Division, Hypocrisy, Heresy short of Apostasy,

BOOK V. Ch. lviii. 6.

whereof whole kingdoms and nations professing Christ both have been heretofore and are at this present day divided about Christ. During which divisions and contentions amongst men albeit each part do justify itself, yet the one of necessity must needs err if there be any contradiction between them be it great or little, and what side soever it be that hath the truth, the same we must also acknowledge alone to hold with the true Church in that point, and consequently reject the other as an enemy in that case fallen away from the true Church.

Wherefore of hypocrites and dissemblers whose profession at the first was but only from the teeth outward, when they afterwards took occasion to oppugn certain principal articles of faith, the Apostles which defended the truth against them pronounce them “gone out” from the fellowship of sound and sincere believers, when as yet the Christian religion they had not utterly cast off.

In like sense and meaning throughout all ages heretics have justly been hated as branches cut off from the body of the true Vine, yet only so far forth cut off as their heresies have extended. Both heresy and many other crimes which wholly sever from God do sever from the Church of God in part only. “The mystery of piety” saith the Apostle “is without perad-venture great, God hath been manifested in the flesh, hath been justified in the Spirit, hath been seen of Angels, hath been preached to nations, hath been believed on in the world, hath been taken up into glory.” The Church a pillar and foundation of this truth, which no where is known or pro-fessed but only within the Church, and they all of the Church that profess it. In the meanwhile it cannot be denied that many profess this who are not therefore cleared simply from all either faults or errors which make separation between us and the wellspring of our happiness. Idolatry severed of old the Israelites, iniquity those scribes and Pharisees from God, who notwithstanding were a part of the seed of Abraham, a part of that very seed which God did himself acknowledge to be his Church. The Church of God may therefore contain both them which indeed are not his yet must be reputed his by us that know not their inward thoughts, and whom whose apparent wickedness testifieth even in the sight of the whole world that God abhorreth them. For to this and no other purpose are meant those parables which our Saviour in the Gospel hath concerning mixture of vice with virtue, light with darkness, truth with error, as well an openly known and seen as a cunningly cloaked mixture.

That which separateth therefore utterly, that which cutteth off clean from the visible Church of Christ is plain Apostasy, direct denial, utter rejection of the whole Christian faith as far as the same is professedly different from infidelity. Heretics as touching those points of doctrine wherein they fail; schismatics as touching the quarrels for which or the duties wherein they divide themselves from their brethren; loose, licentious and wicked persons as touching their several offences or crimes, have all forsaken the true Church of God, the Church which is sound and sincere in the doctrine that they corrupt, the Church that keepeth the bond of unity which they violate, the Church that walketh in the laws of righteousness which they transgress, this very true Church of Christ they have left, howbeit not altogether left nor forsaken simply the Church upon the main foundations whereof they continue built, notwithstanding these breaches whereby they are rent at the top asunder.

[7.] Now because for redress of professed errors and open schisms it is and must be the Church’s care that all may in outward conformity be one, as the laudable polity of former ages even so our own to that end and purpose hath established divers laws, the moderate severity whereof is a mean both to stay the rest and to reclaim such as heretofore have been led awry. But seeing that the offices which laws require are

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1 Matt. xiii. 47.
2 Namely, the Act of Uniformity: that under which the High Commission acted and the Queen’s Injunctions were issued from time to time; other acts in 1562, 1581, 1583. Of interference with regard to the Communion in particular two instances occur in Strype: one in Park. i. 358: where a person of the Temple is interrogated, “Whether he had received the Communion in the Temple church, accus-tomably, as others of the house had done:” the other, Ann. i. ii. 347; a circular signed by the magistrates, pledging themselves to receive the holy Sacrament from “time to time, according to the tenor of the Act of Uniformity;” both dated 1569, when the rebellion in the north was yet rife. The act of 1581 appears to have been thought necessary on account of certain doubts which existed as to the construction of the previous general enactments, and consequent unlawfulness of the pecuniary penalties which
always definite, and when that they require is done they
no farther, whereupon sundry ill-affect persons to save
themselves from danger of laws pretend obedience, albeit in-
wardly they carry still the same hearts which they did before,
by means whereof it falleth out that receiving unworthily the
blessed sacrament at our hands, they eat and drink their own
damnation; it is for remedy of this mischief here determined,

the court of High Commission had
been in the habit of occasionally en-
four科. Strype, Grind. 345. A. D.
1577.]
[12b, 133.]
"If the place of the fifth to the
"Cornishian do forbid that we
should have any familiarity with
notorious offenders, it doth much
more forbid that they should be
received to the Communion. And
therefore papists being such as
which are notoriously known to
hold hereafter confessions ought not
to be admitted much less compelled
to the Supper. For seeing that
our Saviour Christ did institute
his supper amongst his disciples
and those only which were as St.
Paul speaketh within, it is evident
that the papists being without, and
foreigners and strangers from the
Church of God ought not to be
received if they would offer them-
selves; and that minister that
shall give the Supper of the Lord
to him which is known to be a
papist and which hath never made
any clear renouncing of popery
with which he hath been defiled
doth profane the table of the Lord,
and doth give the meat that is pre-
pared for the children unto dogs,
and he bringeth into the pasture
which is provided for the sheep,
swine and unclean beasts, contrary
to the faith and trust that ought
to be in a steward of the Lord's
house as he is. For albeit that I
"doubt not but many of those
which are now papists pertain to
the election of God, which God also
in his good time will call to the
knowledge of his truth; yet not-
withstanding they ought to be
unto the minister and unto the
Church touching the ministering
"of sacraments as strangers and
"as unclean beasts. . . . The mi-
"nistering of the holy sacraments
unto them is a declaration and
"seal of God's favour and reconcili-
"ation with them, and a plain
"preaching partly that they be
"washed already from their sins,
"partly that they are of the house-
"hold of God and such as the Lord
"will feed to eternal life, which is
"not lawful to be done unto those
"which are not of the household
"of faith. And therefore I conclude
"that the compelling of papists un-
"to the communion, and the dis-
"missing and letting of them go
"when as they be to be punished
"for their stubbornness in the Sac
"ring (with this condition, if they will
"receive the communion) is very
"unlawful, when as although they
"would receive it yet they ought
"to be kept back till such time as
"by their religious and gospel like
"behaviour, &c. [Comp. T. C. i.
34. ap. Whitg. Def. 178. Whitgift
in his answer had pleaded against
popular election of bishops, that
the Church is now full of papists,
athiestes, and such like.] T. C.
"replies, 'You now bring in papists,
"idolaters, and atheists, which are
"not only filthy but also poisonous
"and venomed beasts. I am not
"ignorant of that maxim of the Church
"that there be in the Church
"which are not of the Church; and
"those are hypocrites as is before
"said; but I would you plainly learn
"you, what scripture there is to
"prove that idolaters and papists
"and atheists are in the Church,
"when St. Paul calleth all such
"without the Church, and with
"whom the Church hath nothing
to do, nor they with the Church.

What their hearts are God doth know. But if they which
mind treachery to God and man shall once apprehend this

You might as well have placed in
"the Church, wolves, tigers, lions
"and bears, i.e. tyrants and perse-
cutors. . . . But now I hear you ask
"may the men shall become of the
"papists and atheis, if you will
"not have them to be of the Church?
"I answer that they may be of
"and in the Commonwealth, which
"neither may, nor can be, of or in
"the Church. And therefore the
"Church having nothing to do with
"the magistrats ought to see that
"they join to hear the sermons
"in the place where they are made,
"and cause them to be examined,
"how they profit; and if they pro-
"fit not, to punish them; and as
"their contempt growth, so to in-
crease the punishment, until such
time as they declare manifest to
"kens of unrepentantness, and then
"as rotten members . . . cut them off.'

[This expression refers perhaps
to the Jesuits and seminary priests
especially: who were very busy in
England about 1596. See Strype,
Ann. iv. 423. Compare in the same
Toplcy's statement in a letter to Burghley: 'There is a
great danger in many others, who
sometimes do come to the church,
"and yet be papists both in their
"inward hearts, and in their out-
ward actions and conversations,
refusing to receive the communion,
"and in every thing else that is
"worst. Of which there be also
two sorts. The one goeth to the
church for saving of the penalties
of thirteen years pounds a year;
"yet his wife and whole family, or
"most of them, continue resolute
"reucants and harbour traitors.
"The other sort go to the church
"because they may avoid suspicion
"of the magistrates the better, and
"is dispensed withal by some secret
Errors of those who would repel conforming Papists.

BOOK V.
Ch. l. viii. 9.

advantage given them, whereby they may satisfy law in pretending themselves conformed (for what can law with reason or justice require more?) and yet be sure the Church will accept no such offer, till their gospel-like behaviour be allowed; after that our own simplicity hath once thus fairly eased them from sting of law, it is to be thought they will learn the mystery of gospel-like behaviour when leisure serveth them. And so while without any cause we fear to profane sacraments, we shall not only defeat the purpose of most wholesome laws, but lose or wilfully hazard those souls from which the likeliest means of full and perfect recovery are by our indiscretion withheld.

For neither doth God thus bind us to dive into men's consciences, nor can their fraud and deceit hurt any man but themselves. To him they seem such as they are, but to us they must be taken for such as they seem. In the eye of God they are against Christ that are not truly and sincerely with him, in our eyes they must be received as with Christ that are not to outward show against him.

The case of impenitent and notorious sinners is not like unto theirs whose only imperfection is error severed from pertinacity, error in appearance content to submit itself to better instruction, error so far already cured as to crave at our hands that sacrament the hatred and utter refusal whereof was the weightiest point wherein heretofore they swerved and went astray.

[9.] In this case therefore they cannot reasonably charge us with remiss dealing, or with carelessness to whom we impart the mysteries of Christ, but they have given us manifest occasion to think it requisite that we earnestly advise and exhort them to consider as they ought their sundry oversights, first in equaling undistinctly crimes with errors as touching force to make uncapable of this sacrament; secondly in suffering indignation at the faults of the church of Rome to blind and withhold their judgments from seeing that which withal they should acknowledge, concerning so much nevertheless still due to the same church, as to be held and reputed

da dispensation of a delegate or such "the better, and with the less suspi-
a great priest as hath episcopal dion, serve the turn of their cause
authority, to the end they may "cathoiic."

Fewness of Communicants: not the Church's Fault. 375

BOOK V.
Ch. l. viii. 10.

a part of the house of God, a limb of the visible Church of Christ; thirdly in imposing upon the Church a burden to enter farther into men's hearts and to make a deeper search of their consciences than any law of God or reason of man enforceth; fourthly and lastly in repelling under colour of longer trial such from the mysteries of heavenly grace, as are both capable thereof by the laws of God for any thing we hear to the contrary, and should in divers considerations be cherished according to the merciful examples and precepts whereby the gospel of Christ hath taught us towards such to shew compassion, to receive them with lenity and all meekness, if any thing be shaken in them to strengthen it, not to quench with delays and jealousies that feeble smoke of conformity which seemeth to breathe from them, but to build wheresoever there is any foundation, to add perfection unto slender beginnings, and that as by other offices of piety even so by this very food of life which Christ hath left in his Church not only for preservation of strength but also for relief of weakness.

[10.] But to return to our own selves in whom the next thing severely reproved is the paucity of communicants; if they require at communions frequency we wish the same, knowing how acceptable unto God such service is when multitudes cheerfully concur unto it; if they encourage men thereunto, we also (themselves acknowledge it) are not utterly forgetful to do the like; if they require some public coaction for remedy of that wherein by milder and softer means little good is done, they know our laws and statutes provided in that behalf, whereto whatsoever convenient help may be added more by the wisdom of man, what cause

1 T. C. lib. i. p. 147. [116.] 2 Chron. xxx. 13; Psalm cxxii. 1. 3 [T. C. l. 117. al. 149. "It may be objected, that in this point the Book of Common Prayer is not in fault, which doth not only not forbid, but bid all the Church should receive together, but also by a good and godly exhortation moveth those that be present that they should not depart... It is true that it doth not forbid, and that there is godly exhortation for that purpose."] 4 [T. C. l. 117. al. 149. "It" (the Prayer Book) "ought to provide that those which would, with draw themselves should be by ecclesiastical discipline at all times, and now also under a godly prince by civil punishment brought to communicate... This is the law of God, (Numbers ix. 13.) and this is now and hath been hereto-fore the practice of the churches reformed."
have we given the world to think that we are not ready to hearken to it, and to use any good mean of sweet compulsion 1 to have this high and heavenly banquet largely furnished? Only we cannot so far yield as to judge it convenient: that the holy desire of a competent number should be unsatisfied, because the greater part is careless and undisposed to join with them.

Men should not (they say) be permitted a few by themselves to communicate when so many are gone away, because this sacrament is a token of our conjunction with our brethren 2, and therefore by communicating apart from them we make an apparent show of distraction. I ask then on which side unity is broken, whether on theirs that depart or on theirs who being left behind do communicate? First in the one it is not denied but that they may have reasonable causes of departure, and that then even they are delivered from just blame. Of such kind of causes two are allowed 3, namely danger of impairing health and necessary business requiring our presence otherwhere. And may not a third, which is insufficiency at the present time, detain us as lawfully back as either of these two? True it is that we cannot hereby altogether excuse ourselves, for that we ought to prevent this and do not. But

1 Luke xiv. 23.
2 [T. C. i. 116. al. 147. "The holy Sacrament of the Supper of the Lord is not only a seal and confirmation of the promises of God unto us, but also a profession of our conjunction as well with Christ our Saviour and with God, as also "as St. Paul teacheth a declaration and profession that we are at one with our brethren... The de- paring therefore of the rest of the Church from those three or four is an open profession that they have no common communion, fellowship, nor unity, with them that do communicate; and likewise of those three or four, that they have none with the Church. Therefore St. Paul driving therunto wisheth that one should tarry for another." Whig. Def. 528. "If the book should appoint that three or four should communicate together, and no more; or if it did not allow that communion best wherein"

Private Communion objected to by the Puritans.

if we have committed a fault in not preparing our minds before, shall we therefore aggravate the same with a worse, the crime of unworthy participation? He that abstaineth doth want for the time that grace and comfort which religious communicants have, but that he eateth and drinketh unworthily receiveth death, that which is life to others turneth in him to poison.

Notwithstanding whatsoever be the cause for which men abstain, were it reason that the fault of one part should any way abridge their benefit that are not faulty? There is in all the Scripture of God no one syllable which doth condemn communicating amongst a few when the rest are departed from them.

[11.] As for the last thing which is our imparting this sacrament privately unto the sick 1, whereas there have been of old (they grant 2) two kinds of necessity wherein this sacrament might be privately administered 3, of which two

"uncleanness which Moses speaketh was such as men could not easily avoid: and whereunto they might fall sometimes by necessity, or duty;... which can not be partsakers of those that are now of the Church. For if they will say, they be not meet, it may be answered unto them that it is their own fault; and further, if they be not meet to receive the holy Sacrament of the Supper, they are not meet to hear the word of God, they are not meet to partake of the prayers of the Church... To whomesoever of them the Lord will communicate himself by preaching the word, to the same he will not refuse to communicate himself by receiving of the sacraments.

1 [Adm. ap. Whig. Def. 529. "In this latter case, or if we are allowed for a fit number to receive the communion, and the priest alone together with one more, or with the sick man alone, may in time of necessity, that is when there is any common plague, or in time of other visitation minister it to the sick man, and if he require it may be denied. This is not I am sure like in effect to a private mass: that Scripture, "Drink ye all of this, maketh not against this; and private Communion is not against the Scriptures."]

2 T. C. i. 146. [al. 115. "It is

3 T. C. i. 146. ch. lvii. 11.
the one being erroneously imagined, and the other (they say) continuing no longer in use, there remaineth unto us no necessity at all, for which that custom should be retained. The falsely surmised necessity is that whereby some have thought all such excluded from possibility of salvation as did depart this life and never were made partakers of the holy Eucharist. The other case of necessity was, when men, which had fallen in time of persecution, and had afterwards repented them, but were not as yet received again unto the fellowship of this communion, did at the hour of their death request it, that so they might rest with greater quietness and comfort of mind, being thereby assured of departure in unity of Christ's Church, which virtuous desire the Fathers did think it great impiety not to satisfy. This was Serapion's case of necessity. Serapion a faithful aged person and always of very upright life till fear of persecution in the end caused him to shrink back, after long sorrow for his scandalous offence and suit oftentimes made to be pardoned of the Church, fell at length into grievous sickness, and being ready to yield up the ghost was more then instant than ever before to receive the sacrament. Which sacrament was necessary in this case, not that Serapion had been deprived of everlasting life without it, but that his end was thereby to him made the more comfortable. And do we think, that all cases of such necessity are clean vanished? Suppose that some have by mis-persuasion lived in schism, withdrawn themselves from holy and public assemblies, hated the prayers, and loathed the sacraments of the Church, falsely presuming them to be fraught with impious and Antichristian corruptions, which error the God of mercy and truth opening at the length their eyes to see, they do not only repent them of the evil which they have done but also in token thereof desire to receive comfort by that whereunto they have offered disgrace, (which may be the case of many poor seduced souls even at this day), God forbid we should think that the Church doth sin in permitting the wounds of such to be suppld with that oil which this gracious Sacrament doth yield, and their bruised minds not only not but beg.

[12.] There is nothing which the soul of man doth desire in that last hour so much as comfort against the natural terrors of death and other scruples of conscience which commonly do then most trouble and perplex the weak, towards whom the very law of God doth exact at our hands all the helps that Christian lenity and indulgence can afford. Our genera. consolation departing this life is the hope of that glorious and blessed resurrection which the Apostle St. Paul, nameth ξανάσταιν, to note that as all men shall