.

BOOK IV. and forwardness in good things doth add nothing unto men's
Ch. xiii. 10. commendation, the two former speeches of St. Paul might
lead him to reform his judgment. In like sort, to take down the stomach of proud conceited men, that glory as though they were able to set all others to school, there can be nothing more fit than some such words as the Apostle's third sentence doth contain; wherein he teacheth the church of Corinth to know, that there was no such great odds between them and the rest of their brethren, that they should think themselves to be gold and the rest to be but copper. He therefore useth speech unto them to this effect: "Men instructed in the knowledge of Jesus Christ there both were before you, and are besides you in the world; ye neither are the fountain from which first, nor yet the river into which alone the word hath flowed." But although as Epænetus was the first man in all Achaia, so Corinth had been the first church in the whole world, that received Christ; the Apostle doth not shew that in any kind of things indifferent whatsoever this should have made their example a law unto all others. Indeed the example of sundry churches for approbation of one thing doth sway much; but yet still as having the force of an example only, and not of a law. They are effectual to move any church, unless some greater thing do hinder; but they bind none, no not though they be many; saving only when they are the major part of a general assembly, and then their voices being moe in number must oversway their judgments who are fewer, because in such cases the greater half is the whole. But as they stand out single each of them by itself, their number can purchase them no such authority, that the rest of the churches being fewer should be therefore bound to follow them, and to relinquish as good ceremonies as theirs for theirs.

[10.] Whereas therefore it is concluded out of these so weak premises, that the retaining of divers things in the church of England, which other reformed churches have cast out, must needs argue that we do not well, unless we can shew that they have done ill¹; what needed this wrest to

¹ T. C. lib. iii. p. 183. "Our church ought either to shew that they have done evil, or else she is found to be in fault that doth not conform herself in that which she cannot deny to be well abrogated."

BOOK IV. draw out from us an accusation of foreign churches? It is
 Ch. xiv. 1. not proved as yet that if they have done well our duty is to
 follow them, and to forsake our own course because it differeth
 from theirs, although indeed it be as well for us every way
 as theirs for them. And if the proofs alleged for confirma-
 tion hereof had been sound, yet seeing they lead no further
 than only to shew, that where we can have no better cere-
 monies theirs must be taken; as they cannot with modesty
 think themselves to have found out absolutely the best which
 the wit of men may devise, so liking their own somewhat
 better than other men's, even because they are their own,
 they must in equity allow us to be like unto them in this
 affection; which if they do, they ease us of that uncourteous
 burden, whereby we are charged either to condemn them or
 else to follow them. They grant we need not follow them, if
 our own ways already be better: and if our own be but equal,
 the law of common indulgence alloweth us to think them at
 the least half a thought the better because they are our own;
 which we may very well do, and never draw any indictment
 at all against theirs, but think commendably even of them
 also.

A declara-
 tion of the
 proceed-
 ings of the
 Church of
 England
 for estab-
 lishment of
 things as
 they are.

XIV. To leave reformed churches therefore and their ac-
 tions for Him to judge of, in whose sight they are as they are;
 and our desire is that they may even in his sight be found
 such as we ought to endeavour by all means that our own may
 likewise be; somewhat we are enforced to speak by way of
 simple declaration concerning the proceedings of the church
 of England in these affairs, to the end that men whose minds
 are free from those partial constructions, whereby the only
 name of difference from some other churches is thought cause
 sufficient to condemn ours, may the better discern whether
 that we have done be reasonable, yea or no. The church of
 England being to alter her received laws concerning such
 orders, rites, and ceremonies, as had been in former times an
 hinderance unto piety and religious service of God, was to
 enter into consideration first, that the change of laws, espe-
 cially concerning matter of religion, must be warily proceeded
 in. Laws, as all other things human, are many times full of
 imperfection; and that which is supposed behoveful unto men,
 proveth oftentimes most pernicious. The wisdom which is

BOOK IV. learned by tract of time, findeth the laws that have been in
 former ages established, needful in later to be abrogated.
 Besides, that which sometime is expedient doth not always so
 continue: and the number of needless laws unabolished doth
 Ch. xiv. 2. weaken the force of them that are necessary. But true withal
 it is, that alteration though it be from worse to better hath in
 it inconveniences, and those weighty; unless it be in such
 laws as have been made upon special occasions, which occa-
 sions ceasing, laws of that kind do abrogate themselves. But
 when we abrogate a law as being ill made, the whole cause
 for which it was made still remaining, do we not herein re-
 voke our very own deed, and upbraid ourselves with folly,
 yea, all that were makers of it with oversight and with error?
 Further, if it be a law which the custom and continual prac-
 tice of many ages or years hath confirmed in the minds of men,
 to alter it must needs be troublesome and scandalous. It
 amazeth them, it causeth them to stand in doubt whether any
 thing be in itself by nature either good or evil, and not all
 things rather such as men at this or that time agree to account
 of them, when they behold even those things disproved,
 disannulled, rejected, which use had made in a manner
 natural. What have we to induce men unto the willing
 obedience and observation of laws, but the weight of so many
 men's judgment as have with deliberate advice assented there-
 unto; the weight of that long experience, which the world
 hath had thereof with consent and good liking? So that to
 change any such law must needs with the common sort impair
 and weaken the force of those grounds, whereby all laws are
 made effectual.

[2.] Notwithstanding we do not deny alteration of laws to
 be sometimes a thing necessary; as when they are unnatural,
 or impious, or otherwise hurtful unto the public community
 of men, and against that good for which human societies were
 instituted. When the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour
 were ordained to alter the laws of heathenish religion received
 throughout the whole world, chosen I grant they were (Paul
 excepted) the rest ignorant, poor, simple, unschooled altoge-
 ther and unlettered men; howbeit extraordinarily endued
 with ghostly wisdom from above before they ever undertook
 this enterprise; yea their authority confirmed by miracle, to

the end it might plainly appear that they were the Lord's ambassadors, unto whose sovereign power for all flesh to stoop, for all the kingdoms of the earth to yield themselves willingly conformable in whatsoever should be required, it was their duty. In this case therefore their oppositions in maintenance of public superstition against apostolic endeavours, as that they might not condemn the ways of their ancient predecessors, that they must keep *religiones traditas*, the rites which from age to age had descended, that the ceremonies of religion had been ever accounted by so much holier as elder¹; these and the like allegations in this case were vain and frivolous.

Not to stay longer therefore in speech concerning this point, we will conclude, that as the change of such laws as have been specified is necessary, so the evidence that they are such must be great. If we have neither voice from heaven that so pronounceth of them, neither sentence of men grounded upon such manifest and clear proof, that they in whose hands it is to alter them may likewise infallibly even in heart and conscience judge them so: upon necessity to urge alteration is to trouble and disturb without necessity. As for arbitrary alterations, when laws in themselves not simply bad or unmeet are changed for better and more expedient; if the benefit of that which is newly better devised be but small, sith the custom of easiness to alter and change is so evil, no doubt but to bear a tolerable sore is better than to venture on a dangerous remedy.

[3.] Which being generally thought upon as a matter that touched nearly their whole enterprise, whereas change was notwithstanding concluded necessary, in regard of the great hurt which the Church did receive by a number of things then in use, whereupon a great deal of that which had been was now to be taken away and removed out of the Church; yet sith there are divers ways of abrogating things established, they saw it best to cut off presently such things as might in that sort be extinguished without danger, leaving the rest to be abolished by disusage through tract of time. And as this was done for the manner of abrogation: so touching the stint

¹ [Min. Felix. c. 5. p. 50. ed. Gronov. "Venerabilius et melius, "antistitem veritatis majorum excipere disciplinam: religiones traditas colere; deos, quos a pa-

"rentibus ante imbutus es timere quam nosse familiaris, adorare; "nec de numinibus ferre sententiam, sed prioribus credere." And see before, p. 159, note 1.]

or measure thereof, rites and ceremonies and other external things of like nature being hurtful unto the Church, either in respect of their quality or in regard of their number; in the former there could be no doubt or difficulty what should be done, their deliberation in the later was more hard. And therefore inasmuch as they did resolve to remove only such things of that kind as the Church might best spare, retaining the residue; their whole counsel is in this point utterly condemned, as having either proceeded from the blindness of those times, or from negligence, or from desire of honour and glory, or from an erroneous opinion that such things might be tolerated for a while; or if it did proceed (as they which would seem most favourable are content to think it possible) from a purpose, "¹partly the easilier to draw papists unto "the Gospel" (by keeping so many orders still the same with theirs), "and partly to redeem peace thereby, the breach "whereof they might fear would ensue upon more thorough "alteration;" or howsoever it came to pass, the thing they did is judged evil. But such is the lot of all that deal in public affairs whether of church or commonwealth; that which men list to surmise of their doings, be it good or ill, they must beforehand patiently arm their minds to endure. Wherefore to let go private surmises, whereby the thing in itself is not made either better or worse; if just and allowable reasons might lead them to do as they did, then are these censures all frustrate.

[4.] Touching ceremonies harmless therefore in themselves, and hurtful only in respect of number: was it amiss to decree, that those things which were least needful and newliest come should be the first that were taken away, as in the abrogating of a number of saints' days, and of other the like customs, it appeareth they did; till afterwards the Form of Common Prayer being perfected, Articles of sound Religion and Discipline agreed upon, Catechisms framed for the needful instruction of youth, churches purged of things that indeed were burdensome to the people or to the simple offensive and scandalous, all was brought at the length unto that wherein now we stand? Or was it amiss, that having this way eased

¹ T. C. lib. ii. p. 29. "It may "the Gospel, partly the easilier to "well be, their purpose was by that "draw the papists to the Gospel, &c. "temper of popish ceremonies with "partly to redeem peace thereby."

BOOK IV. the Church as they thought of superfluity, they went not on
Ch. xiv. 5, 6. till they had plucked up even those things also, which had
taken a great deal stronger and deeper root; those things
which to abrogate without constraint of manifest harm thereby
arising, had been to alter unnecessarily (in their judgments)
the ancient received custom of the whole Church, the uni-
versal practice of the people of God, and those very decrees
of our fathers, which were not only set down by agreement
of general councils, but had accordingly been put in ure and
so continued in use till that very time present?

[5.] True it is, that neither councils nor customs, be they
never so ancient and so general, can let the Church from
taking away that thing which is hurtful to be retained.
Where things have been instituted, which being convenient
and good at the first, do afterwards in process of time wax
otherwise; we make no doubt but they may be altered, yea,
though councils or customs general have received them.
And therefore it is but a needless kind of opposition which
they make who thus dispute, "If in those things which are
"not expressed in the Scripture, that is to be observed of the
"Church, which is the custom of the people of God and
"decree of our forefathers; then how can these things at
"any time be varied, which heretofore have been once or-
"dained in such sort¹?" Whereto we say, that things so
ordained are to be kept, howbeit not necessarily any longer,
than till there grow some urgent cause to ordain the contrary.
For there is not any positive law of men, whether it be
general or particular; received by formal express consent,
as in councils, or by secret approbation, as in customs it
cometh to pass; but the same may be taken away if occasion
serve. Even as we all know, that many things generally
kept heretofore are now in like sort generally unkept and
abolished every where.

[6.] Notwithstanding till such things be abolished, what
exception can there be taken against the judgment of St.
Augustine, who saith, "That of things harmless, whatsoever
"there is which the whole Church doth observe throughout
"the world, to argue for any man's immunity from observing
"the same, it were a point of most insolent madness?"

¹ T. C. lib. iii. p. 30.

² Aug. Epist. 118. [al. 54. c. 5. t. ii. 126.]

And surely odious it must needs have been for one Christian
church to abolish that which all had received and held for
the space of many ages, and that without any detriment unto
religion so manifest and so great, as might in the eyes of
unpartial men appear sufficient to clear them from all blame
of rash and inconsiderate proceeding, if in fervour of zeal they
had removed such things. Whereas contrariwise, so reasonable
moderation herein used hath freed us from being deservedly
subject unto that bitter kind of obloquy, whereby as the
church of Rome doth under the colour of love towards those
things which be harmless, maintain extremely most hurtful
corruptions; so we peradventure might be upbraided, that
under colour of hatred towards those things that are corrupt,
we are on the other side as extreme even against most harmless
ordinances. And as they are obstinate to retain that, which
no man of any conscience is able well to defend; so we might
be reckoned fierce and violent to tear away that, which if
our own mouths did condemn, our consciences would storm
and repine thereat. The Romans having banished Tarquinius
the Proud, and taken a solemn oath that they never would
permit any man more to reign, could not herewith content
themselves, or think that tyranny was thoroughly extinguished,
till they had driven one of their Consuls to depart the city,
against whom they found not in the world what to object,
saving only that his name was Tarquin, and that the common-
wealth could not seem to have recovered perfect freedom, as
long as a man of so dangerous a name was left remaining¹.
For the church of England to have done the like in casting out
of papal tyranny and superstition; to have shewed greater
willingness of accepting the very ceremonies of the Turk²,
Christ's professed enemy, than of the most indifferent things
which the church of Rome approveth; to have left not so
much as the names which the church of Rome doth give unto
things innocent; to have ejected whatsoever that Church doth
make account of, be it never so harmless in itself, and of never
so ancient continuance, without any other crime to charge it
with, than only that it hath been the hap thereof to be used

¹ [Liv. ii. 2.]

² T. C. lib. i. p. 131. "For indeed
"it were more safe for us to conform

"our indifferent ceremonies to the
"Turks which are far off, than to
"the papists which are so near."

by the church of Rome, and not to be commanded in the word of God: this kind of proceeding might haply have pleased some few men, who having begun such a course themselves must needs be glad to see their example followed by us¹. But the Almighty which giveth wisdom and inspireth with right understanding whomsoever it pleaseth him, he foreseeing that which man's wit had never been able to reach unto, namely, what tragedies the attempt of so extreme alteration would raise in some parts of the Christian world², did for the endless good of his Church (as we cannot choose but interpret it) use the bridle of his provident restraining hand, to stay those eager affections in some, and to settle their resolution upon a course more calm and moderate: lest as in other most ample and heretofore most flourishing dominions it hath since fallen out, so likewise if in ours it had come to pass, that the adverse part being enraged, and betaking itself to such practices as men are commonly wont to embrace, when they behold things brought to desperate extremities, and no hope left to see any other end, than only the utter oppression and clean extinguishment of one side; by this mean Christendom flaming in all parts of greatest importance at once, they all had wanted that comfort of mutual relief, whereby they are now for the time sustained (and not the least by this our church which they so much impeach) till mutual combustions³, bloodsheds, and wastes, (because no other inducement will serve,) may enforce them through very faintness, after the experience of so endless miseries, to enter on all sides at the length into some such consultation, as may tend to the best reestablishment of the whole Church of Jesus Christ. To the singular good whereof it cannot but serve as a profitable direction to teach men what is most likely to prove available, when they shall quietly consider the trial that hath been thus long had of both kinds of reformation; as

¹ [Sara. de divers. Ministr. Evang. Grad. in Prolog. "Ejectis Tarquiniis Roma, Regis nomen postea non tulere Romani, quasi cum nomine ejecta esset quam oderant tyrannis: qui tamen postea plures tyrannidis formas perpassi sunt, quam si Regis nomen et autoritatem retinuissent. Non enim in regia potestate aut regis

"nomine ulla inerat tyrannis, sed in Tarquinio. Sic dico tyrannidem, quæ Ecclesias Christi vastavit, non fuisse in primatu Episcoporum et Archiepiscoporum, sed in iis qui primatu abusi sunt."]

² [France, Westphalia, Flanders, Scotland.]

³ ["Combustious," A. B.; "combustions," 1617.] 1886.

well this moderate kind which the church of England hath taken, as that other more extreme and rigorous which certain churches elsewhere have better liked. In the meanwhile it may be, that suspense of judgment and exercise of charity were safer and seemlier for Christian men, than the hot pursuit of these controversies, wherein they that are most fervent to dispute be not always the most able to determine. But who are on his side, and who against him, our Lord in his good time shall reveal.

[7.] And sith thus far we have proceeded in opening the things that have been done, let not the principal doers themselves be forgotten. When the ruins of the house of God (that house which consisting of religious souls is most immediately the precious temple of the Holy Ghost) were become, not in his sight alone, but in the eyes of the whole world so exceeding great, that very superstition began even to feel itself too far grown: the first that with us made way to repair the decays thereof by beheading superstition, was King Henry the Eighth. The son and successor of which famous king as we know was Edward the Saint: in whom (for so by the event we may gather) it pleased God righteous and just to let England see what a blessing sin and iniquity would not suffer it to enjoy. Howbeit that which the wise man hath said concerning Enoch (whose days were though many in respect of ours, yet scarce as three to nine in comparison of theirs with whom he lived) the same to that admirable child most worthily may be applied, "Though he departed this world soon, yet fulfilled he much time¹." But what ensued? That work which the one in such sort had begun, and the other so far proceeded in, was in short space so overthrown, as if almost it had never been: till such time as that God, whose property is to shew his mercies then greatest when they are nearest to be utterly despaired of, caused in the depth of discomfort and darkness a most glorious star² to arise, and on her head settled the crown, whom himself had kept as a lamb from the slaughter of those bloody times; that the experience of his goodness in her own deliverance might cause her merciful disposition to take so much the more delight in saving others, whom the like necessity should press. What in this behalf

¹ Sap. iv. 13.

² ["That bright Occidental Star, James by the Translators of the Queen Elizabeth of most happy Bible.]

"memory." Dedication to King

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hath been done towards nations abroad, the parts of Christendom most afflicted can best testify. That which especially concerneth ourselves, in the present matter we treat of, is the state of reformed religion, a thing at her coming to the crown even raised as it were by miracle from the dead ; a thing which we so little hoped to see, that even they which beheld it done, scarcely believed their own senses at the first beholding. Yet being then brought to pass, thus many years it hath continued, standing by no other worldly mean but that one only hand which erected it ; that hand which as no kind of imminent danger could cause at the first to withhold itself, so neither have the practices so many so bloody following since been ever able to make weary. Nor can we say in this case so justly, that Aaron and Hur, the ecclesiastical and civil states, have sustained the hand which did lift itself to heaven for them¹, as that heaven itself hath by this hand sustained them, no aid or help having thereunto been ministered for performance of the work of reformation, other than such kind of help or aid as the Angel in the Prophet Zachary speaketh of, saying, "Neither by an army nor strength, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts²." Which grace and favour of divine assistance having not in one thing or two shewed itself, nor for some few days or years appeared, but in such sort so long continued, our manifold sins and transgressions striving to the contrary ; what can we less thereupon conclude, than that God would at leastwise by tract of time teach the world, that the thing which he blesseth, defendeth, keepeth so strangely, cannot choose but be of him ? Wherefore, if any refuse to believe us disputing for the verity of religion established, let them believe God himself thus miraculously working for it, and wish life even for ever and ever unto that glorious and sacred instrument whereby he worketh.

¹ [Exod. xvii. 12.]

² Zach. iv. 6.