

Christmasks Revived :

OR AN

ANSWER

To certain

OBJECTIONS

MADE AGAINST

The Observation of a Day in memory
of our Saviour Christ his Birth.

By JOHN READING, M.A. And one of the
Prebends of Christs-Church in Canterbury.

Prov. 26. 5. Answer a fool according to his foolishness, lest
he be wise in his own conceit.

Matth. 23. 24. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and
swallow a camel.

Charitatis unitas jugiter indisrupta servetur :
Hæc est enim principale spiritus sancti donum, &c. *Fub-*
gentide Miss. Sp. S.

Stromb. 12

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be sold at the White-Lion near Py-Corner.



To my honoured kinsman,

Mr. William Rooke

S I R,

You know the occasion of my meddling with this controversy: It remaineth that I give account of my permitting these rude papers to the publique view; which is, first, because all good Christians are not satisfied herein: if I may hereby deceive some of them, I have so much of my end; next I conceive it the duty of every good son of our sacred Mother the Church of England, to defend her rites and holy decrees against the calumnies of turbulent spirits, possessing

seeing so many in these times: whose study is
to cavil at all, but the vain Minerva's of their
own brains. If my endeavour may happily
contribute anything to peace, I shall think my
labour well bestowed. Lastly, the candid Rea-
der may be advertised that the satisfaction
which he receives herein, he oweth to you.
The God of peace compose all our unhappy
differences, which is the constant prayer of

Your affectionate Kinsman,

I. R.

A N



An answer to certain Crudities and frivolous Objections made against the observation of a day in memorie of our Saviour Christ his Birth.

A true copy of the objections.



The Question concerning the Observation of a day in memorie of Christ's birth, is the same which our Saviour put to the Pharisees, Whether *Johns* Baptism were of heaven or from men? *Luke. 20.*

So the observation of this day, if it be of God, it is a duty and a sin to omit it. But if it were set up by man, all men do acknowledg, That what man shall set up, man may take down.

Therefore first.

1. Have we any command in scripture for it? if not, then
2. Did the Apostles or Disciples ever observe it?
3. Would they have omitted it, if it had been a duty?
4. Was it observed in the Primitive Church for fifty years after the Apostles were all dead? search the Scripture and Ecclesiasticall history.
5. How came it to be Christs day? tell us the Original of this duty, that we may know, whether it be Divine or humane. Is it like to be a duty and no footsteps at all left in the word, either Precept or Example looking that way?
6. Whether the Papists may not say as much for all their heaps of Traditions, as we can say for this? And if we once follow traditionall Divinity, where shall we stop?
7. Give us a definition of that sin which the Scripture calls Will-Worship.

I suppose these Queries duely weighed, will satisfy any ingenuous spirit

spirit, That man was the founder of this Festivall.

Object. Do we not celebrate days of thanksgiving at the appointment of the Magistrate (as the 5. of November.) and may we not this day as well as those?

Answer. 1. Where-ever the Magistrate appoints such days, it is lawfull for him to forbid them again when he will.

Answer 2. If God had not appointed what memorial he would have of his Son Christ, man had the greater liberty. But where we are directed how and when to celebrate the remembrance of our blessed Saviour, for us to superadd, we have cause to fear, lest we become guilty of that sin which Scripture calls Will-worship. Like whereto is that sin taxed, Ezek. 48. 8. setting our threshold by his threshold, and our posts by his posts, which is there called a defilement.

Besides, consider the constant a buse of this solemnity; and though I know, *abusus non tollit usum*; yet where it is never otherwise, but the devil hath more service at this time then God, I think it concerneth the Magistrate to look to it. He that would read more on this Subject, let him read *Mr Camdrys* book against *Dr. Hamond* concerning holydays and Superstitious worship.

Consider that there is nothing more often blamed in Scripture then this, to follow the inventions of man in the worship of God; which is the case in hand.

I would ask that man who blames the neglect of this Festival whether he that will not keep this memorial, doth break any of the ten Commandements in so doing? and if not, then sure it is no sin to omit it.

Sect. 1. **T**he Question concerning observation of a day in memory of Christ's birth, is the same which our Saviour put to the Pharisees, Whether John's Baptism were of heaven, or from men? Luke 20.

In all orderly disputes, the Question should necessarily be stated: now by your strict prohibition of our solemn commemoration of our Saviours nativity, it seemeth the question is, Whether it be lawfull on any day to remember our Saviours birth, and therein to meet in holy assemblies, to preach and hear the word of God, to sing Psalms, pray, give thanks, administer and receive the holy Sacraments? we affirme, your sect deny it, as if some Act of amnestie had passed upon that day as, Job 3. &c. and it

it were resolved upon the Question, The day of Christ's birth shall be no more had in remembrance.

This Opponent not so much as repeating the question, as in some sudden passion when *furor arma ministrat*, snatcheth up that which first comes to hand, and so precipitately rusheth on to the encounter, that he stumbleth in his on-set saying, The Question concerning the observation of a day in memorie of Christ's birth, is the same which our Saviour put to the Pharises, &c. We answer 1. in the Scripture which you cite, *Luk: 20. 1.* there is no mention of the Pharises, neither *Math. 21. 23.* *Mark 11. 30.* where the same history is recorded: We read *Ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οὐνοσβυτεροὶ τῶ λαοῦ*, the Chief Priests, and (or with) the Elders of the people: Consider whether you do well translate that, the Pharisees, &c. 2. We say, that the Lord answered their question by another question, which was concerning the Baptism of *John*; there is not a word concerning the day of his nativity; now to say that things so much differing are the same, consider what you would call it if another had said so? what a silly animal would you deeme him who would admit such conclusions? In many respects this pretended parallel runs uneven. 1. Christs dilemma was necessary to shew that if they had believed *John Baptists* testimony, they would have known by what authority Christ did those things, but your objection is unnecessary, as will appear. 2. That was an holy refutation of Jewish unbelieve; but yours a Schismatical caption, to the contempt of the Christian Churches customes. But to pass by these first over-sights of yours; we may use *Goliath's* sword to cut him shorter, and thus retort the point of your argument; The prohibition of our observation of a day in memory of Christs nativity, is it from heaven, or of men? if from heaven, shew us any place of holy Scripture forbidding the same: If you say, that prohibition is of men; we shall with good conscience follow venerable antiquity, rather then trouble the Sacred peace of the Church about things of such nature.

Sect. 2. [O the observation of this day] What supplement is here necessary for your elliptical speaking? we would rather that you should consider, when we determine, being unwilling to injure you. So the observation, &c. Do you mean, *hoc dato*, that Christs forementioned question and yours, are the same? you have not much reason so to beg the question, and we should have as little to grant you that which you shall never be able to prove.

Sect. 3. **I**f it be of God, it is a duty &c.] Deal syllogistically, and your assumption will be, *But it is no sin to omit it*, which your better informed conscience, we hope will shew you is false, when you shall know that contumacy against the lawfull decrees and customs of the Church of Christ, disturbance of her peace, breach of holy unity, uncharitable censuring and condemning your brethren, offence of weak consciences, bringing an odious scandal on the Church, opening a wide and dangerous window to sects and pernicious heresies and other mischeivous consequences hereof, are a sinne whose name is Legion.

Sect. 4. **A**ll men do acknowledge, that what man shall set up, man may take down] It is very troublefom handling such dis-joynted arguments, but their infirmity may not excuse their falshood — That all men acknow'edge, or ought so to do, is very false; for some better understand, and so we hope will you.

Sect. 5. **T**hat what man shall set up, man may take down] We are very willing to think that these lame expressions vail some more solid and sincere meaning: if your proposition be, Man may lawfully take down that which man seteth up (which you must meané if you dispute, *κατά τὸ αὐτὸ*, and to any purpose) then we may justly enquire concerning the quantitie of the proposition, viz. Whether you universally affirme it; your sence being thus, *Whatsoever man setoth up, he may lawfully take down*; if it be but indefinite, as (some things which man setteth up &c. suppose an house, barn &c. he may lawfully take down) if it be to no other mans preiudice, we shall willingly grant it: but if you universally affirme, in a determinate Subject, subordinate to the service and glory of God, your second thoughts will enform you that your assertion is false and erroneous: for it will not hold in things dedicated to God. The Centurion built a Synagogue for the Jewes, *Luke. 7. 5.* he might not after dedication thereof have taken it down. Again by Setting up, we conceive you use a translatitious maner of speaking borrowed from builders, founders, appointers, or authors of things, to customes or rites appliable; as if you said, *Whatsoever man foundeth, determineth, appointeth or bringeth into use or custome, may lawfully be annulled and taken away by man*; which is very false, if the instance be in things subordinate to the

Service of God, whether we consider circumstance, or thing: for example; there are two circumstances to every action of man appertaining. 1. place, concerning which a due consideration of the forecited instance may satisfie: it was lawfull for the Centurion to design that place for a Synagogue on which he did build it, but not lawfull, thence to take it being consecrated or dedicated to the Service of God, *Durante usu*:

2. It was lawfull for a man to appoint or determine his days of *Nazaritship* for a certain time; concerning which he might vow, or set up that resolution, but not lawfully take down or annull the same: See *Numb. 6*. So the vow of *Jonadab* son of *Rechab*, commanding his posterety to drinke no wine, build house, sow seed &c was at first, arbitrary, and so it was but an appointment by man; yet they might not annull or take it down. See *Jerem. 35. 6, 7, 8, 18, 19*. and there are now some temporal vows binding.

3. A thing determined by man in Subordination to Gods Service, however arbitrary it be for the proprietor to ordain it so, or otherwise to dispose of it as he pleaseth; yet after he hath so ordained, and set it up, he may not lawfully take it down or impropriate the same, lest he beare his sin, as *Ananias* and *Saphira* too late knew. *Act. 5, 3, 4*. &c. whence the falshood of your ground appeareth, and what your Superstructions are like to prove, may easily be conjectured.

Sect. 6. **H**ave we any Command in Scripture for it?] If you mean in *terminis terminantibus*, thus, Is there any expresse Scripture which saith, on the 25. of *December*; keep the feast of Christ's nativity? we affirme not, neither were it needfull, seeing that in Christ, God freed us from the band of legal ceremonies as well concerning detemined times by the Levitical law appointed and limited, as places: we are not now bound to go to Jerusalem to worship: *John. 4*. nor to the 14. day of the first month (*Exod. 12. 6*.) but for circumstances of time and place, it is left to the authority of the Church, orderly and conveniently in things publike to determine for the government of the Church, in which the Ceremoniall law left no such liberty: But God never did, never will permit the publike government to the fancies or judgements of private spirits: for what order or peace ever was, or can be in such a confused liberty: yet we must know that God never left it arbitrary, whether man would worship him or no; or whether they might at their pleasures contemne the authority of the Church, and disturbe her sacred peace, the Apostle saying

saying--But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custome, neither the Churches of God. And again, Despise ye the Church of God? what shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. 1. Cor. 11. 16, 22. If you would here Syllogistically dispute, your arguement would be to this purpose. That which hath no command *in terminis* in Scripture for it, may not be done or may be left undone, though the Church otherwise determin:

But the observation of a day in memory of Christ's birth, hath no command *in terminis* in Scripture for it. Ergo &c. Who perceiveth not the fallshood of the first proposition? seeing that we have no expresse command *in terminis* in Scripture for any thing indifferent (for were it expressly commanded or forbidden there, it were not indifferent) those things being left to the Church to determin: we have not expresse command in Scripture for some things necessary, as administration of the Lords supper to women, &c. And if you will allow payment in your own coyne, may not the Anabaptists say as much for their denyall of pædobaptism? if you say women are included in the generall precepts, as also infants of beleiving parents, which is true; then allow us the same liberty of concluding, and we shall satisfy those who will understand. Lastly we say (concerning the observation of a day in memorie of Christ's birth) have we any command in Scripture against it? you will not affirm that: being then neither expressly commanded nor forbidden, you grant it of its owne nature *adiaphorous* or indifferent; and we are sure that in things of that nature you must acknowledge that the Church of Christ hath power to determin, if at least you will allow her any.

Sect. 7. **D**Id the Apostles or disciples ever observe it? We answer, doth it appear that they did not observe it? further we say, that all that which our Lord Jesus did, is not recorded in Scripture, *John. 20. 30. John. 21. 25.* And can we reasonably think that all things which the Apostles or disciples did, are written in holy Scripture? we read not that all the Apostles were baptized, where, when, and by whom; will you therefore conclude, that they were not at all baptized? In things simply necessary to Salvation, the general precept was sufficient to shew it so; and for things subordinate to decency, unity, & order, it was left to the Church to determin conveniently in respect of times, places, and persons: hence appeareth a sufficient answer to your next.

Guare.

Sect. 8. **V** *Would they have omitted it, if it had been a duty?*] To dispute *ex non concessis*, either presupposeth much ignorance in the *Respondent*, or bewrayeth it in the *Opponent*; Who ever granted you that the Apostles &c. omitted it? or when did you, or ever shall be able to prove that they did? what vain trifling use you in such a frequent begging of the question?

Sect. 9. **V** *As it observed in the Primitive Church for fifty yeers after the Apostles were dead? Search the Scriptures and Ecclesiastical history.*] We answer again; that you found us in possession of many hundred years prescription, and therefore it rests on your parts to shew us that it was not observed in and from the Apostles times (except untill now of late days) which when you attempt to do, or to shew that any consent of the universall Church ever annulled the observation thereof, we shall begin with you upon a new score. If your argument lie thus, *It is not found in Scripture nor in Ecclesiastical history, &c. Therefore in the Apostles times and Fifty years after the Apostles were dead, it was not observed*; The consequence is lame; for, *A non Scripto ad non factum, non valet argumentum*: how absurd is it to say, *It is not found written; therefore it was not done*? all is not written which Christ did, as hath been said before: if therefore you finde any thing to the contrary in your search of the Scriptures, &c. proclaime your *εὐρηκα* in open streets, and sacrifice to your invention: We finde that good and antient authors spake of the observation of that day, as of a thing long before their times accustomed and in use. See *Ammianus Marcellinus*. l. 21. who lived about Three hundred and sixty years after Christ. *Gregorie Nazianz*. *Orat.* 32. who lived about the same age, *Augustin* and many others. And we further say, that the reason why little or no mention of this days observation, not onely for Fifty but many more years can be found in the antient Ecclesiastical writers, may be, and most probably is, because so long, none opposed that rite and custome of the Church: So was it in case of *pedobaptisme*, unto *Cyprian* time and the *Concils of Carthage* and the *Milevetan*. An. 416. 417. (in which *Pelagius* and *Celestius* were condemned) because no opposition did before that, for some hundred years, give the Orthodox Fathers occasion to dispute or write in defence of it: indeed, to what end should any write in defence of that

that which none opposed? But when some pretenders to Christian religion opposed the truth, or raised schismes dangerous to the unity of the Church, or the wholesome Rites and customs of the same, then the Orthodox wrote, and many of their works are yet extant, and so are divers of their Sermons and godly Orations delivered to the people on the same day, which sufficiently testify the custom of the Church of Christ concerning the observation of the day in memory of our Saviours nativity: Lastly, it is well known, that there were some obscure ages, wherein few or none writ; or none so eminent and known, as that there writings were transmitted to posteritie.

Sect. 10. **H**ow came it to be Christs day?] If you beleive that which the Angel told the shepherds. *Luke. 2. 10, 11.* that Christ was on that day borne, this quere is superfluous; marke the words, *The Angel said unto them, fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people: for unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.* You possibly will say, what is that to us? what cause of joy or commemoration have we? Certainly the same that all the people of God then had, if Christ were born your Savior: for in that he saith, *which shall be to all people,* he includeth us Gentiles as well as the Jews, for he is not only the *Saviour of the Jews, but of the believing Gentiles also,* *Rom 3. 29* neither of those only who lived that day, but of all ages: you may say, how know we whether he were born on that day which we observe? we answer, how know you the contrary? One day of the year he was born; you that so obstinately deny the day which we observe to be it, assigne us one other which you will affirme, was the day of his nativity, except you think he was not born in any time: You will say again; But why should we yearly observe a day? we say first, for the same reason which Moses gave Israel for the yearly observation of the Passover; *When your Children shall say unto you, what mean you by this service?* you shall say, As this day (by the computation of the *Church of England*) was our Saviour Christ born, whom God sent into the world to deliver us, not from a temporall bondage but from the eternall misery of hell and damnation, to which sin had inflaved us. Again Secondly, you may as rationally say, Why should we at all, or any time be thankful to God for this his greatest mercy conferred on the elect, considering the end of his incarnation, his suffering and mans redemption, which Paul reciteth under the motion of a *faithfull saying and worthy of all acceptation.* *1. Tim. 1. 15.* and our Saviour recounteth as a principal Specimen

specimen of Gods love to mankind, *John. 3. 16.* indeed it was the cheif; *non enim prodesset nasci, nisi redimi profuisset.* Ambros. And is it not worth thanks in your sence?

Sect. 11. **T**ell us the originall of this duty] They who will not learne of Christ (the onely Mediatour between God and man, through whom, and by whose merits onely, they can be heard) to say, *thy will be done in earth, as it is heaven, &c.* may possibly doubt concerning the originall of this duty, not knowing, or not beleiving the practice of an holy Angel, or a multitude of the heavenly hoste, praying God on the day of Christ's nativity, *Luke. 2. 10. 13.* to be a sufficient warrant (without consent of *Pharisees*) to prescribe a duty to men on earth; but believers, whose hearts and tongues do indeed accord in prayer, neither question the original of this duty, nor whether it were divine and from heaven, or of men; guided by Gods Spirit they were. The ground of your doubt is a meer caption and begging of the question, sufficiently refuted in that which hath been said. That you say, *no footsteps at all are left in the word, either precept, or example looking that way;* consider better and know that the gospel (*Luke. 2.*) is the word of God, and the practice of a multitude of holy Angels example sufficient for them who desire indeed to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven: Lastly, we say, shew us before Mr *Calvins* time any footstep or example, I say not of holy Angels, but of any true Christian for your new discipline.

Sect. 12. **W**hether the Papists may not say as much for all their heaps of traditions, as we can for this?] They may, and do say (as you do) some things untrue. But for satisfaction in this behalf, you must know, 1. That some traditions were Apostolical. 2. *Thef. 3. 6.* and they were either written, as the *dogmata*, doctrines of holy Scripture, which *Irenaus* calleth *veritatis traditionem* l. 3. c. 4. or *sine caractere vel atramento.* of which, saith the many nations of the Barbarians, who beleive in Christ, diligently holding the old tradition, beleiving in one God the maker of the heaven and earth, & all things that are therein, by Christ Jesus his son, through faith please God, &c. Therefore some traditions Apostolical, were not written but delivered *viva voce*, to the Churches which they

they planted, as rites for order and convenience of the same. The ground of this distinction, the Apottle himself layeth down ² *Thef. 2 15.* saying, *κατὰ τὰς παραδόσεις, Hold fast the traditions, which ye have been taught, whether by word, or by our Epistles:* And we must remember that the Apostles committed not all to writing, but onely those things which appertained unto the ground and essence of faith and sanctification, or thereto nearly subordinate. Again it is necessary to distinguish rites of the Church from doctrines, and things necessary from indifferent; also things perpetual, from changable, which are not universal, as some of the others are: for some of the Apostolical traditions were accommodated to times, places and persons, and so not to be esteemed universally binding, at all times, places, and all persons; as for example, saluting with an holy kiss, anointing the sick (*Jam 5. 14.*) abstinence from blood. *Act. 15. 29.* Also, as it is necessary to distinguish in these things; so, to know that in things of their own nature indifferent, thou art bound to give no offence to the brethren with whom thou livest, but to observe such their rites; there being necessary to all men ever, and in all places, as one faith, so one love, but not one rite or custom, though these are not rashly to be violated by any person, the institution whereof was from its beginning in publike authority of the Church, not any private spirits.

Moreover by traditions, good writers sometimes understand any thing concerning rites, doctrine and discipline *Ecclesiastical*, not expressly written in *Scripture*, but that which is by good and necessary consequence, thence to be concluded, as *padobaptism*, observation of the *Christian Sabbath*, &c. wherein it is observable that Christ condemned the Sadduces of error, through ignorance of that *Scripture*, whose consequence they knew, not or would not acknowledge. *Moses* said, *I am the God of Abraham*, &c. here was no express word to prove the resurrection of the dead; but necessary consequence here is, because God is the God of the living. Thus understand in holy duties, that though we must ever be regulated by the holy *Scriptures*, yet is it not always necessary to have express *Scripture in terminis* for our warrant therein, where a necessary consequence from the general rule is sufficient; for example, we finde no express word commanding us to pray in the *English tongue*; you cannot hence conclude, that praying in *English*.

will-worship, because we have no expresse word of God for it; because the general rule is sufficient, *omnis lingua laudet Dominum*, and the sense of Scripture, that we should pray in a known tongue, *viz.* in that tongue which we, & those with whom we pray, do understand: we read not in any expresse Scripture that we must preach the Gospel in *England*, or that the Apostles ever did so; yet you will not say that it is *will-worship*, or *Poperie* so to do; because the general rule is sufficient warrant, which saith, *Go into all the world, preach the Gospel to every Creature.* *Mark.* 16. 15. but this is a tradition and practice of the Church since religion was planted among the English; though we finde no expresse mention of *England* in holy Scriptures, yet we know no cause to doubt whether we ought to preach in *England*, or may lawfully so do, without danger of being guilty of *will-worship*, because we have no expresse Scripture for it; and if it be lawfull to preach in this place upon the generall warrant, why not also to preach, pray, praise God, on the 25. of *December*? the general warrant concerning the circumstance of time being, *rejoyce evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks.* See *Ephes.* 1. 16. and 5. 20. *1 Thes.* 5. 16, 17, 18. *1 Thes.* 2. 13. *2 Thes.* 1. 3. *Phil.* 1. 3. *Col.* 3. 15. *1 Tim.* 2. 1. *Hebr.* 13. 15. In what Scripture finde you your exception to the 25. of *December*? may we not on that day give God thanks for our meat and drink with your good leave? and why not for the greatest of blessings, the bread of life bestowed upon us on that day?

To conclude, hence it may appear that the Church may appoint and use external rites and orders for conveniency and decency tending to edification; though we hold that no tradition besides holy Scripture is simple necessary to salvation; yet as *Augustin* saith, *Ep. Casulano, In his rebus de quibus nihil certi statuit Scriptura divina, mos populi Dei vel instituta maiorum pro lege tenend: sunt,* that is, In those things concerning which divine Scripture determineth nothing certain, the custom of Gods people, or institutions of our Ancesters are to be held instead of a law: provided that there appear nothing therein constituted, accustomed, or used, contrary to the word of God: so much be spoken concerning Apostolicall and holy traditions.

2. Apostolicall traditions are tares of the envious mans scattering,

meer inventions of men, not subordinate to faith, sanctity and edification, nor consonant to the holy word of God; many such crept into the Jewish Church before our Saviours incarnation; whereof see *Math.* 15. 2. 3. 6. *Mark* 7. 13. *Gal.* 1. 14. Paul before his calling, saith, that he was *more exceedingly* zealous of the traditions of his fathers. With these we may arrange that same *faraginem* of the *Talmudists*, and if you will so call them, *heapes of traditions* which crept into the Church of *Rome*, to the corruption of doctrine and truth; for which traditions the *Papists* so eagerly contend; see their long Council of Trent; and consider the vast difference between their traditions, and our rites. Popish traditions are generally against express Scriptures, or necessary consequences thence to be deduced; and of them, some against the fundamentals of religion; which none but the very ignorant or malicious can object against the rites of the *Church of England*. *Popish traditions* (properly so called) are points which generally were never received by the Church or orthodox fathers, thereof but rather generally opposed by them of the purest ages; but ours, for instance this concerning the observation of a day in memory of our Saviours nativity, was never opposed untill of late years: *Popish traditions*, as also the *Pharisaicall*, did make void the doctrine of God; which none can justly object against us: now we speak of Popish traditions properly so called; for we are not of their number who call all that Popery, which either they understand not, or which agreeth not with their *fanatical opinions*; for when they speak for truth and *Apostolical traditions*, they do no more speak their owne, then the Devil did speak his owne words, or sence when (in hope thereby either to gain credit to his lyes, or to bring a suspicion on the truth of the Gospel) he affirmed *Christ to be the holy one of God*, *Luk.* 4. 34. *Mark.* 1. 24. Nay but when he speaks a lie, then speaketh he of his own, *John.* 8. 44. All is not devillish which the devil said; so neither count we all Popish which the Papists say: when therefore they speak for those traditions whereby they slid away, and continued not in the truth of Christ, then speak they for their *heaps of traditions*, such as their *Council of Trent* equalled with the dictates of Gods Spirit in sacred *Scriptures*; and such other inventions of man may hereto be added, as the old *Pharisees* did, or the modern now do
obtrude

obtrude upon their deluded hearers for doctrines, whereby they elevate the commandment of God, and as much as in them is, make them of less power and authority with men; and so force Gods commands to give place to old traditions, as Papists do, or to new, as some, therein as bad, or worse, now do. And now *bona vestra cum venia*, we would gladly be satisfied, whether you (who would fain pin your fancy of *will-worship* upon our sleeves) do not you in your *Classical traditions*, fall into a more just censure, or suspicion of *will-worship* and depowering the commandments God, who expressly saith, endeavour to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, Ephs. 4. 3. and Heb. 10, 24. 25. *let us consider one another to provoke unto love, not forsaking the assembling our selves together, but your tradition* (not so much valuing the unity and peace of *Christ's Church* as your own wills) will not admit any to communicate with you, except he can reach his conscience so wide as to subscribe to your new discipline. Gods word saith (*Rom. 14. 6.*) *be that observeth a day, observeth it unto the Lord; and ver. 10. why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? and ver. 13. let us not judge one another, and ver. 15. if thy brother be grieved, now walkest thou not charitably; destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died: And ver. 17. for whosoever in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable unto God: let us then follow those things which concern peace, and wherewith one may edify another: but you would have all follow your rigid opinions, or else you will neither hold communion nor charity with them; but brand them with that bloody name of malignant, then which you can say no worse, but only reprobate.*

Sect. 13. **A** *Nd if we once follow traditional divinity, where shall we stop?*] What will not unskilful confidence venter on? Had you been well informed to distinguish between traditions, you might have spared your selves this trouble. Certainly they that follow the *Apostolical traditions* or doctrine of the Gospel onely, shall safely stop, and rest satisfied therein, which Guide and constancy we heartily wish you, but as yet know not that in your late-born discipline you follow either, who have so many off-sets of several *Sects* sprung from you, as are oft to seek where to stop, or of what religion to be; I speak things too well
knowu

known; witnesse the miserable divisions which have torne in
 sunder the late happy unity of the *Church of England*. Lastly,
 you vainly trifle, and would imply, that we observing a day in
 remembrance of our *Saviours nativity*, do therein follow *traditi-*
onall divinity in your sence, which is a *paralogism* and silly begging
 of the question, which a junior Sophister would account very ab-
 surd and ridiculous.

Sect. 14.

Give us a definition of that sin which the Scripture calleth *will-*
worship] If you know not what that is, why take you up a
medium to prove your opinion with, which your self under-
 stand not? could you teach, who understand not what you say;
 nor whereof you affirme? if you do indeed know what *εὐσεβ-*
σπυζαία is, why are you not *theticall* in laying down your own
 sence and definition thereof? you that would catechise us con-
 cerning *will-worship*; rather dispute fairly; and your argument
 will thus lie.

Whatsoever the Scripture calleth will-worship, is a sin:

But, *The Scripture calleth observation of a day in remembrance
 of Christs nativity will worship:*

Ergo. Observation of a day in remembrance of Christs nati-
vity, is a sin.

We answer; untill you shew us where the Scripture so calleth
 it, we shall laugh at your bold weakness, who durst undertake
 this quarrel: yet to do you a curtesy, we tell you that *will-worship* is
 any thing brought into the worship of God, without his commands
 or by the will of man only, which hath not its ground in holy Scri-
 pture. As for our parts, we worship neither time nor place (though
 we cannot worship without these circumstances) we worship God
 through Christ (by whom he made both time and place, *Heb* 1.2.
Gen 1. *Joh* 1.2. *Col* 1.16.) we worship him by prayer, thanksgiving,
 preaching and hearing the holy word on that day; which being ac-
 cording to the will of God, and the exprets word of God, bewa e
 that you bespatter not with your dirty terms of *will-worship*,
 and the like: we suppose you will not blame the Angels for
 coming from heaven, that they might sing and praise God for
 Christs nativity on the day thereof, and preach the same unto
 men: O but say you, you count it a holy day; why not? seeing
 accord-

according to the Custom of the *Church of Christ*, we set it apart to Gods service. But say you then, Is not that *will-worship*? we demand; Is dedicating of a thing to Gods service, in that act, a making it holy? or is a counting a consecrated thing holy, concluded *will-worship* in your Schools? nay but it doth not universally conclude any worship: we suppose that you will grant the elect Angels are holy; that supposition concludes no adoration of Angels at all due.

Sect. 15.

I Suppose these *Queries* duly weighed will satisfy any *ingenuous Spirit*, that man was the founder of this festival.] To argue by such often queries may breed doubts rather then resolve them: how you come to lay claim to ingenuous, or witty, who are satisfied by these questions, we wish that we were satisfied; seeing that the more we weigh them, the lighter and more frivolous we find them: your consequence from your supposed ingenuous sence is another begging the question, which wise men account the most foolish of all fallacies.

Sect. 16.

Ans. 1. **W** Here ever the *Magistrate* appoints such days, &c.] we remit you to the former answer, *Sect. 5.* to which we onely add, Was the *Magistrate* or Power appointing that half the day, *Novem. 5.* should be kept holy (in memory of Gods great mercy that day shewed in delivering us from eminent destruction of our bodies) authors of *will-worship*? or the due observation of that statute, such? which you seem *ingenuously* to suppose; if not, why had not former *Magistrates*, and *Parliaments* as much power in the days of old to appoint or consecrate unto the same Lord, days of thanksgiving and solemn commemoration (for their deliverance from eternall destruction of body and Soule) as they had for the other in these last times? and why may not we without offence, observe them still? our consciences being not satisfied, how any authority or consent of men may lawfully recall, inappropriate, or, in your phrase, *take down* that which they have with a general and unanimous consent of all parties interested, once dedicated to the service of God, the same reason, end, and use thereof, still remaining.

Sect. 17.

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Sect. 17.

Sect. 17.

Ans. 2. **B**Ut where we are directed how, and when to celebrate the remembrance of our blessed Saviour, for us to superadd &c.] How and when? If you mean in praising God by Christ, preaching him, hearing his word, administration and receiving the holy Sacraments, which represent, and remember us of our ever blessed Saviour; we are so far from superadding, that we onely desire free liberty of doing those very things which Gods word evidently directeth us to do in his service: consider well, whether it be not a superaddition of yours to permit remembrance of our blessed Saviour, adding this exception, onely upon the 25. of *December* it is a sin so to do: and whether in your sence, this be not like that sin taxed *Ezek* 43. We understand not why we may not remember our Saviours birth-day and coming into the world (without which he had not suffered for our salvation) or why it should be esteemed good on any day of the year, but evil on the 25. of *December*, if you can solidly teach us, we shall indeed think you *ingenuons*, and our selves your debtors; but in the mean time we confess, that a day prohibited time and place, we cannot understand.

Sect. 18.

LIke whereto is that sin taxed *Ezek* 48. 8. &c.] We suppose you mean *Ezek* 43. 8. which is as much unlike this business, as your self to a sound Interpreter; shew us that there is any *abomination* (which in that place is charged on *Israel*) in remembering that we had a Saviour born on the 25 of *December*, in preaching on those texts of holy Scriptures, which either foretold, or declared the truth of God accordingly fulfilled concerning the same, or to praise, pray, sing Psalmes, and read Scripture, or to administer the holy Sacraments; this is all we desire should on that day be permitted us: if your weak stomachs cannot bear the smell of superstitious pyes, or pottage, we will forbear them, rather then lose your company at Church. But to the matter, That place of the *Prophet*, teacheth how *Israel* sinned in defiling the temple of the Lord, by setting up idols therein, or in place,
and

and chappels neer to the place which God had set apart to his own service, this is idolatry is there and else where called whoredome, which he said, *ver. 7.* should be no more, which was literally fulfilled after their return from their *Babylonish* captivity; and to so this day they have no idols, though they worship not the true God aright because they believe not in *Christ*, whom they do not think yet to be born, and therefore would willingly accord with you in forbidding a day in remembrance of *Christ's* nativity: But to your parallel, *like whereto &c.* it is easily and truly refuted, by saying *unlike whereto is that sin taxed &c.* for there *Israel* defiled Gods house by idolatry; is it so when we preach, pray, or communicate? your ingenious application is admirable, and 'tis strange that whatsoever you think, the bells must ring.

Sect. 19.

Y *Et where it is never otherwise, but the devil hath more service that time &c.* We answer concerning this Cap put into *Ben-jamins* Sack, with whomsoever it be found, let him die, and bear his sin: but we desire the calumniator to read and well consider *Deut. 19. 16, 17. &c.*

Sect. 20.

[*I think it concerns the Magistrate to look to it.*] It doth so, if you mean the abuse of it; but that you say, *is never otherwise*, is a calumny which would suit with the accuser of the brethren, but such untruths ill become a *Christian*: here your own concession is answer enough, were your assumption true, *abusus non tollit usum*: you may know how much prayer, preaching, &c. are abused; should they therefore be used no more?

Sect. 21.

L *Et him read Mr. Cawdryes &c.* Let him for us, who knows no no better use of precious hours.

Sect. 22.

W *Hic is the case in hand*] still begging the question? 'tis not the case in hand: here is no following the inventions of man in the worship of God; what a silly combatant would you judge him, who instead of using his armes, would only intreat his Antagonist to give him that which is contended for?

Sect. 23.

A *ny of the ten Commandments in so doing &c.*] We retort your argument, and shoot your bolt back again, asking you Who blame the obseruation of this festiual; whether he that keepeth this day in memory of our Saviours nativity, doth thereby break any of the ten Commandments; and if not, then sure it is *no sin to observe it*; and what ground then, have all your clamors against so constant a custome of the Church of Christ? but to come neerer to you, this your Quære is not much more rationally then that ridiculous question, *What part of speech is Qui ante non cavet, post dolebit?* what if one should ask you; doth he that violateth charity and the unity of the Church of Christ, break any of the ten Commandments, would you not readily answer, that he breaks them all? because you know that Charity is the sum and end of the law. *Math. 22. 36, 37. 1 Tim. 1. 5.* without which whatsoever else we do, is nothing worth, *1 Cor. 13. 1. &c.* and therefore the Apostle saith, *Rom. 14. 1, 2. &c.* (speaking of things in their own nature indifferent, whereof he instanceth in two, choice of meats, and obseruation of days) that God may be glorified on this ground, that he giveth God thanks, *ver. 10.* and earnestly blameth judging or censuring a brother in such things, *ver. 15.* concluding that, *if thy brother be greived &c. now walkest thou not charitably, or according to charity;* and if I by thanksgiving am partaker of Christian liberty and freedom to serve God and to give him thanks and praise him on any day, *why is my liberty judged of another mans conscience? and why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?* Have you for these and other like respects so much rent the sacred unity of the late happy Church of England, that we now seem like those dry and scattered bones in
the

the Prophets vision, *Ezek. 37.* whereof the question may be, *Can these dry bones live?* have these quarrels caused the English to be a scorn and derision to foriagn nations? hath the contempt of the holy *Churches* authority opened the door to so many ridiculous, irrational and impious heresies, which all know were at first but your off-sets? hath the bloody sword so often disputed these unhappy questions, undone so many noble and good families? and

Sed praestat motos componere fluctus;

I say no more, but do you question whether they by whom these offences come, do therein break any of the commandments? please your selves, conclude, *Sure it is no sin* for our part, we look upon these prodigious divisions with greif of heart, and fear of the issue, being truly sensible that these breaches are too wide already, and heartily desire their happy closure, as for many reasons of greatest moment, so for that which the holy Ghost recordeth, *Gen. 13. 7.* to mark the dangerous importunity of that strife, between Abraham's and Lot's pastors, *The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.* Let us therefore entreat all in the Apostles words *Phil. 2. 1. &c.* *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one minde &c.* And now joyn in petition within, unto the God of peace that he would be pleased to breath the Spirit of unity and life upon our divided parts, and to give a right understanding to all parties, that with one heart and tongue we may glorifie him, and live to him, that we may be saved by him. *Amen.*

F I N I S.
