BOOK V.  

The Evangelical Hymns profitably repeated.

CH. XI. 3.

discoveries of Christ already present, whose future coming the other psalms did but foreshew, they are against the obstinate incredulity of the Jews, the most luculent testimonies that Christian religion hath; yea the only sacred hymns they are that Christianity hath peculiar unto itself, the other being songs too of praise and thanksgiving, but songs wherewith as we serve God, so the Jew likewise.

[3.] And whereas they tell us these songs were fit for that purpose, when Simeon and Zachary and the Blessed Virgin uttered them, but cannot so be to us which have not received like benefit; should they not remember how expressly Ezechias amongst many other good things is commended for this also, that the praises of God were through his appointment daily set forth by using in public divine service the songs of David and Asaph unto that very end? Either there wanted wise men to give Ezechias advice, and to inform him of that which in his case was as true as it is in ours, namely, that without some inconvenience and disorder he could not appoint those Psalms to be used as ordinary prayers, seeing that although they were songs of thanksgiving such as David and Asaph had special occasion to use, yet not so the whole Church and people afterwards whom like occasions did not befall: or else Ezechias was persuaded as we are that the praises of God in the mouths of his saints are not so restrained to their own particular, but that others may both conveniently and fruitfully use them: first, because the mystical communion of all faithful men is such as maketh every one to be interested in those precious blessings which any one of them receiveth at God’s hands: secondly, because when any thing is spoken to extol the goodness of God whose mercy endureth for ever, albeit the very particular occasion whereupon it riseth do come no more, yet the fountain continuing the same, and yielding other new effects which are but only in some sort proportionable, a small resemblance between the benefits which we and others have received, may serve to make the same words of praise and thanksgiving fit though not equally in all circumstances fit for both; a clear demonstration whereof we have in all the ancient Fathers’ commentaries and meditations upon the Psalms: last of all because even when there is not as much as the show of any resemblance, nevertheless by often using their words in such manner, our minds are daily more and more inflamed with their affections.

XL I. The public estate of the Church of God amongst the Jews hath had many rare and extraordinary occurrences, which also were occasions of sundry open solemnities and offices, whereby the people did with general consent make show of correspondent affection towards God. The like duties appear usual in the ancient Church of Christ, by that which Tertullian speaketh of Christian women matching themselves with infidels. “She cannot content the Lord with performance of his discipline, that hath at her side a vassal whom Satan hath made his vice-agent to cross whatsoever the faithful should do. If her presence be required at the time of Station or standing prayer, he chargeth her at no time

[2] They pray that they may be delivered from thunders and tempests, when no danger is nigh.”

BOOK V.  

The Litany: Processions among the Jews.  

[3] “Let any one call it, and give it to be used in all churches: which thing notwithstanding, although all churches might do for the time in respect of the case: the calamity which the churches suffered, yet there is no cause why it should be perpetual that was ordained but for a time, and why all lands should pray to be delivered from the incommodeities that some land hath been troubled with.”


[5] [Lit. “Exod. xx. 20; Wisd. x. 20; 2 Samuel vi. 2; 1 Chron. xiii. 5; 2 Chron. xx. 3; Joel ii. 15.”]
for the appeasing of God's wrath, and the averting of public evils, were of the Greek church termed Litanies; 1 Rogations, of the Latin. To the people of Vienna (Mamercus being their Bishop, about 450 years after Christ) there befell many things, the suddenness and strangeness whereof so amazed the hearts of all men, that the city they began to forsake as a place which heaven did threaten with imminent ruin. It beseemed not the person of so grave a prelate to be either utterly without counsel as the rest were, or in a common perplexity to show himself alone secure. Wherefore as many as remained he earnestly exhorteth to prevent ponted calamities, using those virtuous and holy means wherewith others in like case have prevailed with God. To which purpose he perfected the Rogations or Litanies before in use, and addeth unto them that which the present necessity required. Their good success moved Sidonius Bishop of Arverna to use the same so corrected Rogations 2 at such time as he and his people were

1 Tertull. lib. ii. ad Uxor. [c. 4.]
2 "Domino certe non potest pro dis- 3 ciplina satisfacere, habens in late- 4 re diaboli servum, procuratorem 5 domini sui ad impedienda fidelium 6 salutem laetuleret. Ut si statu fa- 7 cienda est, maritus de die condicat 8 albas: se jejunia observanda 9 sunt, maritus eadem die convivi- 10 um exercet: si procedendum est, 11 nunquam magis familie occupato 12 adveniat."
10 Terent. Andr. [i. 1. 100. "fu- 11 rit procisli." Phorn. v. 8. 37. 12 " taxing." Phorn. v. 8. 37. 13 " taxing." Phorn. v. 8. 37. 14 " taxing." Phorn. v. 8. 37. 15 " taxing." Phorn. v. 8. 37. 16 Julian having permitted the remains of St. Babylas to be removed from Daphne, the Chris- 17 tians asseverated the slave of his great 18 power and authority, which is the cause 19 of the great respect and entire 20 subjection of the lesser gods in all 21 things."

1 Basil. Epist. liii. [al. 207. 3. 31. al lortus, de omni tuis 32 omnifloribus. But it is truly observed by the Benedictine editor, that the 33 word Litanies is not employed here in its technical sense; no processon 34 being mentioned or implied.] Niceph. 35 (715-828.) lib. xiv. c. 3. "The 36 younger Theodosius, having to 37 " preside at the circus games 38 in a time of excessive rain, which 39 threatened famine, said to the 40 people, 'It were better for us 41 " filtering the festivity, to appease 42 God:' and they went forth in 43 procession with the Litanies, offer- 44 ing hymns to God: and the city 45 with accordant voice became in a 46 " moment one church.'"

5 Solo tanen invectarum te auctore 50 "Rogationum palmarum auxilio."
6 Non enim late nostram scisca- 51 tionem, primis temporibus ha- 52 rumce supplicationum instutu- 53 tum civitatis caelestis tibi credita per 54 causumodi periculorum terricula- 55 menta vacabantur. Nam modo 56 scene menium publicorum cre- 57 cistis terre mortuis concitabantur; 58 nunc ignes septem flammati caducas 59 "culmination cristis superfecto favil- 60 larum monte tumultabant: nunc 61 stupenda foro cubilia colocabat 62 audaciam parea, mansueto 63 "cervorum: cum tu inter ista dis- 64 cessum primorum populariumque
Abuse of Processions: how remedied.

after afflicted with famine, and besieged with potent adversa-
ries. For till the empty name of the empire came to be settled
in Charles the Great, the fall of the Romans' huge dominion
concurring with other universal evils, caused those times to be
days of much affliction and trouble throughout the world.
So that Rogations or Litanies were then the very strength, stay,
and comfort of God's Church. Whereupon in the year 506
it was by the council of Aurelia decreed\(^1\), that the whole
Church should bestow yearly at the feast of Pentecost three
days in that kind of processionary service. About half an hun-
dred years after, to the end that the Latin churches which all
observed this custom might not vary in the order and form of
those great Litanies which were so solemnly every where exer-
cised, it was thought convenient by Gregory the First and the
best of that name to draw the flower of them all into one\(^2\).

[3.] But this iron began at the length to gather rust. Which
thing the synod of Colen saw and in part redressed within
that province\(^3\), neither denying the necessary use for which
such Litanies serve, wherein God's clemency and mercy is
desired by public suit, to the end that plagues, destructions,
calamities, famines, wars, and all other the like adversities,
which for our manifold sins we have always cause to fear, may

\(^1\) statu urbis exanimito, ad nova ce-
ler venerem Ninevitarum exempla
decuriri... Qua devotione pla-
tus inspectoactor pectorum Deus, fecit
esse obsecrationem vestram vobis
salutis, ceteris imitationi, utsiqu
præsidio... Quæ omnia scens
populus iste, Viennensis suis et
accidisse prius et non accessisse
posterius, vestigia tam sacrosanctæ
informationis amplissit, sedulo
petens, ut conscientia sua bea-
titudo mittat orationem suarum
suffragia, quibus exempla trans-
misis: Biblioth. Patr. Colon. V.
1629.\(^4\)

\(^2\) Conc. Colon. i. p. 9, c. 7, 8; iv.
545, 547. Quod processiones per
agros et campos peraguntur, ra-
tionem quidem habet, nempe
quod populus orat, ut segetes ac
fruges terræ a Domino conserv
ventur: verum ut alia plurima,
ita et hic mos hominum nullit
iae depraevatus est, quod per oc-
casionem talis deambulationem, que
Dho placando erat instituta, multa
clera committantur. Quam-
obrem nobis satietudin, ut
ise, aliœque supplicationes ac pro-
cessiones, de cætero intra septa,
ecclesiæ religiosæ fierant, ac ut
in templo, loco punctum passus
perculariter dedicato, oreetur Deus,
habaturque tum pius ac tem,
pori conveniens ad populum com-
mitiorum sermo.\(^5\)

Evils seemingly distant may be deprecated in Litanies. 175

be turned away from us and prevented through his grace; nor
yet dispersing the great abuse whereunto as sundry other
things so this had grown by men's improbity and malice,
to whom that which was devised for the appeasing of God's
displeasure gave opportunity of committing things which
justly kindled his wrath. For remedy whereof it was then
thought better, that these and all other supplications or pro-
cessions should be no where used but only within the walls
of the house of God, the place sanctified unto prayer. And by us
not only such inconveniences being remedied, but also whatso-
ever was otherwise amiss in form or matter, it now remaineth
a work, the absolute perfection whereof upbraideth with error
or somewhat worse them whom in all parts it doth not satisfy.

[4.] As therefore Litanies have been of longer continuance
than that we should make either Gregory or Mancemus the
author of them, so they are of more permanent use than that
now the Church should think it needeth them not. What
dangers at any time are imminent, what evils hang over our
heads, God doth know and not we. We find by daily expe-
xperience that those calamities may be nearest at hand, readiest
to break in suddenly upon us, which we in regard of times
or circumstances may imagine to be farthest off. Or if they
do not indeed approach, yet such miseries as being present
all men are apt to bewail with tears, the wise by their prayers
should rather prevent. Finally, if we for ourselves had a
privilege of immunity, doth not true Christian charity require
that whatsoever any part of the world, yea any one of all our
brethren elsewhere doth either suffer or fear, the same we
account as our own burden? What one petition is there
found in the whole Litany, whereof we shall ever be able at any
time to say that no man living needeth the grace or benefit
therein craved at God's hands? I am not able to express how
much it doth grieve me, that things of principal excellency
should be thus bitten at, by men whom God hath endowed
with graces both of wit and learning for better purposes.

XLII. We have from the Apostles of our Lord Jesus
Christ received that brief confession of faith which hath been

\(^1\) T.C. lib. i. p. 137. [107.] "The
like may be said of the Gloria
Patri and the Athanasius' Creed.

thus made an open
always a badge of the Church, a mark whereby to discern Christian men from Infidels and Jews. “This faith received “from the Apostles and their disciples,” saith Ireneæus,1 “the “Church though dispersed throughout the world, doth not “withstanding keep as safe as if it ðwelt within the walls “of some one house, and as uniformly hold, as if it had but “one only heart and soul; this as coronantly it preacheth, “teacheth, and delivereth, as if but one tongue did speak for “all. As one sun shineth to the whole world, so there is no “faith but this one published, the brightness whereof must “enlighten all that come to the knowledge of the truth.” “This rule,” saith Tertullian,2 “Christ did institute; the “stream and current of this rule hath gone as far, it “hath continued as long, as the very promulgation of the “Gospel.”

[2] Under Constantine the emperor about three hundred years and upward after Christ, Arierus a priest in the church of Alexandria, a subtle-witted and a marvellous fair-spoken man,

but discontented that one should be placed before him in honour, whose superior he thought himself in desert, became through envy and stomach prone unto contradiction, and bold to broach at the length that heresy, wherein the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ contained but not opened in the former creed, the co-equality and co-eternity of the Son with the Father was denied. Being for this impiety deprived of his place by the bishop of the same church, the punishment which should have reformed him did but increase his obstinacy, and give him occasion of labouring with greater earnestness elsewhere to entangle unwary minds with the snares of his damnable opinion. Aries in short time had won to himself a number both of followers and of great defenders, whereupon much disquietness on all sides ensued. The emperor to reduce the Church of Christ unto the unity of sound belief, when other means whereof trial was first made took no effect, gathered that famous assembly of three hundred and eighteen bishops in the council of Nice, where besides order taken for many things which seemed to need redress, there was with common consent for the settling of all men’s minds, that other confession of faith set down which we call the Nicene Creed, whereunto the Arianos themselves which were present subscribed also; not that they meant sincerely and in deed to forsake their error, but only to escape deprivation and exile, which they saw they could not avoid openly persisting in their former opinions when the greater part had concluded against them, and that with the emperor’s royal assent. Reserving therefore unto themselves future opportunities, and knowing that it would not boot them to stir again in a manner so composed, unless they could draw the emperor first and by his means the chiefest bishops unto their part, till Constantine’s death and somewhat after they always professed love and zeal to the Nicene faith; yet ceased not in the meanwhile to strengthen that part which in heart they favoured, and to infest by all means under colour of other quarrels their greatest adversaries in this cause: amongst them Athanasius especially, whom by the space of forty-six years, from the time of his consecration to succeed Alexander archbishop in the church of Alexandria till the last hour of his life in this world, they never suffered to enjoy the comfort of a peaceable
day. The heart of Constantine stolen from him. Constantius Constantine's successor his scourge and torment by all the ways that malice armed with sovereign authority could devise and use. Under Julian no rest given him. And in the days of Valentinian as little. Crimes there were laid to his charge many, the least whereof being just had bereaved him of estimation and credit with men while the world standeth. His judges evermore the same men by whom his accusers were suborned. Yet the issue always on their part, shame; on his, triumph. Those bishops and prelates, who should have accounted his cause theirs, and could not many of them but with bleeding hearts and with watered cheeks behold a person of so great place and worth constrained to endure so foul indignities, were sure by bewraying their affection towards him to bring upon themselves those molestations, whereby if they would not be drawn to seem his adversaries, yet others should be taught how unsafe it was to continue his friends.

[3.] Whereupon it came to pass in the end, that (very few excepted) all became subject to the sway of time; other odds there was none amongst them, saving only that some fell sooner away, some later, from the soundness of belief; some were leaders in the host of impiety, and the rest as common soldiers, either yielding through fear, or brought under penury, or by flattery ensnared, or else beguiled through simplicity, which is the fairest excuse that well may be made for them. Yea (that which all men did wonder at) Osius the ancientest bishop that Christendom then had, the most forward in defence of the Catholic cause and of the contrary part most feared, that very Osius with whose hand the Nicene Creed itself was set down and framed for the whole Christian world to subscribe unto, so far yielded in the end as even with the same hand to ratify the Arians' confession, a thing which they neither hoped to see, nor the other part ever feared, till with amazement they saw it done. Both were persuaded that although there had been for Osius no way but either presently subscribe or die, his answer and choice would have been the same that Eleazar's was:

"age to dissemble, whereby many young persons might think,

\[\text{3 Mac. vi. 24.}\]

Fall of Osius. Impolicy of the Catholics. 179

"that Osius an hundred years old and upward were now gone to another religion, and so through mine hypocrisy (for a little time of transitory life) they might be deceived by me, and I procure malediction and reproach to my old age. "For though I were now delivered from the torments of "men, yet could I not escape the hand of the Almighty, "neither alive nor dead." But such was the stream of those times, that all men gave place unto it, which we cannot but impute partly to their own oversight. For at the first the emperor was theirs, the determination of the council of Nice was for them, they had the Arians' hands to that council. So great advantages are never changed so far to the contrary, but by great error.

[4.] It plainly appeareth that the first thing which weakened them was their security. Such as they knew were in heart still affected towards Arianism, they suffered by continual nearness to possess the minds of the greatest about the emperor, which themselves might have done with very good acceptation, and neglected it. In Constantine's lifetime to have settled Constantius the same way had been a duty of good service towards God, a mean of peace and great quietness to the Church of Christ, a labour easy, and how likely we may conjecture, when after that so much pain was taken to instruct and strengthen him in the contrary course, after that so much was done by himself to the furtherance of heresy, yet being touched in the end voluntarily with remorse, nothing more grieved him than the memory of former proceedings in the cause of religion, and that which he now foresaw in Julian, the next physician into whose hands the body that was thus distempered must fall.

[5.] Howbeit this we may somewhat excuse, inasmuch as every man's particular care to his own charge was such as gave them no leisure to heed what others practised in princes' courts. But of the two synods of Arimine and Seleucia what should we think? Constantius by the Arians' suggestion had devised to assemble all the bishops of the whole world about this controversy, but in two several places, the bishops of the

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{ Major centenari. Sulpit. Sever. Hist. lib. ii. \textsuperscript{c. 54.}}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\text{ Greg. Naz. Orat. 21. t. i. 369.}\]