

CONFERENCES.

CERTAIN GODLY, LEARNED, AND COMFORTABLE

CONFERENCES

BETWEEN

NICHOLAS RIDLEY,

SOMETIME BISHOP OF LONDON,

AND

HUGH LATIMER,

SOMETIME BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

DURING THE TIME OF THEIR IMPRISONMENT.

A. D. 1556.

TO THE READER.

CERTAIN GODLY, HEARIED, AND COMFORTABLE CONFERENCES

**betwene the two Reverend Fathers and holy
martyrs of Christ, D. Nicolas Rydley
late bisshoppe of London, and
Mr. Hugh Latimer, sometyme
Bishop of Worcester during
the tyme of their im-
prisonmentes.**

Ps. 116.

Ryght deare in the sight of the

Lord is the death of his

Saintes.

Anno 1556.

GRACE and peace &c. Good Christian Reader, here are set forth for thine instruction and comfort certain learned and comfortable conferences between the two reverend and godly fathers, M. Ridley and M. Latimer, whose bodies the Romish tyranny of late hath tormented, and fire hath consumed; whose souls mercy hath embraced, and heaven hath received; yielding the one unto the enemy to death, for testimony of the truth; commending the other unto God, in sure hope of life. And forasmuch as these their scrolls and writings were by God's good providence preserved, and as it were raked out of the ashes of the authors—containing as well comfortable consolation for such as are in the school of the Cross, as also good and profitable admonition for them which (either of ignorance, either of infirmity, or by flattering of themselves with vain pretences) do yield unto the wicked world—the reverence due to the reverend fathers, the zeal towards the setting forth of the tried truth, and the ready good will to comfort and confirm weak consciences, would not suffer thee any longer to want these small treatises and yet no small treasures; that as in life they profited thee by teaching, and in death by example, so after death they may do thee good by writing. And albeit the matter of itself is sufficient to commend itself, yet it cannot be, but the worthiness of the writers will increase credit, and give no small authority to the writings. M. Latimer came earlier in the morning, and was the more ancient workman in the Matt. xx. Lord's vineyard; who also may very well be called (as divers learned men have termed him) the Apostle of England, as one much more worthy of that name for his true doctrine, and for his sharp reproving of sin and superstition, than was

Augustine, bishop of Canterbury, for bringing in the pope's monkery and false religion. M. Ridley came later, about the eleventh hour; but no doubt he came when he was effectually called: and from the time of his calling became a faithful labourer, terrible to the enemies for his excellent learning, and therefore a meet man to rid out of the Lord's vineyard the sophistical thorns of the wrangling adversaries; which did well appear in all disputations and conferences that were in his time, and partly doth appear in these short treatises following. But what shall it need in many words to praise them, whose lives were most commendable, whose deaths were most glorious? In office and vocation both like, in labour and travail both faithful, in learning and judgment both sound; in mind and manners both mild, but in God's cause both stout. For neither threatened death, neither love of present life, could shake the foundation of their faith, firmly grounded upon the sure rock, Christ. They redeemed liberty of conscience with the bondage of the body; and to save their lives, they were content to lose their lives. This was not the work of the flesh, but the operation of God's mighty Spirit; who hath ever from the beginning not only builded, but also enlarged, his Church by the suffering of his saints, and sealed his doctrine with the blood of his martyrs: as S. Augustine, speaking of the persecutions in the primitive church, doth well declare in these words:

De Civ. Dei,
Lib. xxii.
cap. 6.

*Ligabantur, includebantur, cædebantur, torquebantur, urebantur, (laniabantur, trucidabantur,) et multiplicabantur*¹.

That is to say, The Christians were bound, were imprisoned, were beaten, were tormented, were burnt, [were butchered, were slain,] and yet were multiplied.

Apolog. II. If Justinus Martyr² when he was yet an heathen philo-

[¹ S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. cap. 6. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1685, tom. vii. col. 661. The words in brackets are omitted by Ridley in his quotation. Ed.]

² Just. Mart. Apol. ii. cap. 12. Ed. Ben. Par. p. 96.

sopher (as he confesseth of himself) was moved to embrace the faith and religion of Christ in beholding the constant patience of the martyrs, which suffered for Christ in his time; how much more ought the patient suffering and voluntary death of these notable fathers, with many other learned, godly men in our days (whose names are written in the book of life) not only move, but also pierce and persuade all godly hearts, constantly to remain in the truth known? For undoubtedly the truth of the cause they suffered for is most evident by God's word, and hath been so fully taught, so clearly set forth by many and sundry writings, that it is open to the consciences of all the world, even of the very adversaries themselves that persecute it (greater is their damnation), except it be to such whom the God of this world, malice, ambition, avarice, or ignorance hath blinded.² Cor. iv. Which thing needeth none other proof (especially for the realm of England) but only to call to mind, with what conscience and constancy these pillars of the church (that cannot err) have walked in religion these twenty years by past: how they (not long ago) received and allowed things, which with fire and faggot they persecute now; and shrank from that then, which now they most earnestly maintain. And although there appeared in the latter days a shadow of stoutness in a few, yet it was indeed nothing. For it sprang not out of any zeal to the cause or clearness of conscience, but rather out of a like subtle and foxy presumption as the Syrians once conceived, when they put themselves in the danger of king Ahab, saying, "Behold we¹ Kings xx. have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are pitiful and merciful." For out of all doubt, king Henry the Eighth could as easily have obtained at Winchester's hands and others, a conformity in putting down the mass and all the rest, whatsoever hath been done (by order) since, if he had earnestly minded it; as the abolishing of the Pope, monkery,

pilgrimages, relics, with like baggage; all which are now again things well esteemed, and covered (as all the residue is) with the cloak of the Catholic church.

But to return to the matter we have in hand: in this little treatise, good Reader, thou shalt perceive another manner of spirit, thou shalt think (if thou thyself be not very dull) that thou hearest men speak, which had learned the lesson of the Apostles, that is, to obey God rather than man, and had not learned the Romish epicure's lesson, to apply faith and religion to the present state of policy, to turn with the time, and serve all seasons; men before death dead unto the world, accounting with St Paul all other things to be damage, loss, and vile, that they might win Christ; men zealous for the house of God, and the glory of his name; such as had already laid open their consciences and infirmities before the judgment-seat of God, and had again through Christ received the effect of faith and true righteousness, that is, peace of conscience and joyfulness in the Holy Ghost, and so had a full taste in this mortal body, of immortality; in misery, of happiness; in earth, of heaven. O England, England! how great is thy loss for the want of them! how horrible is thine offence for killing of them! how grievous will thy plague be, when the revenger of innocent blood shall call thee to an account for them, if thou do not repent in time! God grant that the admonitions of these and other godly martyrs may so warn us, their doctrine so instruct us, and their example so confirm us in the true knowledge and fear of God, that flying and abhorring idolatry and superstition, we may embrace true religion and piety; forsaking the phantasies of men, we may humbly obey the written word of God; and ruled thereby, direct all our doings to the glory of his name, and our own endless salvation in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Acts iv.

Philip. iii.

CERTAIN GODLY, LEARNED, AND COMFORTABLE

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BETWEEN

THE TWO REVEREND FATHERS AND HOLY MARTYRS,

DR NICHOLAS RIDLEY,

LATE BISHOP OF LONDON,

AND

MASTER HUGH LATIMER,

SOMETIME BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

DURING THE TIME OF THEIR IMPRISONMENT.

“*In the name of Jesus let every knee bow.*” Philip. ii.

N. RIDLEY.

“A BISHOP ought to be unproveable, as the steward of N. RID. God, &c., cleaving fast to the true word of doctrine,” &c. Tit. i. All worldly respects put apart, of shame, death, loss of goods, and worldly commodities, let me have, I pray you, your advice in these matters following: that is, your assent and confirmation in those things, which you judge that God doth allow, and your best counsel and advertisement where you think otherwise, and your reasons for both the same. For the wise man saith, “One brother which is helped of another, is like a well-defended city¹.” Prov. xviii.

The causes that move me to abstain from the mass, be these:

I. It is done in a strange tongue, which the people doth not understand, contrary to the doctrine of the apostle. 1 Cor. xiv.

[¹ This quotation is taken from the Septuagint:

“*ἀδελφὸς ὑπὸ ἀδελφοῦ βοηθούμενος ὡς πόλις ὄχυρά καὶ ὑψηλή.*”

The authorised version renders the passage:

“A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city.” Prov. xviii. 19. Ed.]

H. LATIMER.

H. LAT. Where is no understanding, there is neither edifying, nor comfort; for besides that they speak into the air, the mind receiveth no profit; they are one to another as aliens. The parishioners will say, their priests are mad, whereas all things ought to be done so as they may edify. Let every man know, that the things which I write, saith St Paul, are the commandments of the Lord. Such absurdities are to be eschewed.

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID. II. There is also wanting the shewing of the Lord's death, contrary to the mind of the Apostle, "As often as ye shall eat this bread, and drink of this cup, ye shall shew the Lord's death till he come." What shewing can be there, whereas no man heareth, that is to say, understandeth what is said? No man, I mean, of the common people, for whose profit the prayer of the church ought specially to serve.

H. LATIMER.

H. LAT. "Woe be unto you, that take away the key of knowledge." The papists study by all means to make the people ignorant (lest their ignorant Sir Johns should be had in less estimation or despised), which is clean contrary to St Paul's practice, who wished that all men might be fulfilled with all knowledge, and to be perfect in Christ Jesus, &c. The institution of Christ, if it were rehearsed in the vulgar tongue, should be not only a consecration, but also a fruitful preaching to the edification of the hearers. Whereas, in the popish mass it is neither understood nor heard, whilst the common people are utterly ignorant what their priests do, or what they go about, whether they bless or curse. The apostles understood Christ, when he celebrated his supper; therefore do these papists swerve from Christ in their mass.

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID. III. There is no communion, but it is made a private table, and indeed ought to be a communion; for St Paul saith, "The bread which we break, is the partaking of the body of Christ." And Christ brake, distributed, and said, "Take and eat," &c. But that they make it a private

table, it is open. For where they be many priests which will communicate, they do it not in one table or altar, but every one of them have their altars, masses, and tables. The papists make the Lord's table a private table.

H. LATIMER.

To make that private, which Christ made common, and H. LAT. willed to be communicated, may seem to be the workmanship of Antichrist himself. The canons¹ of the apostles do excommunicate them which being present at common prayer, &c. do not also receive the holy communion. And unto the same agreeeth the decree of Anacletus: "When the consecration is done," saith he, "let all such communicate as intend not to be excommunicated²." "That which is first is true; that which is latter is counterfeited³," saith Tertullian. But the papists say, "We do it privately, because we do it for others." But where have you your commission to mass and sacrifice for others? Can. ix. De Consec. dist. 1 cap. Epist. Tertull. contra Prax. cam.

N. RIDLEY.

IV. The Lord's commandment of communicating the cup unto the lay people, is not observed according to the word of the Lord, "Drink ye all of this." N. RID. Matt. xxvi.

H. LATIMER.

"As often as ye shall eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, ye shall shew the Lord's death." So that, not the partaking of the one only, but of both, is a shewing of the Lord's death. Because in his death the blood was divided from the body, it is necessary that the same division be represented in the Supper; otherwise the Supper is not a shewing of the Lord's death, &c. "Let a man examine H. LAT. 1 Cor. xi.

[¹ πάντας τοὺς εἰσιόντας πιστοὺς καὶ τῶν γραφῶν ἀκούοντας, μὴ παραμένοντας δὲ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ ἀγία μεταλήψει, ὡς ἀταξίαν ἐμποιοῦντας τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀφορίζεσθαι χυρῆ. Can. Apost. Can. 9. Conc. Coll. Reg. Par. tom. i. p. 12. Ed.]

[² Peracta autem consecratione, omnes communicent qui noluerint ecclesiasticis carere limitibus. Anacleti. Ep. 1. Conc. Coll. Reg. Par. tom. i. p. 140. Ed.]

[³ Id esse verum, quodcunque primum; id esse adulterum, quodcunque posterius. Tertullian. adv. Prax. sec. 2. Op. p. 405. Ed.]

The Lord's death is not shewed except both parts of the sacrament be ministered. The argument of King Henry VIII. 1 Cor. xi.

himself," &c. But this word, 'homo,' is of both genders: therefore it is as well commanded to the woman to drink of the cup, as the man, &c. But the king's argument, once against me, was this—"When ye come together to eat," he saith not, saith he, to drink."—I answered, it was not needful, seeing that a little before he had made mention of both in these words: "And so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."—*Homo*—That is to say, as well the woman as the man. Under the name of bread, which betokeneth all sustenance of the body, drink is also understood in the Scripture. Otherwise they would say, that Christ did not drink after his resurrection with his disciples, except Peter had said, we did eat and drink with him after he rose from death.

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID. De doctrina Christiana, Lib. 3, cap. ix.

V. They do¹ servilely serve the holy sign, as St Augustine speaketh, instead of the thing signified, whilst the sacramental bread (by a solemn or common error) is adored and worshipped for the flesh taken of the Son of God.

H. LATIMER.

H. LAT. If ye deny unto them their corporeal presence and transubstantiation, their fantastical adoration will (by and by) vanish away. Therefore, be strong in denying such a presence, and then ye have won the field.

Matt. xix. Gen. viii.

Furthermore, in the first Supper, celebrated of Christ himself, there is no mention made of adoration of the elements. Who said, "Eat ye, and drink ye," not worship ye. Therefore, against adoration may be spoken that saying of Christ concerning divorce, "From the beginning it was not so." But the devil secretly, and by little and little, infecteth all Christ's ordinances; and as for the private mass, with all the sinews thereof, what manner a thing it is, may be easily perceived by the ready acceptance of the people, whose hearts are prone to evil even from their youth.

[¹ Sub signo enim servit, qui operatur aut veneratur aliquam rem significantem, nesciens quid significet. S. Aug. de doctr. Christ. lib. iii. cap. 9. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1635, tom. iii. pars i. col. 48, 49. Ed.]

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID. VI. They pluck away the honour from the only sacrifice of Christ, whilst this sacramental and mass-sacrifice is believed to be propitiatory, and such a one as purgeth the souls, both of the quick and the dead. Contrary to that is written to the Hebrews, "With one offering hath he made perfect for ever them that are sanctified." And again, "Where remission of these things (that is, of sins) is, there is no more offering for sin."

H. LATIMER.

H. LAT. Heb. i. "By his own person he hath purged our sins." These words, 'by his own person', have an emphasis or vehemence, which driveth away all sacrificing priests from such office of sacrificing; seeing that, which He hath done by himself, He hath not left to be perfected by others; so that the purging of our sins may more truly be thought past and done, than a thing to come and to be done. "If any man sin," &c. He saith not, let him have a priest at home to sacrifice for him, but "we have an Advocate," the virtue of whose one oblation endureth for ever. St Paul saith, "They that serve the altar, &c. Even so the Lord hath ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Why doth he not rather say, "they that sacrifice in the mass"?

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID. VII. There be manifold abuses and superstitions which are done in the mass and about the mass. Salt is conjured, that it may be a conjured salt for the salvation of the believers, to be a salvation and health, both of the mind and of the body, unto everlasting life, to all them that receive it. Water is conjured, that it may be made a conjured water, to chase away all the power of the enemy, to chase away devils, &c. Bread also hath this second blessing, that it may be health of mind and body to all them that receive it. If we do think that such strength is to be given to salt, water, and bread; or if we judge

[² In the authorised version the passage is rendered "by himself purged our sins." Heb. i. 3. Ed.]

that these things are able to receive any such virtue or efficacy, what leave we to Christ, our Saviour? But if we think not so, why then do we pray on this sort; forasmuch as all prayer ought to be done in faith?

H. LATIMER.

H. LAT. As touching the abuses of the mass, I refer you to a little book, the title whereof is *Mistress Missa*¹, where she was justly condemned and banished under pain of burning. But the devil hath brought her in again, to bring us to burning.

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID. VIII. The priest turneth himself from the altar, and speaketh unto the people in an unknown tongue, saying, *Dominus vobiscum, orate pro me, fratres et sorores, &c.*; that is, The Lord be with you, and pray for me, brothers and sisters: and turning from the people, he saith in Latin, "Let us pray, and the peace of the Lord be always with you." Also the people, or at least he which supplieth the place of the people, is compelled three times to say, "Amen," when he hath heard never a word of that the priest hath prayed or spoken, except these few words, *Per omnia secula seculorum*. Whereas to the answering of "Amen," St Paul willeth the answerer, not only to hear, but also to understand, the things that were spoken.

H. LATIMER.

H. LAT. Yea, and *Ite, missa est*, must be sung to them with a great rolling up and down of notes, so bidding them go home fasting, when he hath eaten and drunken up all himself alone. A fellow, once rebuked for going away before mass was ended, answered, that it was not good manners to tarry till he were bidden go. After that he was blamed for not taking holy bread, he answered, that he was bidden go away before.

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID. IX. The priest, when he lifteth up the Sacrament, he murmureth to himself these words: *Hæc quotiescunque feceritis, in mei memoriam facietis*; that is, "As often as ye do

[¹ See note D. at the end of the volume. Ed.]

these things, ye shall do it in remembrance of me." He seemeth by his words to speak unto the people, but he suffereth not his voice to be heard of the people.

H. LATIMER.

I cannot tell to whom the mass-man speaketh as he is a lifting, seeing that neither Christ bade him lift, neither is the people allowed to do those things: and as for that form of words, it is of their own framing. But the papists do all things well, be they never so much deceitful workers, taking upon them the vizer and title of the church, as it were sheep's clothing, as though they were the ministers of righteousness: whereas indeed they are the devil's ministers, whose end shall be according to their deeds. They roll out their Latin language by heart, but in so doing they make the poor people of Christ altogether ignorant; and, so much as in them lieth, they keep them back from that which St Paul calleth the best knowledge, which is, to know rightly the things which are given unto us of Christ. But this is the matter, so long as the priests speak Latin, they are thought of the people to be marvellous well learned.

N. RIDLEY.

X. "Upon the which vouchsafe to look with thy merciful and cheerful countenance." What meaneth this prayer for the Sacrament itself, if it be, as they say, the body of Christ, if it be God and man? How should the Father not look with a cheerful countenance upon his only well-beloved Son? Why do not we rather pray for ourselves, that we, for his sake, may be looked upon of the Father with a cheerful countenance?

H. LATIMER.

To this let them answer, that so pray; except, peradventure, this prayer was used long before it was esteemed to be the body of Christ really and corporeally. And then this prayer maketh well to destroy the popish opinion, that it is not the opinion of the church, nor so ancient as they babble. There be other prayers of the mass, which, peradventure, be of like effect; but I have forgotten all massing matters,

and the mass itself I utterly detest and abhor: and so I confessed openly before our Diotrephes¹ and others.

N. RIDLEY.

N. RID.
Another
piece of the
canon of the
mass.

XI. "Command these to be carried by the hands of thy holy angel unto thy high altar," &c. If we understand the body and blood of Christ, wherefore do we so soon desire the departure of them, before the receipt of the same? And wherefore brought we them thither by making of them, to let him go so soon?

Write again, I beseech you, fathers and brethren, most dearly beloved in Christ. Spare not my paper, for I look ere it be long that our common enemy will first assault me, and I wish, from the bottom of my heart, to be holpen not only by your prayers, but also by your wholesome counsels.

H. LATIMER.

H. LAT.
Matt. xvii.

As Peter, when he said, "Let us make here three tabernacles," spake and wist not what; so, peradventure, our massmen cannot tell what they say, speaking so manifestly against themselves. So that the old proverb may very well be spoken of them, 'Liars had need to have good memories.'

A Proverb.

Against the Sacrifice of the Mass yet more, by Hugh Latimer.

John iii.
Heb. v.

ST JOHN BAPTIST saith, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." And St Paul, "No man taketh honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron," &c. But to offer Christ is a great and weighty matter; therefore ought no man to take it upon him without a manifest calling and commission. But where have our sacrificers so great an office committed unto them? Let them shew their commission, and then sacrifice. Peradventure they will say, 'do this,' is all one to say, as 'offer this.' Then I ask, what was there done? What was demonstrated by this pronoun, 'this?' Or, what did they see done, to whom these words, 'Do this,' were spoken? If the whole action of Christ, if all that Christ did, be meant by

[¹ Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester. Ed.]

this word, 'this,' and 'do,' is nothing else but 'offer'; then the whole action of Christ is to be offered of the priests; neither can they, but in so doing, satisfy the commandment. And so it should appear, that neither was there any sacrament instituted for the lay people, seeing that no such sacrifice hath been done at any time, or is to be done, of the lay people; neither doth it avail much to eat or drink it, but only to offer it. Now the text hath not, that any part of Christ's action was to offer, forasmuch as the text doth not declare that Christ himself did then offer. And so the action of offering is not contained in this pronoun 'this.'

Go through every word. First, 'to take' is not to offer; 'to break' is not to offer; 'to give to the disciples' is not to offer, and so on. Worcester² said once to me, that to offer was contained in '*Benedicere*,' which is not true; for '*Benedicere*' is to give thanks. But he had often given thanks to God before, without any such offering. And if, in giving of thanks, Christ offered his body, seeing after he had given thanks, he said, 'This is my body;' then in speaking those words, he did not change the bread into his body, forasmuch as he had offered, before those words were spoken. St Paul hath these words to the Hebrews, speaking of Christ: "that he might be merciful and a faithful high priest in things concerning God, for to purge the people's sins." So that it may appear, that the purging of our sins doth rather hang hereof, that Christ was the high-priest offering, than that he was offered; saving in that he was of himself willingly offered. Then is it not necessary he should be offered of others; I will not say, a marvellous presumptuous act, that the same should be attempted of any without a manifest vocation; for it is no small matter to make an oblation. And yet I speak nothing, that it tendeth partly to the derogation of Christ's cross; besides also that the offerer ought to be of more excellency than the thing offered.

The minister of the gospel hath rather to do for Christ with the people, than for the people with God, except it be in praying and giving of thanks; and so hath the people as well to do with God for the minister. The office of re-

[² Heath, Bishop of Worcester, afterwards Archbishop of York. Ed.]

2 Cor. v. conciliation standeth in preaching, not in offering. "We are messengers in the room of Christ," saith St Paul; he doth not say, "We offer unto God for the people."

If Christ offered in his Supper, for whom, I pray you? For all. Then his latter oblation made on the cross cannot be thought to be done for all men, for it was not done for them for whom the oblation was made in the Supper; except, peradventure, he offered twice for the self-same, and that should argue the unperfectness of the sacrifice. "Feed ye, as much as in you lieth, the flock of Christ:" nay, sacrifice rather for the flock of Christ, if the matter be as it is pretended; and it is marvel that Peter did forget so high an office, seeing in these days sacrificing is so much esteemed, preaching almost nothing at all. Who art thou, if thou ceaseest to feed? A good catholic. But who art thou, if thou ceaseest to sacrifice and say mass? At the least, an heretic! From whence come these perverse judgments, except, peradventure, they think that in sacrificing they feed, and then what needeth a learned pastor? Seeing no man is so foolish, but he can soon learn to sacrifice and say mass.

Acts xx. Paul wrote two epistles to Timothy, and one to Titus, two clergymen. He made also a long sermon *ad clerum*, but not one word of this mass sacrifice, which could not have been done, if there had been such a one, and so highly to be esteemed.

The sinews of the mass cannot be found in the New Testament.

I have read over of late the New Testament three or four times deliberately; yet can I not find there neither the popish consecration, nor yet their transubstantiation, nor their oblation, nor their adoration, which be the very sinews and marrow-bones of the mass. Christ could not be offered, but propitiatorily; yet now, *Hoc facite*, 'Do this,' must be as much as to say, 'Sacrifice and offer my body under a piece of bread,' available, but we cannot tell how much. Ah! thieves, have ye robbed the realm with your sacrifice of lands and goods; and now cannot tell how much your sacrifice is available? As who say, it is so much available, that the value cannot be expressed, nor too dear bought with both lands and goods. "The eye hath not seen, and the ear hath not heard," &c. This is a fine-

Isai. lxiv.

spun thread, a cunning piece of work, worthily qualified and blanched, be ye sure. But our nobility will not see: they will not have that religion that hath the cross annexed to it.

All popish things (for the most part) are man's inventions; whereas they ought to have the holy scripture for the only rule of faith. When Paul made allegation for himself before Felix, the high deputy, he did not extend his faith beyond the word of God written: "Believing all things (saith he) which are written in the law and the prophets;" making no mention of the rabbins. Moreover, "they have Moses and the prophets," saith Abraham in the parable; not their persons, but their writings. Also, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." And again, "Blessed are they which hear the word of God." "The things, which have not their authority of the scriptures, may as easily be despised as allowed," saith St Hierome¹.

"Therefore, whether it be of Christ, or of his church, or of any other manner of thing, which belongeth to our faith and life, I will not say if we," saith St Augustine², "which are not worthy to be compared to him that said 'If we,' but that also which forthwith he addeth, 'if an angel from heaven shall teach anything, besides that ye have received (in the scriptures of the law and gospel,) accused be he.'" Our Diotrophes with his papists are under this curse. But how are the scriptures, say they, to be understood? St Augustine answereth, giving this rule, "The circumstances of the scriptures," saith he, "lighten the scriptures; and so one scripture doth expound another, to a man that is studious, well willing, and often calling upon God in continual prayer, who giveth his Holy Spirit to them that desire

[¹ Hoc quia de Scripturis non habet auctoritatem, eadem facilitate contemnitur qua probatur. S. Hier. in Matth. xxiii. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1706, tom. iv. col. 112. Ed.]

[² Proinde, sive de Christo, sive de ejus ecclesia, sive de quacumque aliâ re quæ pertinet ad fidem vitamque vestram, non dicam nos, nequam comparandi ei qui dixit, 'Licet si nos;' sed omnino quod secutus adjecit, Si angelus de cælo vobis annuntiaverit præterquam quod in Scripturis legalibus et evangelicis accepistis, anathema sit. S. Aug. Cont. lit. Pet. lib. iii. cap. 6. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1635, tom. ix. col. 301. Ed.]

2 Pet. i.

it of him¹." So that the scripture is not of any private interpretation at any time. For such a one, though he be a layman, fearing God, is much more fit to understand holy scripture than any arrogant and proud priest, yea, than the bishop himself, be he never so great and glistering in all his pontificals. But what is to be said of the Fathers? How are they to be esteemed? St Augustine answereth, giving this rule also; that we should not therefore think it true, because they say so, do they never so much excel in holiness or learning; but if they be able to prove their saying by the canonical scriptures, or by good probable reason; meaning that to be a probable reason, as I think, which doth orderly follow upon a right collection and gathering out of the scriptures².

Epist. Nix.
ad Hieron.

Let the papists go with their long faith; be you contented with the short faith of the saints, which is revealed unto us in the word of God written. Adieu to all popish fantasies. Amen. For one man, having the scripture and good reason for him, is more to be esteemed himself alone, than a thousand such as they, either gathered together, or succeeding one another. The Fathers have both herbs and weeds; and papists commonly gather the weeds and leave the herbs. And they speak many times more vehemently in sound of words, than they did mean indeed, or than they would have done, if they had foreseen what sophistical wranglers should have succeeded them. Now, the papists are given to brawl about words, to the maintainance of their own inventions, and rather follow the sound of words, than attain unto the meaning of the Fathers; so that it is dangerous to trust them in citing the Fathers.

In all ages the devil hath stirred up some light heads to esteem the Sacraments but lightly, as to be empty and bare signs; whom the Fathers have resisted so fiercely, that in their fervour they seem, in sound of words, to run too far the other way, and to give too much to the Sacraments, when

[¹ The passage here quoted does not occur in the 23th chapter, though the sense of the chapter is the same. Ed.]

[² Alios autem ita lego, ut quantalibet sanctitate doctrinaque præpolleant, non ideo verum putem, quia ipsi ita senserunt, sed quia mihi vel per illos auctores canonicos, vel probabili ratione, quod à vero non abhorreat, persuadere potuerunt. Ordo Novus. LXXXIII. S. Aug. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. tom. ii. col. 190. Ed.]

they did think more measurably. And therefore they are to be ready warily, with sound judgment. But our papists, (an they seem but a little sounding to their purpose,) they will outface, brace, and brag all men:—it must needs be, as they will have it. Therefore, there is no remedy (namely, now when they have the master-bowl in their hand, and rule the roast) but patience. Better it is to suffer what cruelty they will put unto us, than to incur God's high indignation.

Wherefore, good my Lord, be of good cheer in the Lord, with due consideration what he requireth of you, and what he doth promise you. Our common enemy shall do no more than God will permit him. "God is faithful, which will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength," &c. Be at a point, what ye will stand unto, stick unto that, and let them both say and do what they list. They can but kill the body, which otherwise is of itself mortal. Neither yet shall they do that when they list, but when God will suffer them, when the hour appointed is come. To use many words with them, it shall be but in vain, now that they have a bloody and deadly law prepared for them. But it is very requisite that ye give a reasonable account of your faith, if they will quietly hear you; else ye know, in a wicked place of judgment a man may keep silence after the example of Christ. Let them not deceive you with their sophistical sophisms and fallacies; you know that many false things have more appearance of truth, than things that be most true. Therefore Paul giveth us a watch-word, saying, "Let no man deceive you with likeliness of speech." Neither is it requisite, that with the contentious you should follow strife of words, which tend to no edification, but to the subversion of the hearers, and the vain bragging and ostentation of the adversaries.

Fear of death doth most persuade a great number. Be well ware of that argument; for that persuaded Shaxton³, as many men thought, after that he had once made a good profession openly before the judgment-seat. The flesh is weak; but the willingness of the spirit shall refresh the weakness of the flesh. The number of the criers under the altar must needs be fulfilled. If we be segregated thereunto, happy

[³ Shaxton, Bishop of Salisbury, who resigned at the passing of the Six Articles, but afterwards acquiesced in them. Ed.]

Philip. i. be we. That is the greatest promotion that God giveth in this world, to be such Philippians, "to whom it is given not only to believe, but also to suffer," &c.

But who is able to do these things? Surely all our ability, all our sufficiency, is of God. He requireth and promiseth. Let us declare our obedience to his will, when it shall be requisite, in the time of trouble, yea, in the midst of the fire. When that number is fulfilled, which I ween shall be shortly, then have at the papists, when they shall say, "Peace, all things are safe;" when Christ shall come to keep his great parliament, to the redress of all things that be amiss. But he shall not come, as the papists feign him, to hide himself, and to play bo-peep, as it were, under a piece of bread; but he shall come gloriously, to the terror and fear of all papists, but to the great consolation and comfort of all that will here suffer for him. "Comfort yourselves one another with these words."

1 Thess. v.
1 Thess. iv.

Lo! sir, here have I blotted your paper vainly, and played the fool egregiously. But so I thought better, than not to do your request at this time. Pardon me, and pray for me: pray for me, I say, pray for me, I say. For I am sometime so fearful, that I would creep into a mouse-hole; sometime God doth visit me again with his comfort. So he cometh and goeth, to teach me to feel and to know mine infirmity, to the intent to give thanks to him that is worthy, lest I should rob him of his duty, as many do, and almost all the world.

Fare you well.

What credence is to be given to papists, may appear by their racking, writhing, wringing, and monstrously injuring of God's holy scripture, as appeareth in the pope's law. But I dwell here now in a school of obliviousness. Fare you well, once again. And be you steadfast and immoveable in the Lord. Paul loved Timothy marvellously well, notwithstanding he saith unto him, "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel:" and again, "Harden thyself to suffer afflictions." "Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," saith the Lord.

1 Cor. xv.
2 Tim. i.
Rev. ii.