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For their worshipful & high much honoured Sirs
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Sam. Parker, Reverendissimo
in Christo Patri ac Domino
Domino Gilberto Archiep.
Cantuar. à Sac. Dom.

Ex Ædibus Lambeth.
Sept. 12. 1672.
Primitive Christianity:
OR, THE
RELIGION
OF THE
Ancient Christians
In the first Ages
OF THE
GOSPEL.

In Three Parts.

By WILLIAM CAVÉ, D.D.

"Οὐκ ὁ λόγος, ἀλλ' ὁ λόγος ταῖς ἀμετάβαται οὐσίαις οὐκ ἔστω.
"Nos non habuit Sapientiam; sed mente pretiumus.
"Non eloquimur magna, sed vivimus.


The Third Edition.

LONDON,
Printed by J.G. for R. Chiswel at the Rose and Crown in S. Paul's Church-yard.

MDCLXXVI.
TO THE
Right Reverend Father in
G O D,
N A T H A N A E L,
Lord Bishop of
O X F O R D,
And Clerk of the Closet to
H I S M A J E S T Y.

My Lord,

When I first desir’d that these Papers should take
Sanctuary at your Lordships Patronage, the
Hebrew Proverb presentlie came into my mind, Keep close
to a Great Man, and Men will reverence thee. I knew no better way
A 4 (next
The Epistle Dedicatory.

(next to the Innocency, and, if it may be, Usefulness of the Subject I have undertaken) to secure myself from the Censures of Envy and ill Nature, than by putting myself under your Protection, whose known Kindness, the Sweetness and Obligingness of whose Temper is able to render Malice itself candid and favourable. Encouraged also by this Consideration, I hardened my self into the Confidence of this Address, which I had not otherwise attempted, but that your Lordships Kindness and Generous Compassion, and the mighty Condescension wherewith you were always pleased to treat me, (while I had the happiness of your Lordships Neighbourhood) did at once invite and oblige me to it. I say no more, lest I should affront that Modesty that is so innate to your Temper, or come within the least suspicion of Flattery, so repugnant to my own.)

One
The Epistle Dedicatory.

One thing only there is, which I cannot but remark, the great Honour which your Lordship has done, not to the Episcopal only, but to the whole Ministerial Order, that a Person of your Rank and Education would stoop to an Employment so little valued and regarded in this Unthankful and Degenerate Age. And herein your Lordship has been a happy Precedent; your Example being already followed by some, and will shortly by more Persons of Noble Descent and Pedigree; a thing for which the Church of England was never more Renowned since the Reformation, than it is at this day.

My Lord,

There was a Time within the compass of our Memory, when the Bishops amongst other things were accused (by one of the House of Peers, though one that had not the most reason to bring in a Charge of that nature) to be in
The Epistle Dedicatory

respect of their Parentage De face populi; of the very Dregs and Ruffles of the People; (Malice will play at small games rather than not at all.) A Charge as false as it was spiteful; though had it been true, it had been impertinent, seeing the very Order is enough to derive Honour upon the Person, even when he cannot (as your Lordship) bring it along with him. And indeed for Honourable an Order has Episcopacy ever been accounted, even when there have been no visible Advantages either of Riches or Grandeur to attend it; for there were not in the more early Ages of Christianity that Persons of the greatest Birth and Fortunes have not thought it below them to exchange the Civil Tribunal for the Bishops' Throne, and to lay down the publick Racks and Axes, to take up the Crockier and the Pedum Pastorales. If we may credit that Catalogue of the Bishops of Constantinople...
The Epistle Dedicatory.

ple recorded by Nicephorus, we find Dometius Brother to the Emperor, Probus, and after him his two Sons, Probus and Metrophanes, successively sitting in that Chair; as afterwards Nectarius, S. Chrysostome Predecessor, was of a Senator made Bishop of that See. Thalassus became Bishop of Cæsaræa when he was a Senator, the Prefectus Ptolemaio (or the Emperor's Lieutenant, one of the biggest Places both of Trust and Honour in the Roman Empire) of Illyricum, and rising to greater Dignities, being designed by the Emperor for the Government of the East. S. Ambrose (whose Father was an Illustrious Person, the Prefect of France) was made Governor of Liguria and Væmitia, and sent thither with Consular Power and Dignity, during which Employment he was made Bishop of Milan. Petronius Bishop of Bononia is said to have been first a Prefectus Prae-
The Epistle Dedicatory

Prætorio, and to descend of the Family of Constantine the Great. Sidonius Apollinaris descended for many Generations of Noble and Illustrious Parents, his Father the Praefectus Prætorio of Gaul, himself Son-in-Law to Avitus, (a Person of Extraordinary Honour and Employment, and afterwards Conful and Emperor,) and yet in the midst of this disdained not to become Bishop of Clermont in France. More sucili Instances I could give, not to speak of Multitudes that were in the middle and later Ages of the Church, especially in our own Nation. But I return to what I was speaking about. I beheld Religion generally laid waste, and Christianity ready to draw its last breath, stifled and oppressed with the Vices and Impieties of a Debauched and Profligate Age: to contribute towards the Recovery whereof, and
The Epistle Dedicatory.

and the reducing things (if possible) to the Ancient Standard, is the Design of the Book that is here offered to you. The Subject, I assure myself, is not unsuitable either to your Lordships Order, Temper, or Course of Life; if my ill managery of it has not rendered it unworthy of your Patronage. However, such as it is, it's bumbly presented by him who is

Your Lordships

faithfully devoted Servant,

WILLIAM CAVE.
I know not whether it may be any satisfaction to the curiosity of the reader to understand the birth and original of these papers; if it be, let him take this account. No sooner did I arrive at years capable of discerning, but I began to enquire into the grounds of that religion into which I had been baptized; which I soon found to be so noble and excellent, in all its laws so just and rational, in all its designs so divine and heavenly, so perfective of the principles, so conducive to the happiness of humane nature, a religion so worthy of God, so advantageous to man, built upon such firm and uncontrollable evidence, back'd with such proper and powerful arguments, that I was presently convince'd of the divinity that resided in it, and concluded with my self, (and
The Preface.

(and I thought I had reason so to do) that surely the Disciples of this Religion must needs be the most Excellent persons in the World. But alas! a few years' Experience of the World, let me see, that this was the Conclusion of one that had convers'd onely with Books, and the reasonings of his own Mind. I had not been long an Observer of the Manners of Men, but I found them generally so Debauched and Vicious, so Corrupt and Contrary to the Rules of this Holy Religion, that if a modest and honest Heathen was to estimate Christianity by the Lives of its Professors, he would certainly proscribe it as the vilest Religion in the World. Being offended hereat, I resolved to stand in the ways and see, and enquire for the good old way, the Path wherein the Ancient Christians walk'd. For I could not think that this had always been the unhappy fate and portion of Christianity; and that if the Footsteps of true Christian Piety and Simplicity were any where to be found, it must be in those Times, When (as St. Hierom notes) the Blood of Christ was yet warm in the breasts of Christians, and the Faith and Spirit of Religion more brisk and vigorous.

In pursuance of this Design, I set my self...
The Preface.

to a more close and diligent reading of the first Fathers and Ancient Monuments of the Church than ever I had done before, especially for the three or four first Centuries, for much lower I did not intend to go, because the Life and Spirit of Christianity did then visibly decline apace; noting as I went along whatever contributed to my satisfaction in this Affair. Had I consulted my own ease and quiet, I might have gone a nearer way to work, and have taken up with what I could have pick'd up of this nature in Baromius, the Centuries, &c. but I could not satisfy myself (and I presume it would as little have satisfied the Reader) with shreds, with things taken upon trust, and borrowed at the second hand. For the same reason I made little use of The Lives of the Saints, (especially in such Instances whereof there was the least cause to doubt) and the Spurious and Supposititious Writings of the Fathers, seldom making use of any but such as are of unquestionable Credit and Authority. And because the Testimony of an Enemy is ever accounted of great moment and regard, I have been careful to add the Testimonies that have been given to Christians and to their...
The Preface.

their Religion by the known and pro-
fessed Adversaries of the Christian Faith; such as Pliny, Lucian, Porphyry, Julian, &c. more whereof we might have been furnished with, had those Writings of theirs against the Christian Religion been extant, which the Zeal of the first Christian Princes industriously banished out of the World. What other Authors of later Date I have borrowed any light from in this Discourse, I have faithfully produced in the Margin. Two Books indeed I met with, which at first sight I well hoped would have wholly saved me the labour of this Search; the one written by a Person of our own Nation; the other by a Florentine of great name and note; but my hopes were very much frustrated in both. For the first, I no sooner looked into it, but found myself wretchedly imposed upon by the Title, his elder times and Christians (not to say any thing of his intermixtures of things nothing to his purpose) seldom reaching any higher than the middle ages of the Church, little or nothing being remark'd of the first


Paganini. Gaudentius de vita Christianorum ante tempora Constantini. Florent. 1639. quarto.
The Preface.

first Ages of Christianity, the onely thing I aimed at. For the other (which I met not with till I had almost finished this Search) I found it miserably thin and empty, containing little else but short Glosses upon some few Passages out of Tertullian, from whence I did not enrich my self with any one Observation, which I had not made before. There is indeed an Epistle of Fronto's, the Learned Chancellor of the University of Paris, concerning this Affair; but it contains onely some general Intimations, and seems to have been designed by him (as appears from that and some other of his Epistles) as the ground-work of a larger and more particular Discourse. But his Death happening some few years after the date of that Epistle, cut off all hopes of prosecuting so Excellent a Design. These are all that I know of, who have attempted any thing in this Subject, none whereof coming up to the Curiosity of my Design, I was forced to resume the task I had undertaken, and to go on with it through those Ancient Writers of the Church; the result of which Search is laid together in this Book.

Whether I have discharged my self herein to the satisfaction of the Reader,
I know not; sure I am, I have endeavoured what I propounded to my self, viz. A Specimen of Primitive Christianity, in some of the most considerable Branches and Instances of Religion. Here he will find a Piety Active and Zelous, shining through the blackest Clouds of Malice and Cruelty; afflicted innocence triumphant, notwithstanding all the powerful or politick Attempts of Men or Devils; a patience unconquerable under the biggest Persecutions; a charity truly Catholick and unlimited; a simplicity and upright Carriage in all Transactions; a sobriety and temperance remarkable to the admiration of their Enemies; and in short, he will here see the Divine and Holy Precepts of the Christian Religion drawn down into Action, and the most Excellent genius and Spirit of the Gospel breathing in the Hearts and Lives of these good Old Christians. Here he will find a real and evident Confutation of that senseless and absurd calumny, that was fastned upon Christianity, as if it required no more than an easie and credulous Temper of Mind; as if under a pretence of Kindness and Indulgence to Sinners, it ministred to all Vice and Wickedness. Celsus confidently begins the
The Preface.

there be some amongst the Christians (says he) that will neither give no receive a Reason of their Faith, who are wont to cry out, Don't examine, but believe; and, Thy Faith will save thee; The Wisdom of this world is evil, but Foolishness good and useful. Julian carries on the Charge somewhat higher, as if the Christian Religion were not onely content with a naked and an empty Faith, but gave encouragement to sin, by affuring its most desperate Proselytes of an easie pardon. In the conclusion of his Caesars, after he had assigned the Roman Emperours their particular Tutelar Deities, he delivers over Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperour, to the Goddess of Pleasure, who having effeminately trick't and dress'd him up, brought him to the Goddess Asotia, or Intemperance, where he finds τὸν ὅρ, his Son, Constantius probably, (for the Passage is a little disturbed and obscure, for which reason probably the Translator passed it by, and took no notice of it) making this


uni-
universal Proclamation. Whoever is an Adulterer, or a Murderer, whoever is an impure profligate Wretch, let him come boldly, for I declare, that being washed in this water [Baptism] he shall immediately be cleansed: nay, although he again commit those sins, let him but knock his Breast, and beat his Head, and I will make him clean. Much to the same purpose Zosimus (as good a Friend to Christianity as either of the former) spitefully charges it upon Constantine the Great, that being haunted with the Conscience of his prodigious Villanies, and having no hopes given him by the Gentle Priests of the Expiation of his Crimes, embraced Christianity, being told, that in the Christian Religion there was a Promise of cleansing from all sin, and that as soon as ever any closed with it, pardon would be granted to the most profligate Offenders. As if Christianity had been nothing else, but
but a Recptacle and Sanctuary for Rogués and Villains, where the worst of men might be wicked under hopes of Pardon. But how false and groundless (especially as urged and intended by them) this impious Charge was, appears from the whole design and tenour of the Gospel, and that more than ordinary Vein of Piety and Strictness that was conspicuous in the Lives of its first Professors, whereof we have in this Treatise given abundant evidence.

To this Representation of their Lives and Manners, I have added some Account concerning the Ancient Rites and Usages of the Church; wherein if any one shall meet with something that does not jump with his own humour, he will I doubt not have more Discretion than to quarrel with me for setting down things as I found them. But in this part I have said the less, partly because this was not the thing I primarily designed, partly because it has been done by others in just Discourses. In some few Instances I have remarked the corruption and degeneracy of the Church of Rome, from the purity and simplicity of the Ancient Church; and more I could easily have added, but that I studiously avoided a 4 Con-
The Preface.

Controversies, it being no part of my Design to inquire, what was the Judgment of the Fathers in Disputable Cases, especially the more Abstruse and Intricate Speculations of Theology, but what was their Practice, and by what Rules and Measures they did govern and conduct their Lives. The truth is, their Creed in the first Ages was short and simple, their Faith lying then (as Erasmus observes) not so much in nice and numerous Articles, as in a good and holy Life. At the end of the Book I have added a Chronological Index of the Authors, according to the Times wherein they are supposed to have lived, with an account of the Editions of their Works made use of in this Treatise. Which I did, not that I had a mind to tell the World, either what, or how many Books I had; a piece of Vanity of which had I been guilty, it had been no hard matter to have furnish'd out a much larger Catalogue: but I did it partly to gratifie the request of the Bookseller, partly because I conceived it might not be altogether unuseful to the Reader; the Index to give some light to the Quotations, by knowing when the Author lived, especially when he speaks of things done.
done in or near his own Time, and which must otherwise have been done at every turn in the Body of the Book. And because there are some Writings frequently made use of in this Book, the Authors whereof in this Index could be reduced to no certain date, especially those called the Apostolical Canons and Constitutions, it may not be amiss here briefly to take notice of them. And first for the Canons; as I am far from their Opinion who ascribe them to the Apostles, so I think their great Antagonist Mr. Daille bends the stick as much too far the other way, not allowing them a Being in the World till the Year 500, or a little before. The truth doubtless lies between these two: 'Tis evident both from the Histories of the Church, and many Passages in Tertullian, Cyprian, and others, that there were in the most early Ages of Christianity frequent Synods and Councils for settling the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church, though their Determinations under that notion be not extant at this day. Part of these Synodical Decrees, so many of them as concern'd the Rites and Discipline of the Church, we may conceive some person of Learning and Judgment gathered to-
The Preface,

gather, probably about the beginning of the third Century, and put them (especially the first Fifty, for I look not upon the whole eighty five as of equal Value and Authority) if not into the same, into some such form and method, wherein we now have them; styling them Ecclesiastical or Apostolical Canons, not as if they had been composed by the Apostles, but either because containing things consonant to the Doctrines and Rules delivered by the Apostles, or because made up of Usages and Traditions supposed to be derived from them, or lastly because made by Ancient and Apostolic men. That many, if not all, of these Canons were some considerable time extant before the first Nicene Council, we have great reason to believe from two or three passages amongst many others. S. Basil giving Rules about Discipline appoints a Deacon guilty of Fornication to be deposed, and thrust down into the rank of Laicks, and that in that capacity he might receive the Communion. There being (says he) an ancient Canon, that they that are deposed should only fall under this kind of punishment; the Ancients (as I suppose) following herein that command, Thou shalt not
not punish twice for the same fault. This Balsamon joyns with the twenty fiftth Canon of the Apostles, which treats of the very same Affair: and indeed it cannot in probability be meant of any other, partly because there was no ancient Canon (that we know of) in S. Basil's time about this business but that, partly because the same Sentence is applied as the reason both in the Apostolical and S. Basil's Canon, Thou shalt not punish twice for the same fault; which clearly shews whence Basil had it, and what he understands by his ancient Canon. Theodoret records a Letter of Alexander Bishop of Alexandria, to another of the same name Bishop of Constantinople, (this Letter was written a little before the Council of Nice) where speaking of some Bishops who had received the Arrian, whom he had excommunicated, into Communion, he tells him, that herein they had done what the Apostolical Canons did not allow; evidently referring to the twelveth and thirteenth Canons of the Apostles, which state the case about one Bishops receiving those into Communion, who had been excommunicated by another. To this let me add, that Constantine in a Letter to Ephesius commends him for refusing to leave his own
own Bishoprick to go over to that of
Antioch, to which he was chosen, espe-
cially because herein he had exactly ob-
served the rule of Ecclesiastical Discipline,
and had kept the Commands of God, and
the Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Canon,
meaning doubtless the fourteenth Apo-
stolick Canon, which treats about such
Removes. Nay, Learned men both for-
merly and of late have observed divers
Passages in the Nicene Canons them-
selves, which plainly respect these Ca-
nons, as might be made appear (notwith-
sanding what Daille has excepted against
it,) were this a proper place to discourse
of it. This for the Canons:

For the Constitutions, they are said to
have been composed by S. Clemens, at
the instance and by the direction of the
Apostles. And this wilde and extravagent
Opinion has not wanted its Patrons and
Defenders, Turrianus, Bovius, &c. but
herein deserted by the more modest
and moderate of their own Party: be-
fides that their Apostolicalness (in this
sense) is by the Learned Daille everlast-
ingly shatter'd and broken. But then he
sets them at too wide a distance, affign-
ing them to the later end of the fifth
Century: when 'tis as clear as the Sun
that
that they were extant and in credit with many before the Times of Epiphanius (though somewhat altered now from what they were in his Time) compiled probably out of many lesser Δοκιμαι and Διαρκειαι, Books containing the Doctrines and Rites that had been delivered and practised by Ancient and Apostolical persons, or at least vented under their names; but whether, as some conjecture, composed by Clemens Alexandrinus (and thence by an easy mistake ascribed to Clemens Romanus) I am not at leisure to consider. In this Class of Writers I may reckon Dionysius the Areopagite, absurdly enough asserted by many to be genuine, by Daille thrust down to the beginning of the sixth Century; but most probably thought to have been written about the middle of the fourth Age, as a person amongst us deservedly of great Name and Note has shewn in his late Vindication of Ignatius Epistles. These are the principal of those Authors, who could not be fixed upon any certain Year: the rest have in the Index their particular and respective times. To which I have added the account of the Editions, for the more ready finding (if occasion be) of any passage quoted out of them.

One
The Preface:

One thing indeed there is which I cannot but take notice of, it looks so like a piece of Vanity and Ostentation, that the Margin is charged with so many quotations; but whoever considers the nature of my Design, will quickly see that it was absolutely necessary, and that it concerned me not to deliver any thing without good Authority; the reason why I have, where I could, brought them in speaking their own words: though to avoid as much of the Charge as was possible, I omitted the citing Authors in their own Languages, and only set them down in English, faithfully representing the Authors sense, though not always tying my self to a strict and precise Translation. How pertinent my quotations are, the Reader must judge; I hope he will find them exact, being immediately fetched from the Fountain head; here being very few (if any) that have not been examined more than once. For the Method into which the Book is cast, I chose that which to me seemed most apt and proper, following S. Pauls distribution of Religion; into piety towards God, sobriety towards our selves, and righteousness towards others; and accordingly divided the Discourse into three
three Parts, respecting those three great branches of Religion; though the first is much larger than either of the other, by reason of some preliminary Chapters, containing a Vindication of the Christians from those Crimes that were charged upon them; that so the Rubbish, being cleared and thrown out of the way, we might have a fairer prospect of their Religion afterwards. The Book I confess is swall’d into a greater bulk than I either thought of or desired; but by reason of somewhat a confused Copy never designed for the Press, no certain measures could be taken of it.

And now if after all this it shall be inquired, why these Papers are made publick, as I can give no very good reason, so I will not trouble my self to invent a bad one. It may suffice to intimate, that this Discourse (long since drawn up at leisure hours) lay then by me, when a tedious and uncomfortable Distemper (whereby I have been taken off from all publick Service, and the prosecution of severer Studies) gave me too much opportunity to look over my Papers, and this especially, which peradventure otherwise had never seen the light. Indeed I must confess I was some-
The Preface.

what the easilier prevailed with to let this Discourse pass abroad, that it might appear, that when I could not do what I ought, I was at least willing to do what I could. If he that reads it shall reap any delight and satisfaction by it, or be in any measure induced to imitate these Primitive Vertues, I shall think my pains well bestowed: if not, I am not the first, and probably shall not be the last, that has written a Book to no purpose.
The Contents

Part I.

CHAP. I.
Things charged upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.

CHAP. II.
Of the Novelty that was charged upon Christianity.

CHAP. III.
Things charged upon the Christians, respecting their outward Condition.
The Contents.

CHAP. IV.

The Charges brought against them, respecting their Life and Manners.

CHAP. V.

Of the positive parts of their Religion: And first, Of their piety towards God.

CHAP. VI.

Of Churches, and places of publick Worship in the Primitive times.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Lords Day, and the Fasts and Festivals of the Ancient Church.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the persons constituting the Body of
The Contents.

of the Church, both people and Ministers.

CHAP. IX.

Of their usual Worship, both private and publick.

CHAP. X.

Of Baptism, and the Administration of it in the primitive Church.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Lords Supper, and the Administration of it in the Ancient Church.

b s Part
The Contents

Part II.

The Religion of the Primitive Christians as to those Vertues that respect themselves.

CHAP. I.

Of their Humility.

CHAP. II.

Of their Heavenly-mindedness and Contempt of the World.

CHAP. III.

Of their Sobriety in respect of their Garb and Apparel.
CHAP. IV.
Of their great Temperance and Abstinence.

CHAP. V.
Of their singular Continence and Chastity.

CHAP. VI.
Of their Readiness and Constancy in professing their Religion.

CHAP. VII.
Of their patience and exemplary carriage under Sufferings.
Part III.

Of their Religion as respecting other men.

CHAP. I.

Of their Justice and Honesty.

CHAP. II.

Of their admirable Love and Charity.

CHAP. III.

Of their Unity and Peaceableness.
The Contents.

CHAP. IV.

Of their Obedience and Subjection to Civil Government.

CHAP. V.

Of their Penance, and the Discipline of the Ancient Church.
Primitive Christianity:

OR THE

RELIGION

OF THE

ANCIENT CHRISTIANS,

In the first Ages of the Gospel.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

Things charged upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.

Christian Religion likely to meet with opposition at its first setting out. Chiefly undermined by Calumnies and Reproaches. Three things by the Heathens charged upon the Christians, some things respecting
Prudent Christian. Ch. 1.

Part I. respecting their Religion; some their outward Condition, others their Moral Carriage, and the matters of their Worship. Their Religion charged with two things, Impiety and Novelty. The Charge of Atheism considered and answered out of the Fathers. The Heathens excepted against as Incompetent Judges of the Affairs of Christianity. In what sense Christians confessed themselves Atheists. The wretched and absurd Deities that were amongst the Heathens, and the impure manner of their Worship. Atheism properly such, disowned and denied by Christians. The Account they gave of their Religion, and the God whom they worshipped.

No sooner did the Son of God appear in the World, to establish the most Excellent Religion that ever was communicated to Mankind, but he met with the most fierce and vigorous opposition: persecuted and devoted to death as soon as he was born, followed all his life with fresh assaults of malice and cruelty, his Credit traduced and slandered, his Doctrine despised and slighted, and himself at last put to death with the most Exquisite Arts of Torture and Disgrace. And
And if they thus served the Master of the House, how much more them of the household? the Disciple not being above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord. Therefore when he gave Commission to his Apostles, to publish this Religion to the World, he told them beforehand what hard and unkind Reception they must look to meet with; that he sent them forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves, that they should be delivered up to the Councils, and scourged in the Synagogues; and be brought before Kings and Governors, and be hated of all men for his Name sake. Nay, so high should the Quarrel arise upon the account of Religion, that men should violate some of the nearest Laws of Nature, betray their Friends and Kinsfolk; the Brother deliver ing up the Brother to death, and the Father the Child, the Children rising up against their Parents, and causing them to be put to death. This he well foresaw (and the Event truly answered it) would be the Fate of its first appearing in the World: and indeed, considering the present State and Circumstances of the World at that time, it could not reasonably be expected, that the Christian Religion should meet with a better Entertain-
Part I. Entertainment; for the Genius and nature
of its Doctrine was such, as was almost
impossible to escape the frowns and dis-
pleasure of men: a Doctrine it was, that
call'd men off from lusts and pleasures,
and offered violence to their native incli-
nations, that required the greatest strict-
ness and severity of life, obliged men to
deny themselves, to take up their Cross,
and to follow the steps of a poor crucified
Saviour, and that upon little other en-
couragement at present, than the invis-
ible rewards of another world. It intro-
duced new Rites and Ceremonies, un-
known to those of former Ages, and such
as did undermine the received and esta-
blished principles of that Religion, that
for so many Generations had governed
the World; it revealed and brought to
light such Truths, as were not onely con-
trary to the principles of mens Education,
but many of them above the reach of Na-
tural comprehension, too deep for the
line of Humane Reason to fathom or find
out.

Upon these, and such like accounts,
Christianity was sure to encounter with
mighty prejudices and potent opposition;
and so it did: for no sooner did it peep
abroad in the world, but it was every
where
where spoken against: Princes and Po-Part 1. tentates, and the greatest Powers and Po- licies of the world, did for some Ages confederate and combine together, to extirpate and banish it out of the world: and certainly, if Arms and Armies, if Strength and Subtlety, if Malice and Cruelty could have stifled it, it had been smothered in its infancy and first deliv- ered into the world. But notwithstanding all these oppositions, it still lifted up its head in triumph, and outbrav'd the fiercest storms of Persecution; and as Tertullian told their Enemies, By every exquisite act of Cruelty, they did but tempt others to come over to the party; the oft- ner they were moved down, the faster they sprang up again, the blood of Christians making the Churches soil more fat and fertile. Hereupon the great Enemy of Mankind, betook himself to other coun- sels, and sought to undermine, what he saw he could not carry by open assault and battery; he studied to leaven the minds of men with false and unjust Pre- judices against Christianity, and to bur- den it with whole loads of Reproaches and Defamations, knowing no speedier way to hinder its reception, than to blast its Reputation. For this purpose all
Part I. the Arts of Spite and Malice were mustered up, and Christians confidently charged with all those Crimes that could render them and their Religion vile and infamous. Now the things that were charged upon the Christians were either such as respected their Religion, or such as concern'd their outward State and condition, or such as related to their moral carriage and behaviour, with some things relating to the matter or manner of their Worship. We shall consider them in order, and how the Christians of those times vindicated themselves from these imputations.

The Christian Religion at its first coming abroad into the World was mainly charged with these two things, Impiety and Nobility: For the first, it was commonly cried out against as a grand piece of Atheism and Impiety, as an affront to their Religion, and an undermining the very being and existence of their Gods. This is the summe of the Charge, as we find it in the Ancient Apologists; more particularly Celsinus, the Heathen in Minutius Felix accuses the Christians for a Desperate, Undone, and Unlawful Faction, who by way of Contempt did spew and spit at the mention of
of their Gods, deride their Worship, scoff at their Priests, and despite their Temples as no better than Charnel-houses, and heaps of bones and ashes of the Dead; for these, and such like Reasons, the Christians were everywhere accounted a Pack of Atheists, and their Religion The Atheism; and seldom it is that Julian the Emperor calls Christianity by any other name. Thus Lucian bringing in Alexander the Impostor setting up for an Oracle-monger, ranks the Christians with Atheists and Epicureans, as those that were especially to be banished from his Mysterious Rites. In answer to this Charge the Christians pleaded especially these three things.

First, that the Gentiles were for the most part incompetent Judges of such Cases as these, as being almost wholly ignorant of the true State of the Christian Doctrine, and therefore unfit to pronounce Sentence against it. Thus when Crescens the Philosopher had traduced the Christians as Atheistical and Irreligious, Justin Martyr answers, that he talked about things which he did not understand, feigning things of his own head, only to comply with the Humour of his seduc'd Disciples and Followers; that in re-
Part I. Approaching the Doctrine of Christ, when he did not understand it, he discovered a most wicked and malignant Temper, and shewed himself far worse than the most simple and unlearned, who are not wont rashly to bear witness and determine in things not sufficiently known to them. Or if he did understand its Greatness and Excellency, then he shewed himself much more base and disingenuous, in charging upon it what he knew to be false, and concealing his inward sentiments and convictions, for fear lest he should be suspected to be a Christian. But Justin well knew, that he was miserably unskilful in matters of Christianity, having formerly had Conferences and Disputations with him about these things; and therefore offered the Senate of Rome (to whom he then presented his Apology) if they had not heard the summe of it, to hold another conference with him, even before the Senate itself: which he thought would be a work worthy of so wise and grave a Council: or if they had heard it, then he did not doubt, but they clearly apprehended how little he understood these things; or, that if he did understand them, he knowingly dissembled it to his
his Auditors, not daring to own the Part 1. Truth, as Socrates did in the face of danger: an evident argument that he was not a Philosopher, but a Slave to popular Applause and Glory.

Secondly, They did in some sort confess the Charge, That according to the vulgar notion which the Heathens had of their Deities, they were Atheists, i.e. Strangers and Enemies to them; That the Gods of the Gentiles were at best but Demons, impure and unclean Spirits, who had long imposed upon Mankind, and by their villanies, sophistries, and arts of terror, had so affrighted the common people, who knew not really what they were, and who judge of things more by Appearance than by Reason, that they call'd them Gods, and gave to every one of them that name, which the Demon was willing to take to himself, and that they really were nothing but Devils, fallen and apostate Spirits, the Christians evidently manifested at every turn, forcing them to the confessing it, while by Prayer and invoking the name of the true God, they drove them out of possessed persons, and therefore they trembled to encounter with a Christian, as
as Octavius triumphingly tells Cæcilius; that they entertained the most absurd and fabulous Notions of their gods, and usually ascrib'd such things to them, as would be accounted an horrible shame and dishonour to any wise and good man, the Worship and Mysterious Rites of many of them being so brutish and filthy, that the honefter and severer Romans were ashamed of, and therefore over-turn'd their Altars, and banished them out of the Roll of their Deities, though their Degenerate Posterity took them in again, as Tertullian observes; their gods themselves so impure and beastly, their Worship so obscene and detestable, that Julius Firmicus advises them to turn their Temples into Theatres, where the Secrets of their Religion may be delivered in Scenes, and to make their Players Priests, and that the Common Rout might sing the Amours, the Sports and Pastimes, the Wantonnesses and Impieties of their Gods, no places being so fit for such a Religion as they. Besides the attributing to them Humane Bodies, with many Blemishes and Imperfections, and subjection to the Mysteries of Humane Life, and to the Laws of Mortality, they could not deny them to
Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity.

so have been guilty of the most horrid Parts,
and prodigious Villanies and Enormities,
Revenge and Murder, Incest and Luxury,
Drunkenness and Intemperance, Theft,
and unnatural Rebellion against their
Parents, and such like, of which their
own Writings were full almost in every
Page, which served only to corrupt and
debauch the Minds and Manners of
Youth, as Olibarin tells his Adversary;
where he pursues this Argument at large,
with great Eloquence and Reason. Nay,
those among them that were most
quixtive and serious, and that entertain-
ed more abstract and refin'd Appre-
rehensions of things than the Common
people, yet could not agree in any fit
and rational Notion of a Deity, some
ridiculously affirming one thing and some
another, till they were divided into a
hundred different Opinions, and all of
them farther distant from the truth than
they were from one another; the Vul-
gar in the mean while making gods of
the most brutish Objects, such as Dogs,
Cats, Wolves, Goats, Hawks, Dragons,
Beetles, Crocodiles, &c. This Origen a-
gainst Celsum particularly charges upon
the Egyptians, When you approach (says
he) their sacred Places, they have glorious
Groves
Part I. Groves and Chapels, Temples with goodly Gates, and stately Portico's, and many mysterious and religious Ceremonies; but when once you are entered, and got within their Temples, you shall see nothing but a Cat, or an Ape, or a Crocodile, or a Goat, or a Dog, worshipp'd with the most solemn Veneration. Nay, they deified senseless and inanimate things, that had no life or power to help themselves, much less their Worshippers, Herbs, Roots, and Plants; nay, unmanly and degenerate passions, Fear, Paleness, &c. fell down before Stumps and Statues, which owed all their Divinity to the cost and folly of their Votaries, despised and trampled on by the forriest Creatures, Mice, Swallows, &c., who were wont to build Nest's in the very mouth of their Gods, and Spiders to periwig their Heads with Cobwebs; being forc'd first to make them, and then make them clean, and to defend and protect them, that they might fear and worship them, as he in Minutius wittily derides them; in whose Worship there are (says he) many things that justly deserve to be laugh'd at, and others that call for pity and compassion. And what wonder now if the Christians were not in the least ashamed to be called Atheists, with respect to such
such Deities, and such a Religion as this Part 1. was.

Thirdly, in the strict and proper notion of Atheists they no less truly than confidently denied the Charge, and appealed to their severest Adversaries, whether those who owned such Principles as they did, could reasonably be styled Atheists. None ever pleaded better and more Irrefragable Arguments for the Existence of a Supreme Infinite Being, who made and governs all things by Infinite Wisdom and Almighty Power, none ever more ready to produce a most clear and candid confession of their Faith, as to this grand Article of Religion, than they. Although we profess our selves Atheists, with respect to those whom you esteem and repute to be Gods (so their Apologist J. Martyr tells the Senate) yet not in respect of the true God, the Parent and Fountain of Wisdom and Righteousnes, and all other Excellencies and Perfections, who is infinitely free from the least Contagion or Spot of Evil: Him, and his only begotten Son (who instructed us and the whole Society of good Angels in these Divine Mysteries) and the Spirit of Prophecy, we worship and adore, honouring them in Truth, and with the highest Reason, and ready
Primitiv Christianity. Ch. i.

Part i. ready to communicate these things to any one that's willing to learn them, as we our selves have received them. Can we then be Atheists, who worship the great Creator of this World, not with Bloud, Incense, and Offerings, (which we are sufficiently taught he stands no need of) but exalt him according to our power with prayers and prayers, in all the Addresses we make to him: believing this to be the onely Honour that's worthy of him, not to consume the Creatures which he has given us for our use, and the comfort of those that want, in the fire by Sacrifice; but to approove our selves thankful to him, and to sing and celebrate Rational Hymns and Sacrifices, pouring out our prayers to him as a grateful return for those many good things which we have received, and do yet expect from him, according to the faith and trust that we have in him. To the same purpose Athenagoras, in his Return to this Charge. Diagoras indeed was guilty of the deepest Atheism and Impiety; but we, who separate God from all Material Being, and affirm him to be Eternal and Unbegotten, but all Matter to be made and corruptible, how un-justly are we branded with Impiety?

It's
Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity.

It's true, did we side with Diagoras in denying a Divinity, when there are so many and such powerful Arguments from the Creation and Government of the World, to convince us of the Existence of God and Religion, then both the Guilt and Punishment of Atheism might deservedly be put upon us. But when our Religion acknowledges one God, the Maker of the Universe, who being uncreate himself, created all things by his Word, we are manifestly wrong'd both in word and deed; both in being charged with it, and in being punished for it. We are accused (says Arnobius) for Introducing Prophane Rites and an Impious Religion; but tell me, O ye Men of Reason, how dare you make so rash a Charge? To adore the Mighty God, the Sovereign of the whole Creation, the Governor of the Highest Powers, to pray to him with the most Obsequious Reverence; under an Afflicted State to lay hold of him with all our powers, to love him, and look up to him, is this a Dismal and Detestable Religion, a Religion full of Sacrilege and Impiety, destroying and defiling all Ancient Rites? Is this that bold and prodigious Crime, for which your Gods are so angry with us, and
Part I. and for which you your selves do so rage against us, confiscating our Estates, banishing our Persons, burning, tearing, and racking us to death with such Exquisite Tortures? We Christians are nothing else but the Worshippers of the Supreme King and Governour of the World, according as we are taught by Christ our Master: search, and you'll find nothing else in our Religion: this is the summum of the whole Affair; this the end and design of our Divine Offices; before him it is that we are wont to prostrate and bow our selves to him: we worship with common and conjoin'd Devotions, from him we beg those things which are just and honest, and such as are not unworthy of him to hear and grant. So little reason had the Enemies of Christianity to brand it with the note of Atheism and Irreligion.
Of the Novelty that was charged upon Christianity.

Christianity excepted and cried out against as a late Novel Doctrine. This a common Charge continued when Christianity had been some hundreds of years in the World. Christianity greatly prejudiced by this Charge. Men loth to forsake the Religion of their Ancestors. What the Christians answered to it. Christian Religion the same in substance and effect with that of the ancient Jews: in that respect by far the Oldest Religion in the World: prov'd and urg'd by Tertullian, Cl. Alexandrin. Eusebius, &c. Its Lateness and Novelty no real prejudice to Rational and Unbiast'd men. The Folly and Vanity of adhering to absurd and unreasonable Customs and Principles, because Ancient; and of refusing to change Opinions for the better. An Objection; if Christ and Christianity were so great Blessings to Man-kind, why was it so long before God revealed them? answered out of Arnobius.
This Artifice proving weak and ineffectual, the next Charge was its Late ness and Novelty, that it was an upright Sect, and but of yesterdays standing, not known in the World many years before: whereas the Religion of the Gentiles had uncontrollably and almost universally obtained from Ages and Generations: a Doctrine newly sprung up, and come as 'twar from a far Country, Theophilus Antiochenus: a Disrace, or rending themselves from the Institutions of their Ancestors, as Tertullian has it. This Charge begun betimes, when S. Paul preached at Athens, we find this the first thing charged upon him, that he was a setter forth of strange Gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection: and it was followed with a loud Cry in succeeding times. You are wont to object to us (says Arnobius) that our Religion is novel, started up not many days ago, and that you ought not to desert your Ancient way, and the Religion of your Countrey, to espouse barbarous and foreign Rites. And Eusebius tells us, the Heathens were wont to reason thus: What strange Profession of Religion is this?
this? What new way of life; wherein Part I. we can neither discern the Rites amongst us us'd in Greece, nor amongst any Sect of the Barbarians? Who can deny them to be impious, who have forsaken the Customs of their Fathers, observed before in all Cities and Countries, revolted from a way of Worship which had been universally received from all Ages, both by Greeks and Barbarians, entertained both in Cities and Villages, countenanced and approved by the common Vote and Consent of all Kings, Law-makers, Philosophers, and the greatest Persons whatsoever. Nay, we may observe, that after Christianity had been settled for some hundreds of years in the World, and was become the prevailing Religion, and had in a manner banished all others out of doors, and driven them into corners, yet this Charge still continued. Thus Julian the Emperor, writing to the People of Alexandria concerning the Galileans, (so he was wont in scorn to call the Christians) that he wondered that any of them durst dwell amongst them, or that they would suffer these Despisers of the Religion of their Country to be in any place amongst them; calls Christianity, the new Doctrine that
that had been preached to the World: the very same Title which Lucian had also long since bestowed upon it, where speaking of our Saviour, he calls him the Great man that was crucified in Palestine, who introduced that new Religion into the World. So Symmachus some years after Julian (a man no less Eminent for his parts and eloquence, than for his power and authority, being Chief Priest and Prefect of Rome) confidently owns to the Emperours themselves, (though they were Christians) that he did endeavour to defend the Institutions of their Ancestors, the Settled Rights and Laws of the Countrey, (he means them of Religion) that he designed to settle that state of Religion, which for so many Ages had been profitable to the Commonwealth; and therefore begs of them, that what they had received when they were Children, now they were old they might leave to their Posterity; that they were to be true to the Trust that had from so many Ages been devolved upon them, and were to follow their Parents, as they had happily done their Ancestors, that had gone before them. So he, pleading the Cause of Paganism from its antiquity and prescription, obliquely reflecting
fleeting upon the Novellism of Christianity, for more he durst not speak, the Emperours (to whom he made his Address) being themselves Christians. This indeed must needs be a mighty prejudice against the Christian Religion at its first coming into the World; for all men as they have a Natural Reverence for Religion, so they have a great Veneration for Antiquity, the Customs and Traditions of their Fathers, which they entertain as a most inestimable depositum, and for which they look upon themselves as obliged to contend, as for that which is most Solemn and Sacred. What more excellent and venerable (says the Heathen in Minutius Felix) than to entertain the Discipline of our Forefathers, to solemnize that Religion that has been delivered to us, to worship those Gods, the Knowledge of whom has been infus'd into us by our Parents, not boldly to determine concerning the Deities, but to believe those who have been before us. To the same purpose Lactantius speaking of the Heathens, they go on (says he) most pertinaciously to maintain and defend the Religion derived down to them from their Ancestors, not so much con-

C 3

considering
Part 1. Considering what they are, as concluding them to be right and good, because the Ancients conveyed them to them; nay, so great the Power and Authority of Antiquity, that it's accounted a kind of Impiety to question it, or enquire into it. Upon these accounts the Gentiles bore so hard upon Christianity, beholding it as a Mushroom Sect, sprung up of a sudden, and as an Incroaching Inmate, undermining the Established Religions of the World.

Now we find two Pleas especially which the Christians made to this Indictment.

First, that the Charge was not wholly and universally true: for besides that many Principles of Christianity were the same with those of the Law of Nature; the Christian Religion was, for substance the same with that of the Ancient Jews, whose Religion claim'd the Precedency of all others in the World. That the Religion was in substance and effect the same, is expressly asserted and proved by Eusebius. The Ancient Patriarchs were the Christians of the old World, who had the same Faith, Religion, and Worship common with us, nay the same name too, as he endeavours to prove from...
C. 2. Primitive Christianity!

from that, Touch not mine Anointed, Part 1.

And how far superior in age they were to any thing that's recorded of the most ancient Gentiles, to their Oldest Writers, Orpheus, Homer, Hesiod; nay, to their very Gods themselves, is sufficiently made good by many of the Ancient Fathers; there being at the easiest Computation between Moses and Homer above 600 years: nay Cadmus (the first Inventer of Letters among the Grecians) was some Ages junior unto Moses. Therefore Origen tells Celsus, that Moses and the Prophets were not only more Ancient than Plato, but than Homer himself, yea than the very Invention of Letters amongst the Grecians, who yet were as proud of their Antiquity as any other Nation in the World. Nay, whatever useful and excellent Notions the great Masters of Religion amongst the Heathens had amongst them, 'tis plain they borrowed, or more truly stole them, from the Writings of the Ancient Jews, as is abundantly demonstirated by Eusebius at large; as before him it had been done by Clemens of Alexandria, and by Tertullian before them both, who shews that all their Poets and Philosophers had drunk
Part 1. drunk deep of the Fountain of the Prophets, and had forced their best Doctrines and Opinions from thence, though subtilly altering and disguising them, to make them look more like their own. So that upon this consideration the Accusation was unjust and false, and Christianity appears the Oldest Religion in the World.

Secondly, admit the Christian Religion in a more limited and restrained sense, to be of a far later standing than the Religion of the Gentiles; yet they pleaded, that 'twas infinitely reasonable, that they should change for the better, whenever it offered itself to them; that novel truth was better than ancient error, and that they ought not to be eternally bound up in old inveterate Customs and Principles, when those which were abundantly more reasonable and satisfactory were presented to them. You tell us (says Clemeus Alex.:) that you may not subvert the Customs received from your Ancestors. But if so, why then are we not content without any other food than our Mothers milk, to which we were accustomed, when we first came into the World; why do we encrease or impair our Estates, and not ra-
rather keep them at the same pitch, just as we received them from our Fathers? Why have we left off those Toys and Sports, to which we were wonted while Infants and Children, but only because Years and Discretion (although we had no other Tutor) would make us quit those Childish and Trifling Vanities. That Old Age (says S. Ambrose) has true cause to blush, that is ashamed to reform. 'Tis not multitude of years, but the goodness of manners, that makes Grey Hairs worthy of Praise and Honour. No Age is too late to learn, nor is it shame to grow better. What wilt thou do (says Latian to the Heathen) wilt thou follow Reason or thy Ancestors? If Reason, then thou must needs relinquish the Authority and Institutions of thy Forefathers, because that Way only can be right that is warranted and prescribed by Reason: but if Piety towards thine Ancestors sway with thee to follow them, thou must confess both that they were Fools in devoting themselves to a Religion contrary to Reason, and that thou thyself art unwise and simple in Worshipping what thou art convinced to be false. Besides, that they had little reason to boast of those goodly Ancestors, to whom they
Part 1. adhered so close, and upon whose Authority they did so much depend, as he goes on to demonstrate in the remaining part of that Chapter. That you object to us the Novelty of our Religion, (so Arnobius) may we not change some such fault upon the first and most Ancient Ages of the World, who at first liv'd in a very poor and mean state; but by little and little changed it into a more liberal and splendid course of life? Was it any crime that they changed their beasts' skins into more comely and convenient Garments, or that they were no longer fond of their Thatch'd Cottages, or chose to dwell like Wilde Beasts in Rocks and Caverns, when they had learnt to build better habitations? 'Tis natural to all Mankind to prefer better before what is worse, profitable before what is useless, and to seek after what we are assured is more grateful and excellent. Therefore when you charge us with Apostasy from the Religion of the Ancients, you should rather consider the cause than the action, and not so much upbraid us with what we have left, as examine what it is we have entertain'd. For if merely to change our Opinion, and to pass from Ancient Institutions to what's more late
late and new, be a fault and crime; Part 1.
then none so guilty of the Charge as
your selves, who have so often changed
your manners and course of life, and by
embracing new Rites and Customs, have
condemned those that went before;
which he there makes good by parti-
cular Instances. And the same Answer S.
Ambrose gives to Symmachus, if nothing
but Ancient Rites will please you, how
comes it to pass that there has been a
Succession of New and Foreign Rites e-
ven in Rome itself? Of which he gives
him many particular Examples. In short,
Ambrose wittily argues thus: Our way p.42.
of Religion (you say) is new, and yours
ancient; and what does this either hurt our
cause, or help yours? If ours be new, 'twill
in time become old. Is yours old? There was
a time when it was new. The Goodness and
Authority of Religion is not to be valued by
Length of Time, but by the Excellency of its
Worship; nor does it become us to consider
so much when it began, as what it is we wor-
ship.

It may not be impertinent in this place
to take notice of what the Heathens ob-
jected as a Branch of this Charge; that
if God's sending Christ into the World
was so great a Blessing, why did this Sa-

vior
viour of Mankind come no sooner to reveal this Religion, to lead men into the Truth, to tell the World who this True God was, and to reduce us to the Adoration of him. If so, why did God suffer him to stay so long, and to be born (as twere) but a few hours before, in comparison of the preceding Ages of the World? To this Arnobius answers with a great deal of modesty and reason, That he could not tell: that twere easie to retort the same Captious Question upon them, if twere so much to the benefit of the World that Hercules, Æsculapius, Mercury, &c. shou'd be Gods, why were they born and deified no sooner, that not onely Posterity but Antiquity might have reap'd advantage by them? If there was reason in one case, then there was also in the other; but to assign proper and particular Reasons was not possible; it not being within the power of such a short-sighted Creature as Man is, to fathom the depth of the Divine Councils, or to discover by what ways or methods he disposes his Affairs; these things being known onely to him who is the grand Parent, the Sovereign Lord and Governour of all things: that although we are not able to assign the Cause why a thing
thing comes to pass in this or that parti-
cular manner, yet this concludes never
a whit the more that the thing is not
so, or that it is less credible; when it has
otherwise the most clear and unques-
tionable Evidence and Demonstration. More
particularly he answers, that our Sav-
our cannot be said to have been lately
sent in respect of God, because in re-
spect of Eternity there is nothing late;
where there is neither beginning nor
end, there can be nothing too soon, no-
thing too late. Time indeed is transact-
ed by parts and terms, but these have
no place in a perpetual and uninterrup-
ted series of Eternal Ages. What if that
state of things, to which he came to bring
relief, required that season of Time to
come in? What if the condition of Anci-
ent and Modern Times were in this case
not alike? or called for somewhat diffe-
rent methods of Cure? It may be the
great God then chose to send Christ, when
the state of Mankind was more broken
and shattered, and Humane Nature be-
come more weak and unable to help it
self. This we are sure of, that if what
so lately came to pass had been neces-
sary to have been done some thousands
of years ago, the Supreme Creator would
have
Part 1. have done it, or had it been necessary to have been done thousands of years hence, nothing could have forc'd God to have anticipated the settled Periods of Time one moment: for all his Actions are managed by fix'd and Eternal Reasons, and what he has once determined cannot be frustrated by any change or alteration. And thus we see how easily, and yet how satisfactorily, the primitive Christians wip'd off that double Imputation of Impiety and Novelty, which the Gentiles had so undeservedly cast upon their Religion.

CHAP. III.

Things charged upon the Christians respecting their Outward Condition.

The Christians look'd upon and despis'd by the Heathens as a company of rude and illiterate persons, Mechanicks, silly Women, and Children. This Charge considered and largely answer'd by Origen. Christianity provides for the truest and best Knowledge: it excludes none, learned or
or unlearned. Christians not for of con-Part 1. municating the Knowledge of their My-
suries to men sober and inquisitive. The
Efficacy of Christianity in prevailing up-
on men of the acutest Parts and great-
est Learning. The Christians accused
for being poor and mean. This Charge
(universally) false. Christianity entar-
tained by Persons of all sorts, of the
Highest as well as the Lowest Ranks. Se-
veral Instances of such: Fl. Clemens and
Fl. Domitilla (Domitian's near Kin-
dred) Christians; another Domitilla
Domitian's Niece, Acil. Glabrio the
Consul; Apollonius the Senator; and o-
thers. Philip the Emperor proved to
be no Christian: the rise of the Story
whence. Though Christianity had had
no such Persons under its Profession, this
had been no just reasonable Prejudice.

External Pompa and Grandeur not neces-
sary to Religion. The Advantages Chris-
tians reaped from their Meanness and
Contempt of the World, Of their being
charged as a People useless and unserv-
icable to the Publick. This disowned.
The Opinion that it was not lawful for
Christians to bear Arms or Offices, par-
ticular onely to some persons and in some
cases, and why. How much the World.
was beholden to Christians for reclaiming men from vice and wickedness. The Gospel greatly Instrumental that way; its general Influence upon those whom it did not convert: the Writings of Philosophers generally better after Christianity appeared, and why. The excellent Prayer of Simplicius. Christians very useful by frequent working Beneficial Miracles, Curing Diseases, Raising the Dead, Dispossessing Devils, &c. This Miraculous Power continued for several Ages in the Church. Christians further traduced as pernicious to the World, as the cause of all Publick Evils and Calamities. This objected at every turn. The occasion of S. Augustine's and Orosius his writing a Vindication of it. This Charge justly retorted upon the Heathens, and they sent to seek the cause of Publick Calamities nearer home. Some few hinted by Tertullian. Christians unjustly charged with it, because the World was pestered with such Evils before Christianity appeared in it. The Publick State better and more prosperous since Christianity than before. Its Prosperity ebb'd or increased, according to the Entertainment Christianity found in the World.
THE second sort of Arts which the Enemies of Christianity made use of to render Christians vile and despised, related to the Circumstances of their External State and Condition in the World, where two things were laid to their Charge, that they generally were a very mean and inconsiderable sort of men, and that they were an useless and unserviceable people, nay pernicious and mischievous to the World. They were looked upon as the lowest and meanest Rank of men, Persons neither considerable for their parts and learning, nor for their estates and quality. Inconsiderable they were accounted in respect of parts and learning; you scorn and spit us out as Rude Adv. and simple, and think that the treasury of all Divine and Excellent Knowledge is open only to your selves, as Arnobius tells them. Thus Celsus objected, that amongst the Christians no wise and learned men were admitted to the mysteries of their Religion. Let no man come that is Learned, Wise, and Prudent, for these things (says he) they account evil and unlawful; but if any be unlearned, an Infant or an Idiot, let him come and welcome; openly declaring, that none but Fools and such
Part 1. Such as are devoid of Sense and Reason, Slaves, silly Women, and little Children are fit Disciples for the God they worship. We may observe (says he) these trifling and Mountebank Impostors, bragging great things to the Vulgar, not in the presence and company of Wise men (for that they dare not) but wherever they espie a flock of Boys, Slaves, and weak simple People, there they presently crowd in, and boast themselves. You shall see (as he goes on in this Charge) Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most Rustick and Illiterate Fellows, at home when before their Elders and Betters as mute as Fishes; but when they can get a few Children and silly Women by themselves, then who so wise and learned, who so full of talk, and so able to teach and instruct as they? Much to the same purpose Cecilius discourses in Minutius Felix, that the Christians were men of a desperate and unlawful Faction, who gathering a Company out of the very Dregs and Refuse of the People, of silly, ease, credulous Women, who by reason of the weakness of their Sex are easily imposed and wrought upon, combine them into a wicked Confederation, a People mute in pub-
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

Publick, but in corners talkative and full of Part 1.

prattle. Now to this part of the Accu-

sation Origen answers, that 'tis for the

main false, and proceeds from the Spirit of Malice and Reproach. The Summary of

his Answer, as he delivers it to the several parts of the Charge, take thus: That

the Christian Doctrine invites and calls

men to Wisdom, as appears both from

the Writings of the Jews of Old, and the

Scriptures of the New Testament, where-
in we find many singularly Eminent for

Wisdom and Learning, Moses, Solomon,

Daniel; and such like of old, and the

blessed Jesus made choice of such Di-

sciples, as whom he judged fittest to com-

municate the Secrets of his Religion to,

and privately opened and explained to them, what he only delivered in

Parables and Similitudes unto others;

that he promised to send forth Prophets, Matt. 23.

wise men, and Scribes, for the divulging and propagating of his Doctrine; that

S. Paul reckons wisdom and knowledge in

cor. 12.8.

the first Rank of the Gifts of God; and that if he any where seem to reflect se-

verely upon Wisdom or Humane Learn-

ing (which probably may be the first

device of this Charge) he only censures the

use of, never intending to blame the

D 2 thing
Part 1. thing it self; that when he prescribes the properties of a true Bishop, or Governor of the Church, he requires this as one necessary Qualification, that he be apt to teach, and able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. That we are so far from prohibiting any, that come who will, Wise, Learned, and Prudent, provided the Rude, Simple, and Unlearned be not excluded; for to them also the Gospel does promise and provide a Remedy, making them meet for God. That no man but must confess that 'tis an excellent thing to study the best Arts and Discipline, and that Learning, the Study of Arts, and Prudence, are so far from being an hindrance to the Knowledge of God, that they mightily help it and advance it. That it's a great Calumny to compare us to wandering Impostors, who by our Reading and Expounding the Divine Oracles, do onely exhort the people to piety toward the great God, and to the rest of those virtues which are its individual Companions; endeavouring to rescue men from a Contempt of the Deity, and all brutish and irregular Passions; a thing which the very best Philosophers of
them all could wish for. That Christians Part 1.
are so far from admitting any hand over
head, that they first pre-examine the
Minds of those that desire to become
their Auditors; and having privately had
trial of them, before they receive them
into the Congregation, when they per-
ceive them fully resolved to lead a Pious
and Religious Life, then they admit them
in their distinct Orders, some that are
newly admitted, but not yet baptized, oth-
ers that have given some evidence and
demonstration of their purpose to live
as becomes Christians; amongst whom
there are Governors appointed to in-
spect and inquire into the Life and Man-
ers of those who have been admitted,
that they may expel and turn off those
Candidates of Religion who answer not
their Profession, and heartily entertain
those that do, and by daily Converses
build them up and make them better.
That it's false to say that we apply our
selves only to Women and Children, and
that in corners, when we endeavour
what we can by all means to fill our
Societies with Wise and Prudent Persons,
and to such we open the more sublime
and recondite principles of Religion, oth-
erwise accommodating our Discourses
D 3 to
Part 1. to the Capacities of meaner persons, who stand more in need of milk than strong meat: that we desire that all men may be trained up in the Word of God, and that Servants and Children may have such Instructions given them, as are suitable and convenient to them, the Ministers of our Religion professing themselves to be Debtors both to the Greeks and Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise, that as much as may be they may outgrow their Ignorance, and attain to the best kind of Wisdom. And whereas we are accused to seduce and circumvent silly Women and little Children, and to draw them away from more weighty and serious Counsels; let him produce any such, and enquire of them whether ever they heard better Masters than ours, or if they did, why they would leave so Grave a Discipline, and suffer themselves to be seduced into a worse... But he'll find no such thing to fasten upon us; but that on the contrary we reclaim Women from Immodesty, from falling out with their Husbands, and parting from them, from the wilde Extravagancies of the Sports and Theatres, and from all Superstition whatsoever. The Youth, who are prone to Vice
Vice and Luxury, we restrain by telling them not only how base and degenerous a thing it is to indulge their Lust, but into how much danger they precipitate their Souls, and what Punishments the Divine Vengeance lays up for such Profligate Offenders. We openly (not in corners) promise Eternal Happiness to those who live according to the Rules of the Divine Law, who set God always before their eyes, and whatever they do, endeavour to approve themselves to him: and is this the Discipline, these the Doctrines of Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most rustic and illiterate persons? Surely no. If at any time we refuse to produce our Instructions and Counsels before Masters of Families or the Doctors of Philosophy, know, that if they be studious of Virtue, Enemies to Vice, and such as breath after the best things, before such we are most willing and ready to instruct our Youth, being well assured we shall find them favourable Judges. But if they be Enemies to Goodness and Virtue, and Opposers of sound wholesome Doctrine, then if we hold our peace, no fault can justly be laid upon us: for in such circumstances the philosophers themselves would not dis-
Part 1. cover the Dictates and Mysteries of their Philosophy. This is the substance of the several Answers, which Origen pursues more at large through several pages: which though very Rational and Satisfactory, yet we find something pleading more direct and positive to the Charge; viz. that although amongst the Christians (as 'tis in any Society of Men) the Vulgar and more common sort might not be men of the sharpest Understanding, or vers'd in the more Polite Arts of Learning, yet wanted they not (and those no small number) great Scholars, men of Acute Parts, and Raised Abilities, such as had run through the whole circle of the Sciences, who daily came over to them. So Arnobius, urging the Triumphant Power and Efficacy which the Christian Faith had over the Minds of men, who (says he) would not believe it, when he sees in how short a time it has conquered so great a part of the World; when men of so great Wit and Parts, Orators, Grammarians, Rhetoricians, Lawyers, Physicians, and Philosophers, have thrown up those former Sentiments, of which but a little before they were so tenacious, and have embraced the Doctrines of the Gospel. So
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

fast did the Christian Church fill with the Part of most Eminent Professors of all parts of Learning that were then known to the World.

Nor were the Christians of those times more despised upon the account of their weakness and ignorance, than they were for their meanness and poverty. They were looked upon as de ultima fece, as the scum and refuse of the people, scarce a Considerable man to be found amongst them. See (says the Heathen in Minus-pag. tius Felix) the most and best of all your Party are a poor, beggarly, hunger-starv'd Generation, that have neither Riches nor Reputation to bear them out. This Charge (however impertinent, seeing the goodness of any Religion depends not upon the greatness of its Professors) was yet as untrue as 'twas unreasonable; the Christians having amongst them persons of the choicest Place and Quality, and after some years the Princes and Potentates of the World, and even the Emperours themselves struck fail to the Sceptre of Christ. When Scapula the President of Carthage threatened the Christians with severe and cruel usage, Tertullian bids him bethink himself; What wilt thou do (says he) with so many Ad Scap.
Part 1. thousands of Men and Women of every Sex, Age, and Dignity, as will freely offer themselves? What Fires, what Swords wilt thou stand in need of? What is Carthage it self like to suffer if decimated by thee, when every one shall find there his near Kindred and Neighbours, and shall see there Matrons, and men perhaps of thy own Rank and Order, and the most Principal Persons, and either the Kindred or Friends of those who are thy own nearest Friends. Spare them therefore for your own sake, if not for ours. And if there were persons of such Quality in Afric (so remote, and in a manner so barbarous a Province) what may we suppose there were in Rome itself, and other parts of the Roman Empire? And in his Apologie, speaking of the vast spreading of the Party, Though (says he) we be men of quite another way, yet have we fill'd all places among you, your Cities, Islands, Castles, Corporations, Councils, nay your Armies themselves, your Tribes, Companies, yea the Palace, the Senate, and the Courts of Justice, onely your Temples we have left you free. Sure I am, Pliny in his Letter to the Emperor tells him, that Christianity had not onely over-run City and Coun-
Country, but that it had infected many of every Sex, Age, and Order of Men.

And indeed it were no hard matter out of the Ancient Histories and Martyrologies of the Church, nay from the Heathen Writers themselves, to prove that Persons of the highest Rank and Quality (even in those times) embraced Christianity, and seal'd it with their Blood. Of which it may suffice to give an account onely of some few. Not to insist upon the Saints which S. Paul tells us were in Nero's Palace, we find many considerable Persons, and some of them near akin to the Emperor under the Reign of Domitian, (that cruel Prince and Persecutor of Christians) entertaining the Profession of the Gospel. And, first let us hear the Account which Dion Cassius the Famous Historian gives us. He tells us that about the latter end of Domitian's Reign he condemned many (some whereof were slain, others stript of their Estates) and amongst the rest Flavius Clemens the Consul, his own Cousin-german, and his Wife Flavia Domitilla, near akin also to the Emperor, upon pretence of Atheism (ιτατεως εγνων άθεως) and for that they had embrac'd the Rites and Religion of the Jews.
Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 1. Jews. His Nephew Clemens he put to death, his Wife Domitilla he banished into the Island Pandateria. Upon the same account also he put to death Acilius Glabrio, who together with Trajan had been Consul the Year before. That the persons here described were Christians, is plain, partly from the Charge of Atheism here fastened upon them (the common and familiar Accusation, and the Title given to Christianity by the Heathens, as we observ'd before) and partly because they are said to have passed over to the Rites and Customs of the Jews; nothing being more ordinary in the Historians of those times than to mistake Christians for Jews, and to call them so, because both proceeding out of the same Countrey, Christ himself and his Apostles being Jews born, and his Religion first published and planted there. And that which may give some more countenance to this is, that Suetonius speaking of Domitian's Condemning this Fl. Clemens, represents him as a man contemptissima inertiae, as a most contemptibly dull and sluggish person, which we know was generally charged upon the Christians, that they were an useless and unactive people, as we shall have
have occasion by and by more particu-
larly to remark. Besides this Fl. Domi-
tilla, the Wife of Clemens, there was an-
other of the same name, his Neece by
the Sisters side, (unless Dion Cassius mis-
took, and put down Wife for Neece,
which there’s no reason to suppose, see-
ing both may very well consist toget-
her) who (as Eusebius informs us) was
with many more banished by Domitian
in the fifteenth year of his Reign into
the Island Pontia, and there put to death
for the Profession of Christianity; whose
Persecutions and Martyrdoms (lays he)
are recorded by Heathen Writers them-
selves. Amongst whom (I suppose) he
principally intends Brettius or Brutius,
the Historian, whom he cites elsewhere,
and out of whom he there quotes this
very passage, *That under Domitian ma-
ny of the Christians suffered martyrdom,
amongst whom was Fl. Domitilla, Neece
by the Sisters side to Fl. Clemens the Con-
sul, who for being a Christian was banish-
ed into the Island Pontia. She is said
after a great deal of hard and tedious
usage to have been burnt, together with
the House wherein she was; her memory
celebrated in the Roman Calendar upon
the seventh of May.*
Besides these we find that Christianity getting ground under the quiet Reign of the Emperor Commodus, many of the greatest Birth and Fortunes in Rome, together with their whole Families flock'd over to the Christian Faith. Amongst whom was Apollonius, a man famous for Philosophy and all Polite Humane Literature, who so gallantly pleaded his Cause before the Senate, and was himself a Senator, as S. Hieron informs us. I shall but mention one instance more, and that is of Philip the Emperor, whom Eusebius expressly affirms to have been a Christian, and the first of the Emperors that was so, followed herein by a whole Troop both of Ancient and Modern Writers. Nay we are told by some a formal story, that this Philip and his Son were converted by the Preaching of Pontius the Martyr, and baptized by Fabian Bishop of Rome. But notwithstanding the Smoothness of the Story, and the number of Authorities, I must confess it seems to me scarcely probable, that a person of so bad a Life, guilty of such enormous Villanies, as that Emperor was, should either be, or be thought a Christian; or if he was, that the whole World should presently ring of
of it. Certain I am, that all Historians Part 1.
of that time are wholly silent in the case,
nor is there the least intimation of any
such thing in any Writer, either Heathen
or Christian, before Eusebius. Nay, Origa-
gen, who wrote his Book in Defence of
Christianity under the Reign of this ve-
ry Emperor, and about this very time,
(nay, and two Epistles, one to Philip,
the other to his Wife Severa, if we may
believe Eusebius) yet not onely makes no
mention of it, when it would have made
greatly for his purpose, but tacitly im-
plies there was no such thing. For Cel-
sus reproving the boldness and petulance
of the Christians, as if they should give
out, that if they could but bring over
the present Emperours to their Religion,
all other men would quickly be brought
over; Origen point blank denies the
Charge, and tells him there's no need
of any Answer, for that none of the
Christians ever said so. An Answer which
surely he would not have given, had
the Emperor at that time been a Chri-
stian. Not to insist upon many other In-
timations which might be produced out
of that Book against it. Besides, Eusebius
reports, that Philip and his Son be-
ing slain by the Souldiers, were yet
inter
Part 1. inter Divos relati, deified, or advanced into the number of their Gods. An honour which 'tis certain the Senate would not have done them, had they either been; or but suspected to have been, Christians. To all which I may add, that Ephebus himself (in whom the first Footsteps of this Story appear) builds it upon no better a Foundation than a mere νόμος, a bare Tradition and Report.

That which seems to have given both birth and colour to the Story is this:

One Philip, an Illustrious Person under the Emperor Severus, was a long time Governor of Egypt; he by the means of his Daughter Eugenia was converted to Christianity, under whose shelter the Christians there enjoyed great peace and favour; (nay the Story adds, though certainly without any ground, that he was created Bishop of Alexandria) till the Emperor, being acquainted with his being a Christian, presently remov'd him, and by the help of his Successor Terentius caus'd him to be secretly murdered and made away. This (if anything) was the rise of the Story, and that which makes it more probable is, the Honour and Excellency of that Employment, the greatest of all the Offices,
in the Roman Empire, the command and part of the Emperours in their Letter to this Philip (wherein they reproach him for ingratitude and apostacy) tell him that in a manner he was made a King, when he was chosen President of Egypt. Accordingly the title of the Governour of Egypt (as appears from the Historians, but especially the Notitia Imperii) was Prefectus Augustalis; and how easie was it to mistake Philippus Augustus for Philippus Augustalis? But enough of this, as also the falseness of that charge, that the Christians were such a sorry inconsiderable people.

But however, let us suppose them to have been as mean and poor, as the malice and cruelty of their adversaries did endeavour to make them, yet this was no real prejudice to their cause; nor any great hurt to them. That the most part of us are accused to be poor (says Octavius in answer to Cecilius his charge) 'tis not our dishonour, but our Glory; the mind as 'tis dissolv'd by plenty and luxury, so 'tis strengthened and girt close by diligence and frugality; and yet how can that man be poor, who wants not, who is not greedy of what's another man's, who is rich in and towards God?
God? that man is rather poor, who when he has a great deal desires more; the truth is, no man can be so poor, as he was when he was born; the Birds live without any patrimony entailed upon them, and the Beasts find pastures every day; and yet these are born for our use, all which we fully enjoy, when we do not covet them: much lighter and happier does he go to Heaven, who is not burdened by the way with an unnecessary load of riches: and yet did we think estates so useful to us, we could beg them of God, who being Lord of all, might well afford a little to us; but we had rather despise them than enjoy them, and rather choose innocency and patience, desiring more to be good than to be great and prodigious. If we endure outward sufferings and tortures, 'tis not so much pain as 'tis a warfare; our courage is increased by infirmities, and calamity is very oft the discipline of virtue; the nerves both of body and mind without exercise would grow loose and faint; and therefore God is neither unable to help us, nor yet negligent of us, as being the Governor of the world, and the Father of his Children; but tries and examines every one's temper in an adverse
adverse state, as God is tried in the Part fir. Besides it must needs be a sight very pleasing to God, to behold a Christian conflicting with grief and misery, preparing himself to encounter threatenings and torments; pressing in upon the very noise of death, and the horror of the executioner, maintaining his liberty against Kings and Princes, and only yielding to God, whose he wholly is, coming off from all the attempts of adversity with victory and triumph. So argues that excellent person (and who ever reads him in his native language must confess it) with equal strength of eloquence and reason, where he also briefly touches that objection so common amongst the Heathens, that if Christians were so dear to God, why then did he suffer them to be oppressed with so many miseries and troubles, and not come in to vindicate and relieve them: an argument fully cleared by Arnobius, Latantius, and other ancient Apologists for the Christian Faith.

But this was not all, they were charged as a very useless and unserviceable people, that contributed nothing to the happiness of the Common-wealth; nay, as destructive and pernicious to humane society,
Part of society, and as the procuring cause of all those mischiefs and calamities that beset the world. In answer to the first, their being useless as to the common good, hear what Tertullian says in the case; how can this be (says be) when we live amongst you, have the same diet, habit, manner, and way of life? we are no Brachmans or Indian Gymnosophists, who live in Woods, and banish themselves from all civil life: we are not unmindful of what we owe to our great Creator, and therefore despite none of his Creatures, though careful to use them with temperance and sobriety; wherefore we live not in the world without the use of your Markets, Shambles, Bathes, Taverns, Shops, Stables, your Marts, and other ways of humane commerce: we go to Sea with you, bear Arms, till and improve the ground, use merchandize, we undergo Trades amongst you, and expose our works to your use; and how then we can seem unserviceable, to your affairs, with which and by which we live, I see not. Certainly (says be) if any have cause truly to complain of our being unprofitable, they are Bandits, Panders, Pimps, Healers, and Russians, sellers of poisons, Magicians, South-
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 53

Sorcerers, Wizards, and Astrologers: Part i.

and to be unserviceable to these, is the greatest serviceableness. But besides this, they pleaded for themselves, that their Religion was highly beneficial to the world, and in its own nature contributed to the peace and happiness of mankind. It cannot be denied but that some of the Primitive Christians were shie of engaging in Wars, and not very forward to undergo publick places of authority and power; but (besides that this was only the opinion of some private persons, and not the common and current practice or determination of the Church) it arose partly from some mistaken passages in the Gospel, turning Evangelical Counsels into positive precepts; but principally because such Offices and Employments were usually clogg'd with such circumstances and conditions, as obliged them to some things repugnant to the Christian Law: otherwise where they could do it without offering violence to their Religion and their Conscience, they shun'd it not, but frequently bore Arms, and discharged such Publick Offices as were committed to them, as cannot be unknown to any that are never so little vers'd in the History.
Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part I. Story of the first Ages of the Church: never were there better, more faithful and resolute Soldiers, more obedient to the Orders of their Commanders, more ready to attempt the most hazardous enterprises, never boggling at any thing which they could do without sin: of which, amongst many others I shall instance only in that of the Theban Legion, who being commanded upon a bloody and unlawful butchery, to destroy and cut off the Christians their brethren, meekly returned this answer to the Heathen Emperor Maximianus, under whom they served; We offer our hands against any enemy, but count it unlawful to embrace them in the blood of the innocent: our Swords know how to strike a Rebel or an Enemy, but not to wound those who are Citizens and guiltless; we remember that we took up Arms for, not against friends and fellow Citizens: we have always fought for justice and piety, and for the safety of the innocent; these have been hitherto the price of those dangers that we have run upon; we have fought for fidelity, which how shall we be able to keep to you, if we do not first keep it to our God? So far were the Christians of those times from refusing to engage in the
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

The service of their Prince. Nay those Part i. of them who were so bound up by their private sentiments, as not to think it lawful, yet reckoned they otherwise made equivalent compensation: thus when Celsus press'd the Christians to undergo publick Offices, and to help the Emperours in their Wars; Origene answers, that they did so, though by a divine not humane help, by praying for their persons, and their prosperity and success; above all men (says he) we fight for the Emperour, while we train our selves in exercises of piety, and contend by prayers for him. But besides these there were several other instances which the Christians pleaded to vindicate themselves from being unserviceable to the good of mankind, amongst which I shall at present take notice only of these two.

First, that they really sought to reclaim men from vice and sin, to a good and a virtuous life; by which means (besides that they provided for mens highest and nearest interest, the interest of their souls, and their eternal happiness in another life) they greatly consulted the peace and welfare of the places where they lived; for vicious and wicked
Part. ii. Wicked men are the pests and plagues of humane society, that taint and infect others by their bad examples or persuasions, and entail vengeance upon the places of their residence; whilst good men engage the favour and blessing of heaven, and both by their counsels and examples bring over others to sobriety and virtue, whereby they establish and strengthen the foundations of government, and the happiness of civil life. And none so eminent for this as the Christians of old; this is the great triumph of argument wherewith Origen at every turn exalts the honour of Christianity; this (says he) we find in the multitudes of those that believe, who are delivered from that sink of vices, wherein before they were wont to wallow: enquire into the lives of some of us, compare our former and our present course, and you'll find in what filthiness and impieties they tumbled, before they entertained the Christian Doctrine; but since the time that they entred into it, how gentle and moderate, how grave and constant are they become, and some so inflamed with the love and purity, that they forbear, even what lawfully they might enjoy; how largely are the Churches
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 57

Churches of God, founded by Christ, Part re-spread over all Nations, consisting of such as are converted from innumerable evil ways to a better mind. And elsewhere vindicating the Doctrine of Christ, from the mischievous cavils of his adversary, he tells us, how 'twas impossible Lib. 29. 78 that could be pestilent and hurtful, which had converted so many from their vices and debaucheries, to a course most agreeable to Nature and Reason, and to a life of temperance and all other virtues: and the same he urges frequently in other places, and what greater kindness and benefit could be done to men? Does Celsus call upon us (says he) Lib. 8 to bear Offices for the good of our Country; let him know that the Country is much more behelden to Christians than to the rest of men, while they teach men piety towards God, the tutelar Guardian of the Country, and shew them the way to that heavenly City that is above, which they that live well may attain to, though here they dwell in the smallest City in the world. Nor do the Christians thus employ themselves, because they shun the publick Offices of the civil life; but only reserve themselves for the more divine and necessary
Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part I. Necessary services of the Church, in order to the good and happiness of men; for this they think very just and reasonable, that they should take care of all men; of them of their own party, that they may every day make them better; of others, that they may draw them to the belief and practice of piety and Religion, that so worshippine God in truth, and doing what they can to instruct others, they may be united to the great God, and to his blessed Son, who is the wisdom, truth, and righteousness, and by whom it is that every one is converted to a pious and religious life.

Theodoret discoursing against the Gentiles, of the excellency of the Laws of Christ, above any that were given by the best Philosophers or wisest men amongst the Heathens, gives them instances of whole Nations whom Christianity had brought off from the most brutish and savage manners, he tells them of the Persians who by the Laws given them by Zarada lived in incestuous mixtures with their own Mothers, Sisters, and Daughters, looking upon it as a lawful and warrantable practice; till entertaining Christianity, they threw off those abominable Laws, and submitted to that tempe-
temperance and chastity, which the Gospel requires of us. And whereas before they were wont to cast out the bodies of their dead, to be devoured by Beasts and Birds of prey, since they embraced the Christian Religion, they abstained from that piece of inhumanity, and decently committed them to the earth, from which they could not be restrained, either by the Laws of their Country, or the bitterness of those torments which they underwent. The Massagetes who thought it the most miserable thing in the world to dye any other than a violent death, and therefore made a Law that all persons arrived to old age should be offered in Sacrifice and eaten, no sooner submitted to Christianity, but abhorred those barbarous and abominable Customs. The Tibarens, who used to throw aged persons down the steepest Rocks, left it off upon their embracing of the Gospel. Upon the same account the Hyrcani and the Cassians reformed their manners, who were formerly wont to keep dogs on purpose to devour the bodies of the dead. Nor did the Scythians any longer together with their dead bury those alive who had been their nearest friends and kindred. So great
Part 1. great a change (says my Author) did the Laws of Christ make in the manners of men, and so easily were the most barbarous Nations persuaded to entertain them, a thing which Plato, though the best of all Philosophers, could never effect amongst the Athenians, his own Fellow Citizens, who could never induce them to govern the Common-wealth, according to those Laws and Institutions which he had prescribed them.

Nay where the Gospel did not produce this effect to reclaim men from their vices and vanities, and to bring them over to the Religion of the crucified Saviour; yet had it this excellent influence upon the world, that it generally taught them better lessons, refined their understandings and filled their minds with more useful and practical notions about Religion than they had before. To which purpose it's mainly observable, that those Philosophers who lived in the time of Christianity, after the Gospel publickly appeared in the world, wrote in a much more divine strain, entertained more honourable and worthy sentiments about God and Religion, and the duties of men in their several capacities, than those of their Sect that went before them.
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.  

them. Of which I conceive no account Part 1. can be given so satisfactory as this, that the genius and spirit of the Gospel began then to fly abroad, and to breathe in a freer air, and so could not but leave some tincture and favour upon the spirits of men, though its most inveterate Enemies. Besides that many of them did more nearly converse with the Writings of Christianity, which they read either out of curiosity, or with a design to confute and answer them. This doubtless sharpened the edge of their understandings, and furnished them with better notions, more useful precepts and rules of life, than are to be met with in any of the old Philosophers: witness those excellent and uncommon strains of piety that run through the Writings of Seneca, Epictetus, Antoninus, Arrian, Plut. c. p. 33, tarch, Hierocles, Plotinus, and the rest that lived in those first Ages of the Gospel: of which I could give considerable instances, were it necessary to my purpose. I shall only as a specimen, set down that Prayer wherewith Simplicius (Enemy eno

ough to Christianity) concludes his Comment upon Epictetus: and thus he makes his address to God.
Part 1.

I beseech thee, O Lord, that art the Father and guide of our rational Powers, grant that we may be mindful of those Noble and Generous Natures with which thou hast invested us; and assist us, that as persons endowed with self-moving Principles, we may cleanse our selves from all bodily and brutish passions; that we may subdue and govern them, and in a due and decent manner use them only as Organs and Instruments. Help us through the Light of the Truth, accurately to correct our Reason, and to unite it to those things that have a real existence. And in the third place, I beseech my Saviour, that he would perfectly dispel the mist that is before the eyes of our minds, that according
Besides the matter of this Prayer, which is very sublime and spiritual, the manner of its composure is considerable, consisting of three parts, and those addressed as it were to three persons, answerable to those in the blessed Trinity, the Lord (or Father) the Saviour (or Christ) and the light of truth (which even in Scripture is a common Periphrasis of the Holy Spirit: whether he intended this, I will not say, sure I am it looks very like it. But enough of this.

Secondly, That they ordinarily wrought such miracles as were incomparably beneficial to the world, in curing diseases, raising the dead, and rescuing possessed persons from the merciless rage and cruelty of the Devil: we may observe, that in those primitive times there were innumerable multitudes of possessed persons, beyond what were in the Ages either before or since; the Divine Providence doubtless permitting it to be so, that by this means there might be a fairer occasion of commending Christianity to the world; and there
Part 1. is nothing which we more commonly meet with in the Writings of the ancient Fathers, than testimonies concerning their triumphant power over evil spirits: Justin Martyr discoursing of the end of Christ's coming into the world, for the salvation of men, and the subversion of Devils, tells the Senate; that these things are so, you may know by what is done before your eyes; for many that were possessed by Devils, throughout the whole world, and even in this City of yours, whom all your Inchanters, Sorcerers, and conjurers were not able to cure, many of us Christians adjuring them by the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, have perfectly cured, and do still cure, disarming and driving out of men those Demons that had seized upon them; and the same he affirms more than once and again in his discourse with Trypho the Jew. Irenaeus arguing against the Hereticks, tells us, that the true Disciples of Christ did in his name many strange things for the good of others, according as every one had received his gift, some so signally expelling Devils, that those out of whom they were cast came over to the Faith; others foreseeing
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity

telling future events; others curing men.

Of the most grievous distempers, by putting their hands upon them, and restoring them to their former health; many that have been raised from the dead, and afterwards lived many years amongst us. And indeed innumerable (says he) are the gifts which God has everywhere bestowed upon his Church, whereby in the name of the crucified Jesus many and great miracles are daily done, to the great advantage of the world. Tertullian appeals to the Heathens, as a thing commonly known amongst them, that they daily restrained the power of Devils, and cast them out of men. And he tells Sca. 18. 4. p. 71. Pula the president, that he might be satisfied of this from his own records, and those very advocates who had themselves reaped this benefit from Christians; as for instance, a certain notary, and the kinsman and child of another; besides divers other persons of note and quality, not to speak of the meaner sort, who had been recovered either from Devils or from desperate diseases. Nay, Severus the father of Antoninus having been cured by being anointed with oil by Proculus a Christian, he kept him in his palace till his death, whom Antoninus
Part 1, knew well, having been himself nursed by a Christian. And in his Apology he challenges the Heathens to produce any powerful person before the Publick Tribunals, and the Evil Spirit being commanded by any Christian shall then as truly confess himself to be a Devil, as at other times he falsely boasts himself to be a god. And elsewhere putting the case that the Christians should agree to retire out of the Roman Empire, he asks them what Protection they would then have left against the secret and invisible Attempts of Devils, who made such havoc both of their Souls and Bodies, whom the Christians so freely expelled and drove out; that it would be a sufficient piece of Revenge, that hereby they should leave them open to the uncontrolled Possession of those Evil Spirits. 'Twere endless to produce all the Testimonies of this nature, that might be fetched from Origen, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, Eusebius, and all the old Apologists for the Christian Religion, (some whereof I have briefly noted in the Margin) who constantly pleaded this as a mighty and uncontrollable Argument of the Truth and Divinity of their Religion, and of their
their great Usefulness to Mankind; nay Part 1. this Miraculous Power continued in the Church some considerable time after Constantine and the World was become Christian, as appears from S. Basil, Nazianzen, and others: and though I do not give heed to all the Miracles which are reported by S. Hierom in the Lives of Hilasius, Greg. Nyss. Paulus, and some others; or by Palladius in his Historia Lausiaca; yet doubtless many of them were very true and real; God withdrawing this Extraordinary Power as Christianity gained faster footing in the World; and leaving the Church to those standing Methods by which it was to be managed and governed to the end of the World.

And yet notwithstanding the Case was thus plain and evident, how much the World was beholden to Christians, yet were they looked upon as the pests of Humane Society, counted and called the common enemies of mankind, as Tertullian complains; that they were the Causes of all Publick Calamities, and that for their sakes it was that Vengeance did so often remarkably haunt the Roman Empire. This was the common Out-cry: If the City be besieged, (says Tertullian) if any thing happen ill in the Fields, in the Garrisons,
part. in the Islands, presently they cry out, *'Tis because of the Christians.* They conspire the ruin of Good men, and thirst after the Blood of the Innocent, patronizing their hatred with this vain pretence, that the Christians are the cause of all publick Misfortunes and Calamities. If Tiber overflow the Walls, if the Nile do not (as 'tis wont) overflow the Fields, if the Heaven do not keep its accustomed Course, if an Earthquake happen, if a Famine, or a Plague, presently the Cry is, *Away with the Christians to the Lions.* Thus Demetrius the Proconsul of Africa objected to S. Cyprians, that they might thank the Christians, that Wars did oftner arise, that Plagues and Famines did rage so much, and that Immoderate and Excessive Rains hindered the Kindly Seasons of the Year. The same Arnobius tells us, the Heathens were wont to object at every turn, and to conclude it as sure as if it had been dictated by an Oracle, that since the Christians appeared in the World, the World had been well-nigh undone, Mankind has been over-run with infinite kinds of Evil; and the very Gods themselves had withdrawn that Solemn Care and Providence, wherewith they were wont to su-
superintend Humane Affairs. Nay, so hot Part and common was this Charge amongst the Pagans, that when the Goths and Vandals broke in upon the Roman Empire, S. Augustine was forced to write those excellent Books De Civit. Dei, purposely to stop the mouth of this Objection, as upon the same account and at his request Orosius wrote his Seven Books of History against the Pagans. Omitting some of the Answers given by the Fathers, (as being probably less solid; and not so proper in this case; such as, that 'twas no wonder if Miseries happened, and things grew worse in this old age of Time, the World daily growing more feeble and decrepit; and that these things had been foretold by God, and therefore must necessarily come to pass; two Arguments largely and strongly pleaded by S. Cyprian, that those Evils were properly resolvable into Natural Causes; and that every thing is not presently evil, because it crosses our Ease and Interest, as Arnobius answers. Passing by these) I shall take notice only of two things which the Christians pleaded in this case.

First, that the Gentiles should do very well to seek the true causes of these things
things nearer home, and to enquire whether 'twas not for their own sakes, that the Divine Providence was thus offended with them; there being very just reasons to think so. Tertullian points them to such Causes as these: First, their horrible affronting their Natural Notions of God, that when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imagination, and their foolish heart was darkned, and they changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible God into an Image made like to Corruptible Man, and to Birds, and Fourfooted Beasts, and Creeping things, as S. Paul had told them long before. And that therefore 'twas reasonable to suppose, that God was more angry with them, who instead of him worshipped Pieces of Wood and Statues, or at best Genii and Devils, than with those who sincerely paid their Adorations to him alone. Secondly, passing by God the great Master of all Goodness and Innocence, and the severe Revenger of all Impiety, they tumbled themselves in all manner of Vice and Wickedness; and what wonder if the Divine Justice followed close at their heels? You are angry (says Cyprian) that God is angry,
as if in living ill you deserved well, and Part in 
as if all that has happened to you were 
not less and lighter than your sins. And 
 thou Demetrian, who art a Judge of o- 
thers, be in this a Judge of thy self, in- 
spect the Retirements of thy Conscience, 
and behold thy self now, who shalt one 
day be seen Naked by all ; and thou wilt 
find thy self enslave’d, and led captive 
by some sins or other; and why then 
shouldst thou wonder that the Flames of 
the Divine Anger should rise higher, 
when the sins of men do daily adminis- 
ter more fuel to it? An Answer which 
he there prosecutes to very excellent 
purpose. Thirdly, their Prodigious Un- 
thankfulness to God for all the former 
Blessings they had received from him. 
So far as they were ingrateful, they were 
highly guilty, and God could not but 
punish them. Had they sought him, 
whom in part they could not but know, 
and been Observant of him, they would 
in this case have found him a much more 
Propitious than an Angry Deity, as 
Tertullian tells them. Upon these and 
such like accounts they might well con- 
clude it was, that the Vengeance of God 
did press so hard upon them, and that 
therefore they had no true reason to
Part: 1. lay the fault at any other door but their own.

Secondly, as to the thing itself, as 'twas charged upon them, they point blank denied it be true, and that for two Reasons especially.

First, because the World had been sadly and frequently pestered with such evils and miseries long before the Christian Religion appeared in it. I pray, (says Tertullian) what Miseries did overwhelm all the World, and even Rome itself, before the Times of Tiberius, i.e. before the Coming of Christ? Have we not read of Hierapolis, and the Islands of Delos, and Rhódes, and Cos, destroyed with many thousands of men? Does not Plato speak of the greatest part of Asia and Afric swallowed up by the Atlantic Sea? An Earthquake drank up the Corinthian Sea, and the Force of the Ocean rent off Sicilia from Italy. Not to ask where were the Christians, the great Continenters of your Gods; but where were your Gods themselves when the Flood over-ran the World? Palestine had not yet received the Jewish Nation out of Egypt, much less had the Christians sate down there when Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Adjacent parts, were burnt.
Ch. 3. Primitive Christians

burnt up by a shower of Fire and Brimstone, of which the Countrey smells to this day. Nor could Tuscia and Campania complain of the Christians, when a Fire from Heaven destroyed the Vulson and the Pompeii. None as yet worshipped the True God at Rome, when Hannibal at Carma made such a Slaughter of the Romani, that the very Rings that he took (which were the Honourable Badges of none but Roman Knights) were measured by the Bushel. They were all your Gods that then had the General Worship, when the Gauls took the Capitol it self. So smarly does that grave man retort their own Arguments upon themselves. Arnobius fully and elegantly pursues Lib. I. p.

this, that in this respect the Former Times were no better than these, which they so much complained of, and bids them run over the Annals and Records that were written in all Languages, and they would find that all Nations had frequently had their Common Miseries and Devastations. The clearing of which was likewise the great design Orosius proposed to himself, in drawing down the History of the World through all the Ages and Generations of it.

Secondly, because since the coming of Chri-
Christianity, the World had been in a better and more prosperous state than it was before, especially whenever the Christian Religion met with any favour and encouragement. The reason of it Tertullian gives: Although we should compare present with former Miseries, yet they are much lighter now, since God sent Christians into the World; for since then Innocency has balanced the Iniquities of the Age, and there have been many who have interceded with Heaven. The Author of the Questions and Answers in Justin Martyr (for that it was not Justin himself, I think no man can doubt that reads him, the man betraying himself openly enough to have liv'd in the Times of prevailing Christianity) putting this Question, Whether Paganism was not the better Religion, forasmuch as under it there was great Prosperity and Abundance; whereas 'twas quite otherwise since Christianity came in fashion. He answers among other things, That (besides that Plenty was no Argument of the Goodness of any Religion, Christians being to be judged of rather by the holiness than the prosperity of their Religion) there was so much the more Abundance in these Times of Christianity, by
by how much there were fewer Wars, Part 1, than was while Paganism governed the World. Never were Wars more successfully managed, never was Prosperity more Triumphant, than when Christians met with kind Entertainment. Melito, Bishop of Sardis, in an Oration which he presented to the Emperor M. Antoninus in behalf of the Christians (part whereof is yet extant in Eusebius) tells him that Christianity commencing under the Reign of Augustus was a good omen of the Prosperity of the Empire, and that ever since the Majesty of the Roman Empire had increased. Of whom he being the Heir and Successor, he could not better assure it to himself and his Son, than by protecting that Religion that had been born and bred up together with the Empire, and for which his Ancestors amongst other Religions had had an Esteem and Honour. That there could be no better Argument that this Religion contributed to the Happiness of the Empire, (with which it began and had grown up) than that since the Reign of Augustus no Misfortune, but on the contrary (according to all mens wishes) every thing had happened to be Magnificent and Prosperous. Hence
Part I. *Eusebius* notes once and again, that the Affairs of the Empire commonly flourished while Christianity was protected, but when that was persecuted, things began to go to rack, and their Ancient Peace and Prosperity could not be retrieved till Peace and Tranquillity was restored to the Christians. Therefore *Cyprian* tells the *Proconsul*, that their Cruelty to the Christians was one of those Crying sins that had provoked God to inflict so many heavy Miseries upon them, not only refusing to worship God themselves, but unjustly persecuting those Innocent persons that did with all the methods of Rage and Fierceness. So little hand had the Christians in entailing Vengeance upon the World, that their Enemies rather wilfully pull'd it down upon their own heads.
Chap. IV.

The Charges brought against them respecting their Life and Manners.

The Primitive Christians accused of the grossest sins, Sacrilege, Sedition, Treason, Incest, Murder, &c. The particular Consideration of these, referred to their proper places. What they offered in the general for their Vindication considered. They openly asserted their Innocency, and appealed to the known Piety of their Lives. None accounted Christians, however eminent in Profession, unless their Lives answerable. Their Abstaining from Appearance of Evil, or Doing any thing that symbolized with the Idolatrous Rites of the Heathens. Their being willing to be brought to the strictest Trial, and to be severely punished, if found guilty of those crimes. Their Complaints of being (generally) condemned merely for bearing the Name of Christians. They greatly gloried in that Title. This Name prohibited by Julian, and Christians commanded in scorn.
Primitiv Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 1.

to be called Galileans. The Christians appealed for their Vindication to the Consciences of their Impartial Enemies, and by them acquitted. The Testimonies of Pliny, Ser. Granianus, Antoninus Pius, M. Antoninus, Trypho the Jew, and Apollo's Oracle to this purpose. The Excellency of Christians is compared with the best of Heathens. All such disowned for Christians as did not exactly conform to the Rule and Discipline of Christianity.

All the Attempts that had been hitherto made against the Honour and Reputation of Christians seemed but like the first skirmishings of an Army, in respect of the main Battalia that was yet behind, the Charge that was made against their Moral Carriage and behaviour; and here they were accused at every turn of no less than Sacrilege, Sedition, and High Treason, of Incest and Profligate Mixture, of Murder, and Eating the flesh of Infants at their Sacramental Feasts. These were sad and horrid Crimes, and (had they been true) would justly have made Christianity stink in the Nostrils of all Sober and Considerable men: but they were as false as they
they were black and hellish. The particular Answers to these Charges (together with some things relating to matters of Worship) shall be considered hereafter, according as they fall in in their more proper places: I shall only at present take notice of the General Vindication which the Christians made of themselves, from these Indictments that were brought in against them; and the summe of what they pleaded lies especially in these three things.

First, they did openly assert and maintain their innocency, and shew by their lives as well as their Apologies, that they were Men of quite another Make and Temper, than their Enemies did generally represent them. Their Religion and Way of Life was admired by all. Who (says S. Clement to the Corinthians) did ever dwell amongst you, that did not approve of your Excellent and Unshaken Faith? that did not wonder at your sober and moderate Piety in Christ? You were forward to every good work, adorned with a most Vertuous and Venerable Conversation, doing all things in the Fear of God, and having his Laws and Commands written upon the Tables of your Hearts. They placed Religion then

\[ \text{clem.ep.ad \ Corinthians p. 2:4} \]
then not in talking finely, but in living well. Amongst us (says Athenagoras) the meanest and most Mechanick persons, and Old Women, although not able to discourse and dispute for the Usefulness of their Profession, do yet demonstrate it in their Lives and Actions: they don't indeed critically weigh their words, and recite Elegant Orations; but they manifest honest and virtuous Actions; while being buffeted they strike not again, nor sue them at Law that spoil and plunder them; 5 Liberally give to them that ask, and love their neighbours as themselves. And this we do because we are assured that there is a God that superintends Humane Affairs, who made both us and the whole World; and because we must give to him an account of all the Trans-actions of our Lives, therefore we choose the most Moderate, Humane, and Benign, and (to many) the most Contemptible Course of Life; for we reckon that no Evil in this Life can be so great, though we should be called to lay down our Lives, which ought to be esteemed little and of no value, in comparison of that Happiness which we hereafter look for from the Great Judge of the World, promised to those who are of an
Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 

in a Humble, Benign, and Moderate Conversation. Clemens of Alexandria gives us this short account of them; As the fairest Profession we give up our selves to God, entirely loving him, and reckoning this the great business of our lives. No man is with us a Christian, or accounted truly Rich, Temperate, and Generous, but he that is Pious and Religious, not does any further bear the Image of God, than he speaks and believes what is just and holy. So that this in short is the state of us who follow God: such as are our desires, such are our discourses; such as are our actions, such is our life. So universally good is the whole Life of Christians. Certainly none were ever greater Enemies to a Naked Profession, and the covering a bad Life under the Title of Christianity. Do any live otherwise than Christ hath commanded, 'tis a most certain Argument they are no Christians, though with their Tongues they never so smoothly profess the Christian Doctrine; for 'tis not mere Professors, but those who live according to their Profession, that shall be saved, as Justin Martyr declares before the Emperours. Let no man (says Ba
Primitve Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 1. 

Basil) imposes upon himself with inconsiderate words, saying, Though I be a sinner, yet I am a Christian, and I hope that Title will be my shelter. But hearken, sinner, all wicked men shall be bundled up together, and in the great day of the Divine Vengeance shall be indifferently thrown into those merciless and devouring Flames.

Nay, so careful were they to avoid all sin, that they stood at a wide distance from any thing that (though lawful in itself, yet) seemed to carry an ill colour with it. This Origen tells Celsus was the reason why they refused to do any Honour to an Image, lest thereby they should give occasion to others to think that they ascribed Divinity to them. For this reason they shunn'd all community with the Rites and Customs of the Heathens, abstaining from things strangled, or that had been offered to Idols; from frequenting the publick Baths, or going to the Sights and Shows, because they seemed to owe their Original to Idolatry, and were the occasion of many gross Enormities. They refused to wear Crowns of Laurel, lest they should seem to patronize the Custom of the Gentiles, who were wont to do so in their Sacred and
and Solemn Rites, as appeared eminent-Part i-ly in the Solemnities of the Emperorus Severus and Caracalla, when the Tribune delivered the Donative to the Souldiers, and all came to receive it with Crowns upon their heads, one of them brought his Hand, and being demanded the reason, answered that he was a Christian, and could not do it. Which was the occasion of Tertullian's Book De Corone Militis, wherein he lets himself to defend it.

Secondly, they were willing to put themselves upon the strictest Trial, and to undergo the severest Penalties, if found Guilty of those Crimes that were charged upon them. So their Apologist bespeaks the Emperorus: We beseech you (says he) that those things that are charged upon the Christians may be enquired into, and if they be found to be so, let them have their deserved Punishment; nay let them be more severely punished than other men; but if not Guilty, then 'tis not reasonable, that In-nocent Persons should suffer meerly upon report and clamour. And speaking of those that only took Sanctuary at the Name of Christians, he adds that those who lived not according to the Laws G 2 of
Part 1. of Christ, and were onely called by his Name, they begg'd of them that such might be punished. To the same purpose Athenagoras in his Embassy, taking notice how their Enemies laid wait for their Lives and Fortunes, loaded them with heaps of Reproaches, charging them with things that never so much as entered into their Minds, and of which their Accusers themselves were most guilty, he makes this Offer; Let but any of us be convict of any Crime either small or great, and we refuse not to be punished, nay are ready to undergo the most cruel and heavy penalty: but if we be onely accused for our Name, (and to this day all our Accusations are but the fragments of obscure and uncertain fame, no Christian having ever been convict of any fault) then we hope it will become such wise, gracious, and mighty Princes as you are, to make such Laws as may secure us from those wrongs and injuries. But alas, so clear was their Innocency, that their bitterest Adversaries durst not suffer them to come to a fair open Trial. If you be so certain that we are guilty (says Tertullian to the Heathens) why then are we not treated in the same nature with all Malefactors,
factors, who have leave both by them-Part 1.

selves and their advocates to defend their

Innocency, to answer and put in Pleas,

it being unlawful to condemn any be-

fore they be heard, and have liberty to

defend themselves? Whereas Christians

only are not permitted to speak any

thing that might clear their Cause, main-

tain the Truth, and make the Judge able

to pronounce Righteous Sentence. 'Tis

enough to justifie the publick odium, if

we do but confess our selves Christians,

without ever examining of the Crime;

contrary to the manner of Procedure a-

gainst all other Delinquents, whom 'tis

not enough barely to charge to be

Murderers, Sacrilegious, or Incestuous, or

Enemies to the Publick, (the titles you are

pleased to bestow upon us) unless they

also take the Quality of the Fact, the

Place, Manner, Time, Partners, and Ac-

cessories under examination. But no such

favour is shewn to us, but we are con-

demned without any Inquisition passed

upon us. And good reason there was,

that they should take this course, seeing

they could really find nothing to con-

demn them for, but for being Christians.

This one would think strange, espe-

cially amongst a People so renowned for
Part 1. justice and equity as the Romans were, and yet in these times nothing more ordinary. Therefore when Urbicius the Prefect of Rome had condemned Ptolemeus merely upon his confessing himself a Christian, one Luctius that stood by cried out, 'What strange course is this, what infamous misdemeanour is this man guilty of, that when he's no Adulterer, Fornicator, no Murderer, no Thief nor Robber, thou shouldst punish him only because he calls himself a Christian?' Certainly, Urbicius, such justice as this does not become the Piety of the Emperor, or the Philosophy of Cæsar his Son, or the Sacred and Venerable Senate. And Tertullian tells us, 'twas the common Accusation they had in their mouths, Such or such a one is a good man, only he is a Christian: or, I wonder at such a one, a Wife man, but lately turned Christian. So Cyprian, I remember, reduces his Adversary to this unavoidable Dilemma; Chuse one of these two things, to be a Christian either is a fault, or 'tis not; if it be a fault, why dost thou not kill every one that confesses it? if it be not, why dost thou persecute them that are innocent? Hence we find nothing more common in the old Apologists, than Complaints concerning the Unreasonable-
ness of being accused, condemned, and punished, merely for their name, this being the first and great cause of all that Hatred and Cruelty that was exercised towards them; 'twas the Innocent Name that was hated in them; all the Quarrel was about this Title; and when a Christian was guilty of nothing else, 'twas this made him guilty, as Tertullian complains at every turn. The truth is, they mightily gloried in this title, and were ambitious to own it in the face of the greatest danger. Therefore when Atalus the famous French Martyr was led about the Amphitheatre, that he might be exposed to the hatred and derision of the people, he triumphed in this, that a Tablet was carried before him with this Inscription, THIS IS ATTALUS THE CHRISTIAN. And Sancius ib. 158.

(another of them) being oft asked by the President what his Name was, what his City and Countrey, and whether he was a Freeman or a Servant, answered nothing more to any of them, than that he was a Christian, professing this Name to be Countrey, Kindred, and all things to him. Nay, so great was the Honour and Value which they had for this Name, that Julian the Emperour (whom we com-
Part 4, only call the *Apostate*) endeavoured by all ways to suppress it, that when he could not drive the thing, he might at least banish the Name out of the World; and therefore did not only himself constantly call Christians Galileans, but made a Law that they should be called only by that Name. But to return; the summe is this, the Christians were so buoy'd up with the conscience of their Innocency, that they cared not who saw them, were willing and desirous to be scann'd and search'd to the bottom, and to lie open to the view of all; and therefore desired no other favour than that that Apologie which Justin Martyr presented to them, might be let out with the Decree of the Senate, that so People might come to the true Knowledge of their Case, and they be delivered from false Suspicions, and those Accusations, for which they had been undeservedly exposed to so many Punishments.

Thirdly, they appealed for their Vindication to the Judgment and Consciences of their more Sober and Impartial Enemies, and were accordingly acquitted by them, as Guiltless of any Heinous Crimes. *Pliny* the Younger being commanded
manded by the Emperor Trajan to Part I. give him an account of the Christians, tells him, That after the best Estimate that he could take, and the strictest Inquisition that he could make by Tortures, he found no worse of them than this, that they were wont to meet early for the performance of their Solemn Devotions, and to bind themselves under the most sacred obligations to commit no Vice or Wickedness; and that their Religion was nothing else but an Untoward and Immoderate Superstition. This is the testimony which that Great man (who being Proconsul of Bithynia was capable to satisfy himself, and who was no less diligent to search into the matter) gives concerning them. Next after him Severus Granius (the Proconsul of Asia) writes to the Emperor Adrian, Trajan's Successor, to represent to him how unjust it was to put Christians to death, when no Crime was duly laid to their charge, meekly to gratifie the tumultuous Clamours of the People; to whom the Emperor answers, that they should not be unjustly troubled; that if any thing was truly prov'd against them, he should punish them according to the nature of the fault; but if done out of ma-
malice or spite, he should then accordingly punish the Accuser as a Calumniator. Next to Adrian, Antoninus Pius (if he be not mistaken for his Successor Marcus) in his Epistle to the Commune of Asia tells them, that they had traduced the Christians, and had objected those Crimes to them which they could not prove; that they were more firm and undaunted in their Profession than themselves, and had a greater freedom with and confidence towards God; and that therefore he resolved to ratifie and follow the Determination of his Father. After him comes M. Antoninus, who, having obtained that famous and signal Victory against the Quades in Germany, confesses in his Letter to the Senate, (which Letter, though I know 'tis questioned by some Learned Men, as now extant, whether true and genuine, yet that there was such a Letter is evident enough from Tertullian, who himself lived within a few years of that time, and appeals to it) that it was clearly gotten by the Prayers of the Christian Legion which he had in his Army, and therefore commands that none be molest for being Christians, and that if any accuse a Christian for being such, with-
Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity.

without a sufficient Crime proved against him, he shall be burnt alive for his Accusation: that a Christian confessing himself to be one shall be safe and secure, and that the Governor of the Province shall not drive him to renounce his Profession; and this he commands to be confirmed by the Decree of the Senate. So clear did the Christians appear to their greatest Enemies, especially in their more calm and sober Intervals. Nay, Trypho the Jew (and that very Notion speaks him Enemy enough, yet) confesses them clear of those foul Aspersions; for when the Martyr had asked him, whether he disliked the Christians Manners and Way of Life, and whether he really believed that they ate Mens flesh, and putting out the Candles ran together in Promiscuous Mixtures; the Jew answered, that those things whereof they were accused by many were unworthy of belief, as being so extremely abhorrent to Humane Nature; and that the Precepts which are commanded in their Gospel (which his Curiosity had prompted him to read) were so great and admirable, that he supposed no man could be able to keep and obey them. And, to instance in no more, the Hea-

Primitive Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part i. then Oracle itself pronounced in favour of the Christians; for Apollo giving forth his Oracles, not as he was wont by Humane Voice, but out of a dark and dismal cavern, confessed it was because of just men that lived upon the Earth; and when Dioecletian enquired who those just men were, one of the Heathen Priests that stood by answered, that they were the Christians. This Constantine the Great tells us he himself heard, being then a young man, and in company at that time with the Emperor Dioecletian, and he there solemnly calls God to witness for the truth of the story.

From all which it appears how Innocent the Christians were, of those things which the Gentiles charged upon them, how infinitely strict and unblamable in their Lives, and therefore triumphed over the Heathens in the Purity and Innocency of their Conversations. Origen tells Celsus, that the Churches of God which had taken upon them the Discipline of Christ, if compared to the common Societies of men, were amongst them like Lights in the World. For who (says he) is there, but he must needs confess that the worse part of our Church is much better than the Popular Af-
As for instance; the Church Part of God at Athens is meek and quiet, as endeavouring to approve it self to the great God; whereas now the popular assembly of Athens is seditious and tumultuous, and no ways to be compared with the Church of God in that City. And the same may be said of the Churches of God, and the Vulgar Assemblies which are at Corinth or Alexandria. So Miltiades Felix, should we Christians be compared with you, although our Discipline may seem somewhat inferior, yet we should be found infinitely to transcend you. You forbid Adultery, and then practice it; we keep entirely to our own Wives. You punish Wickedness when committed, with us even a Wicked thought is sin: You stand in awe of those who are conscious of your Crimes, we of nothing but our consciences, without which we cannot be. And last of all, 'tis with your party that the Prison is filled and crowded; no Christian is there, unless such a one as is either a shame to his Religion, or an Apostate from it. And a little after he tells his Adversary, how much they exceeded the best Philosophers, who were filthy and tyrannical, and only Eloquent to declaim against
Part 1: Against those Vices of which themselves were most guilty: that we Christians do not measure Wisdom by Mens Habits, but by their Minds and Tempers, and do not speak great things, but live them, having this to boast of, that we really attain to those things which they earnestly sought, but could not find. Thus Lactantius having excellently discoursed of the Prodigious Debaucheries and Wickednesses of the Heathens; but which of these things (says he) can be objected to our People, whose whole Religion is to live without spot or blemish? From whence they might easily gather, had they any Understanding, that Piety is on our side, and that they themselves are vile and impious. And Eusebius tells us, that in his time the Christian Faith had by Gravity, Sincerity, Modesty, and Holiness of Life, so conquered all Opposition, that none durst bespatter it, or charge it with any of those Calumnies which the Ancient Enemies of our Religion used to fasten upon it. What Religion (says Eusebius) can be truer, more useful, powerful, just, than this? Which (as he else where notes) renders men Meek, Speakers of Truth, Modest, Chaste, Charitable, Kind,
Kind, and Helpful to all, as if most near—Part 1.
ly related to us. And indeed this is the
genuine and natural tendency of the
Christian Doctrine, and which it cannot
but effect wherever 'tis kindly embraced
and entertained. So true is that which
Athenagoras told the Emperours, that no Christian
could be a bad man, unless he
were an hypocrite. And Tertullian open-
ly declares, that when men depart from 36.
the Discipline of the Gospel, they so far
cease amongst us to be accounted Chi-
ristians. And therefore when the Hea-
thens objected, that some that went un-
der that Name were guilty of great E-
normities, and enquired how comes such
a one to be a Cheat; if the Christians
be so righteous; how so cruel, if they
be merciful? He answers, that by this
very thing they bore witness, that they
who were real Christians were not
such; that there's a vast difference be-
tween the crime and the name, the opi-
men and the truth; that they are not
presently Christians that are called so,
but cheat others by the pretence of a
Name; that they shunn'd the company
of such, and did not meet or partake
with them in the Offices of Religion;
that they did not admit those whom
meer
Part I. meer Force and Cruelty had driven to deny Christianity, much less such as voluntarily transgressed the Christian Discipline; and that therefore the Heathens did very ill to call them Christians, whom the Christians themselves did disown, who yet were not wont to deny their own Party.

CHAP. V.
Of the Positive Parts of their Religion: and first of their Pity towards God.

The Religion of the Ancient Christians considered, with respect to God, themselves, and other men. Their Pity seen in two things, their Detestation of Idolatry, and Great Care about the matters of Divine Worship. What Notion they had of Idolatry; their Abhorrence of it. Their refusing to give Divine Honour to Angels and Created Spirits; this condemned by the Laodicean Council. Their denying any thing of Divine Honour to Martyrs and departed Saints. The famous Instance of the Church of Smyrna,
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

Smyrna concerning S. Polycarp. S. Augustine's testimonies to this purpose. Their mighty abhorrence of the Heathen Idolatry. The very making an Idol accounted unlawful. Hatred of Idolatry one of the first principles instilled into new Converts. Their affectionate bewailing any that lapsed into this sin. Several severe penalties imposed by the ancient Council of Iliberis upon persons guilty of Idolatry. They were willing to hazard any thing rather than sacrifice to the Gods. Constantius his plot to try the integrity of his Courtiers. A double instance of the Christian Soldiers in Julian's Army; their active zeal in breaking the Images of the Heathen gods, and assaulting persons while doing sacrifice to them; this whether justifiable. Notwithstanding all this, the Christians accused by the Heathens of Idolatry; of worshipping the Sun; whence that charge arose. Of adoring a Cross. Of worshipping an Asses head. Christians called Alinarii. The absurd and monstrous Picture of Christ mentioned by Tertullian. The occasion of this ridiculous fiction whence.
Having thus seen with how much clearness the ancient Christians vindicated themselves from those unjust aspersions, which their spiteful and malicious adversaries had cast upon them; we come now to take a more direct and positive view of their Religion, which according to St. Paul's division, we shall consider as to their piety towards God; those virtues which more immediately concern'd themselves, and those which respected their behaviour and carriage towards others. Their piety towards God appeared in those two main instances of it, a serious and hearty detestation of Idolatry and a religious care about the concerns of Divine Worship.

Idolatry in those times was the prevailing sin of the world; the principal crime of mankind, the great guilt of the age, and the almost sole cause of men being brought into judgment, as what in a manner contains all sins under it; a Tertullian begins his Book upon that subject; a crime of the first rank, and one of the highest sorts of wickedness, a thing called by the most ancient Councils in Spain. They looked upon it as a sin that...
that undermined the very being of the Deity, and ravished the honour of his Crown. Before we proceed any further, we shall first enquire what was the notion they generally had of Idolatry; and they then accounted that a man was guilty of Idolatry, when he gave divine adoration to any thing that was not God, not only when he worshipped a material Idol, but when he vested any creature with that religious respect and veneration that was only due to God; Idolatry (says Tertullian) robs God, denying him those honours that are due to him;

and conferring them upon others, so that at the same time it does both defraud him and reproach him: and a little after he expressly affirms, that whatever is exalted above the Standard of civil Worship, in imitation of the divine excellence, is directly made an Idol: thus St. Gregory, for his solid and excellent learning call'd the Divine (a title never given to any besides him but to St. John the Apostle) designs Idolatry (which says he, is the greatest evil in the world) to be the translation of that worship that is due to the Creator upon the Creature. Accordingly, we finde them infinitely zealous to assert divine adoration, as
Part 1. The proper and incommunicable prerogative of God alone, and absolutely refusing to impart religious Worship to any though the best of Creatures; surely if any, one would think Angels, the first rank of created beings, creatures of such sublime excellencies and perfections, might have challenged it at their hands; but hear what Origen says to this; we adore (says he) our Lord God, and serve him alone, following the example of Christ, who when tempted by the Devil to fall down and worship him, answered, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve; which is the reason why we refuse to give honours to those spirits that preside over humane affairs, because we cannot serve two Masters, to wit, God and Mammon: as for these Demons, we know that they have no administration of the conveniences of man's life: yea, though we know that they are not Demons, but Angels, that have the Government of fruits and seasons, and the productions of Animals committed to them; we indeed speak well of them, and think them happy, that they are intrusted by God to manage the conveniencies of man's life; but yet do not give them that honour
honour that is only due to God; for Part i.
this neither does God allow of, neither
do they desire it; but equally love and
regard us when we do not, as if we did
sacrifice to them. And when Celsus a
little before had smartly pressed him to
do honour to Demons, he rejects the
motion with great contempt, away (says Pag. 395.
he) with this counsel of Celsus, who in
this is not in the least to be hearkened
to; for the great God only is to be a-
dored, and prayers to be delivered up
to none but his only begotten Son, the
first born of every creature, that as our
High-Priest he may carry them to his
Father and to our Father, to his God and
to our God. 'Tis true that the Worship
of Angels did (and that very early, as
appears from the Apostles caveat against
it in his Epistle to the Colossians) creep
into some parts of the Christian Church,
but was always disowned and cried out
against, and at last publickly and solemn-
ly condemned by the whole Laodicean
Council: it is not lawful (says the thirty
fifth Canon of that Council) for Chris-
tians to leave the Church of God, and to
go and invoke Angels, and to make
prohibited assemblies: if therefore any
one shall be found devoting himself to
this
Part i. this private Idolatry, let him be accursed, forasmuch as he has forsaken the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and has delivered up himself to Idolatry. From which nothing can be more clear, then that it was the sense of these Fathers, that the worshipping of Angels was not onely downright Idolatry, but a plain apostasy from the Christian Faith.

Nor were they more peremptory in denying divine honour to Angels, than they were to Martyrs and departed Saints: for though they had a mighty honour and respect for Martyrs (as we shall take notice afterwards) as those that had maintained the truth of their Religion, and seal'd it with their Blood, and therefore did what they could to do praise and honour to their memories, yet were they far from placing any thing of Religion or divine adoration in it; whereof 'twill be enough to quote one famous instance. The Church of Smyrna writing to the Churches of Pontus, to give them an account of the martyrdom of Polycarpus, their Bishop, tells them, that after he was dead, many of the Christians were desirous to have gotten the remains of his body to have given them decent and honourable burial.
11. but were prevented in it by some Jews, who importun'd the Proconsul to the contrary, suggesting that the Christians leaving their crucified Master, might henceforth worship Polycarpus; whereupon they add, that this suggestion must needs proceed from ignorance of the true state of Christians; this they did (say they) not considering how impossible 'tis, that ever we should either for sake Christ, who died for the salvation of mankind, or that we should worship any other. We adore him as the Son of God; but the Martyrs as the Disciples and followers of our Lord, we deservedly love for their eminent kindness to their own Prince and Master; whose Companions, and fellow-Disciples we also by all means desire to be. This instance is so much the more valuable in this case, not onely because so plain and pertinent, but because so ancient, and from persons of so great authority in the Church: For this is not the testimony of any one private person, but of the whole Church of Smyrna, according as it had been, trained up under the Doctrine and Discipline of Polycarpus, the immediate Disciple of S. John. This was the Doctrine and practice of Christians then
Part 1. Then and it held so for some Ages after, even down to the times of S. Augustine, when yet in many other things the simplicity of the Christian Religion began to decline apace: we set apart (say he) no Temples, nor Priests, nor divine services nor sacrifices to Martyrs; because they are not God, but the same who is theirs, is our God: indeed we honour their memories, as of holy men, who have stood for the truth, even unto death, that so the true Religion might appear, and those which are false be convinced to be so; but who ever heard a Priest standing at the Altar, built for the honour and worship of God over the body of the holy Martyr, to say in his Prayers, I offer sacrifice to thee Peter, or Paul, or Cyprian, for in such commemorations we offer to that God, who made them both men and Martyrs, and has made them partners with holy Angels in the heavenly glory; and by these solemnities we both give thanks to the true God for the victories which they have gained, and also stir up our selves by begging his assistance, to contend for such crowns and rewards as they are possessed of; so that whatever offices religious men perform in the places of the
the Martyrs, they are the only ornaments to Parts. 1. sacrifices or divine services done to the departed, as if they were Deities. More to the same purpose we may find in that place, as also in infinite other places of his Works, where (were it worth the while) I could easily shew that he does no less frequently than expressly assert, that though the honour of love, respect, and imitation, yet no religious adoration is due either to Angels, Martyrs, or departed Saints.

But the great instance, wherein the primitive Christians manifested their detestation of Idolatry was in respect of the idolatrous Worship of the heathen world, the denying and abhorring anything of divine honour that was done to their gods. They looked upon the very making of Idols (though with no intention to worship them) as an unlawful trade; and as inconsistent with Christianity: how have we renounced the Devil and his Angels (says Tertullian, meaning their solemn renunciation in baptism) if we make Idols, nor is it enough to say, though I make them, I do not worship them; there being the same cause not to make them, that there is not to worship them; viz. the offence that
Part I. That in both is done to God: yet thou dost so far worship them, as thou makest them that others may worship them: and therefore he roundly pronounces, that no Art, no Profession, no Service whatsoever that is employed either in making or ministering to Idols, can come short of Idolatry. They starved at any thing that had but the least shadow of symbolizing with them in their Idolatry; therefore the Ancyran Council condemned them to a two years suspension from the Sacrament, who sat down with their Heathen friends upon their solemn Festivals in their Idol-Temples, although they brought their own Provisions along with them, and touched not one bit of what had been offered to the Idol. Their first care in instructing new Converts, was to leaven them with the hatred of Idolatry: those that are to be initiated into our Religion (says Origen) we do before all things instil into them a dislike and contempt of all Idols and Images, and lift up their minds from worshipping Creatures instead of God, to him who is the great Creator of the world. If any through weakness chanced at any time to lapse into this sin, how pathetically did they bewail it? So Celerinus in his Epistle
Epistle to Lucian, giving him an account of a woman that to avoid persecution had done sacrifice and thereby fallen from Christ, he bewails her as dead, tells him that it struck so close to him, that though in the time of Easter, a time of festivity and rejoicing, yet he wept night and day, and kept company with sackcloth and ashes, and resolved to do so, till by the help of Christ and the prayers of good men, she should by repentance be raised up again. The better to prevent this sin (wherein weaker Christians were sometimes ensnared in those times of cruelty and persecution) the discipline of the ancient Church was very severe against it; of which we can have no better evidence, then to take a little view of the determinations relating to this case of that ancient Council of Ilchester, held some years before the time of Constantine; there we find, that if any Christian after Baptism took upon him the Flaminship or Priesthood of the Gentiles (an Office ordinarily devolved upon the better sort, and which Christians sometimes either made suit for, to gain more favour with the people, or had it forced upon them by the Laws of the Countrey, so that they must either undergo
Part 1. Undergo it, or fly and forfeit their Estates) such a one no not at the Hour of death was to be received into the Communion of the Church. The reason of which Severity was, because whoever underwent that Office must do sacrifice to the Gods, and entertain the People with several kinds of Sights, Plays, and Sports, which could not be managed without Murders, and the Exercise of all Lust and Filthiness, whereby they did double and treble their sin, as that Council speaks. If a Christian in that Office did but allow the charges to maintain those Sports and Sights, (although he did not actually sacrifice, which he might avoid, by substituting a Gentile Priest in his room) he was indeed to be taken into Communion at last, but was to undergo a very severe penance for it all his Life. Nay, although he did neither of the former, yet if he did but wear a Crown (a thing usually done by the Heathen Priests) he was to be excluded from Communion for two years together. If a Christian went up to the Capitol (probably out of Curiosity) onely to see the Sacrifices of the Gentiles, and did not see them, yet he should be as guilty as if he had seen them, his Intention and Will being
being the same, as the Learned Albaspine Part 1. (and I think truly) understands the Ca-Can. 41, p. non. And in such a case if the person was one of the faithful, he was not to be received till after ten yeare Repentance. Every Master of a Family was commanded to suffer no little Idols or Images to be kept in his House, to be worshipped by his Children or Servants; but if this could not be done without danger of being betrayed and accused by his Servants (a thing not unusual in those Times) that then, at least he himself should abstain from them; otherwise to be thrown out of the Church. Being imbued with such principles, and trained up under such a discipline as this, 'tis no wonder if they would do or suffer any thing rather than comply with the leaft symptom of Idolatry. They willingly underwent Banishment and Confiscation, amongst several of which fort Caldonius Ep. 18, p. 30 tells Cyprian of one Bona, who being violently drawn by her Husband to sacrifice, they by force guiding her Hand to do it, cried out and protested against it, that 'twas not she but they that did it, and was thereupon sent into Banishment. They freely laid down their greatest Honours and Dignities, rather than by any idola-
Part 1. Idolatrous art to offer violence to their consciences, whereof Constantius, the Father of Constantine, made this wise experiment. He gave out that all the Officers and great men of the Court should either do sacrifice to the gods, or immediately quit his service, and the Offices and Preferments which they held under him; whereupon many turned about, while others remained firm and unshaken; upon this the prudent and excellent Prince discovered his Plot, embraced, commended, and advanced to greater honours those who were faithful to their Religion and their conscience, reproaching and turning off those who were so ready to quit and forfeit them. Thus Jovianus a man of considerable note and quality, and an Officer of great place in Julian's Army, when the Emperor sent out his Edict, that all the Soldiers should either sacrifice, or lay down their Arms, presently threw away his belt, rather than he would obey that impious command; though the Emperor at that time, for reasons of State would not suffer him to depart. And after the death of Julian, when by the unanimous vote of the whole Army he was chosen Emperor, he utterly refused
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

suffered it, till the Army had renounced their Pagan Idolatry and superstition. And though it is true, that life is dearest to men of all things in this world; yet how cheerfully did they choose rather to shed their blood, than to defile their Consciences with Idolatry; of which Eusebius gives us many instances, and indeed this was the common test in those times, either sacrifice or die. Philetas Bishop of Thessalæ in a Letter to his people, giving them an account of the Martyrdoms that hapned at Alexandria, tells them, that many after having endured strange and unheard of torments, were put to their choice, whether they would sacrifice and be set at liberty, or refuse and loose their heads; whereupon all of them without any hesitation readily went to embrace death; knowing well how the Scripture is, that whoever sacrifices to strange gods shall be cut off; and again, thou shalt have no other gods but me. And in the next Chapter Eusebius tells us of a whole City of Christians in Phrygia, which together with all the men, women and children was burnt to ashes, for no other reason, but because they universally confessed themselves to be Christians,
and refused to obey those that commanded them to worship Idols: instances of which kind there are enough to be met with in the Histories of the Church.

And so fix't and unmoveable were they in this, that no promises or hopes of reward, no fears or threatenings could either tempt or startle them; a memorable passage or two that we meet withal to this purpose: it was a custom amongst the Romans to show some respect and honour not only to their Emperours themselves, but even to their Statues and Images, by bowing the body, or some other act of external veneration. Now Julian the Emperour (whose great design was to reduce all men, but especially his Army back to Paganism and Idolatry,) made use of this crafty project; he placed the Pictures of Jupiter, and other Heathen Gods, so close to his own Statues, that they could not bow to the one, but they must also to the other; politickly reducing them to this strait, that either they must refuse to pay civil honour to their Prince (which had been a sufficient crime against them) or seem at least to do honour to the gods; with this device the less wary and cautious
telous were entrapped; but others that Part 1. were more pious and prudent chose rather to deny the Prince that Civil Ho-
mage, and fall into the arms of Martyr-
dom, than by such an ambiguous Ado-
racion to seem to patronize Idolatry. At
another time he fell upon this stratagem:
Upon a Solemn Day, when the Empe-
rours were wont to bestow Largeffes up-
on the Souldiers, he caused the Army to
be called before him, sitting then in great
pomp and splendour, and a large dona-
tive of Gold to be laid on the one side,
and an heap of Frankincense with fire by
it on the other; Proclamation being
made, that they that would sacrifice the
one, should have the other. By this means
many of the Christian Souldiers were
ensnared, performed the Sacrifice, re-
ceived the Donative, and went home
jolly and secure. But being at Dinner
with their Companions, and drinking
to each other (as the Custom was) with
their Eyes lift up, and calling upon
Christ, and making the Sign of the Cross;
as oft as they took the Cup into their
hands; one at the Table told them, he
wondered how they could call upon
Christ, whom they had so lately ab-
jured. Amazed at this, and asking how
they had abjured him, they were told, that they had sacrificed, which was all one as to deny Christ. Whereupon starting up from the Table they ran up and down the Market-place in a furious and frantick manner, crying out, We are Christians, we are Christians in heart and truth; and let all the World take notice that there is but one God, to whom we live, and for whom we'll die. We have not broken the Faith which we swore to thee, O blessed Saviour, nor renounced our Profession. If our hands be guilty, our hearts are innocent. 'Tis not the Gold that has corrupted us, but the Emperours craftiness that deceived us. And with that running to the Emperour, they threw down their Gold before him, with this Address, We have not, Sir, received a Donative, but are condemned to die. Instead of being honoured we are vilified and disgraced. Take this Largess, and give it to your Souldiers: as for us, kill us, and sacrifice us to Christ, whom alone we own as our highest Prince. Return us fire for fire, and for the ashes of the Sacrifice reduce us to ashes. Cut off those Hands, which we so wickedly stretched out; those Feet, that carried us to so great a Mischiefs. Give others the Gold,
God, who may have no cause to repent. Part i.  

for our part, Christ is enough for us, whose we value instead of all things. With this Noble and Generous Resolution, though the Emperour was highly enraged, yet because he envied them the Honour of Martyrdom, he would not put them to death, but banished them, and inflicted other Penalties which might sufficiently evidence his Rage against them.

Nay, with so warm a Zeale were they acted against Idolatry, that many of them could not contain themselves from falling foul upon it, where-ever they met it, though with the immediate Hazard of their Lives. So Romainus (Deacon and Exorcist of the Church of Cesaria) seeing great Multitudes of People at Antioch flocking to the Temples, and doing Sacrifice to the Gods, came to them, and began very severely to reprove and reproach them; for which being apprehended, after many strange and cruel Usages he was put to death with all imaginable Pain and Torture. Thus Apphianus (a Young man) when the Cryers by Proclamation summoned all the Inhabitants of Cesaria to sacrifice to the Gods, the Tribune particularly
Part 1. reciting every man's name out of a book, to the great terror of all those who were Christians, privately and unknown to us, (says Eusebius, who lived at that time in the same house with him) stole out, and getting near Urbanus the President, (who was then compassed about with a guard of soldiers) just as he was about to offer sacrifice, caught hold of his right hand, which he grasped so fast, that he forced him to let fall the sacrifice, gravely admonishing him to desist from such errors and vanities: Clearly showing (says the historian) that true Christians are so far from being drawn from the worship of the true God, that by threatenings and torments they are rather heightened into a greater and more ingenious freedom and boldness in the profession of the truth. For this fact: the young man was almost torn in pieces by the soldiers, whose rage and fierceness could scarce suffer him to be reprieved for acuter tortures, which were exercised towards him with all possible cruelty: and when all could do no good upon him, he was thrown half dead into the sea. The like we read of three famous Christians at Merum, a city in Phrygia, where when the governor

Socrates
Hist. Eccl.
l. 3. c. 15 p.
186.
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

Vernour of the Province under Julian the Part 1. Apostate had commanded the Heathen Temple to be opened, they got by night into the Temple, and broke to pieces all the Statues and Images of the Gods. Whereupon when a General Persecution was like to arise against all the Christians of the City, that the ignorant and innocent might not suffer, the Authors of the Fact came of their own accord to the Judge, and confessed it; who offered them pardon if they would sacrifice, which they rejected with disdain, and told him they were much readier to endure any Torments, and Death itself, than to be defiled with sacrificing. And accordingly were first treated with all sorts of Torments, and then burnt upon an Iron Grate; retaining their Courage to the last, and took their leave of the Governour with this Sarcasm, If thou hast a mind, Amachius, to eat Roast meat, turn us on the other side, lest we be but half roasted, and so prove ungrateful to thy taste. So mightily did a Restless Passion for the Divine Honour possess the Minds of those Primitive Christians. And though it is true, such Transports of Zele are not ordinarily warrantable (for which reason the Council of Illiberis justly pro-

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hhibited 72.
Part 4.hibited those who were killed in the de-
-facing and demolishing Idols, to be re-
-koned in the number of Martyrs; yet
do they sufficiently shew what a Spirit
of Eagerness and Activity ruled in those
Times against the False Religions of the
World.

By all this we may see how unjustly
the Christians were traduced and accused
for Idolaters. Three things were com-
monly charged upon them, that they
worshipped the Sun, the Cross, and an
Asses head. For the first, their worship-
ping the Sun, Tertullian answers, that the
mistake arose from a double Cause, partly
that the Christians of those Times did
generally pray toward the East and the
Sun-rising, which the Heathens themselves
also did, though upon different grounds:
and partly because they performed the
Solemnities of their Religion upon the
day that was dedicated to the Sun, which
made the Gentiles suspect that they wor-
shipped the Sun itself. They were next
charged with worshipping Crofes; a
Charge directly false. As for Crofes (says
Maravius) we neither desire nor worship
them; 'tis you who consecrate Wooden
Gods, that perhaps adore Wooden Crof-
es as parts of them: for what else are
your
your Ensigns, Banners, and Colours, with Part 1. which you go out to War, but Golden and Painted Crosses? The very Trophies of your Victory do not onely resemble the fashion of a simple Cross, but of a man that's fastned to it. The very same Answer which Tertullian also returns to this Charge. The occasion of it no doubt was the Christians talking of, and magnifying so much their crucified Master, and their almost constant Use of the Sign of the Cross, which (as we shall see afterwards) they made use of even in the most common actions of their Lives. But for paying any Adoration to a material Cross, was a thing to which those Times were the greatest strangers. Otherwise, understanding the Cross for him that hung upon it, they were not ashamed (with the great Apostle) to glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to count it the matter of their highest joy and triumph. But the absurdest part of the Charge was, that they worshipped the Head of an Ass. I hear (says the Heathen in Minutius Felix) that being seduced by I know not what fond persuasion they worship the consecrated Head of an Ass, one of the filthieast Creatures. A Religion fitly calculated for
Part 1. Persons of such a dull and stupid disposition. Hence Tertullian tells us, that Christians were called Albarnii, Ass-worshippers; and that Christ was painted and publicly exposed by the bold wicked Hand of an Apostate Jew with Ass's ears, one of his feet hoof'd, holding a Book in his Hand, and having a Gown over him, with this Inscription:

DEUS CHRISTIANORUM

ONONYCHITES,

The Ass-hoof'd God of the Christians.

A most ridiculous Representation, and the Issue of the most foolish Spite and malice. *When I saw it (says he) I laughed both at the Title and the Fashion.* This Ovidius tells his Adversary was the result and spawn of Lying Fame, begot and nourished by the Father of Lies: for who (says he) can be so silly as to worship this? or who can be so much more silly as to believe that it should be worshipped? Unless it be that you yourselves do consecrate whole Asses in the Stable with your Goddess Epona, and religiously adorn them in the Solemnities of *Ibr*, and both sacrifice and adore the Heads of Rams and Oxen. You make Gods of a mixture of a Goat and a *Man*, and dedicate them with the Faces of *Dogs*.
Ch.5. Primitive Christianity. 121

Dogs and Lions: More he has there to Part 3.

the same purpose, as Tertullian also had

answered the same thing before him.

The true ground of this Ridiculous

Charge (as Tertullian observes) was a

Fabulous Report that had been a long
time common amongst the Heathens

that the Jews when wandering in the Wild-

derness, and almost ready to die of

Thirst, were conducted by Wild Asses to

a Fountain of Water; for which great

Kindness they formed the Shape of an

Ass, and ever after worshipped it with

Divine Honours. This is confidently re-

ported both by Tacitus and Plutarch, as

it had been many years before by Appio

the Alexandrian in his Books against the

Jews. And by this means the Heathens,

who did frequently confound the Jews and

Christians, came to form and fasten

this Charge upon them; when it was e-

qually False in respect of both. For as

Tertullian observes, the same Tacitus, who

reports this, tells us in another place,

that when Pompey at the Taking of Jeru-

salem presumptuously broke into the Ho-

ly of Holies, whither none but the High

Priest might enter, out of a Curiosity to

pry into the most Hidden Secrets and

arcana of their Religion, he found no
Primitive Christianity. Ch. 6.

Part 1. Image at all there; whereas (says Tertullian) had they worshipped any such thing, there had been no likeliest place to have met with it, and therefore brands him with the Charge of the most lying Historian in the World. And thus we see how the Ancient Christians manifested and maintained their Love and Piety towards God, by a most Vigorous and hearty Opposition of that Idolatry, that reigned so uncontrollably in the Heathen World.

CHAP. VI.

Of Churches and Places of Publick Worship in the Primitive Times.

Place, a circumstance necessary to every Action. The Piety of Christians in Founding Places for the Solemnities of Religion. They had distinct and separate Places for their Publick Assemblies even in the Apostles times. This proved out of the New Testament, as also in the succeeding Ages from the Testimonies of the Fathers and Heathen Writers. The Common Objection
jection of the Gentiles, That Christians had no Temples, considered and answer-
ed. Churches increased as Christianity met with favourable Entertainment: re-
stored and repaired by Diocletian, Maxim-
minus, Constantine. The Fashion of
their Churches Oblong: built towards
the East. The Form of their Churches
described. The Vestibulum or Porch.
The Narthex, and what in it. The Nave
or Body of the Church. The Ambo or
Reading Pew the station of the Faith-
ful. The isokratov or Chancel. The Alتا-
rium or Lords Table. The Bishops Throne
and Seats of the Presbyters. The Dia-
conion what. The Prothesis. Christi-
ans then beautified their Churches. Whe-
ther they had Altars in them. Decent
Tables for the Celebration of the Divine
Offices. Those frequently by the Fathers
styled Altars, and in what sense. They
had no such gaudy Altars as the Heathens
had in their Temples, and the Papists
now in their Churches. Altars when
began to be fixed and made of Stone.
Made Asylums and Places of Refuge,
and invested with many Privileges by
Christian Emperors. No Images in their
Churches for above four hundred years
pro'd out of the Fathers. Pictures in
Churches condemned by the Council of Illiberis. An Account of Epiphanius his tearing the Picture of Christ in the Church of Anablatha; and the great force of the Argument thence against Image worship. Christian Churches when first formally consecrated. The Encomenia of the Ancient Church. Our Wakes or Feasts in memory of the Dedication of particular Churches. What Incomes or Revenues they had in the first Ages. Particular Churches had some standing Revenues even under the Heathen Emperours. These much increased by the Pity of Constantine and the first Christian Princes; their Laws noted to that purpose. The Reverence shewed at their going into Churches, and during their stay there, even by the Emperours themselves.

THE Primitive Christians were not more heartily Zelous against the Idolatrous Worship of the Heathen Gods, than they were Religiously Observant of whatever concerned the Honour and Worship of the True, as to all the material Parts and Circumstances of it; as will easily appear, if we consider what Care they had about the place, time, per-
persons, and both the matter and manner Part. of that Worship that they performed to God. Under each of which we shall take notice of what is most considerable, and does most properly relate to it, so far as the Records of those Times give us an account of it.

Place is an inseparable Circumstance of Religious Worship; for every body by the natural necessity of its being requires some determinate place either for rest or motion: now the Worship of God being in a great part an External Action, especially when performed by the joyned concurrence of several persons, does not onely necessarily require a place, but a place conveniently capacious of all that joyn together in the same Publick Actions of Religion. This reason put all Nations even by the Light of Nature upon Erecting publick places for the Honour of their Gods, and for their own Conveniency in meeting together to pay their Religious Services and Devotions. But my present Inquiry reaches no further, than the Primitive Christians, not whether they met together for the discharge of their Common Duties; (which I suppose none can doubt of) but whether they had Churches fixed and appropriate
Primitive Christianity. Ch. 6.

Part 1. are Places for the joint performance of their Publick Offices. And that they had even in those Early Times, will I think be beyond all Dispute, if we take but a short Survey of those first Ages of Christianity. In the Sacred Story we find some more than probable Footsteps of some Determinate Places for their Solemn Conventions, and peculiar only to that Age. Of this nature was that Upper Room, or Upper Room, into which the Apostles and Disciples (after their return from the Ascension of our Saviour) went up, as into a place commonly known and separate to that use, there by Fasting and Prayer to make choice of a new Apostle; and this supposed by a very ancient Tradition to have been the same room wherein our Saviour the night before his Death celebrated the Passover with his Disciples, and instituted the Lord's Supper. Such a one, if not (which I rather think) the same, was that one place; wherein they were all assembled with one accord upon the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost visibly came down upon them. And this the rather because the Multitude (and they too strangers of every Nation under Heaven) came so readily to the place upon the first rumour of
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 127
of so strange an Accident, which could hardly have been, had it not been commonly known to be the Place where the Christians used to meet together. And this very Learned Men take to be the meaning of that Acts 2:46. They continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread with joy, not as we render it, from house to house, but at home, as 'tis in the margin, or in the house, they ate their meat with gladness and singleness of heart: i.e. when they had performed their daily Devotions at the Temple at the accustomed Hours of Prayer, they used to return home to this Upper Room, there to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, and then go to their ordinary Meals. This seems to be a clear and unforc'd Interpretation, and to me the more probable, because it immediately follows upon their assembling together in that one place at the day of Pentecost, which Room is also called by the same name of House, at the second Verse of that Chapter. And 'tis no ways unlikely (as Mr. Medc conjectures) but that when the first Believers sold their Houses and Lands, and laid the money at the Apostles feet, to supply the necessities of the Church, some of them might give their Houses (at least some
Part I. Some Eminent Room in them) for the Church to meet, and perform their Sacred Duties. Which also may be the reason why the Apostle writing to particular Christians, speaks so often of the Church that was in their house: which seems clearly to intimate not so much the particular persons of any private Family, living together under the same band of Christian Discipline, as that in such or such a House, (and more especially in this or that Room of it) there was the constant and solemn Convention of the Christians of that place, for their joint Celebration of Divine Worship. And this will be further cleared by that Famous Passage of S. Paul, where taxing the Corinthians for their Irreverence and Abuse of the Lords Supper, one greedily eating before another, and some of them to great Excess; What (says he) have you not Houses to eat and to drink in, or despise ye the Church of God? Where that by Church is not meant the Assembly meeting, but the Place in which they used to assembled; is evident partly from what went before, for their coming together in the Church; verse 18. is expounded by their coming together into one place, verse 20. plainly arguing that the Apostle meant not the per-
persons but the place; partly from the Part of Opposition which he makes between the Church and their own Private Houses; if they must have such Irregular Banquets, they had Houses of their own, where 'twas much fitter to do it, and to have their ordinary Repast, than in that place which was set apart for the Common Exercises of Religion, and therefore ought not to be dishonoured by such Extravagant and Intemperate Festivities; for which cause he enjoyns them in the close of that Chapter, that if any man hunger he should eat at home. And that this place was always thus understood by the Fathers of old, were no hard matter to make out; as also by most Learned men of later times, of which it shall suffice to intimate two of our own, Men of great Name and Learning, who have done it to great satisfaction.

Thus stood the Case during the Apostles Times; for the Ages after them we find that the Christians had their fixed and definite Places of Worship; especially in the Second Century, as had we no other Evidence, might be made good from the Testimony of the Author of that Dialogue in Lucian; (if not Lucian himself, of which I see no great cause to
Part 1; to doubt) who lived under the Reign of Trajan, and who expressly mentions that House or Room wherein the Chris-
tians were wont to assemble together.

And Clemens (in his Famous Epistle to the Corinthians) assures us, that Christ did not onely appoint the Times when, the Persons by whom, but the Places where he would be solemnly served and wor-
shipped. And Justin Martyr expressly af-
sirms, that upon Sunday all Christians (whether in Town or Countrey) used to assemble together in one place, which could hardly be done, had not that place been fixed and settled. The same we find afterwards in several places of Tertullian, who speaks of their coming into the Church and the House of God, which he elsewhvere calls the House of our Dove; i.e. our Innocent and Dove-like Religion, and there describes the very Form and Fashion of it. And in another place speaking of their going into the Water to be baptized, he tells us they were wont first to go into the Church to make their solemn Renunciation before the Bishop. About this time in the Reign of Alexander Severus the Emperour (who began his Reign about the Year 222) the Heathen Historian tells us, that
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity.

When there was a contest between the Part 1.
Christians and the Vintners about a certain
public place, which the Christians had seized and challenged for theirs, the Emperor gave the cause for the Chris-
tians against the Vintners, saying, 'Twas much better that God should be worshipped there any way, than that the Vint-
ers should possess it. If it shall be said, that the Heathens of those times generally accused the Christians for having no temples, and charged it upon them as a piece of Atheism and Impiety; and that the Christian Apologists did not deny it, as will appear to any that will take the pains to examine the places alleged in the margin. To this the An-
swer in short depends upon the notion which they had of a Temple, by which the Gentiles understood the places devoted to their Gods, and wherein their Deities were inclosed and shut up, places adorned with Statues and Images, with fine Altars and Ornaments. And for such Temples as these, they freely confessed they had none; no nor ought to have, for that the True God did not (as the Heathens supposed theirs) dwell in Temples made with hands, nor either needed nor could possibly be honoured by
Part 1. by them: and therefore they purposely abstained from the word Temple, and I do not remember that 'tis used by any Christian Writer for the Place of the Christian Assemblies, for the best part of the first three hundred years. And yet those very Writers who deny Christians to have had any Temples, do at the same time acknowledge that they had their Meeting places for Divine Worship, their conventicula, as Arnobius calls them, and complains they were furiously demolished by their Enemies.

If any desire to know more concerning this, as also that Christians had appropriate places of Worship for the greatest part of the three first Centuries, let him read a Discourse purposely written upon this subject by a most learned man of our own Nation; nor indeed should I have said so much as I have about it, but that I had noted most of these things, before I read his Discourse upon that subject.

Afterwards their Churches began to rise apace, according as they met with more quiet and favourable Times; especially under Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelian, and some other Emperours: of which Times Eusebius tells us, that
the Bishops met with the highest respect and kindness both from People and Governors. And adds; But who shall be able to reckon up the innumerable multitudes that daily flocked to the Faith of Christ, the number of Congregations in every City, those Famous Meetings of theirs in their Oratories or Sacred places, so great, that not being content with those old Buildings which they had before, they erected from the very Foundations more fair and spacious Churches in every City. This was several years before the times of Constantine, and yet even then they had their Churches of ancient date. This indeed was a very serene and sunshiny season, but alas it begun to darken again, and the clouds returned after rain; for in the very next Chapter he tells us, that in the Reign of Dioclesian there came out Imperial Edicts, commanding all Christians to be persecuted, the Bishops to be imprisoned, the Holy Bible to be burnt, and their Churches to be demolished and laid level with the ground; which how many they were, may be guessed at by this, that (as Op. tatus tells us) there were about this time above forty Basilicae or Churches in Rome only. Upon Constantines coming into
Part I. into a Partnership of the Empire, the Clouds began to disperse and scatter; and Maximinus (who then govern'd the Eastern Parts of the Empire) a bitter Enemy to Christians, was yet forced by a Publick Edict to give Christians the free liberty of their Religion, and leave to repair and rebuild their Churches, which shortly after they every where set upon, raising their Churches from the ground to a vast height, and to a far greater splendour and glory than those which they had before, the Emperours giving all possible Encouragement to it by frequent Laws and Constitutions: the Christians also themselves contributing towards it with the greatest Cheerfulness and Liberality, even to a Magnificence, comparable to that of the Jewish Princes towards the Building of Solomons Temple; as Eusebium tells them in his Oration at the Dedication of the famous Church at Tyre. And no sooner was the whole Empire devolved upon Constantine, but he published two Laws, one to prohibit Pagan Worship; the other commanding Churches to be built of a nobler size and capacity than before; to which purpose he directed his Letters to Eusebium and the
the rest of the Bishops to see it done. Part 1. within their several Jurisdictions, charg-
ing also the Governours of Provinces to be assisting to them, and to furnish them with whatever was necessary and convenient. Insomuch that in a short time the World was beautified with Churches and Sacred Oratories, both in Cities and Villages, and in the most barbarous and desert places, called wastlands, says the Historian, (from whence our Kirk and Church) the Lords Houses, because erected not to Men, but to the Honour of our Lord and Saviour. Twere needless to insist any longer upon the Piety of Christians in Building Churches in and after the Times of Constantine, the Instances being so vastly numerous; only I cannot omit what Nazianzen reports of his own Father, who (though Bishop of a very small and inconsiderable Diocese, yet) built a Famous Church almost wholly at his own Charge.

Thus we have seen that from the very Infancy of the Gospel the Christians always had their settled and determinate places of Divine Worship; for the Form and Fashion of their Churches, it was for the most part oblong, to keep (say some) the better Correspondence with...
Part I. with the fashion of a Ship, the common Notion and Metaphor by which the Church was wont to be represented, and to put us in mind that we are tossed up and down in the World as upon a Stormy and tempestuous Sea, and that out of the Church there's no safe Passage to Heaven, the Country we all hope to arrive at. They were generally built towards the East, (towards which also they performed the more Solemn parts of their Worship, the Reasons whereof we shall see afterwards in its due place) following herein the Custom of the Gentiles, though upon far other grounds than they did; and this seems to have obtained from the first Ages of Christianity; sure I am 'twas so in Tertullian's time, who opposing the plain and simple way of the Orthodox Assemblies to the skulking and clancular Conventicles of the Hereticks, who Serpent-like crept about in holes and corners, says he, *The House of our Dove-like Religion is simple, built on high and in open view, and reflects the Light as the Figure of the Holy Spirit, and the East as the representation of Christ.* It cannot be thought that in the first Ages, while the Flames of Persecution raged about their Ears, the Christian
Ch. 6. **Primitive Christianity.**

Christian Churches should be very stately and magnificent, but such as the condition of those Times would bear, their Splendour increasing according to the Entertainment that Christianity met with all in the World, till the Empire becoming Christian, their Temples rose up into grandeur and gallantry, as amongst others may appear by the particular Description which Eusebius makes of the Church at Tyre, mentioned before, and that which Constantine built at Constantinople in Honour of the Apostles, both which were incomparably Sumptuous and Magnificent.

I shall not undertake to describe at large the exact Form, and the several Parts and Dimensions of their Churches, (which varied somewhat according to different Times and Ages) but briefly reflect upon such as were most common and remarkable. At the Entrance of their Churches (especially after they began to arrive at more perfection) was the Vestibulum (called also Atrium and πόρτα) the Porch, in greater Churches of somewhat larger capacity, adorned many times with goodly Cloysters, Marble Columns, Fountains, and Cisterns of Water, and covered over for the Conveniency of those...
Part 1. Those that stood or walked there. Here stood the lowest Order of Penitents, beginning the Prayers of the Faithful as they went in. For the Church itself, it usually consisted of three parts; the first was the Narthex (which we have no proper word to render by) it was that part of the Church that lay next to the great door by which they entered in: in the first part of it stood the Catechumens, or first Learners of Christianity, in the middle the Buergamen, or those who were possessed by Satan; and in this part also stood the Font, or place of Baptismal Initiation; and towards the upper end was the place of the Hearers, who were one of the Ranks of Penitents. The second part contained the middle or main Body of the Church, (called by the Greeks Ναός, by the Latins Naves, from whence our term the Nave of the Church comes) where the Faithful assembled for the celebration of Divine Service, where the Men and the Women had their distinct apartments, left at such times unchaste and irregular Appetites should be kindled by a promiscuous interfering with one another: of which pious and excellent contrivance mention is made in an ancient Funeral Inscription found in the Vatican.
Cemetery at Rome; such as one buried Part to Sinistra Parte Virorum, on that side of the Church where the men sat. In this part of the Church next to the entering into it stood the Class of the Penitents, who were called Penance, because at their going out they fell down upon their knees before the Bishop, who laid his hands upon them. Next to them was the Ambo, the Pulpit or rather Reading Desk, whence the Scriptures were read and preached to the people. Above that were the Faithful, the highest Rank and Order of the People, and who alone communicated at the Lords Table. The third part was the Bema or incella, separated from the rest of the Church by near Rails, called Cancelli, whence our English word Chancel, to denote the part of the Church to this day: into this part none might come but such as were in Holy Orders, unless it were the Greek Emperors at Constantinople, who were allowed to come up to the Table to make their Offerings, and so back again; within this Division the most considerable thing was the θυρασιων, the Altar (as they Metaphorically called it, because there they offered the Commemorative Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood) or
Part I. or the Communion Table, (τισαρα ρεδημ, as it is frequently styled by the Greek Fathers) behind which at the very upper end of the Chancel was the Chair or Throne of the Bishop, (for so was it almost constantly called) on both sides whereof were the ρασθασεας, the Seats of the Presbyters, (for the Deacons might not here sit down.) The Bishops' Throne was raised up somewhat higher from the ground, and from hence I suppose it was that he usually delivered his Sermons to the People. Therefore Socrates seems to note it as a new thing in Chrysostom, that when he preached he went to sit ὅτι ὁ ἡμῶν, upon the Pulpit, (he means that in the Body of the Church, for so Sozomen tells us, that he sat in the Reading Desk in the middle of the Church) that by reason of his low voice he might be better heard of the People. Adjoyning to the Chancel, on the North side probably, was the Diaconicon, mentioned both in the Laodicean Council, (though I know both Zonaras and Balsamon, and after them the Learned Leo Allatius, will have another thing to be meant in that place) as also in a Law of Arcadius and Honorius against Heretics; and probably so called either be-
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 141

because peculiarly committed to the Part 1.
Deacon of the place, or (as the Great
Commentator upon that Law will have
it) because set apart יִּשְׂרָאֵל, to
some Sacred Services. It was in the na-
ture of our modern Vestries, the Sacristy,
wherein the Plate, Vessels, and Vesti-
ments belonging to the Church; and oth-
er things dedicated to Holy Uses, were
laid up, and where (in after times) Re-
liques and such like Fopperies were trea-
ured up with great care and diligence.
On the other side of the Chancel was
the Prothesis, or place where things were
prepared in order to the Sacrament,
where the Offerings were laid, and what
remained of the Sacramental Elements,
till they were decently disposed of. And
this may serve for a short View of the
Churches of those first Times, after they
began to grow up into some Beauty and
Perfection.

But though the Christians of those
Times spared no convenient cost in
Founding and Adorning Publick Places
for the Worship of God, yet were they
careful to keep a decent Mean between
a sordid slovenliness, and a too curious
and over nice superstitious. In the more
Early Times, even while the Fury and
Fierce-
Part: A. Fierceness of their Enemies kept them low and mean, yet they beautified their Oratories and Places of Worship; especially if we may believe the Author of the Dialogue in Lucian (whom we mentioned before, and who lived within the first Age), who bringing in one Critias; that was persuaded by the Christians, to go to the place of their Assembly; (which by his Description seems to have been an Upper Room) tells us that after they had gone up several Stairs, they came at last into an House or Room that was overlaid with Gold, where he beheld nothing but a Company of Persons with their Bodies bow'd down, and Pale Faces. I know the design of that Dialogue in part is to abuse and deride the Christians, but there's no reason to suppose he feigned those Circumstances, which made nothing to his purpose. As the Times grew better they added more and greater Ornaments to them; concerning two whereof there has been some Contest in the Christian World, Altars and Images. As for Altars, the first Christians had no other in their Churches than decent Tables of Wood, upon which they celebrated the Holy Eucharist; these 'tis true in allusion to
Ch. 6. Primitie Christianity.

The primitive Christians, to those in the Jewish Temple, the Fa-Pax, others generally called Altars; and truly enough, might do so by reason of those Sacrifices they offered upon them, viz. the Commemoration of Christ's Sacrifice in the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving, and the Oblation of Alms and Charity for the Poor, (usually laid upon those Tables) which the Apostle expressly styles A Sacrifice. These were the onely Sacrifices (for no other had the Christian World for many hundreds of Years) which they then offered upon their Altars, which were much of the same kind with our Communion Tables at this day. For that they had not any such fixed and gaudy Altars (as the Heathens then had in their Temples, and Papists still have in their Churches) is most evident, because the Heathens at every turn did charge and reproach them for having none, and the Fathers in their Answers did freely and openly acknowledge and avow it; asserting and pleading that the only true sacred Altar was a pure and a holy Mind, and that the best and most acceptable Sacrifice to God was a pious heart, and an innocent and religious life. Hac nostra sacrificia, hae Dei sacrum sunt: These (say they).
Part 1. they are our Oblations, these the Sacrifices we owe to God. This was the state of Altars in the Christian Churches for near upon the first three hundred years; till Constantine coming in, and with him Peace and Plenty, the Churches began to excel in Costliness and Bravery everyday, and then their Wooden and Moveable Altars began to be turned into fixed Altars of Stone or Marble, though used to no other purpose than before, and yet this too did not so universally obtain (though severely urged by Sylvester Bishop of Rome) but that in very many places Tables or Moveable Altars of Wood continued in use a long time after, as might easily be made appear from several Passages in Athanasius and others; yea even to S. Augustine's time, and probably much later, were it proper to my business to search after it. No sooner were Altars made fixed and immovable, but they were compassed in with Rails, to fence off Rudeness and Irreverence, and Persons began to regard them with mighty Observance and Respect; which soon grew so high, that they became Asylums and Refuges to protect Innocent Persons and Unwitting Offenders from immediate violence and oppression;
an Instance whereof Nazianzen gives Part 1. us in a Christian Widow, a Woman of great Place and Quality, who flying from the Importunities of the President, who would have forced her to marry him, had no other Way but to take Sanctuary at the Holy Table in S. Basil's Church at Caesarea. She was demanded with many fierce and terrible Threatnings, but the Holy Man stoutly refused, although the President was his Mortal Enemy, and sought only a pretence to ruine him. Many such Cases may be met with in the History of the Church. Nor was this a Privilege meerly founded upon Custom, but settled and ratified by the Laws of Christian Emperours; concerning the particular Cases whereof, together with the Extent and Limitation of these immunities, there are no less than six several Laws of the Emperours Theodosius, Arcadius, and Theodosius junior, yet extant in the Theodosian Code. But how far those Asyla's and Sanctuaries were good and useful, and to what evil and pernicious purposes they were imprvd in after times, is without the limits of my present task to inquire.

But if in those Times there was so little ground for Altars, (as us'd in the

Lib.9.tit. de his qui ad Ecclesias fugiunt.
Part 1. present sense of the Church of Rome, there was yet far less for Images; and certainly might things be carried by a fair and impartial trial of Antiquity; the Dispute would soon be at an end; there not being any one just and good Authority to prove that Images were either worshipped, or used in Churches, for near upon four hundred years after Christ; and I doubt not but it might have carried much further, but that my business lies mainly within those first Ages of Christianity. Nothing can be more clear than that the Christians were frequently challenged by the Heathens, as for having no Altars and Temples, so that they had no Images or Statues in them, and that the Christian Apologists never denied it, but industriously defended themselves against the Charge, and rejected the very thoughts of any such thing with Contempt and Scorn, as might be abundantly made good from Tertullian, Clem. Alexandrinus, Origen, Minutius Felix, Arnobius, and Latinius, many of whose Testimonies have been formerly pointed to. Amongst other things Origen plainly tells his Adversary (who had objected this to the Christians) that the Images that were to be
dedicated to God were not to be can. Part 1:
ted by the Hand of Artists, but to be
formed and fashioned in us by the Word
of God, viz. the virtues of Justice and
Temperance, of Wisdom and Piety, &c.
that conform us to the Image of his one-
ly Son. These (says he) are the only
States formed in our minds, and by
which alone we are persuaded to do
know to himself who is the Image of the
Invisible God, the Prototype and Archetypal
Pattern of all such Images. Had Chris-
tian then given Adoration to them, or
but let them up in their places of Wor-
ship, with what face can we suppose
they should have told the World, that
they so much slighted and abhorred
them? and indeed what a hearty De-
tention they universally shewed to any,
things that had but the least shadow of
holiness, has been before prov'd at
The Council of Illiberis that was can.36.2
In Spain some time before Constan-
"on expressly provided against it, de-
clining that no Pictures ought to be in the
Church nor that any thing that is worship-
ful and adored should be painted upon
walls. Words so clear and positive,
not to be evaded by all the little
isms and glosses which the Expositors
...
Part i. of that Canon would put upon it. The first use of Statues and Pictures in Publick Churches was meerly historical, or to add some Beauty and Ornament to the place, which after Ages improved into Superstition and Idolatry. The first that we meet with upon good Authority (for all the Instances brought for the first Ages are either false and spurious, or impertinent and to no purpose) is no elder than the times of Epiphanius, and then too met with no very welcom Entertainment, as may appear from Epiphanius his own Epistle translated by S. Hierom; where the story in short is this: Coming (says he) to Anabathra, a Village in Palestine, and going into a Church to pray, I espied a Curtain hanging over the door, whereon was painted the Image of Christ, or of some Saint; which when I looked upon, and saw the Image of a Man hanging up in the Church, contrary to the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, I presently rent it, and advis'd the Guardians of the Church rather to make use of it as a Winding-sheet for some Poor mans burying. Whereat when they were a little troubled, and said 'Twas but just, that since I had rent that Curtain I should change it; and give them ano-
another. I promis'd them I would, and Part. I. have now sent the best I could get, and pray entreat them to accept it, and give command that for the time to come no such Curtains, being contrary to our Religion, may be hung up in the Church of Christ; it more becoming your Place solicitously to remove whatever is offensive to, and unworthy of, the Church of Christ, and the people committed to your charge. This was written to John Bishop of Jerusalem, in whose Diocese the thing had been done: and the Case is so much the more pressing and weighty, by how the greater esteem and value Epiphanius (then Bishop of Salamine in Cyprus) for his great Age and Excellent Learning, had in the Church of God. This Instance is so home and pregnant, that the Patrons of Image Worship are at a mighty loss what to say to it, and after all are forced to cry out against it as supposititious. Bellarmin brings no less than Nine Arguments (if such they may be called) to make it seem probable: but had he been Ingenious, he might have given one Reason more true and satisfactory than all the rest, why that part of the Epistle should be thought forged and spurious, viz. be-
Part 1. close it marks so much against them. More might be produced to this purpose, but by this I hope it is clear enough, that the honest Christians of those times, as they thought it sufficient to pray to God without making their Addresses to Saints and Angels, so they accounted their Churches fine enough without Pictures and Images to adorn them.

Their Churches being built and beautified (so far as consisted with the Ability and Simplicity of those days) they thought to derive a greater value and esteem upon them by some peculiar confection; for the Wisdom and Piety of those times thought it not enough barely to devote them to the Publick Services of Religion, unless they also set them apart with Solemn Rites of a formal dedication. This had been an ancient custom both amongst Jews and Gentiles, as old as Solomon’s Temple, nay as Moses and the Tabernacle. When ‘twas first taken up by Christians is not easy to determine; only I do not remember to have met with the Footsteps of any such thing in any Approved Writer (for the Several Epistles every one knows what their Faith is) till the Reign of Constantine.
In his time Christianity being become more prosperous and successful, Churches were every where erected and repaired, and no sooner were so, but (as Eusebius tells us) they were solemnly consecrated, and the Dedications celebrated with great Fesitivity and Rejoycing. An Instance whereof he there gives of the Famous Church of Tyre, at the Dedication whereof he himself made that excellent Oration inserted into the Body of his History. About the thirtieth Year of his Reign he built a stately Church at Jerusalem over the Sepulchre of our Saviour, which was dedicated with singular Magnificence and Veneration, and for the greater Honour by his Imperial Letters he summoned the Bishops, who from all parts of the East were then met in Council at Tyre, to be present and assisting at the Solemnity. The Rites and Ceremonies used at these Dedications (as we find in Eusebius) were a great Confluence of Bishops and Strangers from all Parts, the Attendance of Divine Offices, singing of Hymns and Psalms, reading and expounding of the Scriptures, Sermons; and Orations, receiving the Holy Sacrament, Prayers, and Thanksgivings, Liberal Alms bestowed on the Poor, and
Part 1. great Gifts given to the Church, and in short mighty Expressions of Mutual Love and Kindness, and universal Rejoycing with one another. What other particular Ceremonies were introduced afterwards concern not me to inquire, only let me note, that under some of the Christian Emperours, when Paganism lay, gasping for Life, and their Temples were purged and converted into Christian Churches, they were usually consecrated only by placing a Cross in them, as the Venerable Ensign of the Christian Religion, as appears by the Law of Theodosius the Younger to that purpose. The memory of the Dedication of that Church at Jerusalem was constantly continued and kept alive in that Church, and once a year, to wit, on the 14th. of September, on which day it had been dedicated, was solemnized with great Pomp and much Confluence of people from all parts; the Solemnity usually lasting Eight days together. Which doubtless gave birth to that Custom of keeping anniversary days of Commemoration of the Dedication of Churches, which from this time forwards we frequently meet with in the Histories of the Church, and much prevailed in after Ages, some Shadow whereof still...
still remains amongst us at this day, in Part in the Wakes observed in several Counties, which in Correspondence with the Encænia of the Ancient Church, are Annual Festivals kept in Country Villages in Memory of the Dedication of their particular Churches.

And because it was a Custom in some Ages of the Church, that no Church should be consecrated till it was endowed, it may give us occasion to enquire what Revenues Churches had in those first Ages of Christianity. 'Tis more than probable that for a great while they had no other Publick Incomes, than either what arose out of those common Contributions which they made at their usual Assemblies, every one giving or offering according to his Ability or Devotion, which was put into a common Stock or Treasury, or what proceeded from the Offerings which they made out of the Improvement of their Lands, the Apostolick Canons providing that their First Fruits should, be partly offered at the Church, partly sent home to the Bishops and Presbyters. The care of all which was committed to the President or Bishop of the Church; (for who, says the Author of the fore-cited Canons, is fitter to be trust-
Part I. ed with the riches and revenues of the Church; than he who is intrusted with the precious souls of men) and by him disposed of for the Maintenance of the Clergie, the Relief of the Poor, or whatever Necessities of the Church. As Christianity increased, and Times grew better, they obtained more proper and fixed Revenues, Houses and Lands being setled upon them; for such 'tis certain they had even during the Times of Persecution; for so we had in a Law of Constantine and Licinius, where giving Liberty of Religion to Christians, and restoring them freely to the Churches which had been taken from them, and disposed of by former Emperours. They further add, And because (say they,) the same Christians had not only places wherein they were wont to assemble, but are also known to have had other Possessions, which were not the Propriety of any single person, but belonged to the whole Body and Community. All these by this Law we command to be immediately restored to those Christians, to every Society and Community of them what belonged to them. And in a Rescript to Anulinus the Proconsul about the same matter, they particularly specify whether
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity.

After they be Gardens of Houses, or what. Part 1.

ever else belonged to the Right and Propriety of those Churches, that with all speed they be universally restored to them; the same which Maximinus also Lib. 9. c. 7. (though no good Friend to Christians, yet either out of fear of Constantine, or from the Conviction of his Conscience, awakened by a terrible Sickness) had ordained for his Parts of the Empire. Afterwards Constantine set himself by all ways to advance the Honour and Interests of the Church. Out of the Tributes of every City, which were yearly paid into his Exchequer, he assigned a Portion to the Church and Clergy of that place, and settled it by a Law, which (excepting the short Reign of Julian, who revoked it) was, as the Hiltorian assures us, in force in his time. Where any of the Martyrs or Confessors had died without Kindred, or been banished their Native Country, and left no heirs behind them, he ordained that their Estates and Inheritance should be given to the Church of that place; and that whoever had seized upon them, or had bought them of the Exchequer, should restore them, and refer themselves to him for what Recompence should be made them.
Part I.  

He took away the Restraint which former Emperours had laid upon the Bounty of Pious and Charitable Men, and gave every man liberty to leave what he would to the Church. He gave Salaries out of the Publick Corn, which (though taken away by Julian) was restored by his Successor Jovianus, and ratified as a perpetual Donation by the Law of Valentinian and Marcellinus. After his Time the Revenues of Churches increased every day, Pious and Devout Persons thinking they could never enough testify their Piety to God, by expressing their Bounty and Liberality to the Church.

I shall conclude this Discourse by observing what respect and reverence they were wont in those days to shew in the Church, as the Solemn Place of Worship, and where God did more peculiarly manifest his Presence. And this certainly was very great. They came into the Churches into the Palace of the great King (as Chrysostom calls it) with fear and trembling, upon which account there presses the highest Modesty and Gravity upon them. Before their going into the Church they used to wash at least their Hands, as Tertullian probably in-
intimates, and Chrysostom expressly tells us, Part 1. 

Chrysost. 

hom. 52. in 

Matt. 463. 

hom. 

in Joan. 

72. p. 371.

Nay, so great was the Reverence which they bore to the Church, that the Empe- 

rors themselves, who otherwise never went without their Guard about them, yet when they came to go into the Church used to lay down their Arms, to leave their Guard behind them, and to put off their Crowns, reckoning that the less Ostentation they made of Power and Greatness there, the more firmly the Imperial Majesty would be entailed upon them, as we find it in the Law of Theo- 

dosius and Valentinian, inserted at large in- 
to the last Edition of the Theodosian Code. But of this we may probably speak more when we come to treat of the manner of their Publick Adoration.
CHAP. VII.

Of the Lords Day, and the Fasts and Festivals of the Ancient Church.

Time as necessary to Religious Actions as Place. Fixed Times of Publick Worship observed by all Nations. The Lords Day chiefly observed by Christians. Styled Sunday, and why. Peculiarly consecrated to the Memory of Christ's Resurrection. All Kneeling at Prayer on this Day forbidden, and why. Their Publick Assemblies constantly held up on this day. Forced to assemble before day in Times of Persecution; thence jeered by the Heathens as Latebroka & Lucifugax Natio. The Lords Day ever kept as a Day of Rejoicing; all Fasting upon it forbidden. The great care of Constantine, and the first Christian Emperors, for the Honour and Observance of this Day. Their Laws to that purpose. Their Constant and Conscientious Attendance upon Publick Worship on the Lords Day. Canons of Ancient Councils about Absenting from Publick
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

Publick Worship. Sabbath or Saturday kept in the East as a Religious Day, with all the Publick Solemnities of Divine Worship. How it came to be so. Otherwise in the Western Churches; observed by them as a Fast, and why. This not universal. S. Ambrose his Practice at Millan, and Counsel to S. Augustine in the case. Their Solemn Fasts either Weekly or Annual; Weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays, held till three in the Afternoon. Annual Fast that of Lent, how Ancient. Upon what account called Quadragesima. Observed with great strictness. The Hebdomada Magna, or the Holy Week, kept with singular Austerity, and the reason of it. Festivals observed by the Primitive Christians. That of Easter as Ancient as the Times of the Apostles. An account of the Famous Controversie between the Eastern and Western Churches about the keeping of Easter. The Intemperate Spirit of Pope Victor. Irenæus his Moderate Interposul. The Case finally determined by the Council of Nice. The Vigils of this Feast observed with great expressions of Rejoycing. The Bounty of Christian Emperours upon Easter Day. The Feast of Pentecost how Ancient. Why

Time is a Circumstance no less inseparable from Religious Actions than Place; for Man consisting of a Soul and Body, cannot always be actually en-
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity

engaged in the Service of God, that's the Part I. privilege of Angels and Souls freed from the Fetters of Mortality. So long as we are here, we must worship God with respect to our present state, and consequently of necessity have some definite and particular time to do it in. Now that Man might not be left to a floating uncertainty in a matter of so great importance, in all Ages and Nations men have been guided by the very Dictates of Nature to pitch upon some certain seasons, wherein to assemble and meet together to perform the Publick Offices of Religion. What and how many were the Publick Festivals instituted and observed either amongst Jews or Gentiles, I am not concerned to take notice of. For the Ancient Christians, they ever had their peculiar seasons, their solemn and stated times of meeting together to perform the common Duties of Divine Worship, of which because the Lord's Day challenges the Precedency of all the rest, we shall begin first with that. And being unconcern'd in all the Controversies which in the late times were raised about it; I shall only note some Instances of the Piety of Christians in reference to this Day, which I have observed.
Primitve Christianity. Ch. 7.

Part I. Served in passing through the Writers of those Times. For the Name of this Day of Publick Worship, it is sometimes (especially by Justin Martyr and Tertullian) called Sunday, because it happened upon that day of the week, which by the Heathens was dedicated to the Sun, and therefore as being best known to them, the Fathers commonly made use of it in their Apologies to the Heathen Governors. This Title continued after the World became Christian, and seldom it is that it passes under any other Name in the Imperial Edicts of the first Christian Emperours. But the more proper and prevailing Name was 

\[ \text{Rv. 1.10} \]

Dies Dominica, the Lords Day, as 'tis called by S. John himself, as being that Day of the Week whereon our Lord made his Triumphant Return from the Dead. This Justin Martyr assures us was the true Original of the Title: Upon Sunday (says he) we all assemble and meet together, as being the first day where, in God, parting the Darkness from the rude chaos, created the World, and the same day whereon Jesus Christ our Saviour rose again from the Dead; for he was crucified the day before Saturday, and the day after (which is Sunday) he
Ch. 7. Primitie Christianity. 163

he appeared to his Apostles and Disciples. By this means observing a kind of Analogy and Proportion with the Jewish Sabbath, which had been instituted by God himself. For as that day was kept as a Commemoration of God's Sabbath, or Resting from the Work of Creation, so was this set apart to Religious Uses, as the Solemn Memorial of Christ's Resting from the Work of our Redemption in this World, completed upon the day of his Resurrection. Which brings into my mind that Custom of theirs so universally common in those days, that whereas at other times they kneeled at Prayers, on the Lords Day they always prayed standing, as is expressly affirmed both by Justin Martyr and Tertullian; the reason of which we find in the Author of the Questions and Answers in Justin Martyr. It is (says he) that by this means we may be put in mind both of our Fall by Sin, and our Resurrection or Restoration by the Grace of Christ; that for six days we pray upon our knees, is in token of our Fall by Sin; but that on the Lords Day we do not bow the knee, does symbolically represent our resurrection, by which through the Grace of Christ we are delivered from our Sins and the Powers.
Part 1. of Death. This he there tells us was a Custom deriv'd from the very Times of the Apostles, for which he cites Irenæus in his Book concerning Easter. And this Custom was maintained with so much vigour, that when some began to neglect it, the great Council of Nice took notice of it, and ordained that there should be a constant uniformity in this case, and that on the Lords Day (and at such other times as were usual) men should stand, when they made their Prayers to God. So fit and reasonable did they think it to do all possible Honour to that Day, on which Christ rose from the Dead. Therefore we may observe all along in the Sacred Story, that after Christ's Resurrection the Apostles and Primitive Christians did especially assemble upon the first day of the week. And whatever they might do at other times, yet there are many passages that intimate, that the first day of the week was their more Solemn time of meeting. On this day it was that they were met together, when our Saviour first appeared to them, and so again the next week after. On this day they were assembled when the Holy Ghost so visibly came down upon them, when Peter preached that excellent Sermon, converted and bap-
baptized 3000 souls. Thus when S. Paul Part 1 was taking his leave at Troas, upon the first day of the week, when the Disciples came together to break bread, i.e. as almost all agree, to celebrate the Holy Sacrament, he preached to them, sufficiently intimating that upon that day 'twas their usual custom to meet in that manner. And elsewhere giving directions to the Church of Corinth (as he had done in the like case to other Churches) concerning their contributions to the poor suffering Brethren, he bids them lay it aside upon the first day of the week, which seems plainly to respect their religious Assemblies upon that day, for then it was that every one according to his Ability deposited something for the relief of the Poor, and the uses of the Church.

After the Apostles the Christians constantly observed this Day, meeting together for Prayer, expounding and hearing of the Scriptures, celebration of the Sacraments, and other Publick Duties of Religion. Upon the day called Sunday (says Justin Martyr) all of us that live either in City or Country meet together in one place: and what they then did he there describes, of which afterwards. This doubtless Pliny meant, when giving Lib. 10. 87. Trajan an account of the Christians, he 97.

 tells
Part 1. tells him, that they were wont to meet together to worship Christ sate die, upon a set certain day, by which he can be reasonably understood to design no other but the Lords day; for though they probably met at other times, yet he takes notice of this only, either because the Christians, whom he had examin'd, had not told him of their meeting at other times, or because this was their most publick and solemn convention, and which in a manner swallowed up the rest. By a violent persecutions of those times the Christians were forced to meet together before day, so Pliny in the same place tells the Emperor, that they assembled before day-light, to sing their morning hymns to Christ.

Whence it is that Tertullian so often mentions their nocturnal convocations; for putting the case that his Wife after his decease should marry with a Gentile-Husband, amongst other inconveniences he asks her, whether she thought he would be willing to let her rise from his Bed to go to their night-meetings; and in the case of persecution he tells Fabius, that if they could not celebrate Dominica solennia, their Lords-Day Solemnities in the day time, they had the
night sufficiently clear with the light of Part 1.

This gave occasion to their spightful Adversaries to calumniate and asperse them. The Heathen in Minutius charges them with their Night-congregations, upon which account they are there scornfully called Latebrota & lucifugax natio, an obscure and skulking generation. And the very first thing that Celsius objects is, that the Christians had Private and Clancular Assemblies or Combinations: to which Origen answers, that if it were so, they might thank them for it, who would not suffer them to exercise it more openly; that the Christian Doctrine was sufficiently evident and obvious, and better known through the world, than the Opinion and Sentiments of their best Philosophers; and that if there were some Mysteries in the Christian Religion which were not communicated to every one, 'twas no other thing than what was common in the several Sects of their own Philosophy.

But to return:

They looked upon the Lords Day as a time to be celebrated with great expressions of Joy, as being the happy Memory of Christ's Resurrection, and accordingly restrained whatever might favour of sorrow and sadness; fasting on that day they
Part 1. prohibited with the greatest severity, accounting it utterly unlawful, as Tertullian informs us. It was a very bitter Censure that of Ignatius (or whose soever that Epistle was, for certainly it was not his) that whoever fasts on a Lords Day is a Murderer of Christ; however 'tis certain, that they never fasted on those days, not in the time of Lent it self. Nay, the Montanists, though otherwise great pretenders to Fasting and Mortification, did yet abstain from it on the Lords Day. And as they accounted it a joyful and good day, so they did whatever they thought might contribute to the Honour of it. No sooner was Constantine come over to the Church, but his principal care was about the Lords Day; he commanded it to be solemnly observed, and that by all persons whatsoever; he made it to all a day of rest, that men might have nothing to do but to worship God, and be better instructed in the Christian Faith, and spend their whole time without any thing to hinder them in Prayer and Devotion, according to the Custom and Discipline of the Church. And for those in his Army who yet remained in their Paganism and Infidelity, he commanded them upon Lords Days to go out into
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

into the Fields, and there pour out their souls in hearty prayers to God. And that none might pretend their own inability to the Duty, he himself composed and gave them a short Form of Prayer, which he enjoyned them to make use of every Lords Day. So careful was he that this Day should not be dishonour'd or mis-employ'd, even by those who were yet strangers and enemies to Christianity. He moreover ordained, that there should be no Courts of Judicature open upon this Day, no Suits or Trials at Law, but that for any Works of Mercy, such as the emancipating and setting free of Slaves or Servants, this might be done. That there should be no Suits nor demanding Debts upon this Day, was confirmed by several Laws of succeeding Emperours; and that no Arbitrators who had the Umbrage of any business lying before them, should at that time have power to determine or take up Litigious Causes, Penalties being entail'd upon any that transgressed herein. Theodosius the Great (An. 386.) by a second Law ratified one which he had pasted long before, wherein he expressly prohibited all Publick Shows upon the Lords Day, that the Worship of God might not be confounded
Part I. Founded with those Prophane Solemnities. This Law the Younger Theodosius some few Years after confirmed and enlarged, Enacting, that on the Lords Day (and some other Festivals there mentioned) not only Christians, but even Jews and Heathens should be restrained from the pleasure of all Sights and Spectacles, and the Theatres be shut up in every place. And whereas it might so happen that the Birth-day or Inauguration of the Emperor might fall upon that Day, therefore to let the People know how infinitely he preferred the Honour of God before the Concerns of his own Majesty and Greatness, he commanded that if it should so happen, that then the Imperial Solemnity should be put off, and deferred till another day.

I shall take notice but of one Instance more of their great Observance of this Day, and that was their constant attendance upon the Solemnities of Publick Worship. They did not think it enough to read, and pray, and praise God at home, but made Conscience of appearing in the publick Assemblies, from which nothing but Sickness and absolute Necessity did detain them: and if Sick, or in Prison, or under Banishment, nothing trou-
troubled them more, than that they could not come to Church, and joyn their Devotions to the Common Services. If Persecution at any time forced them to keep a little close, yet no sooner was there the least Mitigation, but they presently returned to their open Duty, and publickly met all together. No trivial Pretences, no light Excuses were then admitted for any ones Absence from the Congregation, but according to the merit of the Cause severe Censures were passed upon them. The Synod of Illiberis provided, that if any man dwelling in a City (where usually Churches were nearest hand) should for three Lords Days absent himself from the Church, he should for some time be suspend the Communion, that he might appear to be corrected for his fault. They allowed no separate Assemblies, no Congregations but what met in the Publick Church. If any man took upon him to make a breach, and to draw people into corners, he was presently condemned, and a suitable Penalty put upon him. When Eustathius, Bishop of Sebastia, (a man pretending to great strictness and austerity of Life) began to cast off the Discipline of the Church, and to intro-
Part 1. duce many odd Observations of his own, amongst others, to contemn Priests that were married, to fast on the Lords Day, and to keep Meetings in Private Houses, drawing away many, but especially two men, (as the Historian observes) who leaving their Husbands were led away with error, and from that into great Filthiness and Impurity. No sooner did the Bishops of those parts discover it, but meeting in Council at Gangra, the metropolis of Paphlagonia, about the Year 340, they condemned and cast them out of the Church, passing these two Canons amongst the rest: If any one shall teach that the House of God is to be despised, and the Assemblies that are held in it, let him be accursed. If any shall take upon him out of the Church privately to preach at home, and making light of the Church shall do those things that belong only to the Church, without the presence of the Priest, and the leave and allowance of the Bishop, let him be accursed. Correspondent to which the Canons called Apostolical, and the Council of Antioch, ordain, that if any Presbyter setting light by his own Bishop, shall withdraw and set up separate Meetings, and erect another Altar, (i.e. says Zonaras, keep unlawful
lawful Conventicles, preach privately, Part \( \frac{1}{4} \) and administer the Sacrament) that in such a case he shall be deposed, as ambitious and tyrannical, and the people communicating with him be excommunicate, as being Factious and Schismatical; onely this not to be done till after the third Admonition. After all that has been said, I might further shew what esteem and value the first Christians had of the Lords Day, by those great and honourable things they have spoken concerning it; of which I'll produce but two passages; the one is that in the Epistle ad Magnesios, which if not Ignatius, must yet be acknowledged an Ancient Author. Let every one (says he) that loves Christ keep the Lords Day Festive, the Resurrection Day, the Queen and Empress of all days, in which our Life was raised again, and Death conquered by our Lord and Saviour: The other that of Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, who speaks thus; That both Custom and Reason challenge from us that we should honour the Lords Day, and keep it Festival, seeing on that day it was that our Lord Jesus Christ completed his Resurrection from the dead.

Next to the Lords Day the Sabbath or
Part I. or Saturday (for so the word Sabbatum is constantly used in the Writings of the Fathers, when speaking of it as it relates to Christians) was held by them in great Veneration, and especially in the Eastern parts honoured with all the publick Solemnities of Religion. For which we are to know, that the Gospel in those Parts mainly prevailing amongst the Jews, they being generally the first Converts to the Christian Faith, they still retained a mighty Reverence for the Mo- saick Institutions, and especially for the Sabbath, as that which had been appointed by God himself, (as the Memorial of his Rest from the Work of Creation) settled by their great Master Moses, and celebrated by their Ancestors for so many Ages, as the Solemn Day of their Publick Worship, and were therefore very loth that it should be wholly antiquated and laid aside. For this reason it seemed good to the prudence of those Times (as in others of the Jew- ish Rites, so in this) to indulge the Humour of that People, and to keep the Sabbath as a Day for Religious Offices. Hence they usually had most parts of Divine Service performed upon that Day; they met together for Publick Pray-
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

Prayers, for reading the Scriptures, celebration of the Sacraments, and such like duties. This is plain not only from some passages in Ignatius and Clemens his Constitutions, but from Writers of more unquestionable credit and authority. Athanasius Bishop of Alexandria tells us, that they assembled on Saturdays, not that they were infected with Juda-ism, but only to worship Jesus Christ the Lord of the Sabbath: and Socrates speaking of the usual times of their public meeting, calls the Sabbath and the Lords day the weekly Festivals, on which the Congregation was wont to meet in the Church, for the performance of Divine Services. Therefore the Council of Laodicea amongst other things decreed, that upon Saturdays the Gospels and other Scriptures should be read, that in Lent the Eucharist should not be celebrated but upon Saturday and the Lords day, and upon those days only in the time of Lent it should be lawful to commemorate and rehearse the names of Martyrs. Upon this day also as well as upon Sunday all Fasts were severely prohibited (an infallible argument they counted it a Festival day) one Saturday in the year only excepted, viz. that
Part 1. that before Easter Day, which was always observed as a Solemn Fast. Things so commonly known as to need no proof. But though the Church thought fit thus far to correspond with the Jewish Converts, as solemnly to observe the Sabbath; yet to take away all offence, and to vindicate themselves from Compliance with Judaism, they openly declared that they did it only in a Christian way, and kept it not as a Jewish Sabbath, as is expressly affirmed by Athanasius, Nazianzen, and others; and the forementioned Laodician Synod has a Canon to this purpose; that Christians should not Judaize, and rest from all labour on the Sabbath, but follow their ordinary works, (i.e. so far as consisted with their Attendance upon the Publick Assemblies) and should not entertain such thoughts of it, but that still they should prefer the Lord's Day before it; and on that day rest as Christians; but if any were found to Judaize, they should be accursed.

Thus stood the Case in the Eastern Church; in those of the West we find it somewhat different. Amongst them it was not observed as a Religious Festival, but kept as a constant Fast. The reason whereof (as 'tis given by Pope Innocent,
Ch. 7: Primitive Christianity.

Innocent in an Epistle to the Bishop of Eugubium, where he treats of this very case) seems most probable: if (says he,) we commemorate Christ's resurrection not only at Easter, but every Lord's Day, and fast upon Friday because 'twas the day of his passion, we ought not to pass by Saturday, which is the middle-tide between the days of grief and joy; the Apostles themselves spending those two days (viz., Friday and the Sabbath) in great sorrow and heaviness: and he thinks no doubt ought to be made but that the Apostles fasted upon those two days, whence the Church had a Tradition, that the Sacraments were not to be administered on those days, and therefore concludes, that every Saturday or Sabbath ought to be kept a Fast. To the same purpose the Council of Illibertis ordained, that a Saturday Festival was an error that ought to be reformed, and that men ought to fast upon every Sabbath. But though this seems to have been the general practice, yet it did not obtain in all places of the West alike. In Italy it self, 'twas otherwise at Milan where Saturday was a Festival; and 'tis said in the life of St. Ambrose, who was Bishop of that See, that he constantly dined
Part 1. dined as well upon Saturday as the Lords day, (it being his custom to dine upon no other days but those, and the memorials of the Martyrs) and used also upon that day to preach to the people; though so great was the prudence and moderation of that good man, that he bound not up himself in these indifferent things, but when he was at Millain he dined upon Saturdays, and when he was at Rome, he fasted as they did upon those days: This S. Augustine assures us he had from his own mouth; for when his Mother Monica came after him to Millain (where he then resided) she was greatly troubled to find the Saturday Fast not kept there, as she had found it in other places; for her satisfaction he immediately went to consult S. Ambrose, then Bishop of that place, who told him he could give him no better advice in the cause, that to do as he did: When I come to Rome (said he) I fast on the Saturday as they doe at Rome, when I am here I do not fast. So likewise you, to whatsoever Church you come, observe the custome of that place, if you mean not either to give or take offence. With this answer he satisfied his Mother, and ever after when he thought of it, looked up-
on it as an Oracle sent from Heaven. So part that even in Italy the Saturday Fast was not universally observed. Nay, a very learned man (and a Bishop of the Roman Church) thinks it highly probable, that for the first Ages especially, Saturday was no more kept as a Fast at Rome, than in the Churches of the East: though the great argument whereby he would establish it (viz.) because some Latin Churches, who must needs follow the pattern of the Church of Rome, did not keep it so) is very in firm and weak; and needs no more then that very instance of the Church of Milan to refute it, which though under the Pope's nose, did not yet keep that day as a Fast, although this was many years after it had been so established and observed at Rome.

And now that I am got into this business, I shall once for all dispatch the matter about their Fasts, before I proceed to their other Festivals. 'Tis certain the ancient Christians had two sorts of solemn Fasts, weekly and annual. Their weekly Fasts (called jejunia quarta & sexta feriae) were kept upon Wednesdays and Fridays, appointed so, as we are told, for this reason, because on Wed-
Part I. 

Wednesday, our Lord was betrayed by Judas. 

On Friday, he was crucified by the Jews.

This custom Epiphanius (how truly I know not) refers to the Apostles, and elsewhere tells us that those days were observed as Fasts through the whole world. These Fasts they called their Stations (not because they stood all the while, but by an allusion to the military Stations and keeping their Guards, as Tertullian observes, they kept close at it) and they usually lasted till the ninth hour. i.e. till three of the Clock in the afternoon, at which time having ended their Fasting devotions, they received the Eucharist, and then broke up the Station, and went home; whence it is that Tertullian calls them stationum semijejunia, the half Fasts of Stations: and he seems to sensibly the practice of some who having privately resolved upon an entire Fasting of the whole day, refused to receive the Eucharist at the publick Stationary Fasts, because they thought that by eating and drinking the sacramental Elements, they put a period to their Fasting: for it was usual in those times with many, after the Stationary Fasts were ended to continue and hold on the
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

The Fast until the evening. The Historian tells us that it had been a very ancient custom in the Church of Alexandria, upon these days to have the Scriptures read and expounded, and all other parts of Divine Service, except the celebration of the Sacrament, and that it was chiefly in those days that Origen was wont to teach the people: whether the omitting of the Sacrament then might be a peculiar custom to that Church, I know not; certain I am 'tis upon those days administered in other places. So S. Basil enumerating the times how oft they received it every week, expressly puts Wednesday and Friday into the number. The remains of these primitive Stations are yet observed in our Church at this day, which by her 15. Canon has ordained, That though Wednesdays and Fridays be not holy days, yet that weekly upon those times Minister and People shall resort to Church at the accustomed hours of prayer.

Their Annual Fast was that of Lent, by way of preparation to the Feast of our Saviour's Resurrection, this (though not in the modern use of it) was very ancient, though far from being an Apostolical Canon, as a learned Prelate of our Church...
Part I. Church has fully proved. From the very first Age of the Christian Church 'twas customary to fast before Easter; but for how long, it was variously observed according to different times and places; some fasting so many days, others so many weeks, and some so many days on each week; and 'tis most probably thought, that it was at first stiled 

Quadragesima, or Quadragesima, not because 'twas a Fast of forty days, but of forty hours, begun about twelve on Friday (the time of our Saviour's falling under the power of death) and continued till Sunday morning, the time of his rising from the dead. Afterwards it was enlarged to a longer time, drawn out into more days, and then weeks, till it came to three, and at last to six or seven weeks. But concerning the different observations of it in several places, let them who desire ro know more consult Socrates and Sozomen, who both speak enough about it. This Quadragesimal Fast was kept in those times with great piety and Religion, people generally applying themselves with all seriousness to acts of penance and mortification, whence Chrysostom calls Lent the remedy and Physick of our souls; and to
the end that the observation of it might be more grave and solemn, Theodosius M. and his Colleague Emperours passed two Laws, that during the time of Lent all process and enquiry into criminal actions should be suspended, and no corporal punishments inflicted upon any; it being unfit (as the second of those Laws expresses it) that in the holy time of Lent the body should suffer punishment, while the soul is expecting absolution.

But with what care forever they kept the preceding parts, 'tis certain they kept the close of it with a mighty strictness and austerity, I mean the last week of it, that which immediately preceded the Feast of Easter; this they consecrated to more peculiar acts of prayer, abstinence, and devotion; and whereas in the other parts of Lent they ended their fast in the evening, in this they extended it to the Cock-crowing, or first glimpse of the morning; to be sure they ended it not before midnight, for to break up the fast before that time was accounted a piece of great prophaneness and intemperance, as Dionysius Bishop of Alexandria determines in a Letter to Basilides, wherein he largely and learnedly states the case. This was the...
Part 1. *Hebdomada magna*, the great (or holy) week: so called (says Chrysostom) not that it has either more hours or days in it than other weeks, but because this is the week in which truly great and ineffable good things were purchased for us; within this time death was conquered, the curse destroyed, the Devils tyranny dissolved, his instruments broken, Heaven opened, Angels rejoiced, the partition-wall broken down; and God and man reconciled. For this cause we call it the great week, for this cause men fast and watch, and do Alms, to do the greater honour to it: the Emperors themselves, to shew what veneration they have for this time, commanding all Suits and Processes at Law to cease, Tribunal-doors to be shut up, and Prisoners to be set free, imitating herein their great Lord and Master, who by his death at this time delivered us from the prison and the Chains of sin; meaning herein those Laws of Theodosius, Gratian, and Valentinian, which we lately mentioned.

We proceed now to enquire what other Festivals there were in those first Ages of the Church, which I find to be chiefly these; Easter, Whitsuntide, and Epiphany.
Epiphany, which comprehended two, Part I.
Christmas and Epiphany properly so called. I reckon them not in their proper order, but as I suppose them to have taken place in the Church. Of these Easter challenges the precedence both for its antiquity, and the great stir about it. That in and from the very times of the Apostles (besides the weekly returns of the Lords day) there has been always observed an Anniversary Festival in memory of Christ's Resurrection, no man can doubt, that has any insight into the affairs of the ancient Church; all the dispute was about the particular time when it was to be kept, which became the matter of as famous a Controversie as any that in those Ages exercised the Christian world. The state of the case was briefly this: the Churches of Asia the less kept their Easter upon the same day, whereon the Jews celebrated their Passover, viz. upon the 1. day of the first Month (which always began with the appearance of the Moon) mostly answering to our March, and this they did, upon what day of the week soever it fell, and hence were stiled Quartodecimans, because keeping Easter quarta decima Luna, upon the
Part 14 day after the *neces* or appearance of the *Moon*. The other Churches, and especially those of the *West*, did not follow this custom, but kept *Easter* upon the Lords day following the day of the Jewish *Passover*, partly the more to honour the day, and partly to distinguish between Jews and Christians: the *Asia-ticks* pleaded for themselves the practice of the *Apostles*; *Polycarpus* Bishop of *Smyrna*, who had lived and conversed with them, having kept it upon that day, together with *S. John* and the rest of the *Apostles*, as *Irenæus* (who himself knew *Polycarpus*, and doubtless had it from his own mouth) speaks in a Letter about this very thing though himself was of the other side. And *Pallcrates* in a Letter to the same purpose, instances not only in *S. John*, but *S. Phillip* the *Apostle*, who himself and his whole Family used *so* to keep it, from whom it had been conveyed down in a constant and uninterrupted observance through all the Bishops of those places, some where-of he there enumerates, and tells us that seven Bishops of that place in a constant succession had been his Kinsmen, and himself the eight, and that it had never been kept by them upon any other day; this
this we are not so to understand, as if Part 1. S. John and the Apostles had instituted this Festival, and commanded it to be observed upon that day, but rather that they did it by way of condescension, accommodating their practice in a matter indifferent to the humour of the Jewish Converts (whose number in those parts was very great) as they had done before in several other cases, and particularly in observing the Sabbath or Saturday. The other Churches also (says Eusebius) had for their patronage an Apostolical Tradition, or at least pretended it: and were the much more numerous party. This difference was the spring of great bustles in the Church; for the Bishops of Rome stickled hard to impose their custom upon the Eastern Churches, whereupon Polycarpus comes over to Rome to confer with Anicetus, who was then Bishop about it; and though they could not agree the matter, yet they parted fairly. After this Pope Victor renewed the quarrel, and was so fierce and peremptory in the case, that he either actually did, or (as a learned man inclines rather to think, probably to mollify the odium of the fact) severely threatened to excommunicate those Eastern Churches
Part 1. Churches for standing out against it: this rash and bold attempt was ill resented by the sober and moderate men of his own party, who writ to him about it; and particularly Irenæus (a man, as Eusebius notes, truly answering his name, both in his temper and his life quiet and peaceable) who gravely reproved him for renting the peace of the Church, and troubling so many famous Churches for observing the customs derived to them from their Ancestors, with much more to the same purpose. But the Asian Bishops little regarded what was either said or done at Rome, and still went on in their old course, though by the diligent practices of the other party they lost ground, but yet still made shift to keep the cause on foot till the time of Constantine, who finding this controversy amongst others much to disquiet the peace of the Church, did for this and some other reasons summon the great Council of Nice, by whom this question was solemnly determined Easter, ordained to be kept upon one and the same day throughout the world, not according to the custom of the Jews, but upon the Lords day, and, this decree ratified and published by the Imperial Letters to all the Churches.
Ch. 7. *Primitive Christianity.*

The Eve of *Vigils* of this Festival Part I. were wont to be celebrated with more than ordinary pomp, with solemn watchings, with multitudes of lighted *Torches* *Nex. Or. 24* in *Pasch. Orat. 42.* both in the Churches and their own private houses, so as to turn the night itself into day, and with the general resort and confluence of all ranks of men, both Magistrates and people. This custom of lights at that time was, if not begun, at least much augmented by *Con-stantine,* who set up Lamps and Torches in all places as well within the Churches as without; that through the whole City the night seemed to outvye the Sun at Noonday. And this they did (as *Nazianzen* intimates) as a *prodromus* or forerunner of that great light, even the *Sun of Righteousness,* which the next day arose upon the world. For the *Feast* itself, the same Father calls it the holy and famous *Passover,* a day which is the *Queen* of days, the *Festival of Festivals,* and which as far excels all other, even of those which are instituted to the honour of *Christ,* as the *Sun* goes beyond the other *Stars.* A time it was famous for works of *mercy* and *charity,* every one both of *Clergy* and *Laity,* striving to contribute liberally to the poor; a duty
Part I. (as one of the Ancients observes) very congruous and suitable to that happy season, for what more fit, than that such as beg relief should be enabled to rejoice at that time, when we remember the common fountain of our mercies? Therefore no sooner did the morning of this day appear, but Constantine used to arise, and in imitation of the love and kindness of our blessed Saviour, to bestow the richest and most noble gifts and to diffuse the influences of his bounty over all parts of his Empire. And his example herein it seems was followed by most of his Successors, who used upon this Solemnity by their imperial Orders to release all Prisoners, unless such as were there for more heavy and notorious crimes, high Treason, Murders, Rapes, Incest, and the like. And Chrysostom tells us of a Letter of Theodosius the Great sent at this time throughout the Empire; wherein he did not only command, that all Prisoners should be released and pardoned; but wished he was able to recall those that were already executed; and to restore them to life again. And because by the negligence and remissness of messengers, or any accident those Imperial Letters might sometimes happen to
Ch.7. Primitive Christianity. 191

come to late, therefore Valentinian the Part 1. younger provided by a standing Law, that whether order came or not, the Judges should dispence the accustomed indulgence, and upon Easter day in the morning cause all Prisons to be open, the Chains to be knock'd off, and the persons set at liberty.

The next Feast considerable in those primitive times, was that of Whitunday, or Pentecost, a Feast of great eminency amongst the Jews, in memory of the Law delivered at Mount Sinai at that time, and for the gathering and bringing in of their Harvest; and of no less note amongst Christians for the Holy Ghosts descending upon the Apostles and other Christians, in the visible appearance of fiery cloven tongues, which hapned upon that day, and those miraculous powers that conferred upon them. It was observed with the same respect to Easter, that the Jews did with respect to their Passover; viz. (as the word imports) just fifty days after it, reckoning from the second day of that Festival: it seems to come to have commenced from the first rise of Christianity, not only because the Apostles and the Church were assembled upon that day, but because S.
Part 1. S. Paul made so much haste to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost, which they understand of his great desire to keep it there as a Christian Feast. But the argument seems to me no way conclusive; for the Apostle might desire to be there at that time, both because he was sure to meet with a great number of the Brethren, and because he should have a fitter opportunity to preach the Gospel to the Jews, who from all parts flocked together to the Feast, as our Saviour himself for the same reason used to go up to Jerusalem at all their great and solemn Feasts. But however this was, 'tis certain the observation of it is ancient, 'twas mentioned by Irenæus in a Book which he wrote concerning Easter, as the Author of the Questions and Responses in J. Martyr tells us by Tertullian, and after him by Origen more than once. This Feast is by us stiled Whitsunday; partly because of those vast diffusions of light and knowledge which upon this day were shed upon the Apostles, in order to the enlightening of the world; but principally because this (as also Easter) being the stated time for Baptism in the ancient Church, those who were baptized put on white Garments, in token of their
pure and innocent course of life they had Part i. now engaged in (of which more in its proper place:) this white Garment they wore till the next Sunday after, and then laid it aside; whence the Octave or Sunday after Easter came to be stiled Dominica in Albis, the Sunday in white, it being then that the new-baptized put off their white Garments. We may observe that in the Writers of those times the whole space of fifty days between Easter and Whitsunday goes often under the name of Pentecost, and was in a manner accounted Festival, as Tertullian informs us, and the forty third Canon of the Illiberitán Council seems to intimate. During this whole time Baptism was conferred; all Fasts were suspended and counted unlawful; they prayed standing as they did every Lords day; and at this time read over the Acts of the Apostles, wherein their sufferings and miracles are recorded; as we learn from a Law of the younger Theodosius, wherein this custom is mentioned; and more plainly from S. Chrysostom, who treats of it in an Homily on purpose; where he gives this reason why that Book which contained those actions of the Apostles which were done after Pentecost, O should
Part 1. Should yet be read before it, when as at all other times those parts of the Gospels were read which were proper to the season, because the Apostles miracles being the grand confirmation of the truth of Christ's Resurrection, and those miracles recorded in that Book, it was therefore most proper to be read next to the Feast of the Resurrection.

Epiphany succeeds; this word was of old promiscuously used either for the Feast of Christ's Nativity, or for that which we now properly call by that name: afterwards the Titles became distinct; that of Christ's Birth (or as we now term it Christmas-day) was called within the Nativity, and θεωρία the appearances of God in the flesh; two names importing the same thing as Nazianzen notes. For the antiquity of it, the first footsteps I find of it are in the second Century, though I doubt not but it might be celebrated before, mentioned by Theophilus Bishop of Cesaria, about the time of the Emperor Commodus: but if any credit might be given to the Decretal Epistles, it was somewhat elder than that, Pope Telephorus, who lived under Antoninus Pius, ordaining divine Service to be celebrated, and an angelical Hymn to
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

to be sung the night before the Nativity of our Saviour. However that it was kept before the times of Constantine, we have this sad instance. That when the persecution raged under Dioclesian, who then kept his Court at Nicomedia, amongst other acts of barbarous cruelty done there, finding multitudes of Christians young and old met together in the Temple, upon the day of Christ's Nativity, to celebrate that Festival, he commanded the Church doors to be shut up, and fire to be put to it, which in a short time reduced them and the Church to ashes. I shall not dispute, whether it was always observed upon the same day that we keep it now the twenty fifth of December; it seems probable that for a long time in the East it was kept in January, under the name, and at the general time of the Epiphania, till receiving more light in the case from the Churches of the West, they changed it to this day; sure I am S. Chrysostom, in an homily on purpose about this very thing affirms, that it was not above ten years since in that Church (i.e. Antioch) it began first to be observed upon that day, and there offers several reasons to prove that to be the true day of Christ's Nativity.
Part 1. The Feast of Epiphany, properly so called, was kept on the sixth of January, and had that name from a threefold apparition or manifestation commemorated upon that day, which all hapned, though not in the same year, yet upon the same day of the year. The first was the appearance of the Star, which guided the wise men to Christ. The second was the famous appearance at the baptism of Christ, when all the persons in the holy Trinity did sensibly manifest themselves, the Father in the voice from Heaven, the Son in the River Jordan, and the Holy Ghost in the visible shape of a Dove. This was ever accounted a famous Festival, and as S. Chrysostom tells us, was properly called Epiphany, because he came in a manner into the world incognito; but at his baptism openly appeared to be the Son of God, and was so declared before the world. At this time it was that by his going into the River Jordan he did sanctifie water to the mystical washing away of sin (as our Church expresseth it) in memory whereof, Chrysostom tells us, they used in this Solemnity at midnight to draw water, which they looked upon as consecrated this day, and carrying it home to lay it up, where it would remain
Ch. 7. *Primitive Christianity.*

remain pure and uncorrupt for a whole year, sometimes two or three years together, the truth whereof must rest upon the credit of that good man. The third *manifestation* commemorated at this time, was that of Christ's divinity, which appeared in the first miracle that he wrought in turning water into wine; therefore 'twas called Bethphània, because it was done in the house at that famous marriage in Cana of Galilee, which our Saviour honoured with his own presence. All these three appearances contributed to the solemnity of this festival.

But beside these, there was another sort of festivals in the primitive Church, kept in commemoration of *Martyrs*: for the understanding of which we are to know, that in those sad and bloody times when the Christian Religion triumphed over persecution, and gained upon the world by nothing more than the constant and resolute sufferings of its professors, whom no threatenings or torments could baffle out of it; the people generally had a vast reverence for those who suffered thus deep in the cause of Christianity, and laid down their lives for the confirmation of it. They looked
Part is looked upon Consciffors and Martyrs as the great Champions of their Religion, who refiised into blood, and dyed upon the spot to make good its ground, and to maintain its honour and reputation; and therefore thought it very reasonable to do all possible honour to their memories, partly that others might be encouraged to the like patience and fortitude, and partly that virtue even in this world might not loose its reward: Hence they were wont once a year to meet at the Graves of Martyrs, there solemnly to recite their sufferings and their triumphs, to praise their virtues, and to bless God for their pious examples, for their holy lives and their happy deaths, for their Palms and Crowns. These anniversary Solemnities were called memoria martyrum, the memories of the Martyrs; a Title mentioned by Cyriian, but certainly much older than his time; and indeed when they were first taken up in the Church is not exactly known; the first that I remember to have had with, is that of Polycarp (whose martyrdom is placed by Eusebius anno 168, under the third Persecution) concerning whose death and sufferings the Church of Smyrna (of which
he was Bishop) giving an account to the Church of Philomelium, and especially of the place where they had honourably entomb'd his bones, they do profess that (so far as the malice of their Enemies would permit them, and they prayed God nothing might hinder it) they would assemble in that place, and celebrate the Birth-day of his Martyrdom with joy and gladness: where we may especially observe, that this Solemnity is fixed in his Birth-day, and indeed is the primitive Christians used to call the days of their death and passion (quite contrary to the manner of the Gentiles, who kept the Natalitials of their famous men) looking upon these as the true days of their nativity, wherein they were freed from this Valley of tears, these regions of death, and born again unto the joys and happiness of an endless life. The same account Origen gives (if that Book be this, a very ancient Author however,) we keep (says he) the memories of the Saints, of our Ancestors, and Friends that dye in the faith both rejoicing in that rest which they have obtained, and begging for our selves a pious consolation in the faith: and we celebrate not the day of their nativity, as being
Part 1. the \textit{inlet} to sorrow and temptation, but of their \textit{death}, as the \textit{period} of their miseries, and that which sets them beyond the reach of temptations. And this we do, both \textit{Clergie} and \textit{People}, meeting together, inviting the poor and needy, and refreshing the Widows and the Orphans, that so our Festival may be both in respect of them whom we commemorate, the memorial of that happy rest which their departed souls do enjoy, and in respect of us, the \textit{odour} of a sweet \textit{smell} in the sight of God. Under \textit{Constantine} these days were commanded to be observed with great care and strictness, enjoying all his \textit{Lieutenants} and Governors of Provinces to see the \textit{memorials} of the \textit{Martyrs} duly honoured; and so sacred were they accounted in those days, that it was thought a piece of prophaneness to be absent from them; therefore S. \textit{Basil} thought he could not use a more solemn argument, to persuade a certain Bishop to come over to him upon this occasion, than to adjure him by the respect he bore to the \textit{memories} of the Martyrs, that if he would not do it for his, yet he should for their sakes, towards whom it was unfit he should shew the least disregard. Hence
it is that Libanius sometimes takes no part in the notice of the Christians under no other character than this, Enemies to the Gods, τὰς πρὸς ἀπολογισμοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, that haunt and frequent. Tombs and Repulchres. For the time of these assemblies it was commonly once a year, viz. upon the day of their martyrdom, for which end they took particular care to keep Registers of the days of the Martyrs' passions. So Cyprian expressly charges his Clergie to note down the days of their decease, that there might be a commemoration of them amongst the memories of the Martyrs. Theodoret tells us, that in his time they did not thus assemble once or twice, or five times in a year, but kept frequent memorials oftentimes every day celebrating the memorials of Martyrs, with hymns and praises unto God. But I suppose he means in days appointed to the memory of particular Martyrs, which being then very numerous, their memorials were distinctly fixed upon their proper days, the Festival of S. Peter, or S. Paul, Thomas, Sergius, Marcellus, &c. as he there enumerates them. For the places, these Solemnities were kept at first at the Tombs where the Martyrs had been buried, which usually were
Part 7. were in the Cemetery or Church-yard, distinct in those times from their places of Publick Worship, and at a great distance from them, as being commonly without the Cities. Here their burying were in large Cryptæ or Grots underground, where they celebrated these memorials, and whether they used to retire for their common devotions in times of great persecution, when their Churches were destroyed or taken from them. And therefore when Emilian the Governor of Egypt under the Reign of Diocletian, would suppress the persecution on all the Christians, he forbade their meetings, and that they should not so much as assemble in the places which they called their Church-yards, the same privilege which Maximinus also had taken from them. By reason of the darkness of these places, and their frequent assembling there in the night, to avoid the fury of their Enemies, they were forced to use Lights and Lamps in their publick meetings, but they who make this an argument to patronize their burning of Lamps and Wax-Candles in their Churches at Noon-day (as 'tis in all the great Churches of the Roman Communion) talk at a strange rate of wild improvidence.
consequence. I am sure S. Jerome when Part 1. charged with it, denied that they used any in the day time, and never but at night when they rose up to their night devotions. He confesses indeed 'twas otherwise in the Eastern Churches, where when the Gospel was to be read, they set up lights as a token of their rejoicing for those happy and glad tidings that were contained in it; light having been ever used as a symbol and representation of joy and gladness: A custom probably not much older than his time. Afterwards when Christianity prevailed in the world, the devotion of Christians erected Churches in those places, the Temples of the Martyrs (says Theo[dor] us) being spacious and beautiful, richly and curiously adorned, and shining with great lustre and brightness. These solemnities as the same Author informs us, were kept not like the Heathen Festivals with luxury and obscenity, but with devotion and sobriety, with divine Hymns and religious Sermons, with fervent prayers to God, mixed many times with lights and tears. Here they heard Sermons and Orations, joined in publick prayers and praises, received the holy Sacrament, offered gifts and charities for
Part I. for the poor recited the names of the Martyrs then commemorated with their due eulogies and commendations, and their virtues propounded to the imitation of the hearers. For which purpose they had their set Notaries who took the acts, sayings, and sufferings, of Martyrs, which were after compiled into particular Treatises, and were recited in these annual meetings, and this was the first original of Martyrologies in the Christian Church. From this custom of offering up prayers, praises, and alms at those times, it is that the fathers speak so often of oblations and sacrifices at the Martyrs' Festivals. Tertullian often, upon an anniversary day (says he) we make oblations for them that are departed, in memory of their Natalitias or Birth days, and to the same purpose elsewhere. As oft (says Cyprian) as by an anniversary commemoration we celebrate the passion days of the Martyrs, we always offer sacrifices for them; and the same phrases oft occur in many others of the Fathers. By which 'tis evident, they meant no more than their publick prayers, and offering up praises to God for the piety and constancy, and the excellent examples of their Martyrs, their celebrating the Eucharist.
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

Sacrifice at these times, as the commemo-
Pration of Christ's Sacrifice, their oblation
of alms and charity for the poor,
every one of which truly may, and often is stiled a sacrifice or oblation; and
are so understood by some of the more
moderate, even of the Romish Church:
and with good reason, for that they did
not make any real and formal sacrifices
and oblations to Martyrs, but only honour
them as holy men, and friends to God,
who for his and our Saviours honour
and the truth of Religion chose to lay
down their lives, I find expressly affirm-
ed by Theodoret.

These Festivals being times of mirth
and gladness were celebrated with great
expressions of Love and Charity to the
Poor, and mutual rejoicings with one
another. Here they had their Enunina,
or Feasts, every one bringing some-
thing to the common Banquet, out of
which the poor also had their share.
These Feasts at first were very sober
and temperate, and such as became the
modesty and simplicity of Christians, as
we heard before out of Theodoret, and cap. 12.
is affirmed before him by Constantine in p. 585.
his Oration to the Saints. But degene-
rating afterwards into excess and intem-
perance.
Perance, they were every where de-
claimed against by the Fathers, till they
were wholly laid aside. Upon the ac-
count of these Feasts, and for the bet-
ter making provisions for them, we may
conceive it was that Markets came to be
kept at these times and places, for of
such S. Basil speaks in his Pontificale
municipal: Markets held at the memorials
and Tombs of Martyrs; these he con-
demns as highly unsuitable to those So-
lemnities which were only instituted
for prayer and a commemoration of the
virtues of good men, for our encourag-
ment and imitation, and that they ought
to remember the severity of our other-
wise meek and humble Saviour, who
whipt the Buyers and Sellers out of the
Temple, when by their marketings they
had turned the House of Prayer into a
Den of Thieves. And the truth is these
anniversary commemorations, though in
their primitive institution they are high-
ly reasonable and commendable, yet
through the folly and dotage of men
they were after made to minister to
great Superstition and idolatry; so plain
is it that the best and usefulllest things
may be corrupted to bad purposes. For
hence sprung the doctrine and practice
of
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity: or
of prayer and invocation of Saints, and Part of their intercession with God, their worshipping of Reliques, Pilgrimages, and visiting Churches, and offering at the Shrines of such and such Saints, and such like superstitious practices, which in after Ages over-run so great a part of the Christian Church; things utterly unknown to the simplicity of those purer and better times.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the persons constituting the body of the Church, both people and Ministers.

The people distinguished into several ranks. Catechumens of two sorts. Gradually instructed in the principles of the Christian Faith. Accounted only Christians at large. The more recondite mysteries of Christianity concealed from persons till after baptism. Three reasons assigned of it. How long they remained in the state of Catechumens. The several classes of Penitents, the περασανίστες, ἀδελφαρίστες, ἀνωπληστες, μεταμαστες, the μοι,
or the faithful. Their particular stations in the Church. Their great reverence for the Lord's Supper. The Clergie why called epi. Of two sorts: the highest Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Bishops as superior to Presbyters how ancient by the most learned opposers of Episcopacy. their office and privilege, what. Chorepiscopi, who. Their power and privilege above Presbyters. The synodical or Visitors in every Diocess. Of Metropolitans, what their power and authority above ordinary Bishops; their antiquity. Of Patriarchs, and in what respects superior to Metropolitans and Archbishops. An account of conforming the external jurisdiction of the Church to the Civil Government of the Roman Empire. Presbyters their place and duty. Whether they preached in the presence of the Bishop. Deacons, their Institution, office, number. The Arch-Deacon. Of inferior orders. The Sub-deacon. The Acholythus. The Exorcist. The Reader. The Door-keeper. What the nature of their several places. Ordination to these Offices how managed. The people present at and consenting to the Ordination. Sacerdotes prædicari, what. The Christian discipline in this case imitated.
imitated by the Emperor Severus in appointing Civil Officers, Great Trials and Testimonials to be had of persons to be ordained. Clergy-men to rise by degrees. The Age usually required in those that were to be promoted to the several Orders. Of Deaconesses, their Antiquity, Age, and Office. The great Honour and Respect showed to Bishops and Ministers, Looked upon as Common Parents. Nothing of moment done without their leave. Their Welcome; and the Honour done them where ever they came. This made good by several Instances. Bishops invested with Power to determine Civil Controversies. The Plentiful Provision made for them. The great Privileges and Immunities granted by Constantine and his Successors to the Bishops and Clergy noted out of the Theodosian Code.

From the Consideration of Time and Place we proceed to consider the Persons that constituted and made up their Religious Assemblies; and they were either the Body of the people, or those who were peculiarly consecrated and set apart for the Publick Ministrations of Religion. For the Body of the peo-
Part 1. People, we may observe, that as Christianity, at first generally gain'd admission in great towns and cities, so all the believers of that place usually assembled and met together; the Christians also of the neighbour villages resorting thither at times of publick worship. But religion increasing apace, the publick assembly, especially in the greater cities, quickly began to be too vast and numerous to be managed with any order and convenience, and therefore they were forced to divide the body into particular congregations, who had their pastors and spiritual guides set over them, but still were under the superintendency and care of him that was the president or bishop of the place. And according as the church could form and establish its discipline, the people either according to their seniority and improvement, or according to the quality of the present condition, they were under began to be distinguished into several ranks and classes, which had their distinct places in the church, and their gradual admission to the several parts of the publick worship. The first were the catechumens, and of these there were two sorts, the profane, or more perfect, such
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity, such as had been Catechumen, of some Part 1: considerable standing, and were even ripe for Baptism; these might stay not only the Reading of the Scriptures, but to the very last part of the first Service. The others were the audaces, the more rude and imperfect, who stood only amongst the Hearers, and were to depart the Congregation as soon as the Lessons were read: these were as yet accounted Heathens, who applied themselves to the Christian Faith, and were catechized and instructed in the more plain grounds and rudiments of Religion. These Principles were gradually delivered to them, according as they became capable to receive them, first the more plain; and then the more difficult. Indeed they were very shy of imparting the Knowledge of the more recondite Doctrines of Christianity to any till after Baptism. So S. Cyril, Prof. ad Catech. R. cap. 13, expressly assures us, where speaking to the illuminato or Baptize; if during the Catechetical Exercise (says he) a Catechumen shall ask thee, what that means which the Preachers say, tell him not, for he is yet without, and these mysteries are delivered to thee onely. The weak Understanding of a Catechumen being no more able to bear such sub-
Part 1. sublime mysteries, than a Sick man's Head can large and immoderate Draughts of Wine. And at the end of his Preface he has this Note, *These Catechetical Discourses may be read by those that are to be baptized, or the Faithful already baptized: but to Catechumens, or such as are no Christians, thou mayest not impart them; for if thou dost, expect to give an account to God.*

S. Basil discoursing of the Rites and Institutions of Christianity, divides them into two parts, the τα κηρύγματα and the τα λόγια. The τα κηρύγματα were those parts of Religion which might be familiarly preached and expounded to the people: The τα λόγια were the more sublime and hidden Doctrines and parts of the Christian Faith; and these were ἀκριβώς, things not rashly and commonly to be divulged, but to be locked up in silence. Of this nature were the Doctrines of the Trinity and Hypostatic Union, and such like, especially of the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. For though they acquainted their Young Heaters with so much of them as was necessary to stir up their Desires, yet as to the main of the things themselves, the Sacramental Symbols, the man-
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity.

manner of their Celebration, the mode of the Divine Presence at the Holy Eucharist, the meaning of all those mystical Rites and Ceremonies that were used about them, these were carefully concealed both from Strangers and Catechumens, and communicated only to those who were solemnly initiated and baptized. Hence that ancient form so common in the Sermons and Writings of the Fathers, whereby when accidentally discoursing before the people of any of these Mysterious parts of Religion, they used to fetch themselves off with an ΤΙΣ ΑΞΙΝ ΟΙ MEMYHMEN ΟΙ Those that are initiated know what is said. This was so usual, that this Phrase occurs at least fifty times in the Writings of S. Chrysostom onely, as Casaubon hath observed: who has likewise noted three Reasons out of the Fathers why they so studiously concealed these parts of their Religion. First, the nature of the things themselves, so sublime and remote from Vulgar Apprehensions, that they would signify little to Pagans or Catechumens not yet fully instructed and confirmed in the Faith, and would either be lost upon them, or in danger to be derided by them. Secondly, that hereby the
Part 1. Catechumens and younger Christians might be inflamed with a greater Eagernefs of desire to partake of the Mysteries and Privileges of the Faithful; Human Nature being desirous of nothing more than the Knowledge of what is kept and conceal'd from us. To help them forwards in this, S. Augustine tells us, that in their Publick Prayers they were wont to beg of God to inspire the Catechumens with a desire of Baptifmal Regeneration. The same account Chrysostoms gives us, this being part of the Form used in their Publick Service. Let us pray that the most gracious and mercifull God would hear the prayers of the Catechumens; and what it was they prayed for he presently adds, viz. that they might no longer remain in that State. Upon these accounts integration by Baptifm, but especially admission to the Lords Supper, is amongst other Titles in the Writers of those Times called Desiderata, because so earnestly desired and sought for by those that were not yet taken in. The truth is, till persons arrived at this State they were not accounted Christians, (or but in a large fense as Candidates that stood in order to it;) and therefore could not satisfy themselves either to
Ch. 8. Promulgate Christianity!

...to live or die in that condition, where in they wanted the great seals and pledges of their Christianity. Thirdly, to get in men's minds the higher esteem and veneration for these religious mysteries, nothing producing a greater contempt even in sacred things, than too much openness and familiarity. So that a little obscurity and concealment might seem necessary to vindicate them from contempt, and secure the majesty and reverence that was due to them. This made the fathers and seniors of the Church (says S. Basil) in prescribing rites and laws, leave many things in the dark, behind the veil and curtain, that they might towards us, vessels holy, preserve the sacredness and dignity that was due to the mysteries of religion. For a thing (says he) cannot properly be said to be a mystery when 'tis once exposed to every vulgar and common ear. But of this enough, if not too much.

And as they were careful to keep the higher parts of Christianity within the cognizance of the faithful, so they were not less careful to teach and instruct the catechumens in all those principles they were capable of being taught. This at their first coming over was done privately...
Part privately and at home, by persons deputed on purpose to that office by the Bishop, (as Basilan clearly intimates) till they were sufficiently instructed in the first and more intelligible Principles of the Faith. Then they were admitted into the Congregation, and suffered to be present at some parts of the Divine Service, especially the Sermons, which were made for the building them up unto higher Measures of Knowledge; which being eried, they were commanded to depart the Church, not being suffered to be present at the more Solemn Rites, especially the Celebration of the Lords Supper. And in this manner they were trained up, till they were initiated by Baptism, and taken into the highest form of Christians. How long persons remained in the state of the Catechumens is difficult to determine, it not being always nor in all places alike, but longer in some, and shorter in others, and probably according to the Capacity of the persons. The Apostolic Constitutions appoint three years for the Catechumen to be instructed; but provide withall that if any one be diligent and virtuous, and have a ripeness of understanding for the thing, he may be admitted to Baptism sooner.
honour: for (say they) not the space of part 1. time, but the fitness and manners of men, are to be regarded in this matter.

The next fort were the Penitents, such as for some Misdemeanours were under the Censures and Severity of the Church, and were gradually to obtain Absolution from it. Of these there were several Degrees, five especially mentioned by S. Gregory of Neo-Cæsarea, who liv'd about the Year 250. The first were the Agygnalov, such as wept and lamented and were rather Candidates to be received into the Order of Penitents, than Penitents properly so called. These usually stood in a squalid and mournful Habit at the Church Porch, with tears and great importunity begging of the Faithful, as they went in, to pray for them. The second were the Agygnalov, the Hearers, who were admitted to hear the Holy Scriptures read and expounded to the people. Their station was at the upper end of the Narthex, or first part of the Church, and were to depart the Congregation at the same time with the Catechumens. The third Class of Penitents was that of the Agygnalov, the Prostrate, because Service being ended they fell down before the Bishop, who together with
Part I. with the Congregation falling down and making confession in their behalf, after rais'd them up, and laid his Hands upon them. These stood within the Body of the Church next the Pulpit or Reading Pew, and were to depart together with the Catechumenens. The fourth were the ξυνεκδύων, the Consistentes, such as stayed with the rest of the Congregation, and did not depart with the Catechumenens, but after they and the other Penitents were gone out, stayed and joyned in Prayer and Singing (but not in Receiving the Sacrament) with the Faithful. These after some time were advanced into the fifth and last order of the Communicantes, (ὑδην ὑψὸν εὐαγγελίων, S. Gregory calls it) and were admitted to the Participation of the Holy Sacrament. This was the state of the Penitents in the Primitive Church. Persons having fully passed through the state of the Catechumenate, became then immediate Candidates of Baptism, presented their names to the Bishop, and humbly prostrating themselves, begged that they might be entered into the Church. These were called Competentes, because they did competere gratiam Christi, sue for the grace of Christ conferred in Baptism. The last Rank
Rank was that of theRET; or the Faith-Part 1. full, who having been baptized and confirmed, and having approved themselves by the long train and course of a strict pious life, were then admitted to the participation of the Lords Supper, which being the Highest and most Venerable Mystery of the Christian Religion, was not then rashly given to any, but to such only as had run through all other Degrees, and by a course of Piety evidenced themselves to be such real and faithful Christians, as that the highest Mysteries and most Solemn parts of Religion might be committed to them. This was the highest Order, and looked upon with great regard, and for any of this Rank to lapse and be overtaken with a fault, cost them severer penances than were imposed upon the inferior Forms of Christians.

This in short was the state of the people. But because 'tis not possible any Body or Community of Men should be regularly managed without some particular persons to superintend, direct, and govern the Affairs of the whole Society, therefore we are next to enquire what persons there were in the Primitive Church, that were peculiarly set apart to
Part 1. to steer its Affairs, and to attend upon the Publick Offices and Ministrations of it. That God always had a peculiar people, whom he selected for himself out of the rest of Mankind, is too evident to need any proof. Such were the Patriarchs, and the holy Seed of old: such the Jews, chosen by him above all other Nations in the World. This was his peculiar, his particular Lot and Portion, comprehending the Body of the People in general. But afterwards this Title was confin'd to narrower bounds, and became appropriate to that Tribe which God had made choice of to stand before him, to wait at his Altar, and to minister in the Services of his Worship. And after the expiration of their Oeconomy, was accordingly used to denote the Ministry of the Gospel, the persons peculiarly consecrated and devoted to the Service of God in the Christian Church: the Clergy being those, qui Divino cultui ministeria religionis impendunt (as they are defined in a Law of the Emperor Constantine) who are set apart for the Ministries of Religion in matters relating to the Divine Worship. Now the whole ναόδες εστὶν, (as tis often called in the Apostles Canons,) the roll of the
Ch. 8. **Primitive Christianity.**

the Clergie of the ancient Church (taking Part 1, it within the compass of its first four hundred years) consisted of two sorts of persons; the **Legates**, who were peculiarly consecrated to the more proper and immediate acts of the Worship of God: and the **Evangelists**, such as were set apart only for the more mean and common Services of the Church. Of the first sort were these three, Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.

The first and principal Officer of the Church was the President or Bishop usually chosen out of the Presbyters. I shall not here concern myself in the Disputes, whether Episcopacy as a superior order to Presbytery, was of Divine Institution (a Controversie sufficiently ventilated in the late times) it being enough to my purpose, what is acknowledged both by Blondel and Salmasius, the most learned Defenders of Presbytery, that Bishops were distinct from and superior to Presbyters in the second Century, or the next age to the Apostles. The main Work and Office of a Bishop was to teach and instruct the people, to administer the Sacraments, to absolve Penitents, to excommunicate obdurate and incorrigible Offenders; to
Part I. preside in the Assemblies of the Clergy, to ordain inferior Officers in the Church, to call them to account, and to suspend, or deal with them according to the nature of the Offence, to urge the observance of Ecclesiastical Laws, and to appoint and institute such indifferent Rites, as were for the decent and orderly Administration of His Church. In short, according to the Notation of his Name he was σκοτώς, a Watchman and Sentinel, and therefore oblig'd ἐποικοδομεῖν, diligently and carefully to inspect and observe, to superintend and provide for those that were under his Charge. This Zonaras tells us was implied in the Bishops Throne, being placed on high in the most eminent part of the Church, to denote how much it was his Duty from thence to overlook, and very diligently to observe the People that were under him. These and many more were the unquestionable Rights and Duties of the Episcopal Office; which because it was very difficult and troublesome for one man to discharge, especially where the σπασίλα, or Diocese, (as we now call it) was any thing large, therefore upon the multiplying of Country Churches, it was thought fit to take in a subordinate fort
sort of Bishops called Chorepiscopi, Country or (as amongst as they have been called) Suffragan Bishops, whose business it was to superintend and inspect the Churches in the Country, that lay more remote from the City where the Episcopal See was, and which the Bishop could not always inspect and oversee in his own person. These were the Visarii Episcoporum, (as they are called in Isodores Version of the thirteenth Canon both of the Antiochian and Neocezarean Council) the Bishops Deputies, chosen out of the fittest and gravest persons. In the Canon of the last mentioned Council they are said to be chosen in imitation of the Seventy, not the seventy Elders which Mosia took into part of the Government, (as some have glossed the words of that Canon) but of the seventy Disciples, whom our Lord made choice of, to send up and down the Countries to preach the Gospel, as both Zephyrus and Balsamon understand it. And these upon by reason of their great care and pains are commanded to be esteemed very honourable. Their Authority was much greater than that of Presbyters, and yet much inferior to the Bishop. Bishops, really they were, though their power
Part. 1. power confin'd within narrow limits, they were not allowed to ordain either Presbyters or Deacons, (unless peculiarly licens'd to it by the Bishop of the Diocese) though they might ordain Sub-deacons, Readers, and any inferior Officers under them. They were to be assistent to the Bishop, might be present at Synods and Councils, (to many whereof we find their Subscriptions) and had power to give Letters of peace, i.e. such Letters, whereby the Bishop of one Diocese was wont to recommend any of his Clergy to the Bishop of another, that so a fair Understanding and Correspondence might be maintained between them; a Privilege expressly denied to any Presbyter whatsoever. But lest this wandring Impeachment of the Choripisci should reflect any dishonour upon the Episcopal Office, there were certain Presbyters appointed in their room, (called mprosant, or Vissers, often mentioned in the ancient Canons and Acts of Councils) who being tied to no certain place, were to go up and down the Country, to observe and correct what was amiss. And these doubtless were those ἐναντίον πρεσβυτέρων, (spoken of in the thirteenth Canon of the Nēbcafarean Coun-
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity.

Council of the Presbyters who are Partly there forbid to consecrate the Eucharist in the City Church, in the presence of the Bishop on the Presbyters, of the City.

As Christianity increased and overspread all parts, and especially the Cities of the Empire, it was found necessary that farther to enlarge the Episcopal Office; and as there was commonly a Bishop in every great City, as in the Metropolis (as the Romans called it) the Mother City of every Province (wherein they had Courts of Civil Judicature); there was an Archbishop or a Metropolitan, who had Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction over all the Churches within that Province. He was superior to all the Bishops within those limits; to him it belonged either to ordain or to raise the elections and ordinations of all the Bishops within his Province, in so much that without his confirmation, they were looked upon as null and void. Once at least, every year he was to summon the Bishops under him to a Synod, to enquire into and direct the Ecclesiastical affairs within that Province; to inspect the lives and manners, the opinions and principles of his Bishops, to admonish, reprove, and suspend them that were disorderly and irregul-
Part I. irregular; if any controversies or contentions happened between any of them, he was to have the hearing and determination of them; and indeed no matter of moment was done within the whole Province without first consulting him in the case. Besides this Metropolitan there was many times another in the same Province, who enjoyed nothing but that name and title; his Episcopal see being by the Emperor's Pragmatic erected into the dignity of a Metropolitan. He was only an Honorary Metropolitan, without any real power and jurisdiction, and had no other privilege, but that he took place above other ordinary Bishops, in all things equally subject with them, to the Metropolitan of the Province, as the Council of Chalcedon determines in this case. When this Office of Metropolitan first began, I find not, only this we are sure of, that the Council of Nice, seeing the just rights and privileges of Metropolitan Bishops speaks of them as a thing of ancient date, willing in the Canon with an alia tunc, let ancient Customs still take place. The original of the institution seems to have been partly to comply with peoples occasions, who often resorted
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity; referred to the Metropolis for dispatch of their affairs, and so might duly discharge their Civil and Ecclesiastical concerns both at once, and partly because of the great confluence of people to that City, that the Bishop of it might have preeminence above the rest, and the honour of the Church bear some proportion to that of the State.

After this sprang up another branch of the Episcopal Office, as much superior to that of Metropolitans, as theirs was to ordinary Bishops, these were called Primates and Patriarchs, and had jurisdiction over many Provinces. For the understanding of this it's necessary to know, that when Christianity came to be fully settled in the world, they contrived to model the external Government of the Church, as near as might be to the Civil Government of the Roman Empire; the parallel most exactly drawn by an ingenious person of our own Nation: the sum of it is this: The whole Empire of Rome was divided into thirteen Dioceses (so they called these divisions) these contained about one hundred and twenty Provinces, and every Province several Cities. Now as in every City there was a temporal Magistrate...
Part 1. State for the executing of justice, and keeping peace both for that City, and the Towns round about it, so was there also a Bishop for spiritual order and Government, whose jurisdiction was of like extent and latitude. In every Province there was a Proconsul or President, whose seat was usually at the Metropolis or chief City of the Province; and here all inferior Cities came for judgment in matters of importance. And in proportion to this there was in the same City an Archbishop or Metropolitan for matters of Ecclesiastical concernment. Lastly, in every Diocese the Emperors had their Vicar or Lieutenants, who dwelt in the principal City of the Diocese, where all imperial Edicts were published, and from whence they were sent abroad into the several Provinces, and where was the chief Tribunal, where all Causes not determinable elsewhere were decided. And to answer this, there was in the same City a Primate, to whom the last determination of all appeals from all the Provinces in differences of the Clergy, and the Sovereign care of all the Dioceses for sundry points of spiritual Government did belong. This is short is the sum of the account which that learned
learned man gives of this matter. So that Part 1.
the Patriarch as superior to Metropolitan, was to have under his jurisdiction
not any one single Province, but a whole
Diocese (in the old Roman notion of that
word) consisting of many Provinces. To
him belonged the ordination of all the
Metropolitan that were under him, as
also the summoning them to Councils,
the correcting and reforming the misde-
meanours they were guilty of, and from
his judgment and sentence in things pro-
perly within his cognizance there lay
no appeal. To this I shall only add what
Salmasiüs has noted, that as the Diocese De Primat.
that was governed by the Vicariüs had
many Provinces under it, so the Prefectus
Pratorio had several Diocesses under him:
and in proportion to this probably it
was, that Patriarchs were first brought
in, who if not superior to Primates in
jurisdiction and power, were yet in hon-
our by reason of the dignity of those
Cities where their Sees were fixed, as
at Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, An-
tioch, and Jerusalem, a title and dignity
which they retain to this day.

The next Office to Bishops was that
of Presbyters, to whom it belonged
to preach to the people, to administer
Part 1. Baptists, consecrate the Eucharist, and so be assistant to the Bishop both in publick ministrations, and in dispatching the affairs of the Church. The truth is, the Presbyters of every great City were a kind of Ecclesiastical Senate, under the care and presidency of the Bishop, whose counsel and assistance he made use of in ruling those Societies of Christians that were under his charge and government, and were accordingly reckoned next in place and power to him: thus described by S. Gregory in his Iambics;

The venerable Senate of Presbyters, that preside over the people, and possess the second Thorne, i.e. the place next to the Bishop: they are called Clerici superioris loci, and otherwhiles (unless we understand it of the Chorepiscopi) Antistes in secundo ordine; and accordingly in Churches had seats of eminency placed for them next to the Bishops Throne. Whereby was implied (says Zonaras) that they ought to use a proportionable care and providence
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity.

providence towards the people, to in Part 1 form and teach them, to direct and guide them, being appointed as Fellow-labourers with, and Assistants to the Bishop. But though Presbyters by their ordination had a power conferred upon them to administer holy things; yet after that the Church was settled upon foundations of order and regularity, they did not usually exercise this power within any Diocese, without leave and authority from the Bishop, much less take upon them to preach in his presence. This custom (however it might be otherwise in the Eastern Church), we are sure was constantly observed in the Churches of Africk till the time of Valerius, S. Augustine's Predecessor in the See of Hippo. Who being a Greek, and by reason of his little skill in the Latine tongue, unable to preach to the edification of the people, admitted S. Augustine (whom he had lately ordained, Presbyter) to preach before him. Which though at first 'twas ill received by some Bishops in those parts, yet quickly became a president for other Churches to follow after.

After these came Deacons: What the duty of their place was appears from their primitive election; the Apostles Acts 6. Q. 4...
Part 1. Setting them apart to serve or minister to the Table, i.e., to attend upon and take charge of those daily provisions that were made for poor indigent Christians; but certainly, it implies also their being dedicated to a peculiar attendance at the service of the Lords Table. And both these may be very well meant in that place, it being the custom of Christians then to meet every day at the Lords Table, where they made their offerings for the poor, and when poor and rich had their meals together. And hence it was ever accounted part of the Deacons' Office, as to take care of the poor, and to distribute the monies given for their relief and maintenance, so to wait upon the celebration of the Eucharist, which being consecrated by the Bishop or Presbyter, the Deacon delivered the Sacramental Elements to the people. Besides this, they were wont also to preach and to baptize, and were employed in many parts of the publick Service, especially in guiding and directing of the people. The number of them in any one place was usually restrained to seven, this being the number originally instituted by the Apostles, and which might not be altered, although the City was never
never so great and numerous, as 'tis in Part 1.

the last Canon of the Neocesarean Council. As the Presbyter were to the Bishop, so the Deacons were to the Presbyters, to be assistant to them, and to give them all due respect and reverence. And therefore when some of them began to take too much upon them to distribute the Sacrament before the Bishop or Presbyter, and to take place amongst the Presbyters, the Council of Nice took notice of it as a piece of bold and saucy usurpation, severely commanded them to know their place, and to contain themselves within their own bounds and measures, and neither to meddle with the Sacrament but in their order, nor to sit down before the Presbyters, unless it be by their leave and command, as 'tis expressed by the Laodicean Synod. According to the first Council of Arles forbids the Deacons to do any thing of themselves, but to reserve the honour to the Presbyters. Out of the body of these Deacons there was usually one chosen to overlook the rest, the Arch-Deacon; an Office supposed to have been of good antiquity in the Church, and of great authority, especially in after times, being generally stiled the Eye of the Bishop,
Part 1. Bishop, to inspect all parts and places of his Diocese. This was he that in the Church of Rome was called the Cardinal Deacon, who (as Onuphrinus tells us) was at first but one, though the number increased afterwards. While Churches were little and the services not many, the Deacons themselves were able to discharge them, but as these increased, so did their labours, and therefore it was thought fit to take in some inferior Officers under them. This gave being to Subdeacons, who were to be assistant to the Deacon, as the Deacon to the Presbyter, and he to the Bishop. One great part of his work was to wait at the Church-doors in the time of publick Worship to usher in, and to bring out the several Orders of the Catechumens and Penitents, that none might mistake their proper stations, and that no confusion or disorder might arise to the disturbance of the Congregation. When he was first taken in, I cannot find, but he is mentioned in an Epistle of the Roman Clergie to them of Carthage about S. Cyprian's retirement, and elsewhere very often in Cyprian's Epistles. Where he also speaks of the Asolypthus; what his proper business was, is not so certain; by
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity.

by some his Office is said to have been Part to this, to Follow (as the word implies) or to go along with the Bishop in the quality of an honourable attendant, to be ready at hand to minister to him, and to be a companion and witness of his honest and unblameable conversation, in case any evil fame should arise, that might endeavour to blast his reputation. But by others he is said to have been a Taper-bearer to carry the Lights, which were set up at the reading of the Gospel. And this seems to be clear from the fourth Council of Carthage, where at his ordination he is appointed to receive at the Archdeacons hand a Candlestick with a Taper, that he may know 'tis the duty of his place, to light up the Lights in the Church. This might very well be in those times, but 'tis certain the Office of Acolythus was in use long before that custom of setting up Lights at the reading of the Gospel was brought into the Church. By Cyprian also is mentioned the Office of the Eunuch, whose business was to attend the Catechumens and the Eunuch-men, or such as were possessed of the Devil. For after the miraculous power of casting out Devils began to cease, or at least not to be so common as it was, these
Part 1. these possessed persons used to come to the out-parts of the Church, where a person was appointed to exorcise them, i.e. to pray over them in such prayers, as were peculiarly composed for those occasions, and this he did in the publick name of the whole Church, the people also at the same time praying within; by which means the possessed person was delivered from the tyranny of the evil spirit; without any such charms and conjurations, and other unchristian forms and rites, which by degrees crept into this Office, and are at this day in use in the Church of Rome. Besides, to the Exorcists Office it belonged to instruct the Catechumens, and to train them up in the first principles of the Christian Faith: in which sense the Exorcist is by Harme-nopulus explained by Catechist, and to exorcise (says Balsamon) is ἱερὰς ἀπόφεις, to instruct unbelievers.

Next to the Exorcist was the Le[ctor or Reader (mentioned frequently by S. Cyprian) whose business was to stand near the Ambo or Pulpit, and to read those portions of holy Scripture which were appointed to be read as principal parts of the Divine Service. This Office Julian (who was afterwards Emperor) when
Ch. 8. *Primitive Christianity.*

when a young Student at *Nitomedia*, Part 2.

took upon him, and became a Reader in that Church, which he did only to blind his Cousin *Constantius*, who began to suspect him as inclining to *Paganism*, to which he openly revolted afterwards, and became a bitter and virulent enemy to Christians, making an ill use of those Scriptures, which he had once privately studied and publicly read to the people.

I know not whether it may be worth the while to take notice of the *Ostiarii* or Door-keepers, answerable to the *Nethinims* in the Jewish Church, who were to attend the Church Doors at times of publick meetings, to keep out notorious Hereticks, Jews, and Gentiles from entering into the Christian assemblies: it doubtless took its rise in the times of persecutions, Christians then being forced to keep their meetings as private and clandestine as they could, and to guard their Assemblies with all possible diligence, lest some Jew or defiled heathen should have gone and accused them before the Magistrate. What other Office there were (nor whether any at all) in those times in and about the Church, will not be worth our labour to enquire.
To these Offices, they were set apart by solemn rites of prayer and imposition of hands at a ceremony (so far as it appears in history taken for lifting up the hand in sacrifices) commonly used at Athens, and some of the States of Greece in the designing and selecting persons to be publick Magistrates. But more particularly in amongst the Jews, and from thence doubtless, as many other of the Apostles, were transferred into the Christian Church, and shown constantly used both with the lifting up and laying on the hands, or the rice of conferring ordination upon the Ministers of Christ. Only it is to be remembered, that there was not the imposition of hands in setting apart a Ecclesiastical Officers; the rite was divinatory, or by way of obsecrating and this was the proper way of ordaining the first ranks of Officers, Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons; the other ranks by way of blessing: hands being laid up- on them only as in the absolution of Remits by way solemn benediction, and thus the Inferior Officers, Scribes, Readers, and Deacons, were set apart. All Orders under Bishops were ordained by the Bishop himself by all the Bishops of that Province.
who used to meet together for that purpose, if nearness of place and other conveniences would allow; otherwise three
(and in cases of necessity two) might do it; the rest submitting their consent in writing, and the pontiff, who was to be confirmed by the Metropolitan of that province. And whereas the Council of Antioch provides, that no Bishop shall be ordained, without the Metropolitan being present, it is to be understood (as Eulogius tells us) of his leave and permission, or his appointing it to be so. For the ordination of the rest of the clergy, Priests, Deacons, &c., the act and presence of one Bishop might suffice: and as no more than one was required, for one at least was necessary, the power of conferring orders being given by those who otherwise have had no mighty kindness for Episcopacy, acknowledged an unquestionable right of the Episcopal Office. Insomuch that in the case of Athanasius it was a just exception against Isaurius, that he had been ordained by Cyprian, who was no higher than a Presbyter, and consequently his ordination by the Council was adjudged null and void.

At all ordinations, especially of superiour
Part I. Prior Officers, the people of the place were always present, and ratified the action with their approbation and consent. And indeed it cannot be denied but that the people in some places, especially were very much considered in this affair, it being seldom or never done without their presence and suffrage. To this end the Bishop was wont before every ordination to propound and publish the names of those who were to have holy Orders conferred upon them, that so the people who best knew their lives and conversations, might interpose, if they had any thing material to object against it. By which means the unworthy were discovered and rejected, the deserving honoured and admitted; the ordination became legitimate and satisfactory, having past the common vote and suffrage, without any exception made against it, as Cyprian speaks. Hence the Clergie of what order soever were said Predicandi, to be propounded or published: And this way seemed so fit and reasonable, that Severus the Emperor (a wise and prudent Prince) in imitation of the Christians established it in the disposal of Civil Offices. For when he had a mind to send out any Governors of Provinces, or
or to appoint Receivers of his Revenues, Part 1; he propounded the Names of those he intended, desiring the People to except against the Persons, if they knew them guilty of any Crimes which they were able to make good against them: affirming it to be unfit (says his own Historian) that when the Christians and Jews did it in publishing those who were to be ordained their Priests and Ministers, the same should not be observed in the Election of Governours of Provinces, who had the Lives and Fortunes of men committed to them. When the Case so hapned that the Ordination was more remote or private, they were then required to bring sufficient testimonials. Thus Cyprian when ordaining Saturnus and Optatus to be Readers, we examined (says he) whether the testimonials agreed to them, which they ought to have who are admitted into the Clergy.

And indeed they proceeded in this Affair with all imaginable Care and Prudence; they examined mens Fitness for the Place to which they were set apart, enquired severely what had been the course and manner of their Life, how they had carried themselves in their Youth, and whether they had governed
Part 1. it by the strict Rules of Piety. This Ancient Custom (as S. Basil calls it) was ratified by the Nicene Council, declaring that none should be ordained Presbyter without previous examination, especially a strict inquiry into his life and manners. For the Apostolick Church (says Joseph the Egyptian in his Arabick Paraphrase of that Canon) admits none in this case, but him that is of great innocency and an unspotted Life, free from those Crimes and Enormities which he there particularly reckons up. They suffered not men in those days to leap into Ecclesiastical Orders but by the usual steps, and staying the appointed times. Cyprian commends Cornelius Bishop of Rome, that he did not skip into the Chair, but passed through all the Ecclesiastical Offices, ascending through all the Degrees of Religion, till he came ad sacerdotii sublime fastigium, to the top of the highest Order. A thing expressly provided for by the Synod of Sardis, that no man though never so rich, though furnished with never so good a knack of speech and oratory, should yet be made Bishop before he had passed through the preceding Orders of Reader, Subdeacon, Deacon, and Presbyter, that having been found
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity.

found fit in each of these, he might step by step ascend up to the Episcopal Chair; and that he should spend some considerable time in each of these Degrees, that to his Faith, and the Innocency and Excellency of his Life, his Constancy and Moderation might be made known to all; and his fitness for that Sacred Function being made apparent might procure him the greater Honour and Reverence from others. Men were then forced to stay their full time before they could be promoted to any higher Order; they did not commence Divines and Bishops in a day, as Nazianzen elegantly calls them) like some he complains of in his time, who were not polished by Time and Study, but fitted and made Bishops all at once; whom therefore he wittily compares to the Dragons teeth, which the Fable tells us Cadmus sowed at Thebes, which immediately sprang up Giants out of the earth, arm'd Cap-a-pe, perfect men and perfect Warriors in one day: and just such (says he) were some Prelats consecrated, made wise and learned in one day, who yet understood nothing before, nor brought any thing to the Order, but onely a good will to be there.

R 7 For
Part 1. For the Age of the persons that were to be ordained, they usually observed the Apostolick Canon, not to choose a Novice; but of an Age competent to that Office, that he was chosen to: though it varied according to Times and Persons, and the occasions of the Church. For that of Bishops, I find not any certain Age positively set down. Photius in his Nomo-Canon speaks of an Imperial Constitution, that requires a Bishop not to be under thirty five: but the Apostolical Constitutions allow not a man to be made a Bishop under fifty years of Age, as having then passed all juvenile Petulancies and Disorders. 'Tis certain, they were not generally (some extraordinary Instances alter not the case) promoted to that Office, till they were of a considerable age, and thence frequently styled majores nati in the Writings of the Church. Presbyters were commonly made at thirty: yea the Council of Neocasarea decreed, that no man, though otherwise of never so unquestionable a Conversation, should be ordained Presbyter before that age: the reason whereof they give, because Christ himself was not baptized, nor began to preach till the thirtieth year of his age. The Council of Agde requires 197
the same Age, but assigns another rea-Part 1. 
son, not before thirty years of age, be- 
cause then (say they) he comes to the age 
of a perfect man. Deacons were made 
at twenty five, and the like distance and 
proportion observed for the inferior Officers under them. I take no notice in 
this place of Monks, Hermits, &c. part- 
ly because, although they were under a 
kind of Ecclesiastical relation, by reason 
of their more than ordinarily strict and 
severe Profession of Religion, yet were 
they not usually in Holy Orders; and 
partly because Monachism was of no very 
early standing in the Church, begin- 
nning probably about the times of the la- 
ter Persecutions; and even then Monks 
were quite another thing, both in 
profession, habit, and way of life, from what 
they are at this day, as will abundantly 
appear to him that will take the pains to 
compare the account which St. Hierom, Au- 
gustine, Palladius, Cassian, and others give 
of those primitive Monks, with the sever- 
al Orders in the Church of Rome at this 
day.

I shall only add, that out of the Monks 
persons were usually made choice of to 
be advanced into the Clergie, as is evi- 
dent not only from multitudes of In- 
stances
Part Instances in the Writers of the fourth and following Centuries, but from an express Law of the Emperor Arcadius to that purpose. The Strictness of their Lives, and the Purity of their Manners, more immediately qualifying them for those Holy Offices; insomuch that many times they were advanced into the Episcopal Chair, without going through the usual intermediate Orders of the Church.

Several Instances whereof (Serapion, Apollonius, Agatha, Arisfo, and some others) Athanasius reckon up in his Epistle to Dracontius, who being a Monk, refused a Bishoprick to which he was chosen. But because we meet in the Ancient Writings of the Church with very frequent mention of persons of another Sex, Deaconesses, who were employed in many Offices of Religion, it may not be amiss in this place to give some short account of them. Their Original was very early, and of equal standing with the Infancy of the Church; such was Plhebe in the Church of Canachis, mentioned by S. Paul; such were those two Servant Maids spoken of by Pliny in his Letter to the Emperor, whom he examined upon the Rack; such was the famous Olympias in the Church of Constantinople; not to
mention any more particular Instances. Part 1. They were either Widows, and then not to be taken into the Service of the Church under threescore years of age, according to S. Paul's Direction; or else Virgins, who having been educated in order to it, and given testimony of a chaste and sober Conversation, were set apart at forty. What the proper place and ministry of these Deaconesses was in the ancient Church, though Matthew Blaistares seems to render a little doubtful, yet certainly it principally consisted in such Offices as these; to attend upon the Women at times of Publick Worship, especially in the Administration of Baptism, that when they were to be divested in order to their immersion, they might overshadow them, so as nothing of Indecency and Uncomeliness might appear; sometimes they were employed in instructing the more rude and ignorant sort of Women in the plain and easy Principles of Christianity, and in preparing them for Baptism; otherwhiles in visiting and attending upon Women that were sick, in conveying Messages, Counsels, Consolations, Relief, (especially in times of Persecution, when it was dangerous for the Officers of the Church) to the
Part 1. the Martyrs and them that were in Prison; and these Women no doubt it was that Libanius speaks of amongst the Christians, who were so very ready to be employed in these Offices of Humanity. But to return:

Persons being thus set apart for Holy Offices, the Christians of those days discovered no less Piety in that mighty respect and reverence which they paid to them; that the Ministers of Religion should be peculiarly honoured and regarded, seems to have been accounted a piece of natural justice by the common Sentiments of Mankind; the most barbarous and unpolished Nations that ever had a value for any thing of Religion, have always had a proportionable regard to them, to whom the care and administration of it did belong. Julian the Emperor expressly pleads for it as the most reasonable thing in the World, that Priests should be honoured, yea in some respects above Civil Magistrates, as being the Immediate Attendants and Domestic Servants of God, our Intercessors with Heaven, and the means of deriving down great Blessings from God upon us. But never was this clearer demonstrated than in the Practice of the Pri-
Primitive Christians, who carried themselves towards their Bishops and Ministers, with all that Kindness and Veneration which they were capable to express towards them. S. Paul bears record to the Galatians, that he was accounted so dear to them, that if the plucking out their eyes would have done him any good, they were ready to have done it for his sake. And S. Clemens testifies, "...of the Corinthians, that they walked in the Laws of God, being subject to them that had the rule over them; yielding also due Honour to the Seniors or elders persons that were amongst them. That by ἄριστοι in this place he should mean Civil Magistrates, (as some have told us) I can hardly be persuaded, both because 'tis the same word that's used by the Author to the Hebrews, Obey τῆς ἐνημέρωσις ὑμῶν, them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves; (and indeed both Eusebius and S. Hierom of old observed such a mighty affinity in the phrase between this and the Epistle to the Hebrews, as certainly to conclude S. Clemens to have been, if not the Author, at least the Translator of that Epistle; and also because the sole occasion of S. Clemens writing this Epistle was a Mutiny which they had..."
Part I. had made against their spiritual Guides and Governours, and therefore according to the right art of Orators, he first commends them for their eminent Subjection to them, that he might with the more advantage reprove and censure them for their Schism afterwards, which he does severally in the latter part of the Epistle, and towards the end of it exhorts those who had laid the foundation of the Sedition to become subject to their Presbyters; and being instructed to repentance, to bow the knees of their Hearts, to lay aside the arrogant and insolent boldness of their Tongues, and to learn to subject and submit themselves. The truth is, Bishops and Ministers were then looked upon as the common Parents of Christians, whom as such they honoured and obeyed, and to whom they repaired for counsel and direction in all important cases. 'Tis plain from several passages in Tertullian, that none could lawfully marry till they had first advised with the Bishop and Clergy of the Church, and had asked and obtained their leave; which probably they did to secure the person from marrying with a Gentile, or any of them that were without; and from the inconveniences that
that might ensue upon such a Match. No Part 1. respect, no Submission was thought great enough, whereby they might do Honour to them, they were wont to kiss Dr. Chrys. their Hands, to embrace their Feet, and at their going from, or returning home, or indeed their coming unto any place, to wait upon them, and either to receive or dismiss them with the universal Confluence of the people. Happy they thought themselves if they could but entertain them in their Houses, and bless their Roofs with such welcome Guests. Amongst the various ways of Kindness which Constantine the Great shewed to the Clergie, the Writer of his Life tells us, that he used to treat them at his own Table, though in the meanest and most desplicable Habit, and never went a journey, but he took some of them along with him, reckoning that thereby he made himself fitter of the propitious and favourable Influence of the Divine Presence. What Honours he did them at the Council of Nice, where he refused to sit down, till they had given him Intimation, with what Magnificent Gifts and Entertainments he treated them afterwards, the same Author relates at large. The truth is, the Piety of that de-
Part 1. devout and excellent Prince thought nothing too good for those who were the Messengers of God, and Ministers of Holy things, and so infinitely tender was he of their Honour, as to profess, that if at any time he should spy a Bishop overtaken in any immodest and uncomely action, he would cover him with his own Imperial Robe, rather than others should take notice of it, to the scandal of his Place and Person. And because their Spiritual Authority and Relation might not be sufficient to secure them from the Contempt of Rude and Profane Persons, therefore the first Christian Emperours invested them with power even in Civil cases, as the way to beget them respect and authority amongst the People. Thus Constantine (as Sozom. tells us) and he sets it down as a great Argument of that Princes Reversence for Religion) ordained, that persons contending in Law, might if they pleased, remove their Cause out of the Civil Courts, and appeal to the judgment of the Bishops, whose Sentence should be firm, and take place before that of any other Judges, as if it had been immediately passed by the Emperor himself. And Cases thus judged by Bi-
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity.

Bishops, all Governours of Provinces and Part. their Officers were presently to put in-
to execution; which was afterwards ra-
tised by two Laws, one of Arcadius, Episc. Ar-
dini, 1. 7; another of Honorius to that purpose.

This power the Bishops sometimes dele-
gated to their inferior Clergy, making
them Judges in these Cases, as appears
from what Socrates reports of Sylvanus
Bishop of Troas, that finding a male-admi-
nistration of this power, he too it out
of the hands of his Clergie, and devolv-
ed the hearing and determining Causes
over to the Laity. And to name no more,
S. Augustine more than once and again
tells us, how much he was crowded and
even oppressed in deciding the Contests
and Causes of Secular persons. It seems
they thought themselves happy in those
days, if they could have their Causes heard
and determined by Bishops.

A pious Bishop and a faithful Minister
was in those days dearer to them than
the most valuable Blessings upon Earth,
and they could want any thing rather
than be without them. When Chrysostome
was driven by the Empress into Banish-
ment, the People as he went along burst
into tears, and cried out, "Twas better the
Sun should not shine, than that John Chry-
sostome
Part 1. Sotom should not preach. And when through the importunity of the People he was recalled from his former Banishment, and diverted into the Suburbs till he might have an opportunity to make a Publick Vindication of his Innocency, the people not enduring such delays, the Emperour was forced to send for him into the City, the People universally meeting him, and conducting him to his Church, with all Expressions of Reverence and Veneration. Nay, while he was yet Presbyter of the Church of Anti-

Metaphras.
in. vit.
Chrys. apud
Surium ad
diem 27.

Constan-
tinople, and sent for by the Empe-
rours Letters, though their Bishop made an Oration on purpose to persuade them to it, yet would they by no means be brought to part with him; and when the Messengers by force attempted to bring him away, he was forced, to pre-
Vent a Tumult, to withdraw and hide himself; the People keeping a Guard about him, lest he should be taken from them: nor could the Emperour or his Agents with all their arts effect it, till he used this wise, he secretly wrote to the Governour of Antiach, who pre-
tending
tending to Chrysostom, that he had Concerns of moment to impart to him, invited him to a private place without the City, where seating upon him, by Mules which he had in readiness, he conveyed him to Constantinople: where that his Welcome might be the more Magnificent, the Emperor commanded that all Persons of Eminency, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, should with all possible pomp and state go six miles to meet him. Of Nazianzen (who sat in the same Chair of Constantinople before him) I find, that when he would have left that Bishopric by reason of the Stirs that were about it, and delivered up himself to Solitude and a Private Life, as a thing much more suitable to his Humour and genius, many of the people came about him, with tears beseeching him not to forswear his Flock, which he had hitherto fed with so much sweat and labour. They could not then lose their Spiritual Guides, but they looked upon themselves as Widows and Orphans, resenting their Death with a general sorrow and lamentation, as if they had lost a common Father. Nazianzen reports, that when his father (who was Bishop of but a little Diocese) lay very sick, and all other Remedies proved un-
Part 1. unsuccessful, the People generally flock-ed to Church, and (though it was then the joyful time of Easter) broke out into mournful and passionate Complaints, and with the most earnest Prayers and Tears besought God for his Life. And of Basil Bishop of Cesarea he tells us, that when he lay a dying, the whole City came about him, not able to bear his Departure from them, praying as if they would have laid hands upon his Soul, and by force detained it in his Body; they were (says he) even distracted with the thoughts of so great a Loss, nor was there any who would not have been willing to have been deprived of part of his own Life, might it have added unto his. His Funeral was solemnized with all possible testimonies of Love and Honourable Attendance, and with the abundant Tears not onely of Christians, but of Jews and Heathens; the Confluence so vast, that many were pressed to death in the Crowd, and sent to bear him company to his long home. And that we may see that their respect did not lie meerly in a few kind Words or external Protestations, they made it good in more real and evident Demonstrations, by pro-
ing at first with their own estates to supply the uses of the Church, and after that, making no less large than frequent contributions, which could not but amount to very considerable sums, the piety of Christians daily adding to their liberality; of which we may make some estimate; by what the Heathen Historian with a little kind of envy relates only of the Church of Rome (and doubtless it was so in some proportion in other places) that the profits of the Clergie arising from oblations chiefly was so great, as to enable them to live in a prince-like state and plenty. And not long after it became the object not only of admiration but envy, insomuch that Chrysostome was forced to make one whole Sermon against those that envied the wealth of the Clergie. It was also the great care of those times, to free them from what might be either scandalous or burthensome to their calling. Constantine decreed, that the Orthodox Clergy should be exempt from all Civil Offices, or whatsoever might hinder their attendance upon the services of the Church: his Son Constantius, that Bishops in many cases should not be chargeable in the secular Courts, but be tried in an Assembly of Bishops,
Part I. Bishops, which priviledge was extended by Honorius to all the Clergie, that they should be tryed before their Bishops; before whom also he ordained, that all causes properly belonging to Religion should be brought, and be determined by them; and by another constitution, that for the veneration that is due to the Church, all Ecclesiastical causes should be decided with all possible speed. And to name no more, that the persons of Ministers might be secured from foreign attempts, he and his Colleague Arcadius made a Law, that whoever did offer any violence to them, should upon conviction or confession of the fact be punished with death; and that the ministers of Civil Justice should not stay till the Bishop complained of the injury that was done (it being probable that he would rather encline to mercy and forgiveness) but that every one in this case should be admitted and encouraged to prefer and prosecute the charge: and in case the rude multitude should by arms or otherwise obstruct execution, and that the powers of that place could not see it done, that then they should call in the assistance of the Governour of the Province, to see Justice put into execution.
Ch. 8. Primitive Christianity.

And because next to his person no part thing is so dear to a Clergie-man as his credit and reputation, therefore the Emperor Honorius took care by a Law, that whosoever (be he a person of the highest rank) should charge any Clergie-man with Chrimes which he was not able to make good, he himself should be publicly accounted vile and infamous, it being but just and equal (says the Law) that as guilt should be punished, and offenders reckoned as spots and blemishes to the Church, so that injured innocence should be righted and maintained. How infinitely tender the first general Council of Constantinople was in this case, to secure the honour and good name of Bishops and Clergie-men, against the malicious insinuations and charges of false accusers, may appear by the large provision which they make about it in the sixth Canon of that Council; and, because it sometimes so happens, that a man's enemies are those of his own house, therefore the Apostolical Canons ordain, that if any Clergy-man reproach and defame a Bishop, he shall be deposed from his Ministry, for thou mayest not (says the Canon) speak evil of the Ruler of thy people; but if it be a Presbyter or Deacon, whom
Part 1. whom he thus reproaches, he shall be suspended from the execution of his Office. So sacred and venerable did they then account the persons and concerns of those who ministered in the affairs of Divine Worship.

CHAP. IX.

Of their usual Worship, both private and publick.

The Christians worship of God in their Families discovered. Their usual times of prayer. Praying before and after meals, Singing of Psalms, and reading the Scriptures at the same time. Frequency in prayer noted in divers instances. Their great reverence for the holy Scriptures, in reading, expounding, committing them to memory. Several instances of it. Their care in instructing their Families in divine things. Singing of Psalms mixed with their usual labours. An account of their publick Worship. The order of the Service in their Assemblies. Prayer; Reading the Scriptures; Two Lessons out of each Testament. Clemens
Ch. 9. *Primitive Christianity.*

mens his Epistle, and the Writings of Part 1. other pious men read in the Church. Singing a part of the publick Service. How ancient: What those Hymns were. The Sermon or discourse, upon what subject usually. Such discourses called Tractatus, and why. More Sermons than one at the same time. Sermons preached in the afternoon as well as in the morning. The mighty concourse and confluence of people to these publick Solemnities. The departure of the Catechumens, Penitents, &c. The Missa Catechumenorum, what. The Missa Fidelium. The word missa or masse, whence, and how used in the Writers of those times. The singular reverence they shewed in these Duties. Great modesty and humility. Praying with hands lift up in the form of a Cross, why. They prayed either kneeling or standing. Sitting in prayer noted as a posture of great reverence. Praying towards the East. The universality of this Custom. The reasons of it enquired into. Their reverence in hearing God's Word. The people generally stood. Standing up at the Gospels. The remarkable piety and devotion of Constantine the Great. No departing the Congregation till the blessing was given.

Thus
Thus far we have discovered the piety of those ancient times, as to those necessary circumstances that relate to the Worship of God, we are next to see wherein their Worship itself did consist, which we shall consider both as private and publick, that which they performed at home, and that which was done in their solemn and Church-Assemblies, only let it be remembered, that under the notion of Worship I here comprehend all those duties of piety that refer to God: the duties of their private worship were of two sorts, either such as were more solemn and stated, and concerned the whole Family, or such as persons discharged alone, or at least did not give up themselves to usual times: For the first, which are properly Family duties, they were usually performed in this order; at their first rising in the morning, they were wont to meet together, and to betake themselves to prayer) as is plainly implied in Chrysostom's exhortation) to praise God for the protection and refreshment of the night, and to beg his grace and blessing for the following day: this was done by the Master of the house, unless some Minister
Minister of Religion were present: 'tis Part 1. probable that at this time they recited the Creed, or some confession of their Faith, by which they professed themselves Christians, and as 'twere armed themselves against the assaults of dangers and temptations; however I question not, but that now they read some parts of Scripture, which they were most ready to do at all times, and therefore certainly would not omit it now. That they had their set hours for prayer, the third, sixth, and ninth hour, is plain both from Cyprian, Clem. Alexandrinus, and others: this they borrowed from the Jews, who divided the day into four greater hours, the first, third, sixth, and ninth hour, three last whereof were stated hours of prayer; the first hour began at six in the morning, and held till nine; the third from nine till twelve; and at this hour it was that the Apostles and Christians were met together, when the Holy Ghost descended upon them; the sixth hour was from twelve till three in the afternoon, and at this time Peter went up to the house top to pray; the ninth was from three till six at night, and now it was that Peter and John went up to the Temple, it being the ninth hour of prayer.
Part I. Prayer; this division was observed by the Christians of succeeding times, though whether punctually kept to in their Family devotions I am not able to affirm. About noon before their going to dinner some portions of Scripture were read, and the meat being set upon the Table, a blessing was solemnly begged of God, as the fountain of all blessings (and so religious herein was the good Emperor Theodosius junior, that he would never taste any meat, no not so much as a Fig, or any other Fruit, before he had first given thanks to the great Sovereign Creator) and both meat and drink set apart with the sign of the Cross (a custom they used in the most common actions of life) as is expressly affirmed both by Tertullian and Origen, where he also gives a form of such prayers as they were wont to use before meals, viz. that lifting up their eyes to Heaven, they prayed thus, Thou that givest food to all flesh, grant that we may receive this food with thy blessing; thou Lord hast said, that if we drink any thing that is deadly, if we call upon thy name it shall not hurt us, thou therefore who art Lord of all power and glory, turn away all evil and malignant quality from our food, and
what ever pernicious influence it may have upon us; when they were at dinner, they sung Hymns and Psalms; a practice which Clem. Alexandrinus commends as very suitable to Christians, as a modest and decent way of praising God, while we are partaking of his Creatures. Chrysostom greatly pleads for it, that men should be careful to teach them their Wives and children, and which they should use even at their ordinary works, but especially at meals, such divine Songs being an excellent antidote against temptations; for (saith he) as the Devil is never more ready to ensnare us than at meals, either by intemperance, ease, or immoderate mirth, therefore both before and at meals we should fortify ourselves with Psalms, nay and when we rise from the Table with our Wives and Children, we should again sing Hymns to God. they used also to have the Scriptures read, and as I have elsewhere noted out of Nazianzen, every time they took the Cup to drink, made the sign of the Cross and called upon Christ. Dinner being ended, they concluded with prayer, giving thanks to God for their present refreshment, and begging his continued provision of those good things which he had
Part 1. had promised to them. So great a place had Religion in those days even in mens common and natural actions, and so careful were they not to starve the soul, while they were feeding of the body: Much after the same rate they spent the rest of the day, till the night approached, when before their going to rest, the Family was again called to prayer, after which they went to bed; about midnight they were generally wont to rise to pray and to sing Hymns to God; this custom was very ancient, and doubtless took its original from the first times of persecution, when not daring to meet together in the day, they were forced to keep their religious Assemblies in the night; and though this was afterwards antiquated, as being found inconvenient for the generality of Christians, yet did it still continue in the nocturnal hours of Monasteries and religious Orders.

But besides these stated and ordinary devotions, performed by a joyous concurrence of the Family, the Christians of those days were careful to spend all the time they could even when alone in actions of piety and religion: they were most frequent in prayer; Eusebius reports of S. James the just, that he was wont every
every day to go alone into the Church, Part 1, and there kneeling upon the pavement so long to pour out his prayers to God, till his knees became as hard and brassing as a Camel's; the same which Nazianzen also tells us of his good Sister Gorgonia, that by often praying her knees were become hard, and did as twere stick to the ground. Constantine the Great though burdened with the cares of so vast an Empire, did yet every day at his wonted hours withdraw from all the company of the Court, retire into his Closet, and upon his knees offer up his prayers to God; and to let the world know how much he was devoted to this duty, he caused his Image in all his Gold Coins, in his Pictures and Statues to be represented in the posture of a person praying, with his hands spread abroad, and his eyes lift up to Heaven. Their next care was diligently and seriously to read the Scripture, to be mighty in the Divine Oracles, as indeed they had an invaluable esteem of and reverence for the Word of God, as the Book which they infinitely prized beyond all others; upon which account Nazianzen very severely chides his dear friend Gregory Nyssen, that having laid aside the holy Scriptures
Part 4. Scriptures (the most excellent Writings in the world) which he was wont to read both privately to himself, and publicly to the people, he had given up himself to the study of foreign and prophane Authors, desirous rather to be accounted an Orator than a Christian. S. Augustine tells us that after his conversation how meanly forever he had before thought of them) the Scriptures were become the matter of his most pure and chaste delight, in respect whereof all other Books (even those of Cicero himself, which once he had so much doted on) became dry and unsavory to him. In the study of this Book it was that Christians then mainly exercised themselves, as thinking they could never fully enough understand it, or deeply enough imprint it upon their hearts and memories. Of the younger Theodosius they tell us, that rising early every morning, he together with his Sisters interchangeably sung Psalms of praise to God; the holy Scriptures he could exactly repeat in any part of them, and was wont to discourse out of them with the Bishops that were at Court, as readily as if he had been an old Bishop himself. We read of Origen, though then but a child, that
that when his Father commanded him to commit some places of Scripture to memory, he most willingly set himself to it; and not content with the bare reading, he began to enquire into the more profound and recondite meaning of it, often asking his Father what the sense of this or that place of Scripture was, and this thirst after divine knowledge still continued and increased in him all his life, S. Hierom reporting it out of a Letter of one who was his great companion and benefactor, that he never went to meals without some part of Scripture read, never to sleep, till some about him had read them to him, and that both by night and day no sooner had he done praying but he betook himself to reading, and after reading returned again to prayer. Valens Deacon of the Church of Jerusalem, a venerable old man, had so entirely given up himself to the study of the Scriptures, that it was all one to him to read, or to repeat whole pages together. The like we find of John an Egyptian hermit, whom Eusebius saw and heard that though both his eyes were put out, and his body mauled with unheard of cruelty, yet he was able at any
any time to repeat any places or passages either out of the old or new Testament; which when I first heard him do in the publick Congregation, I supposed him (says he) to have been reading in a Book, till coming near, and finding how it was, I was struck with great admiration at it. Certainly Christians then had no mean esteem of, took no small delight in these sacred Volvmes: for the sake of this Book (which he had chosen to be the companion and counsellor of his life) Nazianzen professes he had willingly undervalued and relinquished all other things; this was the Mine where they enriched themselves with divine treasures, a Book where they furnished themselves with a true stock of knowledge; as S. Hierom speaks of Nepotian; that by daily reading and meditation he had made his soul a Library of Christ; and he tells us of Blesilla a devout Widow, that though she was so far over-run with weakness and sickness, that her foot would scarce bear her body, or her neck sustain the burden of her head, yet she was never found without a Bible in her hand.

Nor did they covetously hoard up, and reserve this excellent knowledge to
to themselves, but freely communicated. Part 1. it to others, especially were careful to catechise and instruct their Children and Servants in the principles of Religion. S. Clemens praises the Corinthians that they took care to admonish their young men to follow those things that were modest and comely, and accordingly exhorts them to instruct the younger in the knowledge of the fear of God, to make their children partakers of the discipline of Christ, to teach them how much humility and a chaste love do prevail with God, that the fear of him is good and useful, and preserves all those who with pure thoughts lead a holy life according to his will. The Historian observes of Constantine, that his first and greatest care towards his Sons, was to secure the happiness of their souls, by sowing the seeds of piety in their minds, which he did partly himself, instructing them in the knowledge of divine things, and partly by appointing such Tutors as were most approved for Religion: and when he had taken them into a partnership of the Government, and either by private admonitions, or by Letters gave them counsels for the steering themselves, this was always the first and chief, that they should
Part I. Should prefer the knowledge and worship of God, the great King of the world, before all other advantages, yea before the Empire itself. For this Nazianzen peculiarly commends his Mother, that not only the her self was consecrated to God, and brought up under a pious education, but that she conveyed it down as a necessary inheritance to her Children; and it seems her daughter Gorsenia was so well seasoned with these holy principles that she religiously walked in the steps of so good a pattern; and did not only reclaim her Husband, but educated her Children and Nephews in the ways of Religion, giving them an excellent example while she lived; and leaving this as her last charge and request when she died. This was the discipline under which Christians were brought up in those times. Religion was instilled into them betimes, which grew up and mixed itself with their ordinary labours and recreations, insomuch that the most rude and illiterate persons instead of profane wanton Songs, which vitiate and corrupt the minds of men, as Chrysostom calls them, (Songs of the Devils composure,) used nothing but spiritual and divine Hymns, for that...
Ch.9. Primitive Christianity.

that (as Hierom relates of the place where he lived) you could not go into the field, but you might hear the Plowman at his Hallelujahs, the Mower at his Hymns, and the Vine-dresser singing David's Psalms.

Thus they carried themselves at home; what they did in publick in their Church Assemblies, on the Lords Day especially, is next to be considered: the Manner whereof I shall briefly represent, as it generally and for the most part obtained in those Ages, for it could not but vary something according to time and place. And here I should save my self the trouble of any further Search, by setting down the Account which Justin Martyr and Tertullian give of their publick Worship in their Apologies for the Christians, but that I am satisfied they did not design to give a perfect and punctual Account of what was done at their Religious Assemblies, as might sufficiently appear from this one thing; that the first of them in those places speaks not any thing of their Hymns and Psalms, which yet that they were (even in the Times wherein they lived) a constant part of the Divine Service, no man that is not wholly a stranger in Church-Antiquity.
Part 1. Integrity can be ignorant of. I shall therefore out of them and others pick up and put together what seems to have constituted the main body of their Publick Duties, and represent them in that order wherein they were performed, which usually was in this manner: At their first coming together into the Congregation they began with Prayer, as Tertullian at least probably intimates, (for I do not find it in any besides him) we come together (says he) unto God, that being banded as twere into an Army, we may besiege him with our Prayers and Petitions; a violence which is very pleasing and grateful to him. I do not from hence positively conclude, that Prayer was the first Duty they began with, though it seems fairly to look that way, especially if Tertullian meant to represent the Order as well as the Substance of their Devotions. After this followed the Reading of the Scriptures both of the old and new Testament, both the Commentaries of the Apostles, and the Writings of the Prophets, as Justin Martyr informs us. How much of each was read at one Meeting in the first times is not known, it being then unsixed and arbitrary; because their Meetings, by the
Ch. 9. Primitive Christianity.

Fudden interruption of the Heathens, Part 1. were oft disturbed and broken up, and therefore both Justin and Tertullian confessed, that they only read as much as occasion served, and the condition of the present times did require: but afterwards there were set portions assigned, both out of the old and new Testament, two Lessons out of each, as we find it in the Author of the Apostolical Constitutions. Lib. 2. c. 57. Nay, not only the Canonical Scriptures, but many of the Writings of Apostolical men, (such as were Eminent for place and piety) were in those days publickly read in the Church: Such was the Famous Epistle of S. Clemens to the Corinthians; of which and of the Custom in like cases Dionysius Bishop of Corinth, who lived about the Year 172, gives Soter Bishop of Rome, this account: To day (says he) we kept Holy the Lord's Day, wherein we read your Epistle, which we shall constantly read for our Instruction, as we also do the first Epistle which Clemens wrote to us. The like Eusebius reports of Hermas his Pastor (a Book so called) and S. Hierom of the Writings of S. Ephrem, the Famous Deacon of Edessa, that in some Churches they were publickly read after the reading.
Part I. of the Holy Scriptures. About this part of the Service it was that they sung Hymnus and Psalms, a considerable part of the Divine Worship, (as it had ever been accounted both amongst Jews and Gentiles) and more immediately serviceable for celebrating the Honour of God, and lifting up the Minds of men to Divine and Heavenly Raptures. 'Twas in use in the very Infancy of the Christian Church, spoken of largely by S. Paul, and continued in all Ages after; insomuch that Pliny reports it as the main part of the Christians Worship, that they met together before day to joyn in singing Hymnus to Christ as God. These Hymns were either extemporary Raptures, so long as immediate Inspiration lasted; or set Compositions, either taken out of the Holy Scriptures, or of their own Composing, as Tertullian tells us. For it was usual then for any persons to compose Divine Songs to the Honour of Christ, and to sing them in the Publick Assemblies, till the Council of Laodicea ordered, that no Psalms composed by private persons should be recited in the Church; where, though by the Ἰδαονίου Σαλμος the two Greek Scholiasts will have certain Psalms ascribed to...
Ch. 9. Primitive Christianity.

to Solomon and others to be understood, Part 1.
yet it's much more reasonable to understand it of private compositions, usual a long time in the Church, and here for good reason prohibited. By this Council it was likewise appointed, that the Psalms should not be one entire continued Service, but that a Lesson should be interpolated in the midst after every Psalm; which was done (as Balsamon and Alexius Aristenus tells us) to take off the Weariness of the People, whose Minds might be apt to tire in passing through those prolix Offices all together, especially the Lessons being so large and many. In this Duty the whole Congregation bore a part, joyning all together in a common Celebration of the Praises of God; afterwards the Custom was to sing alternatim, course by course, answering one another, first brought in (as we are told) by Flavianus and Diodorus in the Church of Antioch in the Reign of Constantine; but if we may believe Socrates, some hundreds of years before that, by Ignatius, who was Bishop of that Church, who having in a vision heard the Angels praising the Holy Trinity with alternate Hymns, thereupon introduced the use of it in that Church, which from thence...
Part 1. thence spread it self into all other Churches; and whether Pliny (who lived about that time) might not mean some such thing by his Secum invicem canere, that the Christians sung Hymns one with another, or in their courses, may be considered by those who think it worth their labour to enquire. In the mean time we proceed: The Reader having done, (they are the words of Justin the Martyr), the President of the Assembly makes a Sermon by way of Instrucion and Exhortation, to the imitation and practice of those Excellent things that they had heard. And indeed Sermons in those times were nothing else but the Expositions of some part of the Scriptures which had been read before, and exhortations to the people to obey the Doctrines contained in them, and commonly were upon the Lesson which was last read, because that being freshest in the Peoples memory, was most proper to be treated of, as S. Augustine both avers the custom, and gives the reason. Hence, in the Writers of the Church, Preachers came to be called Tractatores, and their Sermons Tractatus, because they handled or treated of such places of Scripture as had been a little before read.
Ch. 9. Primitive Christianity.

read unto the people. According as oc-

casion was these Sermons were more or

generally two or three at the same Assembly, the Presbyters first and

then the Bishop, as is expressly affirmed in

the Apostolical Constitutions; Then (i.e. ut supra.)
after the reading of the Gospel) let the

Presbyters exhort the people one by one, not

all at once, and after all the Bishop, as it is

fretting for the Master to do. And thus

Gregory Nyssen excuses himself for not in-

troducing his Sermons with a tedious

Preface, because he would not be bur-

thened to the people, who had already

taken pains to hear those admirable

Discourses that had been made before

him.

This course they held not in the morning

only, but likewise in the afternoon,

(at sometimes at least) when they had

their Publick Prayers and Sermons to

the People. This Chrysostom assures us

of in an Homily upon this very Sub-

ject, in commendation of those who

came to Church after Dinner, and that

as he tells them in greater Numbers than

before; who instead of sleeping after

Dinner came to hear the Divine Laws

gespoused to them; instead of walking

upon the Exchange, and enteratin
Parting themselves with idle and unprofitable chat, came and stood amongst their Brethren, to converse with the Discourses of the Prophets. And this he tells them, he put them in mind of, not that it was a reproach to eat and drink, but that having done so, it was a shame to stay at home, and deprive themselves of those Religious Solemnities. The same twere easie to make good from several passages in S. Basil, S. Augustine, and others, who frequently refer to those Sermons which they had preached in the morning.

But how many soever the Discourses were, the people were ready enough to entertain them, flocking to them as to their Spiritual Meals and Banquets. We meet together (says Tertullian) to hear the Holy Scriptures rehearsed to us, that so (according to the quality of the Times) we may be either forewarned or corrected by them: for certainly with these holy words we nourish our faith, erect our hope, seal our confidence, and by these Inculcations are the better established in obedience to the Divine Commands. Nazianzen tells us what vast Numbers used to meet in his Church at Constantinople, of all Sexes, of all sorts and
and ranks of persons, rich and poor, ho-Part
nourable and ignoble, learned and simple,
Governors and People, Souldiers and
Tradesmen; all here unanimously con-
spiring together, and greedily desirous
to learn the knowledge of Divine things.
The like Chrysostom reports of the
Church at Antioch, that they would set
aside all affairs at home to come and
hear Sermons at Church; he tells them,
twas the great honour of the City, not
so much that it had large Suburbs and
vast numbers of people, or brave houses
with gilded Dining Rooms, as that it
had a diligent and attentive people. And
elsewhere, that 'twas the great Encou-
ragement of his Ministry, to see such a
famous and cheerful Concourse, a Peo-
ple so well ordered and desirous to
hear: that 'twas this advanced their Ci-
ty above the Honour of a Senate, or the
Office of a Consul, or the variety of Sta-
tues or Ornaments, or the Plenty of its
Merchandise, or the Commodiousness of
its situation; in that its People were so
careful to hear and learn, its Churches
so thronged and crowded, and all per-
sons inflamed with such an insatiable de-
sire of the Word that was preached to
them; yea, that this it was that adorned
the
Part I. the City even above Rome it self. And indeed the Commendation is the greater, in that Commonness did not breed Contempt, it being usual in that Church (as Chrysostom often intimates) for a good part of the Year to have Sermons every day.

Well, Sermon being ended, Prayers were made with and for the Catechumens, Penitents, Possessed, and the like, according to their respective Capacities and Qualifications, the persons that were in every Rank departing as soon as the Prayer that particularly concerned them was done; first the Catechumens, and then the Penitents, as is prescribed in the nineteenth Canon of the Laodicean Council. For no sooner was the Service thus far performed, but all that were under Baptism, or under the Discipline of Penance, i.e. all that might not communicate at the Lords Table, were commanded to depart, the Deacon crying aloud, ΟΣΟΙ ΚΑΤΗΧΟΤΜΕΝΟΙ ΠΡΟΕΑΘΕΤΕ Those that are Catechumens go out; in the Latine Church the form was, ITE, MISSA EST; Depart, there is a dismission of you: missa being the same with missio, as remissio oft used in some Writers for remissio, (and so the word missa is used by
Ch. 9. Primitive Christianity.

by Cassian even in his time, for the distinction of the Congregation.) Hence it was that the whole Service from the beginning of it till the time that the Hearers were dismissed, came to be called Missa Catechumenorum, the Mass or Service of the Catechumens, as that which was performed afterwards at the Celebration of the Eucharist was called Missa Fidelium, the Mass or Service of the Faithful, because none but they were present at it: and in these notions and no other the Word is often to be met with in Tertullian, and other Ancient Writers of the Church. 'Tis true, that in process of time, as the Discipline of the Catechumens wore out, so that Title which belonged to the first part of the Service was forgotten, and the Name Missa was appropriated to the Service of the Lords Supper, and accordingly was made use of by the Church of Rome, to denote that which they peculiarly call the Mass or the Propitiatory Sacrifice of the Altar at this day. And the more plausibly to impose this Delusion upon the People, they do with a great deal of Confidence muster up all those places of the Fathers where the word missa is to be found, and apply it to their Mass; though
Part 1. though it would puzzle them to produce but one place, where the Word is used in the same sense as they use it now, out of any genuine and approved Writer of the Church for at least the first four hundred Years. But to return: The Catechumens, &c. being departed, and the Church doors shut, they proceeded to the Lords Supper, at which the Faithful onely might be present, wherein they prayed for all states and ranks of men, gave the Kiss of Charity, prayed for consecration of the Eucharist, then received the Sacramental Elements, made their Offerings, and such like; of which I do not now speak particularly, because I intend to treat distinctly of the Sacraments afterwards. For the same reason I say nothing concerning their Admonitions, Church-censures, Absolutions, &c. because these will come under consideration in another place, as also because though managed at their Publick Assemblies, were yet onely accidental to them, and no settled parts of the Divine Service. This in short was the general form of Publick Worship in those ancient times, which although it might vary somewhat according to times and places, did yet for the main and the substance of it hold in all.
That which remains, is a little to re-Part 1. marque how the Christians carried themselves in the discharge of these solemn duties, which certainly was with singular reverence and devotion, such gestures and actions, as they conceived might express the greatest piety and humility. Let both Men and Women (says Clemens of Alexandria) come to Church in comely Apparel, with a grave Pace, with a modest silence, with a love unfeigned, chaste both in Body and Mind, and so as they may be fit to put up Prayers to God. Let our speech in Prayer (says Cyprian) be under Discipline, observing a decorous Calmness and Modesty: we are to remember that we are under the Eye of God, whom we are not to offend either in the habit of our Body, or the manner of our Speech; for as 'tis the fashion of those that are impudent to clamour and make a noise, so on the contrary it becomes a sober man to pray with a modest voice. When therefore we come together with our Brethren into the Assembly, to celebrate the Divine Sacrifices with the Minister of God, we ought to be mindful of order and a reverent Regard, and not to throw about our Prayers with a wilde and confused Voice, or
Primate Christianity. Ch. 9.

Part 1. or with a disorderly Prattling to cast forth those Petitions which ought with the greatest modesty to be put up to God. The Men prayed with their heads bare, as not ashamed to look up to Heaven for what they begged of God; the Women covered, as a sign of the modesty of that Sex; and therefore Tertullian severely checks the practice of some Women in his time, who in time of Worship had no Covering on their Heads, or what was as good as none: What reproof (says he) do they deserve, that continue unveiled in singing Psalms, or in any mention of God? Or do they think it's enough to lay some thin and slight thing over their Heads in Prayer, and then think themselves covered? Where he manifestly refers to those Rules which the Apostle prescribes in this case; and concludes at last, that they should at all times and in all places be mindful of the Rule, being ready and provided against all mention of the Name of God, who if he be in Women's hearts, will be known on their heads, viz. by a modest carriage and covering of them in their Addressés to him. Their Hands they did not only lift up to Heaven, (a Posture in Prayer common both among Jews
Ch. 9. Primitive Christianity. 287

Jews and Gentiles) but they did expand Part 1. and spread them abroad, that so by this means they might shadow out an Image of the Cross, or rather a Resemblance of him that hung upon it, as Tertullian De Orat. c. 11. Apol. c. 39. Prayer (says another) is a Conversing with God, and the Way to Heaven; and to stretch out our Hands is to form the Resemblance of Christ crucified, which whoever prays should do, not onely as to the form and figure, but in reality and affection; for as he that is fastned to the Cross surely dies, so he that prays should crucifie the Desires of the Flesh, and every Inordinate Lust and Passion. In the performing of this Duty they either kneeled (which was most usual) or stood, which they always did upon the Lords Day, for a reason which we have spoken of before; sitting was ever held a posture of great rudeness and irreverence. Nay Tertullian falls heavy upon some that used presently to clap themselves down upon their Seats as soon as ever Prayer was done, and down-right charges it as against Scripture: If it be an Irreverent thing (as he argues) to sit down before, or over against a Person for whom thou hast a mighty Reverence and Veneration, how
Part 1. how much more does it favour of irreligion to do so in the presence of the living God, while the Angel is yet standing by thee to carry up the Prayer to Heaven? Unless we have a mind to reproach God to his face, and tell him that we are weary of the Duty.

Another Custom which they had in Prayer was, that they constantly prayed towards the East. This was so universally common, that there's scarce any Ancient Ecclesiastical Writer but speaks of it; though not many of them agree in assigning the Reason of it. The Custom doubtless begun very early, and is generally ascribed to the Apostles; so the Author of the Questions and Answers assures us, and tells us it was because the East was accounted the most excellent part of the Creation; and seeing in Prayer we must turn our faces towards some Quarter, 'twas fittest it should be towards the East. Just (says he) as in making the Sign of the Cross in the Name of Christ, we use the Right Hand, because 'tis better than the Left, not in its own nature, but only in its posture and fitness for our use. S. Basil likewise reckons it amongst the traditions that had been derived from the Apostles, but tells us the
the mystery of it was, that hereby they Part 11 respected Paradise, which God planted in the East, begging of him that they might be restored to that ancient Country from whence they had been cast out. This might probably be with those who dwelt in the Western parts of the world; but how it could be done by those who lived East of the Garden of Eden, (suppose in any parts of India) I am not able to imagine. Clemens Alex. tells us, Strom. I. 3, that herein they had respect to Christ, p. 724, for as the East is the birth and womb of the Natural Day, from whence the Sun (the Fountain of all sensible Light) does arise and spring, so Christ, the true Sun of Righteousness, who arose upon the World with the light of Truth, when it sat in the darkness of Error and Ignorance, is in Scripture styled the East, and therefore our Prayers are directed thither. For which reason Tertullian calls the East the figure or the type of Christ. But whatever the true Reason was, I'm sure 'tis a sober account which Athanasius gives of it: We do not (says he) worship towards the East, as if we thought God any ways shut up in those parts of the world, but because God is in himself, and is so styled in Scripture, etc.
Part I. the true light; in turning therefore towards that created light we do not worship it, but the great Creator of it; taking occasion from that most excellent Element to adore that God who was before all Elements and Ages of the World. This was their carriage for Prayer; nor were they less humble and reverent in other parts of Worship; they heard the Scriptures read and preached with all possible gravity and attention, which that they might the better do, they were wont to stand all the while the Sermon continued, none sitting then but the Bishop and Presbyters that were about him. So Optatus expressly tells us, that the people had no privilege to sit down in the Church; though whether the Custom was universally so in all places, I much doubt. Nay, S. Augustine tells us, that in some transmarine (I suppose he means the Western) Churches it was otherwise, the people having seats placed for them as well as the Ministers. But generally the people stood, partly to express the reverence, partly to keep their Attentions awake and lively. Hence it was part of the Deacons Office (as Chrysostom tells us, and the same we find in the ancient Greek Liturgies) to call upon the
the people with an open stomaena, Part. 1.
Let us duly stand upright, respecting the
decent posture of their bodies, though
withall principally intending the eleva-
tion of their minds, the lifting up their
thoughts from low Fordid Objects to
those Spiritual and Divine things, they
were then conveniant about. But what-
ever they did in other parts of the Pub-
lick Service, they constantly stood up
at the Reading of the Gospel, a Custom
generally embraced in all parts of the
Christian World. Therefore Sozomen
discoursing of the various Rites obser-
ved in several Churches, notes it as an
unusual thing in the Bishop of Alexan-
dria, that he did not rise up when the
Gospels were read; a thing (says he)
which I never saw nor heard of in any
other place. And Philostorgius tells us, Hif. Ech.
of Theophilus, the Indian Bishop, that a-
mongst several irregularities which he
corrected in those Churches, he parti-
cularly reformed this, that the people
were wont to sit while the Lessons out
of the Gospel were read to them. Nor
did the greatest Personages think them-
selves too high to express this piece of
Reverence in their Attendance upon the
King of Kings. 'Tis very memorable
what
Part r. what we read concerning the Great Constantine, that when upon occasion Eusebius was to make a Panegyric concerning the Sepulchre of our Saviour, though it was not in the Church, but in the Palace, yet he refused to sit all the time, and when Eusebius beseeched him to sit down in his Throne, that was hard by him, he would not, but attentively heard, judged, and approved those things that were spoken. And when after a good while, the Sermon having been prolix, Eusebius out of compliance would have broken off and done, he called to him to go on till he came to the full end of his Discourse; whereupon he was again solicited to sit down, but refused, affirming it to be unfit to attend upon any Discourse concerning God, and much more at this time, with ease and softness: and that it was very consonant to Piety and Religion that Discourses about Divine things should be heard standing. So great a Reverence had that excellent Prince for the Solemnities of Divine Worship. In the discharge of these Holy Exercises as they carried themselves with all Seriousness and Gravity, so they continued in them till they were completely finished; there was then no such
Ch. 9. **Primitive Christianity.**

Such Airiness and Levity as now possessest Part 1.

the Minds of men, no snatching at some pieces of the Worship, *tanquam Canis ad Nilum*, and gone again, no rude Disorderly departing the Congregation, till the whole Worship and Service of God was over. And therefore when this warmth and vigour of the first Ages was a little abated, the Council of Orleans thought good to re-establish the Primitive Devotion by this Canon, *That when can. 22.*

the people came together for the Celebration of Divine Service, they should not depart till the whole Solemnity was over, and the Bishop or Presbyter had given the Blessing.
Of Baptism, and the Administration of it in the Primitive Church.

Four Circumstances considered. Baptism by whom administered. By none usually without the leave of the Bishop. The great Controversie about Re-baptizing those that had been baptized by Hetericks. An Account of it out of Cyprian. Laymen how suffered to baptize. The Opinion of the Absolute Necessity of Baptism. The Case of Athanasius his baptizing when but a Child. Women never permitted to baptize. Persons to be baptized, who. Infants. Sufficient Evidence for Infant Baptism in the Ancient Writers of the Church. Some passages out of Cyprian noted. The baptized most-what Adult persons. The stated times of Baptism, Easter and Whitsuntide, and why. Especially upon Easter Eve, and why. In cases of Necessity at any other time. Clinic who. Clinic Baptism accounted less perfect, why. Usual to defer Baptism till a Death-bed, and the reason of it noted in
in Constantine and others. Being baptized for the dead, what (probably) the usual place of Baptism in or near the Church; always before the Congregation. The Baptisterium or Font, where it stood, and how large. Its distinct apartments for Men and Women. A Curiosity in many in those times of being baptized in Jordan, and why. The manner of the Administration. The person baptized looked towards the West, and why. Their Answering as to the Profession of their Faith. Their solemn Abstention and twice, and the form of it. Sureties in Baptism. Persons baptized Exorcised; what meant by it. Unction upon what account used; several Reasons of it assigned by the Fathers. The Sign of the Cross made in Baptism evident out of the Ancient Fathers. Of Immersion or putting the person under water; what is shadowed out. Generally in use in those Countries; not absolutely necessary in others. Trine Immersion: different Reasons of it assigned by the Fathers. It obtained not in Spain, and why. A second Unction. Persons after Baptism clothed in White Garments, and why. These kept in the Church as a testimony of their Solemn Engagement. A memorable
OUR Lord having instituted Baptism and the Lord's Supper as the two great Sacraments of the Christian Law, they have accordingly been ever accounted Principal parts of Publick Worship in the Christian Church; we shall treat first of Baptism, as being the door by which persons enter in, the great and Solemn Rite of our Initiation into the Faith of Christ; concerning which four Circumstances are chiefly to be inquired into; the persons by and upon whom; the time when, the place where, the manner how this Sacrament was administered in the ancient Church.

For the persons by whom this Sacrament was administered, they were the Ministers of the Gospel, the Stewards of the mysteries of Christ, baptizing and preaching the Gospel, being joyned together by our Saviour in the same Commission; usually 'twas done by the Bishop, the sacerdos in J. Martyr, the Antistes in Tertullian, the President or chief Minister of the Congregation, the Summus Sacerdos, qui est Episcopus, as he calls him,
him, without whose Leave and Authority neither Presbyters nor Deacons might take upon them to baptize, as not only Ignatius but Tertullian expressly tells us, and if they did, it was only in case of necessity, as is affirmed by an ancient Author, who lived in or near the time of Cyprian. The same S. Hierom assures us was the Custom in his time, though otherwhiles we find the Bishop to begin the action, and the Presbyters to carry it on and finish it. But as Christianity increased, this became a more familiar part of the Presbyters and the Deacons Office, and doubtless had been more or less executed by them from the beginning, though out of Reverence to the Bishop, and to preserve the honour of the Church, (as Tertullian gives the reason) they did it not without his leave and deputation; and 'tis certain that Philip baptized the Eunuch, who yet was of no higher Order than that of Deacon. Nor was it accounted enough by some in those times, that Baptism was conferred by a person called to the Ministry, unless he was also orthodox in the Faith. This became matter of great bustle in the Church; hence sprang that famous Controversie between Cyprian and
and Stephen Bishop of Rome, concerning the re-baptizing those that had been baptized by Heretics, (of which there is so much in Cyprians Writings) Cyprian asserting that they ought to be re-baptized, the other as stiffly maintaining it to be both against the doctrine and practice of the Church. This begot great Heats and Feuds between those good men, and engaged a great part of the whole Christian Church in the quarrel, Cyprian endeavouring to strengthen his Cause not only by Arguments from Scripture, but by calling a Council at Carthage of eighty seven African Bishops, who all concluded for his Opinion. How truly Cyprian maintained this, I am not concerned to inquire; onely I take notice of two things which he and his Followers pleaded by way of Abatement to the rigour of their Opinion. First, that hereby they did not affect re-baptization to be lawful, this they expressly deny to receive any patronage from their practice, for they looked upon that Baptism that had been conferred by Heretics as null and invalid, (seeing Heretics being out of the Church could not give what they had not) and therefore when any returned to the Union of the Church
Church they could not properly be said Part 1. to be re-baptized, seeing they did but receive what (lawfully) they had not before. Secondly, that they did not pro-
miscuously baptize all that came over from Heretical Churches, for where any had been lawfully baptized by Orthodox Ministers before their going over to them, these they received at their return without any other Ceremony than Imposition of Hands, baptizing those only who never had any other Baptism than that which Heretics had conferred upon them. 

Cyprian being thus severe against Baptism dispensed by Heretical Ministers, we may wonder what he thought of that which was administered by meer Lay unordained persons, which yet was not uncommon in those times; for that Laymen (provided they were Christians and baptized themselves) might and did baptize others in cases of necessity, as so positively asserted by Tertullian, Locis antea citat. Hierom, and others, that no man can doubt of it. A Custom ratified by the Fathers of the Illibarine Council, with this Proviso, that if the persons so baptiz'd lived, they should receive confirmation from the Bishop. This without question arose from an Opinion they had of
Part 1. of the absolute and indispensable necessity of Baptism, without which they scarce thought a man's future condition could be safe, and that therefore 'twas better it should be had from any, than to depart this Life without it; for excepting the case of Martyrs, (whom they thought sufficiently qualified for Heaven by being baptized in their own blood,) insisting upon a twofold Baptism, one of water in time of Peace, another of blood in the time of Persecution, answerable to the water and blood that flowed out of our Saviour's side: excepting these) they reckoned no man could be saved without being baptized, and cared not much in cases of necessity, so they had it, how they came by it. As for that Act of Athanasius (mentioned by the Author of his Life in Photius, and more largely related by Sozomen) when a Boy playing with the rest of his Companions, they formed themselves into a kind of Church-Society, Athanasius was chosen Bishop, and others personated the Catechumens ready to be baptized, and were accordingly with all the usual Formalities baptized by Athanasius. This Juvenile Ceremony being ended, they were brought before Alexander the then Bishop.
shop of Alexandria, (who had himself beheld the whole scene) who inquiring into the Reasons and Circumstances of the action, and having consulted with his Clergy that were about him, concluded that those Children ought not to be re-baptized, and therefore only added his Confirmation to them. But this being only a particular Case, and the like not mentioned that I remember by any Writer of those times, I only relate it as I find it. But though this Power in Cases of necessity was allowed to men, (who were capable of having the Ministerial Office conferred upon them) yet was it ever denied to women, whom the Apostle has so expressly forbidden to exercise any Ministry in the Church of God, and accordingly censured in the Apostolical Constitutions, to be not only dangerous, but unlawful and impious. Indeed in the Churches of the Heretics Women even in those times took upon them to baptize, but it was universally condemned and cried out against by the Orthodox, and constantly affixed as a note of Dishonour and Reproach upon the Heretical Parties of those times, as abundantly appears from Tertullian, Epiphanius, and others, who record the
Part 1. Heretical Doctrines and Practices of those first Ages of the Church; however afterwards it crept in in some places, and is allowed and practised in the Church or Rome at this day: where in cases of necessity they give leave that it may be administered by any, and in any Language, whether the person administering be a Clerge or a Lay man, (yea though under Excommunication) whether he be a Believer or an Infidel, a Catholic or an Heretick, a Man or a Woman; onely taking care that (if it may be) a Priest be preferred before a Deacon, a Deacon before a Subdeacon, a Clergie man before a Lay, and a Man before a Woman; together with some other cases, which are there wisely provided for.

From the persons ministring we proceed to the persons upon whom it was conferred, and they were of two sorts, Infants and Adult persons. How far the Baptizing of Infants is included in our Saviours Institution, is not my work to dispute; but certainly if in Controverted Cases the constant practice of the Church, and those who immediately succeeded the Apostles be (as no man can deny it is) the best Interpreter of the Laws of Christ, the Dispute one would
would think should be at an end: for Part i.
that it always was the Custom to receive
the Children of Christian Parents into
the Church by Baptism, we have suffi-
cient Evidence from the greatest part of
the most early Writers. Tertullian, Origens, Cyprian, &c. whose Testi-
monies I do not produce, because I find
them collected by others, and the Aigu-
ment thence so forcible and conclusive,
that the most zealous Opponers of Infant
Baptism know not how to evade it; the
Testimonies being so clear, and not the
least shadow that I know of in those
times of any thing to make against it.
There was indeed in Cyprians time a
Controversie about the baptizing of In-
fants, not whether they ought to be bap-
tized (for of that there was no doubt)
but concerning the time when it was to
be administered, whether on the second
or third, or whether as Circumcision of
old to be deferred till the eighth day.
For the determining of which, Cyprian
sitting in Council with sixty six Bishops,
writes a Synodical Epistle to Fidus, to Ep.60,p.97
let him know, that it was not neces-
ary to be deferred so long, and that it
was their universal Judgment and Reso-
lution, that the mercy and grace of God
was
was not to be denied to any, though as soon as he was born: concluding, that it was the Sentence of the Council, that none ought to be forbidden Baptism and the Grace of God; which as it was to be observed and retained towards all men, so much more towards Infants and new-born Children. And that this sentence of theirs was no novel Doctrine S. Augustine assures us; where speaking concerning this Synodical Determination, he tells us, that in this Cyprian did not make any new Decree, but kept the Faith of the Church most firm and sure. I shall only take notice of one place more out of Cyprian, which methinks evidently makes for this purpose, where describing the great wickedness and miserable condition of the lapsed, such as to avoid Persecution had done Sacrifice to the Idols; he urges this as one of the least and highest Aggravations, that by their Apostasy their Infants and Children were exposed to ruin, and had lost that which they had obtained at their first coming into the world, (which whether he means it of their right to Baptism, or their having been actually baptized, and losing the fruit and benefit of their Baptism, is all one to my purpose) and there-
Ch. 10. Primitive Christianity.

therefore he brings them in thus elegant-ly pleading against their Parents at the great day: 'Twas no fault of ours, we did not of our selves forsake the Sacraments of our Lord; and run over to joyn with profane impieties; the unfaithfulness of others has undone us, we have found our parents to be murderers; they denied us God for our Father, and the Church for our Mother; for while we alas were little, unable to take any care of our selves, and ignorant of so great a wickedness, we were ensnared by the treachery of others, and by them betrayed into a partnership of their impieties.

This was the Case of Infants, but those who made up the main body of the Baptized in those days were adult persons, who flocking over daily in great numbers to the Faith of Christ, were received in at this door. Usually they were for some considerable time catechised and trained up in the Principles of the Christian Faith, till having given Testimony of their Proficiency in Knowledge (to the Bishop or Presbyter, who were appointed to take their Examination, and to whom they were to give an account once a week of what they had learnt) and of a sober and regular Conver-
Part 1. of the baptism, they then became Candidates for Baptism, and were accordingly taken in, which brings me to the next Circumstance considerable, concerning

The Time when Baptism was wont to be administered. At first all Times were alike, and persons were baptized as opportunity and occasion served; but the Discipline of the Church being a little settled, it began to be restrained to two solemn and stated times of the Year, viz. Easter and Whitsuntide. At Easter in memory of Christ's death and resurrection, correspondent unto which are the two parts of the Christian Life represented and shadowed out in Baptism, dying unto sin, and rising again unto newness of life; in order to which the parties to be baptized were to prepare themselves by a strict observation of Lent, disposing and fitting themselves for Baptism by Fasting and Prayer. In some places, particularly the Churches of Thessaly, Easter was the only time for Baptism, (as Socrates tells us) which was the reason why many amongst them died unbaptized; but this was an Usage peculiar to them alone. The ancient custom of the Church (as Zonaras tells us) was for persons to be baptized, especially upon the Saturday be-
before Easter-day, the reason whereof was, that this being the great or holy Sabbath, and the mid time between the day whereon Christ was buried, and that whereon he rose again, did most effectually correspond with the Mystery of Baptism, as it is the type and representation both of our Lord's burial and resurrection. At Whitsuntide, in memory of the Holy Ghosts being shed upon the Apostles, the same being in some measure represented and conveyed in Baptism. When I say that these were the two fixed times of Baptism, I do not strictly mean it of the precise days of Easter and Whitsuntide, but also of the whole intermediate space of Fifty days that is between them, which was in a manner accounted Festival, and Baptism administered during the whole time, as I have formerly noted. Besides these, Nazianzen reckons the Feast of Epiphany as an Annual time of Baptism, probably in memory either of the Birth or Baptism of our Saviour, both which anciently went under that Title. This might be the custom in some places, but I question whether it was universal; besides that afterwards it was prohibited and laid aside. But though persons in health, and the space
Part 1. Space that was requisite for the Instruction of the Catechumens might well enough comport with these Annual Returns, yet if there was a necessity (as in case of sickness and danger of death) they might be baptized at any other time. For finding themselves at any time surprised with a dangerous or a mortal Sickness, and not daring to pass into another world without this badge of their Initiation into Christ, they presently signified their earnest desire to be baptized, which was accordingly done as well as the circumstances of a Sick Bed would permit. These were called Clinici, (of whom there is frequent mention in the Ancient Writers of the Church) because ἐν τῇ κλίνῃ βαπτίζοντο, baptized as they lay along in their Beds. This was accounted a less solemn and perfect kind of Baptism, partly because it was done not by Immersion, but by Sprinkling; partly because persons were supposed at such a time to desire it, chiefly out of a fear of death, and many times when not throughly Masters of their Understandings. For which reason persons so baptized (if they recovered) are by the Fathers of the Neocesarean Council rendered ordinarily incapable of being
being admitted to the degree of Pres-Part 4.

hysers in the Church. Indeed ’twas ve-
ry usual in those times (notwithstanding
that the Fathers did solemnly and smart-
ly declaim against it) for persons to de-
fer their being baptized till they were
near their death, out of a kind of No-
avian Principle, that if they fell into
sin after Baptism, there would be no
place for Repentance, mistaking that
place of the Apostle, where ’tis said that
If they who have been once enlightened
\( \text{ἐκ} \text{κωμίστας} \), which the Ancients ge-
nerally understand of Baptism) fall away,
’tis impossible to renew them again unto
repentance. For some such reason we
may suppose it was that Constantine the
Great deferred his Baptism till he lay a
dying; the same which Socrates relates
of his Son Constantius, baptized a little
before his death. And the like he reports
of the Emperor Theodosius, who appre-
Lib. 5. c. 6.
hending himself to be arrested with a
Mortal Sickness, presently caused himself
to be baptized, though he recovered
afterwards. To this Custom of Clinic
Baptism some not improbably think the
Apostle has reference in that famous
place, where he speaks of those that are
baptized for the dead, \( \text{καὶ} \text{νεκρῶν} \), which

\[ X 3 \]
Part I. they expound with reference to the state of the dead, and that 'tis meant of such who in danger of death would be baptized, that it might fare well with them after death. This Epiphanius thinks the truest Interpretation, that it's meant of Catechumens; who being suddenly surprized with death, would be baptized, that so their sins being remitted in Baptism, they might go hence under the hope of that Eternal Life which awaits Good men after death, and testifie their belief and expectation of their future happy Resurrection. Others think it may refer to the place of Baptism, those who are baptized "chiefly, over the Graves or Sepulchres of the dead, it being an ancient and general Custom to have their Religious Meetings, and to perform their Publick Exercises at the Tombs of Martyrs; there being numerous Instances in the Acts of the Martyrs, of such as were baptized in the Cemeteries over the Monuments of the dead. Whichsoever of these is most suitable, yet certainly either of them is far more probable than that which many talk so much of, as if the Apostle meant it of a custom common in those Primitive Times amongst the Cerinthians, and other Hereticks, where, when
Ch. 10. Primitive Christianity.

when any died without Baptism, they used to place another under his bed, who was baptized for him in his stead, whence Tertullian calls it a vicarious Baptism; it being highly improbable that the great Apostle would fetch an Argument to confirm so solemn and fundamental a Principle of the Christian Faith, as the Doctrine of the Resurrection is, from such an absurd and ridiculous Rite used only by the worst of Heretics. But this only by the way.

For the Place where this Solemn action was performed, it was first unlimited, any place where there was water, as Justin Martyr tells us, in Ponds, or Lakes, at Springs or Rivers, as Tertullian speaks; but always as near as might be to the place of their Publick Assemblies, for it was seldom done without the presence of the Congregation; and that for very good reason, both as 'tis a principal act of Religious Worship, and as 'tis the initiating of persons into the Church, which therefore ought to be as publick as it could, that so the whole Congregation might be Spectators and Witnesses of that Profession and Engagement which the person baptized then took upon him; and this they so zealously
Part 1. Jovius kept to, that the Trullan Council allows not Baptism to be administered in a private Chapel, but only in the public Churches, punishing the persons offending, if Clergie with Deposition, if Laiety with Excommunication; which yet (as both Zonaras and Balsamon expound the Canon) is to be understood, unless it be done with the leave and approbation of the Bishop of the Diocese. For this reason they had afterwards their Baptisteria or (as we call them) Fonts, built at first near the Church, then in the Church Porch, to represent Baptisms being the entrance into the Mystical Church: afterwards they were placed in the Church itself. They were usually very large and capacious, not only that they might comport with the general Custom of those Times of persons baptized, being immersed or put under water; but because the stated times of Baptism returning so seldom, great Multitudes were usually baptized at the same time. In the middle of the Font there was a partition, the one part for Men, the other for Women, that to avoid offence and scandal they might be baptized asunder. Here it was that this great Rite was commonly performed, though
in cases of necessity they dispensed with Part 1. Private Baptism, as in the case of those that were sick, or shut up in prison, of which there were frequent instances in times of Persecution. Many there were in those days (such especially as lived in the parts near to it) whom nothing would serve, unless they might be baptized in Jordan, out of a reverence to that place where our Saviour himself had been baptized; this Constantine tells us he had a long time resolved upon, to be baptized in Jordan, though God cut him short of his desire. And Eusebius Euseb. de loc. Heb. in voce Bap. 59. elsewhere relates, that at Bethabara, beyond Jordan where John baptized, there was a place whither very many even in his time used to resort, earnestly desiring to obtain their Baptism in that place. This doubtless proceeded from a very devout and pious Mind, though otherwise one place can contribute nothing more than another, nothing being truer than what Tertullian has observed in this case, That it's no matter whether we be baptized amongst those whom John baptized in Jordan, or whom Peter baptized in Tyber.

The last Circumstance I propounded concerns the manner of the Celebration of
314 Primitive Christianity, Ch. 10.

Part 1. of this Sacrament, and for this we may observe, that in the Apostles Age Baptism was administered with great nakedness and simplicity, probably without any more Formality than a short Prayer, and repeating the words of Institution: and indeed it could not well be otherwise, considering the vast Numbers that many times were then baptized at once. But Ages added many Rites, differing very often according to Time and Place; I shall not undertake to give an account of all, but onely of the most remarkable, and such as did generally obtain in those times, keeping as near as I can to the order which they observed in the Administration, which usually was thus: Persons having past through the state of the Catechumens, and being now ripe for Baptism, made it their request to the Bishop that they might be baptized; whereupon at the Solemn times they were brought to the Entrance of the Baptistry or Font, and standing with their Faces towards the West, (which being directly opposite to the East, the place of light, did symbolically represent the Prince of darkness, whom they were to renounce and defeat) were commanded to stretch out their hand, as it were.

were in defiance of him. In this posture Part 1. they were interrogated by the Bishop, concerning their breaking of all their former leagues and commerce with Sin, and the Powers of Hell, the Bishop asking, Doest thou renounce the Devil and all his Works, Powers, and Service? To which the party answered, I do renounce them. Doest thou renounce the World, and all its Pompes and Pleasures? Answer, I do renounce them. This renunciation was made twice, once before the Congregation, (probably at their obtaining leave to be baptized) and presently after at the Font or place of Baptism, as Tertullian witnesses. Next they made an open confession of their Faith, the Bishop asking, Doest thou believe in God the Father Almighty, &c. in Jesus Christ his only Son, who, &c. doest thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholick Church, and in one Baptism of Repentance for the Re- mission of Sins, and Life Everlasting? To all which the person answered, I do believe. This Form of Interrogation seems to have been very Ancient in the Church, and the Apostle is justly thought to refer to it, when he styles Baptism the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, which can reasonably refer
Part I. for to nothing so well as that common Custom of answering in Baptism. These Answers and Actions in the adult were done by the persons themselves, in chil-
De Bapt.. dress by their Sponsores, as Tertullian calls them, their Sureties and Undertakers; for that both Infants and Adult persons had those that undertook for them at their Baptism, is so notoriously known, that it were impertinent to insist upon it. After this there was a kind of Exor-
cism, and an Infusflation or Breathing in the Face of the person baptized, (which S. Augustine calls a most ancient tradition of the Church) by which they signified the expelling of the Evil Spirit, and the breathing in the Good Spirit of God; not that they thought that every one before Baptism was possessed by the Devil, but only that we are by na-
ture children of wrath, Enemies to God, and Slaves to Satan. Nor did they lay any stress upon the bare Usage of those Symbolick Rites, but wholly upon the Churches Prayers, which at the same time were made, that God would deliver those persons from the power of Satan, and by his Spirit unite them to the Church. This being done, they were brought to the Font, and were first
first stript of their garments; (intimating Part of thereby their putting off the old man, which is corrupt with his deceitful lusts;) and that all occasions of scandal and immodesty might be prevented in so Sacred an action, the Men and Women (as I observed before) were baptized in their distinct apartments, the Women having Deaconesses to attend them, to undress and dress them, to stand about and overshadow them, that nothing of indecency might appear. Then followed the Unitio, a Ceremony of early date, by which (says S. Cyril) they signified that they were now cut off from the Wilde Olive, and were ingraffed into Christ the true Olive-tree, and made partakers of his fruits and benefits; or else to shew that now they were become Champions for Christ, and had entred upon a state of Conflict, wherein they must strive and contend with all the Snares and Allurements of the World, as the Athlete of old were anointed against their Solemn Games, that they might be more expedit, and that their Antagonists might take less hold upon them; or rather, probably, to denote their being admitted to the great Privileges of Christianity, a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation,
Part 1. (as the Apostle styles Christians) Offices of which anointing was an ancient Symbol; both of being designed to them; and invested in them. And this Account Tertullian favours, where speaking of this Unction in Baptism, he tells us 'tis derived from the Ancient, i.e. Jewish Discipline, where the Priests were wont to be anointed for the Priesthood. For some such purpose they thought it fit that a Christian (who carries Unction in his very name) should be anointed as a Spiritual King and Priest, and that no time was more proper for it than at his Baptism, when the Name of Christian was conferred upon him. Together with this we may suppose it was, that the Sign of the Cross was made upon the Forehead of the party baptized. When this Ceremony first began to be used in Baptism, I find not: S. Basil reckons it (and he puts it too in the first place) amongst those Ancient Customs of the Church that had been derived from the Times of the Apostles. That it was generally in use in the Times of Tertullian and Cyprian, we have sufficient Evidence from their Writings; and indeed cannot reasonably suppose they should omit it in this Solemn Action (where it is so proper) when they used.
used it in the commonest actions of their Part.
Lives, Tertullian expressly assuring us, that
upon every motion, at their going out and
coming in, at their going to bath, or to ad
bed, or to meals, or whatever their Im-
ployment or Occasions called them to, they
were wont frontem signaculo terere, to
make the sign of the Cross upon their Fore-
head; and this they did (as he there tells
us) not that it was imposed upon them
by any Law of Christ, but brought in by
a pious Custom, as that which did very
much tend to strengthen and increa-
te their Faith. By this they shewed, that
they were not ashamed of the Cross of
Christ, nor unwilling to engage in the
Service of a crucified Master, which yet
was so great a scandal to the Heathen
World, and therefore they so often tri-
umphed in this Symbol and Representa-
ton of it. Thus S. Hierom., though he lived
in a time when Christianity had almost
quite prevailed over all other Religions
in the World, yet counted this the great
matter of his Glory, That I am (says he)
a Christian, that I was born of Christian Pa-
rents, and do carry in my Forehead the Ban-
ner of the Cross. And indeed so great
a respect did they bear to this Repre-
sentation of our Saviour's Death, that
(though
Part 1. (though they did not worship the Cross, yet) they took care that it should not be put to any mean and trivial uses, be painted or made upon the ground, or engraven upon Marble pavements, or any thing where it might be trampled upon, as is expressly provided by a Law of Theodosius and Valentinian.

The action having proceeded thus far, the party to be baptized was wholly immersed or put under water, which was the almost constant and universal Custom of those times, whereby they did more notably and significantly express the three great ends and effects of Baptism; for as in Immersion there are in a manner three several acts, the putting the person into water, his abiding there for a little time, and his rising up again: so by these were represented Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and in conformity thereunto our dying unto sin, the destruction of its power, and our resurrection to a new course of life; by the persons being put into water was lively represented the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, and being washed from the filth and pollution of them; by his abode under it, which was a kind of burial in the water, his entering into a state
state of death or mortification, like as Part 1.

Christ remained for some time under the
state or power of death, therefore as
many as are baptized into Christ, are said
to be baptized into his death, and to be
buried with him by Baptism into death,
that the old man being crucified with him,
the body of sin might be destroyed, that
henceforth he might not serve sin, for that
be that is dead is freed from sin, as the
Apostle clearly explains the meaning of
this rite: and then by his immersion, or
rising up out of the water was signified
his entering upon a new course of life,
differing from that which he lived be-
fore, that like as Christ was raised up
from the dead by the glory of the Father,
even so we also should walk in newness of
life. But though by reason of the more
eminent significance of these things, imm-
ersion was the common practice in those
days, and therefore they earnestly urged
it and pleaded for it, yet did they
not hold sprinkling to be unlawful, espe-
cially in cases of necessity, as of weak-
ness, danger of death, or where conve-
niency of immersing could not be had;
in these and such like cases Cyprian does
not only allow, but plead for it, and
that in a discourse on purpose, when
Part I. the question concerning it was put to him. Upon this account it is that immersion is now generally disused in these parts of the world, and sprinkling succeeded in its room, because the tender bodies of most Infants (the only persons now baptized) could not be put under water in these cold Northern Climates without apparent prejudice to their health, if not their lives; and therefore in this as in other cases, God requires mercy rather than sacrifice, especially considering that the main ends of Baptism are attained this way, and the mystical effects of it as truly, though not so plainly and significantly represented, by sprinkling, as by putting the body under water.

This immersion was performed thrice, the person baptized being three several times put under water, a custom which Basil and Sozomon will have derived from the Apostles; 'tis certain that it was very early in the Church, being twice mentioned by Tertullian as the common practice. By this trine immersion they signified (say some) their distinct adoring the three persons in the blessed Trinity, and therefore the custom was, in repeating the words of institution, at the
Ch. 10. Primitive Christianity.

the naming of every person, the Father, Part 1. the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to plunge the party under water, as Tertullian tells us, and S. Ambrose more expressly. 'Twas done (say others) to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of our Saviour, together with his three days continuance in the Grave; S. Augustine joins both these together as the double mystery of this ancient rite, as he is cited by Gratian to this purpose. It cannot be denied but that the Ceremony is very significant and expressive, and accordingly the ancients laid great weight upon it, insomuch that the Canons that go under the name of Apostolical command him, whether Bishop or Presbyter, that baptizes any without the trine immersion, to be deposed from his Ministry. But though this custom was in a manner universal, yet in some places (in after times especially) it was otherwise, particularly in Spain where they used it but once, lest they should gratifie the Arrians, who made use of the trine immersion to denote the persons in the Trinity to be three distinct substances, and gloried that the Catholics did, and held the same with them. Upon this account, they were content to immerge but once;

Y 2 and
and when differences and controversies did still remain about it, the fourth Council of Toledo out of a Letter of Gregory the great thus determined the case, that they should still use their single immersion, and that this would sufficiently express the mysteries of Baptism, the diving under water would denote Christ's death and descending into Hell, the coming out his resurrection: the single immersion would express the unity of the Godhead; while the Trinity of persons would be sufficiently denoted by the persons being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The person baptized being come out of the water was anointed the second time, as S. Cyril tells us; and indeed whatever becomes of theunction that was before, tis certain that that which Tertullian speaks of as a part of the ancient discipline was after the person was baptized, which being done he had a white garment put upon him, to denote his having put off the lusts of the flesh, his being washed from the filth and defilement of his former sins, and his resolution to maintain a life of unspotted innocence and purity, according to that solemn strict engagement which in Baptism he had
had taken upon him. In this they alluded to that of the Apostle, that as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, i.e. have engaged in that strict and holy course of life which he both by his doctrine and example has left to the world: accordingly persons baptized are both by the Apostle, and by the Greek Fathers frequently called ὄνομαSCOΛμων, or the enlightened, because they now professed that they were become the children of the light and of the day, and would not return to works of darkness any more; and this as they expected mercy from Christ at the great day; therefore the white Garment was wont to be delivered to them with such a charge as this, Receive the white and immaculate Garment, and bring it forth without spot before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have eternal life. Amen. From the wearing of these white Vestments (as we have observed before) Pentecost (which was one of the two annual times for Baptism) came to be called Whitesunday, as also the Sunday after Easter (which was the other time) Dominica in Albis, because then they laid this white Robe aside; for it was the custom for persons baptized to wear this
Part 1. this Garment for a whole week after they were baptized, and then to put it off, and lay it up in the Church, that it might be kept as an evidence against them, if they violated or denied that Faith which they had owned in Baptism; whereof we have a memorable instance under the Arrian persecution in Africk. Elpidophorus a Citizen of Carthage had lived a long time in the communion of the Church, but apostatizing afterwards to the Arrians, became a most bitter and implacable persecutor of the Orthodox party: amongst others whom he summoned to be put to the Rack was one Miritas a venerable old Deacon (who had been the Undertaker for him at his Baptism) who being ready to be put upon the Rack, plucked out the white Vestment wherewith Elpidophorus had been clothed at his Baptism, and with tears in his eyes thus openly bespake him before all the people: These, Elpidophorus, thou minister of error, these are the Garments that shall accuse thee, when thou shalt appear before the majesty of the great Judge; these I will diligently keep as a testimony of that ruin, that shall deprefs thee down into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; these are
are they that were girt upon thee, when thou camest pure out of the holy Font; and these are they that shall bitterly pursue thee when thou shalt be cast into the place of flames; because thou hast cloathed thy self with cursing, as with a Garment, and hast cast off the sacred obligation of thy Baptism, and the true faith which thou didst then profess and take upon thee. These were the main and most considerable circumstances wherewith Baptism was administered in the primitive Church; some whereof were by degrees antiquated and disused; other rites there were that belonged only to particular Churches, and which, as they were suddenly taken up, so were as quickly laid aside; others were added in after times, till they increased so fast that the usage and the number of them became absurd and burdensome, as may appear by the office for Baptism in the Romish Ritual at this day.

As a conclusion to this Chapter, I had once thought to have treated concerning Confirmation, which ever was a constant appendage to Baptism, and had noted some things to that purpose; but shall supersede that labour, finding it so often, and so fully done by others in just discourses.
Part 1. discourses, that nothing considerable can be added to them; only I shall give this brief and general account of it: all persons baptized in the ancient Church, (according to their age and capacity, persons adult, some little time after Baptism, children, when arrived to years of competent ripeness and maturity) were brought to the Bishop, there further to confirm and ratifie that compact which they had made with God in Baptism, and by some solemn acts of his ministry to be themselves confirmed and strengthened, by having the grace and blessing of God conferred upon them, to enable them to discharge that great promise and engagement which they had made to God. This was usually performed with the Ceremony of Unction, the person confirmed being anointed by the Bishop, or in his absence by an inferior Minister; and indeed Unction was an ancient rite used in the Jewish Church to denote the conferring of gifts or graces upon persons, and thence probably amongst other reasons (as many other usages were) might be derived into the Christian Church; though a learned man is of opinion, that unction was never used in confirmation, but where
where the person being in case of necessity baptized by some of the inferior Clergy had not been before anointed; otherwise those who had received complete Baptism, were not afterwards anointed at their confirmation, for which the Council of Orange is most express and clear. And indeed that Confirmation was often administered without this union, no man can doubt that knows the state of those times, being done only by solemn imposition of the Bishops hands, and by devout and pious prayers, that the persons confirmed might grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ, and be enabled to perform those vows and purposes, and that profession of Faith which they had before embraced in Baptism, and then again owned before the whole Congregation. Till this was done, they were not accounted compleat Christians, nor admitted to the holy Communion, nor could challenge any actual right to those great privileges of Christianity, whereas it is that the Ancients so often speak of Confirmation as that which did perfect and consummate Christians, as being a means to confer greater measures of that grace that was but begun in Baptism; upon all which accounts, and
Part 1. and almost exactly according to the primitive usage, it is still retained and practised in our own Church at this day: and happy were it for us, were it kept up in its due power and vigour; sure I am, 'tis too plain that many of our unhappy breaches and controversies in Religion do (if not wholly, in a great measure) owe their birth and rise to the neglect and contempt of this excellent usage of the Church.

Chap. XI.

Of the Lords Supper, and the administration of it in the ancient Church.

The persons dispensing this Ordinance, who. The persons Communicating, the Baptized or the Faithful; Suspension from this Ordinance according to the nature of the offence. The Eucharist sent home to them that could not be present. The case of Serapion. A custom in some places to give the Sacrament to persons when dead, if they dyed before they could receive it, and why. The Eucharist kept
kept by persons at home. Sent abroad. Part I.

This laid aside, and in its stead Eulogia or pieces of consecrated Bread sent from one Church to another, as tokens of communion. The time of its administration: sometimes in the morning, sometimes at night: varied according to the peace they enjoyed. How oft they received the Eucharist. At first every day. This continued in Cyprian's time. Four times a week. Afterwards less frequented. The usual place of receiving, the Church: ordinarily, not lawful to consecrate it elsewhere. Oblations made by persons before their communicatig. Their Agapæ or Love-Feasts, what. Whether before or after the Sacrament. How long continued in the Church. The manner of celebrating this Sacrament, collected out of the most ancient Authors.

The holy Kiss. The general prayer for the Church, and the whole world. The consecration of the Sacrament: the form of it out of S. Ambrose. The Bread common Bread. The sacramental Wine mixed with Water. This no necessary part of the institution. Why probably used in those Countreys. The posture of receiving not always the same. Singing Psalms during the time of celebration.

Followed
The holy Eucharist or Supper of our Lord being a rite so solemnly instituted, and of such great importance in the Christian Religion had place accordingly amongst the Ancients in their publick offices and devotions. In speaking to which I shall much what observe the same method I did in treating concerning Baptism, considering the persons, the time, the place, and the manner of its celebration. The persons administering were the ordinary Pastors and Governors of the Church, those who were set apart for the ministration of holy offices; the institution was begun by our Lord himself, and the administration of it by him committed to his Apostles and to their ordinary successors, to the end of the world. We find in Tertullian, that they never received it from any but the hand of the President; which must either be meant of the particular custom of that Church where he lived, or of consecration only; for otherwise the custom was when the Bishop or President had by solemn Prayers and blessings consecrated the
the sacramental elements, for the Dea-Part 1. cons to distribute them to the people, as well to those that were absent as to them that were present, as Justin Mar- apol 2. tyr expressly affirms, and as the custom generally was afterwards. For the persons communicating at this Sacrament, at first the whole Church, or body of Christians, within such a space, that had embraced the doctrine of the Gospel, and been baptized into the faith of Christ, used constantly to meet together at the Lords Table. As Christians multiplied, and a more exact discipline became necessary, none were admitted to this ordinance till they had arrived at the degree of the Faithful, for who ever were in the state of the Catechumenis, i.e. under instruction in order to their Baptism, or by reason of any hainous crime under the censures and suspension of the Church, and not yet passed through the several stages of the Penitents, might not communicate, and were therefore commanded to depart the Church, when the rest went to the celebration of the Sacrament: for looking upon the Lords Supper as the highest and most solemn act of Religion, they thought they could never take care enough in the dispensing of it; accordingly
Part 1. Accordingly who ever was found guilty
of any scandalous fault, was according to
the nature of the offence debarred the
Communion a shorter or a longer time,
and sometimes all their life, not to be
reconciled and taken into the communi-

tion of the Church, till they had con-
tinued their repentance to their death-
bed. As for those persons that could not
be present, either through distance of
place, sickness, or any other just cause,
the Eucharist was wont to be sent home
to them, some little pieces of the con-
secrated bread dip in the sacramental Cup,
which were usually carried by the Dea-
con, or some inferior Officer of the
Church, or in cases of necessity by any
other person; as in the case of Serapion,
of whom Dionysius of Alexandria relates,
that having been all his life a good man,
at last lapsed in a time of persecution,
and though he oft desired reconciliation,
yet none would communicate with
him; not long after he was seized upon
by a mortal sickness, depriv'd of the
use of his speech and senses, but com-
ing to himself after four days, he sends
his Nephew a little Boy late at night for
one of the Presbyters to come to him; the
Minister was at that time sick, but
considering
considering the exigence of the case, Part 1. gives the Boy a little piece of the Eucharist, bids him to moisten it with a little water, and so give it him in his mouth, which he did, and immediately the old man cheerfully departed this life. For the better understanding of which, we are to observe, that those who had lapsed into Idolatry, were to undergo a very long time of penance, and were not many times admitted to the Communion, till they were near their death; and because it sometimes hapned that they were overtaken with sudden death, before the Sacrament could be administered to them, thence a custom sprung up to give it them after they were dead, which they did doubtless upon this ground, that they might give some kind of evidence, that those persons died in the peace and communion of the Church, though this usage was afterwards by many Councils abrogated. \textit{Vid. conc. Carth. Can. 6. Conc. 6. Trull. Can. 83.}

I take no notice in this place of their giving the Eucharist to new-baptized Infants, the case being so commonly known and obvious. In those early times nothing was more common than for Christians either to carry, or to have sent to them some parts of the Eucharist.
Part 1. Eucharist, which they kept in some decent place in their houses against all emergent occasions, especially to fortisie and strengthen their faith in times of persecution, and to increase kindness and amity with one another; whence one that was well versed in Church-Antiquities, conjectures that when ever they entertained Friends or Strangers, they used before every meal first to give them some parts of the holy Eucharist, as being the greatest badge, the strongest bond of true love and friendship in the world. Besides these parcels of the sacramental Elements, there were wont at the celebration of the Communion to be pieces of bread (which remained of the Offerings of the people) which being solemnly blessed by the Bishop, might be given to those who had no right to be at the Lords Table as to the Catechumenens, and such like, and were to them instead of the Sacrament: These pieces were properly called Eulogie, because set apart by solemn benediction, and were sent up and down the Towns and Villages round about, to testify and represent their mutual union and fellowship with one another; nay and sometimes from Churches in one Country to those
Ch. 11. Primitive Christianity.

those that were in another; which was Part also done by the Eucharist it self: for so Irenæus in a Letter to Pope Victor tells us, that the Ministers of Churches (though differing in some little circumstances) did yet use to send the Eucharist to one another. Which Custom is also taken notice of by Zonaras; but because the carrying the Sacramental elements up and down the world was thought not so well to consist with the Reverence and Veneration that is due to this Solemn ordinance, therefore it was abolished by the Laodicean Synod, and these Eulogia or pieces of bread appointed at East, can. 14. after, to be sent up and down in their room.

For the Time, the next Circumstance; when they met together for this Solemn Action, it was in general at their Publick Assemblies, on the Lords Day always or the first day of the Week, as we find it in the History of the Apostles Acts, besides other days, and especially Saturday, on which day all the Churches in the World (those of Rome only and Alexandria excepted) used to celebrate this Sacrament; as the Historian informs us, Socc. 1. 5. c. 22, p. 286. What time of the day they took to do it is not altogether so certain. Our blessed Saviour and his Apostles celebrated it at night, at the time of the Jewish Pass-
Part 1. over; but whether the Apostles and their immediate Successors punctually observed this Circumstance may be doubted; 'tis probable that the Holy Eucharist, which S. Paul speaks of in the Church of Corinth, was solemnized in the morning, the Apostles calling it a Supper, (as Chrysostom thinks) not because 'twas done in the evening, but the more effectually to put them in mind of the time when our Lord did institute those Holy Mysteries. De cor.mil. Tertullian assures us, in his time 'twas done in tempore victus, about Supper-time, (as all understand him) and very often in the morning before day, when they held their Religious Assemblies, of which Pliny also takes notice in his Letter to the Emperor. For in those times of Persecution, when they were hunted out by the inquisitive malice of their Enemies, they were glad of the remotest Corners, the most unseasonable Hours when they could meet to perform the joint Offices of Religion. But this communicating at evening or at night either lasted onely during the extreme Heats of Persecution, or at least wore off apace; for Cyprian expressly pleads against it, affirming that it ought to be in the morning, and so indeed in a short time it prevailed.
vailed over most parts of the World, except in some places of Egypt near Alexandria, of which Socrates tells us, that after they had sufficiently feasted themselves in the Evening, they were wont to receive the Sacrament. Under this circumstance of Time we may take occasion to consider how oft in those days they usually met at this Table. And at first (while the Spirit of Christianity was yet warm and vigorous, and the Hearts of Men passionately inflamed with the love of Christ) 'tis more than probable they communicated every day; or as oft as they came together for Publick Worship, insomuch that the Common Apostolical and the Synod of Antioch threatened every one of the Faithful with Excommunication, who came to Church to hear the Holy Scriptures, but stay not to participate of the Lords Supper; the eye of their Minds was then almost wholly fixed upon the Memory of their crucified Saviour, and the oftener they fed at this Table, the stronger and healthier they found themselves, and the more able to encounter with those fierce Oppositions that were made against them. This custom of receiving the Sacrament every day continued some considerable time in the Church, though in some places longer.
Primitive Christianity, Ch. 11.

Part 1. than in others, especially in the Western Churches. From Cyprian we are fully assured 'twas so in his time, We receive the Eucharist every day (says he) as the food that nourishes us to Salvation. The like S. Ambrose seems to intimate of Milan, whereas he was Bishop, nay and after him S. Hierom tells us, 'twas the custom of the Church of Rome; and S. Augustine seems pretty clearly to intimate, that it was not unusual in his time. In the Churches of the East this custom wore off sooner, though more or less according as the Primitive Zele did abate and decay; S. Basil telling us that in his time they communicated four times a week, on the Lords Day, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, yea and upon other days too, if the memory or Festival of any Martyr fell upon them. Afterwards, as the Power of Religion began more sensibly to decline, and the commonness of the thing begat some contempt, (Manna itself was slighted, after once it was rained down every day) this Sacrament was more rarely frequented, and from once a day it came to once or twice a week, and then fell to once a month, and after for the most part to twice a year, at the 3 great Solemnities of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. To so great a coldness and indifferency did the Piety and
and Devotion of Christians grow, after Part 1.
once the true Primitive Temper and Spirit
of the Gospel had left the World.

Concerning the third circumstance, the
Place where this Holy Supper was kept,
much need not be said, it being a main
part of their Publick Worship always per-
formed in the place of their Religious As-
semblies. 'Twas instituted by our Saviour
in a Private house, because of its analogie to
the Jewish Passover, and because the neces-
sity of that time would not otherwise ad-
mit. By the Apostles and Christians with
them 'twas celebrated in the houses of Be-
lievers, generally in an upper room, set apart
by the bounty of some Christian for the
uses of the Church, and which (as I have
formerly proved) was the constant sepa-
rate place of Religious Worship for all the
Christians that dwelt thereabouts. Under
the Severities of great Persecutions they
were forced to fly to the mountains, or to
their Crypte or Vaults under ground, and
to celebrate this Sacrament at the Tombs
of Martyrs, and over the Ashes of the
Dead. Churches growing up into some
Beauty and Regularity, several parts of
the Divine Offices began to have seve-
ral places assigned to them, the Commu-
nion Service being removed to the up-
per
per or East end of the Church, and there performed upon a Table of Wood, which afterwards was changed into one of Stone, and both of them not uncommonly, though metaphorically, by the Fathers styled Altars, and the Eucharist itself, in later times especially, the Sacrament of the Altar. This place was called 

Samaritana, and was fenced in with Rails, within which the Clergie received the Sacrament, as the Laity did without. Here it was that they all used to meet at this Heavenly Banquet, for out of this place they allowed not the Celebration of the Sacrament, (a thing expressly forbidden by the Laodician Council) unless in cases of great necessity; and therefore it was one of the principal Articles for which the Synod of Gangra deposed Eustathius from his Bishoprick, that he kept private meetings, persuading some that were averse to the publick Assemblies of the Church, that they might communicate and receive the Sacrament at home.

We come last of all to consider the Manner how the Eucharist was celebrated in the ancient Church; but before we describe that, we are to take notice that after the Service of the Catechumen, and before the beginning of that of the Faithful, at which the Eucharist was administered, the cu-
custom was to present their offerings, every one according to his ability bringing some gift as the first fruits of his increase. These offerings were laid upon the altar or communion table, and none of them were empty. And therefore S. Cyprian severely chides a rich widow of his time, who came without giving any thing to the poor man's box, and did partake of their offerings without bringing any offering of her own. These oblations were designed to the uses of the church, for the maintenance of the ministry, and the relief of the poor, especially out of them were taken the bread and the wine for the sacramental elements, the bread being no other than common bread, such as served for their ordinary uses, there being then no notice taken of what has since so many hundred years, and still is to this day fiercely disputed between the gree and the latine church, whether it ought to be leavened or unleavened bread. Out of these oblations also 'tis probable they took (at least sent provisions extraordinary) to furnish the common feast, which in those days they constantly had at the celebration of the sacrament, where the rich and the poor feasted together at the same
Part 1. same Table. These were called Apage or Love-feasts, (mentioned by S. Jude, and plainly enough intimated by S. Paul) because hereat they testified and confirmed their mutual love and kindness, a thing never more proper than at the Celebration of the Lords Supper; which is not only a seal of our peace with God, but a sign and a pledge of our Communion and Fellowship with one another. Whether this Banquet was before or after the Celebration of the Eucharist, is not easy to determine; 'tis probable that in the Apostles time, and the Age after them, it was before it, in imitation of our Saviours Institution, who celebrated the Sacrament after Supper; and S. Paul taxing the Abuses of the Church of Corinth reproves them, That when they came together for the Lords Supper, they did not one tarry for another, but every one took his own supper; i.e. that provision which he had brought from home for the common Feast, which was devoured with great Irregularity and Excess, some eating and drinking all they brought, others (the Poor especially that came late) having nothing left, one being hungry and another drunken. All this, 'tis plain, was done before the Celebration of the Eucharist, which was never administered till the whole
whole Church met together. That therefore which the Apostle reproves and corrects, is their Indecency and Intemperance, commanding both rich and poor to wait for one another, and to eat this common Meal together, that they might the more orderly and unanimously pass to the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. In after Ages this Feast was not till the Communion was over, when the Congregation feasted together, and so departed; and so Christ expressly tells us 'twas in his days, besides, nothing is more obvious than that it was customary in those times for persons to fast till they had received the Communion. I know a very Learned man is of opinion, that these Love-feasts were not kept at the same time with the Celebration of the Eucharist; but besides that his Arguments are not Conclusive, the whole stream of learned Writers runs full against him. These Feasts continued for some Ages, till great inconveniences being found in them, they were prohibited to be kept in Churches by the Laodicean Synod, and after that by the Council of Carthage; which though but Provincial or National Councils, yet the Decrees were afterwards ratified by the sixth Trullan Council, and the Custom in a short time dwindled into nothing. These
These things being premised, the Sacramental Elements prepared, and all things ready, they proceeded to the Action it self, which (following for the main the account that is given us by S. Cyril of Jerusalem, and taking in what we find in others) was usually managed after this manner: First the Deacon brought water to the Bishop and the Presbyters that stood round about the Table to wash their Hands, signifying the purity that ought to be in those that draw nigh to God, according to that of the Psalmist, *I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord.* Then the Deacon cried out aloud, *Mutually embrace and kiss one another.* This holy kiss was very ancient, commonly used in the Apostles' times, and in the succeeding Ages of the Church, but especially at the Sacrament, as a sign of the unfeigned reconciliation of their Minds, and that all Injuries and Offences were blotted out, according to our Lords Command, *When thou bringest thy gift to the Altar, and rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* This being done they fell to Prayer, the whole Congregation praying together with the Minister,
Ch. 11. Primitive Christianity.

(which therefore Justin Martyr calls the Part 1. Common Prayer, the Form whereof in the ibid. Apostolical Constitutions is described at Lib. 8. c. 10 large) for the universal peace and welfare p. 1011. of the Church, for the tranquillity and quietness of the World, for the prosperity of the Age, for wholesome weather and fruitful seasons, for all sorts of persons, for Kings and Emperors, and all in Authority, for Souldiers and Armies, for Believers and Unbelievers, for Friends and Companions, for the sick and distressed, and in short for all that stood in need of help. This General Prayer is frequently mentioned by the Ancient Fathers as that which was at the beginning of the Communion Service; though S. Cyril place it a little later, as doubtless it was in his time. After this followed the mutual Salutation of the Minister and People, the Minister saying, The Lord be with you; to whom the People answered, And with thy spirit. The Minister cried, Lift up your hearts, (nothing being more suitable, says S. Cyril, at this time than that we should shake off all worldly cares, and exalt our hearts to God in heaven) the People truly assenting and yielding to it, answered, We lift them up unto the Lord. The Minister proceeded, Let us give thanks unto the Lord, (for what more fit than thank-
Part 1. thankfulness to God, and a high resentment of such Favours and Blessings) to this the People returned, It is meet and just so to do. Whereupon the Minister proceeded to the Prayer of Consecration, (the Form whereof we have in the Apostolical Constitutions) wherein he expressed huge thankfulness to God for the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of his Son, for the Shedding of his Blood for us, and the Celebration of it in this Sacrament; for condescending to admit them to such mighty Benefits, and praying for a closer unity to one another in the same Mystical Body; concluding usually with the Lords Prayer, and the hearty and universal Acclamation of Amen by all that were present. This done, the Minister cried out, TA AGIA TOID AGIOID, Holy things belong to holy persons; the People answering, There is one holy, one Lord Jesus Christ. Then he exhorted them to a due Participation of the Holy Mysteries, which Cyril tells us was done by way of a Divine Hymn, singing, Come taste and see that the Lord is good.

After this the Bishop or Presbyter took the Sacramental Elements, sanctified them by a Solemn Benediction. The Form of Consecration we have in S. Ambrose: Lord, make this Oblation now prepared for us, to be-
become a reasonable and acceptable sacrifice; Part 1. this, which is the Figure of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; who the day before he suffered took the Bread in his Sacred Hands, looked up to Heaven, giving thanks to thee, O Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, blessed it, and having broken it gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take, eat all of it, for this is my Body which is broken for many. Likewise also after Supper he took the Cup, that very day before he suffered, looking up to Heaven, giving thanks to thee, Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, and having blessed it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take, and drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood. After this he first brake the Just Man's Bread, and delivering it to the Deacon, he distributed it to the Communicants; and after that the Cup, which was likewise delivered to them; for the Custom of Communicating under one kind only, as is used in the Church of Rome, was then unknown to the World, nay, and for above a thousand Years after Christ. In some cases (tis true) they dip't the Bread in the Wine, as in the case of Baptized Infants, to whom they administered the Eucharist in those Primitive Times, and to very Weak Dying Persons, who
Part 1. who would not otherwise have swallowed the Bread; and that by this means they might keep the Sacrament at home against all emergent occasions; and this probably might in time make the way easier for introducing the Sacrament under the kind of Bread only. Their Sacramental Wine was generally diluted and mixed with water, as is evident from Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Cyprian, and others. Cyprian in a long Epistle expressly pleads for it, as the only true and warrantable Tradition, derived from Christ and his Apostles, and endeavours to find out many mystical significations intended by it, and seems to intimate as if he had been peculiarly warned of God to observe it according to that manner; an argument which God often produces as his Warrant to knock down a Controversie, when other Arguments were too weak to do it. But although it should be granted, that our Saviour did so use it in the Institution of the Supper, (the Wines of those Eastern Countries being very strong and generous, and that our Saviour, as all sober and temperate persons, might probably abate its strength with Water, of which nevertheless the History of the Gospel is wholly silent,) yet this being a thing in it self in-
Ch. 11. Primitive Christianity.

indifferent and accidental, and no way necessary to the Sacrament, could not be obligatory to the Church, but might either be done or let alone. The posture wherein they received it was not always the same: the Apostles at the Institution of it by our Saviour received it (according to the Custom of the Jews at Meals at that time) lying along on their sides upon Beds round about the Table; how long this way of Receiving lasted I find not; in the time of Dionysius Alexandrinus the custom was to stand at the Lords Table, as he intimates in a Letter to Pope Xystus; other Gestures being taken in as the Prudence and Piety of the Governours of the Church judged most decent and comely for such a Solemn Action; the Bread and Wine were delivered into the hands of those that communicated, and not as the Superstition of After-ages brought in, injected or thrown into their mouths. Cyril p. 545 tells us, that in his time they used to stretch out their right Hand, putting their left Hand under it, either to prevent any of the Sacramental Bread from falling down, or as some would have it, hereby to shadow out a kind of Figure of a Cross. Can. 10.

During the time of Administration, which in Populous Congregations was no
Part in no little time, they sung Hymns and Psalms, (the Compiler of the Apostolical Constitutions particularly mentions the 33 Psalm) which being done, the whole Action was solemnly concluded with Prayer and Thanksgiving, (the Form whereof is likewise set down by the Author of the Apostolical Constitutions) that God had thought them worthy to participate of such Sacred Mysteries, and the People being blessed by the Bishop or the Minister of the Assembly, and having again saluted each other with a KIss of peace, as a testimony of their hearty Love and kindness, (whence Tertullian calls this Kiss signaculum orationis, the Seal of Prayer) the Assembly broke up, and they returned to their own Houses. This for the main was the Order wherein the first Christians celebrated this Holy Sacrament; for though I do not pretend to set down every thing in that precise and punctual order wherein they were always done, (and how should I, when they often varied according to time and place?) yet I doubt not but whoever examines the usages of those times, will find that 'tis done as near as the nature of the thing would bear.

The End of the First Part.
Primitive Christianity;

Or the Religion of the Ancient Christians,

In the first Ages of the Gospel.

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Part 11.
The Religion of the Primitive Christians as to those Vertues that respect themselves.

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Chap. I.

Of their Humility.

This second branch of Religion comprehended under the notion of Sobriety, and discovered in some great instances of
Part 2. The proper tendency of the Christian Religion to beght humility. This divine temper eminently visible in the first Christians: made good out of their writings. The great humility and self-denial of Cyprian. What Nazianzen reports to this purpose of his own Father. Their modest declining that just commendation that was due to them. Many who suffered, refuse the honourable title of Martyrs. Nazianzen's vindication of them against the suggestions of Julian the Apostate. The singular meekness and condescension of Nebridius amidst all his honours and relations at Court. Their stooping to the vilest Offices, and for the meanest persons: dressing and ministering to the sick, washing the Saints feet, kissing the Martyr's Chains. The remarkable humility of Placilla the Empress, and the Lady Paula. An excellent discourse of Gregory Nyssen's against Pride.

Next to Piety towards God, succeeds that part of Religion that immediately respects our selves, expressed by the Apostle under the general name of Obedience, or the keeping, our selves within those bounds and measures which God
God has set us, Vertues, for which the Part 2. Primitive Christians were no less renowned than for the other: Amongst them I take notice of their Humility, their contempt of the World, their temperance and sobriety, their courage and constancy, and their exemplary patience under sufferings. To begin with the first.

Humility is a vertue that seems more proper to the Gospel; for though Philosophers now and then spake a few good words concerning it; yet it found no real entertainment in their lives, being generally animalia gloriae, creatures puffed up with wind and emptinesse, and that sacrific'd only to their own praise and honour: whereas the doctrines of the Gospel immediately tend to level all proud and swelling apprehensions, to plant the world with mildness and modesty, and to cloath men with humility; and the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit. By these we are taught to dwell at home, and to converse more familiarly with our selves, to be acquainted with our own deficiencies and imperfections, and rather to admire others than to advance our selves: for the proper notion of Humility lies in a low
Part 2. and mean estimation of our selves, and an answerable carriage towards others, not thinking of our selves more highly than we ought to think, nor being unwilling that other men should value us at the same rate. Now that this was the excellent spirit of Primitive Christianity will appear, if we consider how earnestly they protested against all ambitious and vain-glorious designs, how cheerfully they condescended to the meanest Offices and Imployments, how studiously they declin'd all advantages of applause and credit, how ready they were rather to give praise to others than to take it to themselves, in honour preferring one another. S. Clemens highly commends his Corinthians, that all of them were of an humble temper, in nothing given to vain-glory, subject unto others rather than subjecting others to themselves, ready to give rather than receive. Accordingly, he exhorts them (especially after they were fallen into a little faction and disorder) still to be humble-minded, to lay aside all haughtiness and pride, foolishness and anger; and not to glory in wisdom, strength or riches, but let him that glories, glory in the Lord; and to follow the example of our
Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity.

our Lord the Scepter of the Majesty of Part 2. God; who came not in the vain boasting of arrogancy and pride, although able to do whatsoever he pleased, but in great meekness and humility of mind, appearing in the world without any form or comeliness, or any beauty that he should be desired, suffering himself to be despised and rejected of men, who esteemed him not, and hid as it were their faces from him; who counted himself a worm and no man, and was accordingly made a reproach of men, and the derision of the people; all they that saw him, laughing him to scorn, shooting out the lip and shaking the head at him. Now if our Lord himself was so humble-minded, what should we be, who are come under the yoke of his grace? This and much more to the same purpose, has that Venerable and Apostolical man in that admirable Epistle, wherein he does lively describe and recommend the meek and excellent spirit of the Gospel.

Justin the Martyr treads in the very same steps; He tells us that we are to shun all sinister suspicions of others, and to be very careful what Opinion we entertain of them: that we are to be of a meek and unpassionate mind, not envying...
Primitiue Christianity. Ch. 1.

ing the good esteem and respect which others have, nor ambitiously affecting, or putting our selves forwards upon any service or employment: that we are humbly to submit our selves, not in words only, but in all our actions, so as that we may appear to be not Imposers and Dissemblers, but mild and undersigning persons; for whoever would govern his life aright must be modest and unpragmatical, not angry and contentious but silently consider with himself what is best and fittest to be done: that we are to account others wise and prudent, and not to think our selves the only discreet and understanding persons; that we must not despite their admonitions, but hearken to their counsels when ever they are just and true. When some in St. Cyprian's time had made a noble and resolute confession of Christ in the face of the greatest danger, lest they should be exalted above measure in their own thoughts, he bids them remember, according to the discipline of the Gospel, to be humble and modest and quiet, that they might preserve the honour of their name, and be as glorious in their actions as they had been in their words and confessions of.
Ch. i. Primitive Christianity.

of Christ: that they should imitate their Lord, who was not more proud, but more humble at the time of his passion, washing his Apostles feet, and follow the counsel and pattern of St. Paul who in his greatest sufferings continued meek and humble, and did not arrogate anything to himself, no not after he had been honoured with a translation into Paradise and the third Heavens. And great reason he had to press this with all possible vehemency at that time, lest Christians by their turbulent and unquiet carriage should provoke the Heathen Magistrate to greater severity against them: and indeed who could better do it than he, who was himself so eminent for humility? For though some Schismatical persons (whole wildness and insolence he sought to restrain) endeavoured to insinuate that he was not so humble as became a man of his rank and order, and as were our Lord and his Apostles; yet observe how he vindicates himself in a Letter to the Head of the Party: As for my humility (says he) tis sufficiently known, not only to the Brethren, but the Gentiles themselves do see and respect it, and thou thy self didst know

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Part 2. and honour it, whilst thou walt yet in the Church, and didst Communicate with me: but which of us I pray is farthest from humility? I, who daily serve the Brethren, and receive those who come unto the Church with all joy and kindness; or Thou, who makest thyself a Bishop over thy Bishop, and pretendst to be a Judge appointed by God over him who is thy Judge? And indeed how far the good man was from any designs of greatness and dominion appear'd in this, that when the people had universally chosen him to be Bishop, he privately withdrew and retir'd himself, reckoning himself unworthy of so great and honourable an Office, and giving way to others, whose age and experience rendred them (as he thought) much fitter for it: but the importunity of the people being heightned into a greater impatienency, and having found where he was, they beset the house, and blocked up all passages of escape, till they had found him, and forc'd it upon him. And with no less humility did he behave himself in the discharge of it: When consulted by some of his Clergy what they should do in the case of the lapsed, he answers, that
that being now alone he could say no thing to it, for that he had determined from his first entring upon his Bishoprick not to adjudge any thing by his own private order without the counsel of the Clergy, and the consent of the People. So meanly did that wise and excellent man think of himself, and so much did he attribute to the judgement and concurrence of those that were below him.

Nazianzen reports of his Father (a Bishop too) that amongst other Vertues he was peculiarly remarkable for Humility; which he did not express Philosopher-like in little arts of external modes and carriage, putting on a feign'd behaviour, like women who having no natural beauty of their own, fly to the additionals of dresses and paintings, being more deformed by their fictitious beauty. His Humility consisted not in his dress, but in the constancy of his mind; not in the hanging down of his head, or the softness of his tone, or the demureness of his look, or the gravity of his Beard, or the shaving of his head [the cropping of his hair] or the manner of his gate; but in the frame and temper of his soul.
Part 2. being as humble in his mind, as he was sublime and excellent in his life, and when no man could arrive at the perfection of his Virtues, yet every one was admitted to a freedom of converse with him. Both in his garb and diet he equally avoided pomp and sordidness; and though a great restrainer of his appetite, would, yet seem not to do it, lest he should be thought plainly to design glory to himself by being needlessly singular above other men. How industriously do we find them many times, disowning that deserved praise and commendation that was due to them? How modestly does Justin Martyr decline his adversaries commendation of the acuteness and elegance of his reasonings? resolving all into the Grace of God, that enabled him to understand and expound the Scriptures, of which Grace he there persuades all men freely and fully to become partakers with him. Of the Confessors in the time of the persecution under M. Aurelius, Eusebius out of the relation, which the Churches of Vienna and Lyons in France sent to the Churches in Asia, tells us, that although they had often born witness to the truth at
the dearest rate of any thing on this side death, though they had been frequently thrown to wild Beasts, expos'd to the fire, and the remains of wounds and violence were visible in all parts of their bodies; yet in imitation of the great humility of the Son of God; they would not after all this (which yet was not uncommon in those times) either call themselves Martyrs, or suffer others to call them so: but if any of the brethren either by letter or discourse had falated them by that title, they would severely reprove and check them for it; acknowledging themselves at best but vile and despicable Confessors, and with tears begging of the Brethren to be instant with God by Prayer, that they might perfect all by a real Martyrdom. Hence it was, that when Julian the Apostate refus'd to proceed against the Christians by open persecution, as his Predecessors had done, because he envied them the honour of being Martyrs; Nazianzen answers, that he was greatly mistaken if he suppos'd they suffered all this, rather out of a desire of Glory, than a love of Truth: such a foolish and vain-glorious humour might indeed be found amongst his...
Part 2. Philosophers, and the best of his party, many of whom have put themselves upon strange attempts meerly to gain the honour of a name, and the reputation of Divinity: But for Christians, they had rather dye in the Cause of Religion, although no man should ever know of it, than to live and flourish amongst others with the greatest Honour and Esteem; it being our great solicitude not to please Men, but only to obtain honour from God. Nay, some of us (says he) arrive to that kerotck pitch, as to desire an intimate Union unto God, meerly for himself, and not for the honours and rewards that are laid up for us in the other world. Memorable the humility of the great Constantine, that when all mens mouths were filled with the honourable mention of his Vertues, and one took upon him to praise him to his face, telling him how happy he was whom God had thought worthy of so great an Empire in this world, and for whom he reserv'd a much better Kingdom in the next; he was highly offended with the address, and advis'd the man that he should not presume to talk so any more; but rather turn his praises of him, into prayers to
Ch. 1. **Primitive Christianity.**  

To God for him, that both here and Part 2. hereafter he might be thought worthy to be numbered amongst the servants of God.

I cannot but take notice of what St. Hierome reports of Nebridius, a young Roman Gentleman, Cousin-German to the Empress, by whom he was brought up in the Palace, Play-fellow and Companion to the young Emperours (to whom he was very dear) train'd up with them in the same Studies, and Arts of Education; that notwithstanding all this, and that he was then in the prime and vigour of his Youth, yet he was neither debauched by intemperance amidst the delicacies and pleasures of the Court, nor swell'd with pride, reflecting upon others with a surly look; but rendred himself amiable unto all: the Princes he lov'd as brethren, and rever'd as Lords: their Attendants and Ministers, and all the Orders of the Palace he had so endear'd by kindness and condescension, that they who were so much below him, did in a manner think themselves equal to him.

I shall give but one instance more of the Humility of those times, and that is their ready condescending to any Office
Part 2. Use or Employment, though never so mean, about the poorest Christian: they thought it not below them to cook and provide victuals for them, to visit the imprison'd, to kiss their chains, to dress their wounds, to wash their feet. And in this our Lord himself went before them, when a little before his death he rose from table, girt himself, wash'd and wipe'd his Disciples' feet, and then told them what influence this ought to have upon them.

That if their Lord and Master had wash'd their feet, they ought also to wash one another's feet, for that he had given them an example, that they should do as he had done to them; and good reason, the servant not being greater than his Lord, neither be that is sent, greater than he that sent him. Accordingly we find this particular Act of Christian condescension frequently us'd in the Primitive Church. S. Paul expressly requires it as a qualification in a widow that was to be taken in as a Deaconess into the Church, that she be one that has us'd to lodge strangers, and to wash the Saints' feet. Tertullian assures us twas usually done by Christians in his time, to go into the Prisons to kiss and embrace...
Embrace the Martyrs chains, to harbour Part 2, and provide for indigent brethren, and to bring water to wash the Saints feet: No office so low, which they were not content to stoop to.

When Placilla the Empress was check'd by some of the Court for her mighty condescension in visiting the Hospitals, and curing the lame and the sick with her own hands, preparing and giving them their provisions, as a thing too much below her state and Grandeur: She answered, That to distribute gold became the Emperor; but for her part she thought her self oblig'd to do this for God, who had advanced her to that Honour and Dignity: Often instilling this pious Counsel into her husband; It becomes you, Sir, always to remember, what you once were, and what you now are: by which means you will shew your self not to be ingrateful to your great Benefactor, and will govern the Empire committed to you Justly and Lawfully, and to the honour of him that gave it.

St. Hierom reckoning up the Virtues of Paula, a Lady of the greatest Descent and nobility in Rome, but devoting her self afterwards to the solitudes of a Religious life; tells us of her, that for humility
Part 2. humility (the prime and chief Virtue of Christians) she carried herself with so much lowliness that whoever had seen and not known her, could not but have mistaken her for the meanest of the Maids that waited on her. Whenever she appeared in the midst of those devout and pious Virgins that dwelt with her, she always seem'd both in cloaths, and voice, and garb, and gave the least and most contemptible of all the rest. So studious was the Piety of those days to keep the lustre of their own perfections from sparkling in their eyes, and not fondly to admire the glimmerings of their own light; being so far from sally arrogating to themselves those excellencies which they had not, that they industriously conceal'd those excellent perfections which they had.

I cannot better conclude this Chapter, than with the excellent reasonings of St. Gregory of Nyssa against priding a man's self in any external ornaments or advantages, where he thus entertains the proud man: He that looks to himself, and not to the things that are about him, will see little reason to be proud: for what is Man? Say the best of him, and that which may add the greatest
honour and veneration to him, that he's born of Nobles, and yet he that adorns his descent, and speaks highest of the splendor and nobility of his house, does but derive his pedigree from the dirt: and to enquire more narrowly into the manner of his being born into the world, common with other men, were to uncover what shame and modestly require should be conceal'd in the profoundest silence. And dost thou not blush, thou statue of earth, who art shortly to be crumpled into dust, who bubble-like containest within thee a short liv'd humour's, dost thou not blush to swell, with pride and arrogance, and to have thy mind stuffed with vain idle thoughts? Hast thou no regard to the double term of man's life, how it begins, and where it will end? Thou pridest thy self in thy juvenile age, and flatterest thy self in the flower, the beauty and spretliness of thy youth, that thy hands are ready for action, and thy feet apt to dance nimble measures; that thy locks are wav'd by the wanton motions of the wind; and a soft down overgrows thy cheeks, that thy purple-robcs put the very roses to the blush, and thy silken vestures...
Primitive Christianity. Ch. I.

Part II are variegated with rich embroidery of battels, hunting, or pieces of ancient history; or brought down to the feet, artificially set off with black, and curiously made fast with strings and buttons. These are the things thou look'st at, without any regard to thy self. But let me a little as in a glass shew the thy own face, who and what thou art: Hast thou not seen in a publick charnel-house the unveiled mysteries of humane nature; bones rudely thrown upon heaps; naked skulls with hollow eye-holes, yielding a dreadful and deformed spectacle? Hast thou not beheld their grinning mouths, and gastly looks, and the rest of their members carelessly dispersed and scattered? If thou hast beheld such sights as these, in them thou hast seen thy self. Where then will be the signs of thy present beauty, that good complexion that adorns thy cheeks, and the colour of thy lips, that frightful Majesty, and supercilious loftiness that once resided in thine eyes, or thy nose that once beautifully grac'd thy cheeks? Where are thy locks that were wont to reach thy shoulders, the curles that used to adorn thy temples? What are become of
of those arms that used to draw the bow, those legs that used to bestride thy horses? Where's the purple, the silken garments, the long robe, the belt, the spurs, the horse, the race, the noise, and pransings; and all the rest of those things that now add fuel to thy pride? Tell me, where then will those things be, upon the account whereof thou dost now so much boast and bear up thy self? Was there ever any dream so fond and inconstant, any thing more phantastick that ever appeared to a man asleep? What shadow was ever so thin, so incapable of being grasp'd within the hollow of the hand, as this dream of youth, which at once appears, and immediately vanishes away. Thus the Holy Man treats the young vapouring gallant, and levels his pride with the sober considerations of mortality: In his following discourse he deals with persons of riper years, and such as are in places of authority and power, and shews how absurd and uncomely pride is in them: which it might not be impertinent to represent, but fearing to be tedious I forbear.
Of their Heavenly-mindedness, and contempt of the World.

The Soul rightly constituted naturally tends upwards, especially when assisted with the aids of Religion. The first Christians much above the World. Not wrought upon by temptations of advantage. They accounted it the greatest honour to be Christians. Contented with a very mean portion of outward things. The story of some of our Saviours Kindred brought before Domitian. The Sect of the Apostolici and Apotastic, the Fathers of the Mendicant Orders in the Church of Rome. The little care which Christians then bad of rich furniture and costly provisions. Their denying to go to publick feasts and sports made for the pleasure of the people. This charged upon them by the Heathens. The case of the woman that was seized upon by an evil spirit while she was at the Theatre. Their cheerful parting with any worldly comforts, Estates, Relations, &c.

A strange
A strange Heroick speech of Melania at Part 2.

The loss of her husband and two Sons, mentioned by St. Hierom. Eager for Maryrdom, as what would presently send them to Heaven. Their frequent supporting themselves under sufferings with discourses of the Kingdom above. Thence accus'd as treasonable affectors of the Empire. Their contempt of the world much promoted by the opinion that the day of judgment was near at hand. Christians in the world like sojourners in a strange Country.

The Soul of man being Heaven-born cannot but partake of the nature and disposition of that Country, and have a Native inclination to that place from whence it borrows its Original: And though 'tis true, in this corrupt and degenerate state it is deeply sunk into matter, clogg'd and overborn with the earthly and sensual propensions of the lower appetites, the desires and designs of men creeping up and down like shadows upon the surface of the earth; yet does it often, especially when assisted with the aids of Religion, attempt its own rescue and release. The mind of a good man is acted
Part ii. Acted by manly and generous impulses, it dwells in the Contemplations of the upper Region, tramples upon those little projects of profit or pleasure which ensnare and enslave other men, and makes all its designs subservient to the interests of a better Country. A temper of mind never more triumphant in any than in the Christians of old, whose Conversations were in Heaven, and whose spirits breathed in too free an air to be caught with the charms of the best enjoyments this world could afford: They looked upon the delights and advantages of this life as things not worthy to arrest their affections in their journey to a better. Justin Martyr discoursing with Trypho the Jew, tells him, that they were careful with all fear to converse with men according to the Scriptures, not greedily desiring to gain Riches, or Glory, or Pleasure to themselves, concerning any of which no man could lay any thing to their charge; and that they did not live like the great men of his people of whom God himself has left this reproachful character. That their Princes were companions of thieves, every one loving gifts, and following after rewards.

Nay,
Nay, Trypho himself bears them this testimony, though doubtless he intended it as a reproach to them, that having from a vain report chosen Christ to be their Master, they did for his sake foolishly undervalue and throw away all the enjoyments and advantages of this world. Amongst us (says Tatian) there is no affectation of vain-glory, no diversity of sentiments and opinions, but separating our selves from all vulgar and earthly thoughts and discourses, and having given up our selves to the commands of God to be governed by his Law, we abandon whatsoever seems but a-kin to humane glory. They never met with opportunities to have advantaged and enriched themselves, but they declined and turned them off with a noble scorn. When Abgarus, the Toparch of Edessa offered Thaddens (one of the Seventy Disciples) great summs of Gold and Silver for the pains he had taken, and the great things he had done among them, he refused them with this answer, To what purpose should we receive good things from others, who have freely forsaken and renounced our own? As indeed in those times friends and relations, houses and lands were
Partly cheerfully parted with, when they stood in competition with Christ; they could content themselves with the most naked poverty, so it might but consist with the profession of the Gospel.

When Quintianus the President under Decius, the Emperor asked Aga-
the Virgin-Martyr, why being descended of such Rich and Illustrious Parents, she would stoop to such low and mean Offices as she took upon her; She presently answered him, Our Glory and Nobility lies in this; that we are the Servants of Christ. To the same pur-
pose was the answer of Quintinus the Martyr under the Dioclesian Persecuti-
on, when the President asked him how it came about, that he being a Roman Citizen, and the Son of a Senator, would cruckle under such a Superstition, and worship him for a God, whom the Jews had Crucified; the Martyr told him, That it was the highest Honour and Nobility to know, and serve God: that the Christian Religion, which he call'd Superstition, ought not to be traduc'd with so base a name, seeing it immedi-
dately guided its followers to the highest degrees of happiness; for here-
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

in it is that the Omnipotent God is re-
vealed, the great Creator of Heaven
and Earth, and his Son Jesus Christ our
Lord, by whom all things were made,
and who is in all things equal to his
Father.

The simplicity of Christians then
kept them from aspiring after honour
and greatness, and if at any time ad-
vanced to it, their great care was to
keep themselves unspotted from the
world; as Nazianzen reports of his
brother Cæsarinus, chief Physician to the
Emperor Constantius, that though he
was very dear to him (as he was to the
whole Court) and advanced by him
every day to greater honours and dig-
nities, yet this (says he) was the chief of
all, that he suffered not the Nobility of
his soul to be corrupted by that Glory,
and those delights that were round a-
bout him: but accounted this his
chiefest honour, that he was a Christian;
in comparison of which all things else
were to him but as a sport and Page-
try; he looked upon other things but
as Comic Scenes, soon up and as soon
over; but upon Piety as the most safe
and permanent good, and which we
can properly call our own, regarding
that
that piety especially which is most inward and unseen to the world.

The like he relates of his Sister Gorgonia, as the perfection of her excellent temper, that she did more seem to be good, than she did really strive to be so; peculiarly conversant in those secret acts of piety, which are visible only to him, who sees what is hidden and secret; to the Prince of this world transferring all into those safe and celestial treasuries that are above; the left nothing, the left nothing, for the hopes of a better life; her riches to her children, but an excellent and desire to follow her example. The truth is, as to estate, they were not concern'd for more supply of nature, or the wants of others, not solicitous to get or possess such revenues as might make them the objects either of men's envy or their fear; as may appear amongst others by this instance.

Domitius the Emperor being inform'd that there were yet remaining some of Christ's Kindred according to the flesh (the Nephews of Judas the Brother
Brother of our Lord, of the Race and Posterity of David, which the Emperor sought utterly to extirpate) he sent for them, enquired of them whether they were of the Line of David, they answered they were; he ask'd what possessions and estate they had, they told him they had between them thirty nine acres of land (to the value of about nine thousand pence) out of the fruits whereof they both paid him Tribute, and maintained themselves with their own hard labour, whereeto the hardness and, callousness of their hands (which they then shew'd him) bore witness. He then ask'd them concerning Christ and the state of his Kingdom; to which they answered, that his Empire was not of this world, but Heavenly and Angelical, and which should finally take place in the end of the world, when he should come with glory to judge, both the quick and the dead, and to reward men according to their works; which when he heard, despising the men upon the account of their meanness, he let them go without any severity against them. Of Origen, id. lib. 6. we read that he was so great a despiser of the world, that when he might have liv'd
liv'd upon the maintenance of others, he would not, but parted with his Library of Books to one that was to allow him only four oboli a day; the day he spent in laborious tasks and exercises, and the greatest part of the night in study; he always remembered that precept of our Saviour, Not to have two coats, not to wear shoes, not anxiously to take care for to morrow, nor would he accept the kindness of others, when they would freely have given him some part of their estate to live on.

Not that the Christians of those times thought it unlawful to possess estates, or to use the blessings of Divine Providence; for though in those times of persecution they were often forc'd to quit their estates and habitations, yet did they preserve their Properties intact, and industriously mind the necessary conveniencies of this life, so far as was consistent with their care of a better. There were indeed a sort of Christians call'd Apostolici, who in a fond imitation of the Apostles left all they had, and gave up themselves to a voluntary poverty, holding it not lawful to possess any thing; hence they were also call'd Apotactici, or renouncers, because
because they quitted and renounced whatsoever they had; but they were ever accounted infamous Heretics. They were, as Epiphanius tells us, the descendents of Tatian, part of the old Cathari and Enocratiae: together with whom they are put in a Law of the Emperour Theodosius, and reckon'd amongst the vilest of the Manichean Heretics. Heretics: mentioned also by Julian, the Apostate as a branch of the Galilean Sect. as he calls the Christians, by him compar'd to the Cynic Philosophers amongst the Heathens, for the neglecting of their Country, the abandoning of their estates and goods, and their loose and rambling course of life; only herein different, that they did not as those Galilean Apostatische, run up and down under a pretence of poverty to beg Alms. The truth is, by the account which both he and Epiphanius give of them, they seem to have been the very Patriarchs and primitive founders of those Mendicant Orders, and professors of vowed poverty, which swarm so much in the Church of Rome at this day. But to return; The Christians of those days did not study those Arts of Splendor and gallantry which
which have since overrun the world, stately Palaces, costly Furniture, rich hangings, fine tables, curious beds, vessels of Gold and Silver, the very possession of which (as Clemens Alexandrinius speaks) creates envy; they are rare to get, hard to keep, and it may be not to accommodate to use. Will not a knife cut as well (says he) though it have not an Ivory-haft, or be not garnished with silver? or an earthen bason serve to wash the hands? will not the table hold our provisions, unless its feet be made of Ivory? or the Lamp give its light although made by a Potter; as well as if twere the work of the Goldsmith? may not a man sleep as well upon a mean couch, as upon a bed of Ivory? upon a Goats skin, as well as upon a purple or Phenician carpet? Our Lord ate his meat out of a common dish, & made his followers sit upon the grass, and washed his Disciples feet, without ever fetching down a silver boyle from Heaven; he took the water which the Samaritanes had drawn in an earthen pitcher, not requiring one of Gold, shewing how easie it was to quench his thirst; for he respected the use, not the vain and superfluous state of things. This
This and much more he there urges to Part 2. this excellent purpose, to let us see how little a Christian need be behol- den to the world, if he be content with what's enough for the necessary uses of humane life.

To this let me annex some part of that discourse which Gregory Nyssen has upon this subject: The fluid and tran- sitory condition of man's life (says he) calls for a daily reparation of the de- cays of nature: he therefore that looks no farther than to minister to the de- sires of nature, and troubles not himself with vain anxious thoughts for more than's necessary, lives little less than the life of Angels, whilst by a mind content with little he imitates their want of nothing. For this cause we are commanded to seek only what's enough to keep the body in its due state and temper, and thus to address our Prayers to God, give us our daily bread: Give us bread, not delicacies or riches, not splendid and purple ve- situres, or rich golden ornaments, not Pearls and Jewels, silver vessels, large fields and great possessions, not the go- vernment of Armies, the conduct of Wars, and disposal of Nations, not nu- merous
Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. merous flocks and herds of cattel, or multitudes of slaves and servants, not splendor and gallantry in publick, not marble pillars or brazen statues, or silken Carpets, or quires of Musick, or any of those things by which the soul is diverted and drawn from more Noble and Divine thoughts and cares: But only Bread, which indeed is the true and common staff of mans life.

Nor were they more studious of pleasures and recreations abroad, than they were of finenes and bravery at home: They went not to publick feasts, nor frequented the shews that were made for the disport and entertainment of the people: and this was so notorious, that the Heathens charg'd it upon them as part of their Crime. Observe how he in Minutius Felix draws it up; The Romans (says he) govern and enjoy the world, while you in the mean time are careful and modest, abstaining even from lawfull pleasures; you visit not the shews, nor are present at the pomps, nor frequent the publick feasts; you abhor the holy games, the sacrificical meats and drinks, crown not your heads with Garlands, nor perfume your bodies with sweet odours; a ghastly.
fearful and miserable people! which by Part 2. that time. that Octavius the Christian comes to answer, he grants it all to be true, and tells him there was very good reason why they should abstain from their shews, pompes and diverteiments, at which they could not be present without great sin and shame, without affronting their modesty and offering a distaste and horrore to their minds; and indeed they reckon'd themselves particularly oblige'd to this by what they had vow'd and undertaken at their baptism, when they solemnly engaged to renounce the Devil and all his works, pompes and pleasures, i.e. (says St. Cyril) the sights and sports of the Theatre, and such like vanities. The truth is, they look'd upon the publick sports and pastimes of those days as the Scenes not only of folly and lewdness, but of great impiety and Idolatry; at places where the Devil eminently rul'd, and reckon'd all his Votaries that came thither. Accordingly Tertullian tells us of a Christian woman who going to the Theatre, was there possess'd by the Devil; and when the Evil Spirit at his calling out was ask'd, how he durst set upon a Christian; he presently answered.
Part 2. ed. I did but what was fit and just, for I found her upon my own ground.

Being thus affected towards the world, they could very willingly part with any thing that was dearest to them, Friends, Estate, Liberty, or Life itself. We are not moved (says one of their Apologists) with the loss of our Estates which our enemies wrested from us, nor with the violence that's offer'd to our credit and reputation, or if there be any thing of greater concernment than these; for although these things are mightily priz'd and valued amongst men, yet can we despise and slight them: nay, we cannot only when beasts refrain from striking again, and make no resistance against those that invade and spoil us, but to them that smite one cheek, we can turn the other, and to them that take away the coat, we can let them take the cloak also. And I remember Nazianzen tells us, that of those excellencies and endowments which God had given him, health, wealth, estate, and eloquence, he repaied this only benefit, that he had something which he could converse, and by which he could shew that he infinitely valued Christ before them. The greatest
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

The endearment of this life is Relations, Part 2, and yet these too they could quietly resign when God called for them: Memorable it is what St. Hierom reports of Melanion (a Lady of great Piety in his time, in whose commendation Paulinus Bishop of Nola spends a very large Epistle, especially commending her for her generous and heroick mind, tam viriliter Christiana, that she was something above a woman, and had the Masuline spirit of a Christian: of this Lady St. Hierom tells us) that her Husband lying dead by her, she lost two of her sons at the same time; and when every one expected that she should break out into a violent passion, tear her hair, rent her garments, and burst into tears; she stood still, and at last falling down as 'twere at the feet of Christ, broke out into this pious and Christian repentment, Lord, I shall serve thee more nimbly and readily, by being eased of the weight thou hast taken from me. Nay, so little kindness had they for this world, that they cared not how little they stayed in it, and therefore readily offered themselves to Martyrdom at every turn. Tertullian tells his adversaries, that all those plagues which
Part 2. which God sent upon the world, what damage soever they might do their enemies, could not hurt them, because they had no other concernment in this world, than as soon as they could to get out of it. This he elsewhere tells us, the very Gentiles assign'd as one reason, why the Christians were train'd up in a defiance of all the sports and pleasures of this life, that they might be more willing to dye; and that the cords being cut by which they were tetter'd to this world, they might be more nimble and expedite for their passage hence. Their main designs were intent upon the happiness of another world, and therefore they regarded not what they went through to come sooner to it. Being inflamed (says Justin Martyr) with the desire of a pure and an eternal life, we breath after an intimate converse with God the great Parent and Creator of the world, and make haste to seal our confession with our blood; being certainly persuad'd that they shall attain to this state, who by their actions study to approve themselves to God that they follow after him, and are heartily desirous of communion with him in that life, where there is no
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. no malice or wickedness shall take place. This was the mighty support they lean'd upon, the great cordial with which they kept up their spirits in those sad times of suffering, and per-
secution, the firm belief and expectation which they had of enjoying God in a better life. They knew, that the more haste their enemies made to break open the cage of their bodies, the sooner their souls would be at liberty to fly to the regions of blessedness and immor-
tality. And indeed so much were their thoughts fixed upon this, so oft did they use to comfort one another by discoursing of that Kingdom which they expected hereafter, that some of their enemies over-hearing and mistaking them, accused them as treasonable affec-
tors of the Empire: when alas! (as Justin Martyr assures the Emperors) they meant nothing less; which they might know by this, that being brought to tryal, they freely confessed themselves to be Christians, though they certain-
ly knew they must dye for it: whereas (says he) did we expect an humane Kingdom, we would dissemble and deny it, and avoid death, and so expect a more convenient season to accomplish our
Part 2. our desires; but since our hopes are not placed in any thing in this world, we regard not those that take away our lives, well knowing they take nothing from us, but what we must needs lay down our selves. It was their care then continually to keep company with dying thoughts, and to dwell within the prospect of eternity; it being generally true of all what St. Hierom particularly reports of Marcella, that she lived so, as always believing that she should immediately dye, and never put on her garments, but it put her in mind of her grave, and of the sheet that should wrap her up in the house of silence.

But besides the influence which the expectation of their particular dissolutions had upon them, there was one thing which I doubt not did mightily contribute to their being mean'd from the world, and did strongly animate them to a quick and speedy diligence about the affairs of the other life, and that was, the Opinion they generally had of the day of judgment being near at hand. An Opinion started early as appears by that caution which St. Paul gives the Thessalonians about it; and it lasted
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

laced for some Ages after, as is evident Part 2 from several passages in Tertullian, who Vid. decubi
it. saev. lib. 2. c. 9. ad
anox. lib. 1. c. 5.
always improves it to this purpose, that
men should not unnecessarily encumber
themselves with the affairs of this life,
but carry themselves as those that were
immediately passing hence. I conclude
with that of Justin Martyr; 5 Christians
(says he) dwell in their own coun-
tries, but as inmates and forereigners; 5 Diognet.
they have all things common with o-
ther men as fellow-Citizens, and yet
suffer all things as strangers and for-
ereigners: every forereign Region is their
Country, and every Country is forereign
to them: They marry like other men,
and beget Children, but do not expose
or neglect their Offspring; they feast
in common, but do not exceed like o-
ther men; they are in the field, but do
not live after the field; dwell upon
earth, but their conversation is in Hea-
ven. Therefore he compares Chris-
tians in this world to the soul in the
body, as for other reasons, so especially
for this, that as the soul lives in the
body, but is not of the body; so Chris-
tians dwell in the world, but are not
of the world; an immortal spirit dwells
in a mortal tabernacle; and Christians,
while

C 4
Part 2. while they sojourn in these corruptible mansions, expect and look for an incorruptible state in Heaven.

CHAP. III.

Of their sobriety, in respect of their Garb and Apparel.

Much of the temper of the mind shewn in the outward garb. The great ends of clothes, for honesty, necessity, distinction. The Primitive Christians accommodated themselves to these. Careful to avoid both singularity and excess. Generally conformable to the sober fashions of the places where they lived. Whether when they turn'd Christian they left off the Roman gown, and took up the Pallium or Cloak; to Toga ad Pallium: the occasion of Tertullians writing his excellent Book on that subject. The Pallium principally worn by those that entred upon a life of more than ordinary strictness. Their great care to keep a medium between costliness and fordidness. This accounted part of that pomp and vanity which they
they renounced in baptism. The va-part at
nity of excessive garbs and finery com-
plain'd of by the Fathers in some of
those times. Especially inveighed ag-
gainst methods of artificial beauty;
what pleaded in defence of it by some
persons in those days, considered and
answered out of the Fathers. That
they were rich, no sufficient argument
to patronize the doing of it. Better
ways of employing their estates. Nor
that they could do it without violating
their chastity. The inconveniences of
it with respect to others. That they
did it to please their Husbands, An-
swered: this needless; every wise and
good man content without it. Such
Arts savour'd too much of lewd wanton
Prostitutes. Painting, and such Arts
injurious to God, and a disparagement
of his workmanship. This largely pro-
secuted out of Tertullian and Cy-
prian. A memorable story which
Theodoret relates of his own Mother.
True beauty accounted to lye in a holy
and virtuous mind, and a pure and
pious life. Gay and phantastick per-
sons fitly represented by the Egyptian
temples. Nazianzen's description of
his good Sister Gorgonia.
The Primitive Christians being thus eminent for their contempt of the world, 'tis easy to imagine that they were very temperate and abstemious in the use of all the pleasures and conveniencies of humane life, which we shall more particularly consider in these three instances, their Sobriety in respect of Garb and Apparel, their Temperance in regard of food and diet, and their Continence or Chastity.

For the first, the care about our Garb and Dress, it is one of those instances of Sobriety which are to be conducted by the rules of Religion and Reason, and which very much discover a virtuous or a vicious temper: There are three things (as the Son of Syrach well observes) that show a man what he is, his Attire, excessive Laughter, and his Gate: There is not certainly a more open evidence of a vain mind, than a vain garb and habit. St. Basil discoursing what habit does best befit a Christian, tells us in general, that it ought to be such as most lively expresses the meekness and humility of the mind, that good men of old were so attired, and that we are commanded, having food and rai-
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

want to be therewith content, not the Part of dying variety, and which most commonly follows it, softness and elegancy, which are but instruments to minister to excess and luxury, introduced into humane life through the idle and unnecessary Arts of looseness and effeminacy. Tis not enough (says Tertullian) that a Christian be chaste and modest, but he must appear to be so; a virtue of which he should have so great a store and treasure, that it should flow from his mind upon his habit, and break from the retirements of his conscience into the superfluities of his life, as he there expresseth it. More particularly St. Basil tells us, that the habit of a Christian ought to be suitable to the two great ends of clothing instituted by God, viz. Honesty and Necessity; honesty to hide the less comely parts of the body, and to cover that shame which sin has brought upon mankind: in Paradise Innocency was man's only robe, 'twas sin brought in the fig-leaves' coat, and what should more induce us to be modest in our apparel, than to remember, that our cloaths are Monitors of our apostasy, and that there's little reason we should pride ourselves in that
Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. that which is only a cover for our shame & Necessity, and to clothes were designed to keep the body in convenient warmth, and to defend it from those injuries and extremities of the air and weather, which would otherwise soon rot down this house of clay.

Vid. c. c. 8. 

ad illum. Catt. 4-94.

Now to both these ends (he tells us) we ought to accommodate our garments, not striving for variety, having some for uses at home, others for ostentation when we go abroad, but that whatever attains these ends is enough. But besides these, there is a third Use and end of Clothes noted by Clemens Alexandrinus, and that is for distinction, not only of Sexes, but of different ranks and degrees of men, such as agree best to mens age, persons, shape, nature, or their several states and employments; in these respects men may use different and distinguishing habits: nay, he grants that in some cases men may recede from the strict rule and discipline of this affair, and that such women as cannot otherwise gain upon their husbands (may if they require it) go a little more trim and neat, provided (as he there limits it) it be done only to please and gain upon their husbands, and
and that they do not practise any Arti-Part 2.

Now that the ancient Christians govern'd themselves by these rules in this affair is plain, in that they avoided both singularity on the one hand, and excess on the other, generally conforming themselves to the decent and orderly customs and fashions of the times and places where they liv'd. Justin Martyr giving his friend an account of the Christians, tells him, that they differ'd not from other men either in their Country, or Speech, or the usages of the civil life; they dwell in their own Cities, use the same language with other men, nor have they any singular and extraordinary way of life; they are not in any thing affected or phantastick; but inhabiting partly amongst Greeks, partly in barbarous Cities, as every one's lot is fallen, they follow the customs of their Country; and both in cloaths and diet, and all other affairs of outward life, shew the excellent and admirable constitution of their discipline and conversation. I am not ignorant of what some learned men would have us to believe, that in those times when any turn'd from Paganism to
Part 2 to Christianity they were wont to change their habit, to leave off the Toga or Gown (the common habit almost in all parts of the Roman Empire) and to take up the Pallium or Cloak: and this they think sufficiently countenanced by the instance of Tertullian, who laying aside the Gown, and putting on the Cloak, was accused of lightness and inconstancy by the people of Carthage, and bitterly persecuted with the common sarcasm, 'a Toga et Pallium, as one that had wantonly skipped from the Gown to the Cloak, i.e. from one profession to another; insomuch that he was forc'd to write an Apology for himself, which he did in his book de Pallio, where with a great deal of satyrical and sarcastick wit he retorts upon them, and vindicates himself from their charge and cavils. But that there was any such change of habit at persons first coming over to Christianity, I can see no reason to believe: and for the case of Tertullian it makes nothing to the purpose, unless it could be prov'd that he left off the gown at his first entrance upon the Christian Religion, which will be hard to make out; for it is clearly of the mind of the learned

Salmusius,
Salmastus, that he altered his habit, and Part 2. assumed the cloak not when he first became Christian, but when he was made Presbyter of the Church of Carthage; whence it is called by him according to his dialect: _Sacerdos habitus_ (for so it is in all ancient Manuscripts, and in the first Edition of B. Rhenanus, and not Sacer habitus, as later Editions have it) the Priest’s habit; because the Christian Priests usually wore it after their entrance upon Holy Orders. For the better understanding of which, we are to consider a little, that amongst the Greeks, the Philosophick Pallium or Cloak was not commonly worn, but was the proper habit of Philosophers, who professed a more severe and accurate course of life. Accordingly amongst the Christians those who professed themselves to be joint, the more strict and exact observers of the Christian discipline, whether they were Laity or Clergy, assumed this habit to themselves, and because the Clergy in those times generally took upon them this austere and philosophick way of life, this garb was most peculiar to them; and this probably they did the rather, not only because this was the most plain and simple garment
Part 2.ment in it self, but because they sup-
posed the Apostles (whom they strove
to imitate) wore this habit, as is plain
they did as from other passages in the
New Testament, so from St. Pauls send-
ing for the Cloak which he left at Troas:
therefore the Author of the Apostolical
History, who shelters himself under the
name of Abdias Babylomns, certainly
forgot himself, when describing the ha-
bit of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, he
made it so trim and fine. Vestitus (says
he) Colore (doubtless it should be Colo-
bio) albo, &c. he was clothed in a white
cloth, beset with studs of purple, over
which he had a white Cloak, having
purple gems at each corner of it; a
piece of gallantry unknown to the
plainness of those times, and unsuitable
to the profession of that Holy man. In-
deed, as plenty and prosperity began
to flow in upon the Church, this simple
and modest garment was laid aside, and
the Clergye took upon them a more
rich and splendid garb; in somuch that
when Eustathius Bishop of Sebastia took
upon him to wear the Philosophick
Cloak, and persuaded his followers
also to use it; he was for this very rea-
son deposed by his own Father Eustathius
Bishop
Bishop of Caesarea, because wearing a habit unsuitable to the Ministerial Order, which sentence was not long after ratified by the Synod of Gangra, and a Canon made against it.

From what has been said it may appear, that although the Clergy, and such as entered upon a more strict and ascetic course of life had a habit peculiar to themselves, yet the generality of Christians differed not from the common garb. They were indeed exceedingly careful to avoid all such as favoured of costliness and finery, choosing such as expressed the greatest lowliness and innocency. The garment that we should wear (says Clemens of Alexandria) ought to be mean and frugal, not curiously wrought with divers colours (the emblem of craftiness and deceit) but white, to denote our embracing and professing simplicity and truth; our outward clothing is an indication of the temper of our manners: that's true simplicity of habit, which takes away what's vain and superfluous; that the best and most solid garment, which is furthest from art and curiosity, and most apt to preserve and keep warm the body. S. Cyprian ever observ'd a due
Part 2. due decorum in his garb as well as his countenance; his aspect was grave and yet cheerful; neither a frowning severity, nor an over-pleasant meanness, but such a happy mixture of both, that it was hard to say, whether he was more to be feared or loved, but that he equally deserved both: and just such was his garb, sober and moderate, keeping a just distance both from slovenliness and superfluity; it neither argued him to be swell'd with pride, nor infected with a miserable and profound mind.

Chrysostome amongst other things especially commends Olympias (a woman of great birth and estate, and of no less piety) for the incredible modesty and meanness of her attire, not much better than that of the poorest beggar; having nothing in her garb or gate that was feigned or gaudy, nothing elaborate or artificial; which things (says he) were the colours, the bright and beautiful representations of her virtue, whereby that wisdom and divine Philosophy that lay hidden in her mind, was externally painted and shadowed out. So far were they then from the vanity and affection of pomp and bravery, of dazzling the eye with rich costly
costly ornaments, that they thought they could never seem mean enough, and this they looked upon themselves as especially bound to by the promise which they had made at Baptism, when they renounced the Devil, and his whole pomp and service, as the same Father elsewhere informs us.

It cannot be denied, but that the Fathers frequently complain of, and smartly declaim against the vanity and folly of some in those times (women especially, by the weakness of their sex more prone to the excesses of pride and superfluity) who gave up themselves to all the arts of fineness and gallantry, and out of an emulation to the Heathen Ladies amongst whom they lived, they affected all manner of pomp and elegance, striving to be as rich and gaudy, not as they ought, but as they could make themselves; whose excessive prodigality Tertullian does thus no less elegantly than sarcastically describe; A great estate (say he) is drawn out of a little pocket; it's nothing to expend many thousand pounds upon one string of pearls, a weak tender neck can make a shift to carry about whole Woods and Lordships; vast sums of
Part 2. of money, borrowed of the Banker, and noted in his account book to be repay'd every month with interest, are weighed at the beam of a thin slender ear; so great is the strength of pride and ambition, that even the weak feeble body of one woman shall be able to carry the weight and substance of so many pounds taken up at Usury. This was look'd upon as a very great sin. Clemens Alexandrinus censures it very deep; that though glutony and intemperance be great vices, yet not to be compar'd with a nice over-curios study of fineness and bravery: I suppose he means in respect of its insatiable and unbounded nature. For so he adds; A well-furnish'd table, and cups that go round may quickly stop the mouth of a hungry stomach: but where there is a nice affectation of bravery, of Gold, Purple, or Jewels, there not the treasures of the Creation, not what's above, or under ground, not the spoils of the Tyrian Sea, not the fraughts from India, or Ethiopia, no nor Pactolus with his golden streams would suffice. Nay, such persons though as rich as Midas, would not yet think themselves rich or fine enough. But that which the Fa-
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

thers do most severely censure and cry Part 2.
out against, is not only the expense and
costliness of their cloths and jewels, but
the arts which they used to add
greater beauty and handsomeness to
themselves, than God and Nature had
bestowed upon them. This it seems
the pride and folly of some Christian
women had arriv'd to, which the zeal
and piety of those times did vehement-
ly condemn and protest against. It
may not be amiss to consider, what the
Gallants of those times pleaded for
themselves, and what was returned in
answer to them. Sometimes they pleaded
that they were rich, and had great
estates, and ought therefore to live
like themselves and to make use of the
estates that God had given them. To
this Cyprian answers, that they only are
truly rich, that are rich in and towards
God; that the world ought to be de-
spised, the pomps and delights whereof
we then renounced, when we happily
turn'd to God, with the love of whom
all that is in the world, the lust of the
flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of
life is not consistent; that the use of
riches in this case is to be governed by
just and moderate measures; the Apo-
D 4

De discipl.

& habit.
Part 2. The commanding all women how rich soever, to adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold or pearls or costly array; but (which becomes women professing Godliness) with good works. S. Peter also requiring of them not the outward adorning of gold or fine apparel, but the hidden ornament of the heart; that though they were rich, yet they were to consult the honour and modesty of their profession, and might not go to the utmost bounds of what was lawful, some things being lawful, which were not expedient, especially when by their wanton and lascivious dress they might be a means to kindle in the breasts of others the flames of an unchaste and unlawful passion, and so prove the occasion of their ruine; that if they thought themselves bound to use the estate that God had given them, God hath shewn them a more excellent way, to relieve the hungry, and feed the poor members of Christ, that this was the best art of improving riches, and the way to lay them up in safe and unfailing treasuries, where we may be sure to reap the fruit of them another day, and not to throw them away.
away upon arts of beauty, upon vain Part 2, and phantastick dresses. This is the sum of that good man’s reasonings in the case.

Sometimes they pleaded, that they might beautifie and honour the body without any danger of violating their chastity, or setting open the case ment for luxury to fly in upon them. Tertullian answers, Let them that had a mind to’t glory in the flesh, that for us we have no designs of glory, partly as being highly unsuitable to us, who by the law of God are under the profession of humility; partly because all glory (to us especially) is vain and swelling, how much more that which arises from the flesh; if we must glory, ’tis much fitter for us who follow spiritual things to please our selves in the excellencies of the spirit than in those of the flesh; let us rejoice in those things about which we are employed, and seek glory from those things, from which we hope for salvation. A Christian may indeed glory in the flesh, but it is when for the sake of Christ it is torn in pieces, that the spirit may be crowned, not that it may prove a snare to attract the eyes and sights of young
Part 2. mens ungovernable passions after it; then when tis tormented for confessing the Christian name, when a woman is found stronger than the men that torment her, when she suffers fires, or crosses, or swords, or wild-beasts, that she may receive the crown; these (says Cyprian) are the precious jewels of the flesh, these the much better ornaments of the body. So that (as Tertullian goes on) beauty being altogether so unuseful to us, ought to be despised by them that want it, and to be neglected by them that have it: a good woman that's content with her own native beauty, has not that occasion to betray her to lust and folly; and if she had, it would become her not to promote, but binder it. Sometimes again they pretended, they did it not only to please their Husbands, and that they might appear more lovely and acceptable to them: to which Plea, as being most specious and plausible, I observe especially Three things return'd by way of answer.

First, That to design the pleasing of their Husbands by such Arts as these, was altogether needless, seeing every wise and good man cannot but like his wife
PrIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.  
wife best without them. No wife (says Part 2. Tertullian) can seem deformed to her own Husband, who doubtless was well enough pleased with her, either for her temper, or her beauty when he first made choice of her: Let none fear their Husbands will more distast and dislike them for abstaining from artificial compositions, for every husband is a rigid exactor of his wives chastity; and consequently they can be of no advantage to this end, whether he be a believing or an unbelieving Husband, a Gentile or a Christian: If a Christian, then he will not require any such foreign beauty as not being taken with the accomplishments, which the Gentiles do account so; if a Gentile, then according to that vile opinion which they have of us Christians, let her do what she can, he will suspect her to be naught: For whose sake therefore should she so curiously dress, so delicately nurse and nourish up her beauty; for a believing Husband? he requires it not; for an Infidel? he'll never believe it to be true; why then should she so much desire to please either one that suspects it, or one that does not desire it?

Secondly,
Part 2. Secondly, That these loose delicate Arts came too near the practice of lewd wanton prostitutes, who made use of these ways and tricks for no other end but to enveagle men into their embraces: The bravery of Ornaments and Apparel, and the additional enticements of beauty are chiefly used, (as Cyprian tells them) by Prostitutes and Unchast women; and that no women's garb is more rich and gaudy, than theirs whose modesty is most vile and cheap. And this he tells us the Scripture shadows out by the Woman that was arrayed in purple and scarlet-colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: But chaste and modest Virgins shun the dress of the defiled, the habit of the shameless, the badges of the Stewes, the Ornaments of light wanton women. Whereas all other Creatures (says Clemens Alexandrinus) birds and beasts are content with their own natural beauty and colours; woman only as if she were inferior to the beasts, thinks herself so deform'd as that ther's need to repair the defect by external bought and borrowed beauty:
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

beauty: for while by infinite Arts of Part 2. curious and costly dressses (somewhere of be there particularly mentions) they seek to ensnare them, who children-like are apt to admire everything that's strange and gaudy, they shew themselves to be women that have put off shame and modesty; and whoever (says he) calls them so, shall do them no wrong, as carrying the signs and representations of it in their very faces.

Thirdly, They mainly insisted upon this, that these Arts were injurious to God, and a disparagement to his workmanship. We are not (says Tertullian) to seek after neatness and finery beyond what is simple and sufficient, and what pleases God; against whom they offend, who are not satisfied with his workmanship: an argument which he there prosecutes with great severity. S. Cyprian treads in his Masters steps and prosecutes the same argument with a great deal of zeal and sharpness; amongst other things he tells us, that these additional Arts are a bold and sacrilegious attempt, and an high contempt of God, that it is to reform what God has form'd, to alter and change his work, and as much as they can.
Part 2. can to disfigure that person, which
God has made after his own Image and
likeness: that such a one has cause
to fear, lest when the day of Resur-
rection comes, he that made them
should not know them, nor receive
them when they come for the promised
rewards. Accordingly he brings in the
great Censor and Judge of the world,
thus speaking to such a person: This
is none of my workmanship, nor is this
our image and likeness; thou hast de-
filed thy skin with false compositions,
chang'd thy hair into an adulterous co-
lor, thy face counterfeit, thy shape cor-
rupt, thy countenance quite another thing,
thou canst not behold God, thine eyes not
being the same which God created, but
which the Evil Spirit has infected; thou
hast imitated the fiery sparkling and glit-
tering eyes of the Serpent: of thine ene-
my hast thou learnt to be over-trim and
neat, and with him like to receive thy
portion. And are not these (says he)
things fit to be thought on by the ser-
vants of God, and to be the daily ob-
jects of their care and fear?

I cannot but in this place set down a
passage which Theodoret reports of his
own Mother, that in her younger years
having
having a distemper in one of her eyes, Part 2. which had baffled all the Arts of Physick, she was at length persuaded to make her address to one Peter, famous for the gift of Miracles; who lived near Antioch, a very severe and ascetic course of life: and to render her self (as she thought) the more considerable in his eye, she put on all her bravery, her richest robes, her pendants, and chains of pearl, and whatever could render her fine and splendid. No sooner was she come to him, but the severe and uncomplemental man at first sight bluntly entertained her with this discourse: Tell me, Daughter; suppose an excellent Artist having drawn a picture according to all the laws and rules of Art, should expose and hang it forth to view, and another rude and unskilful bungler coming by should find fault with this excellent piece and attempt to amend it, draw the eye-brows to a greater length, make the complexion whiter or add more colour to the cheeks; would not the true Author be justly angry, that his Art was disparaged and undervalued, and needless additions made to the piece by an unskilful hand? And so 'tis here; can
Part 2. We think that the great Artificer of the world, the Maker and Former of our Nature, is not, and that justly, angry, when you accuse his incomprehensible Wisdom and Perfection, of Unskilfulness, and want of Knowledge? for you would not add your reds, whites, or blacks, did you not think your bodies needed these additions; and while you think so, you condemn your Creator for weakness and ignorance. But know, that he has Power answerable to his Will; and as the Psalmist tells us, the Lord has done all things as he pleased; and he that takes care of what is good for all would not give what is evil and hurtful unto any. Corrupt not therefore the image of God, nor attempt to add, what he in his infinite wisdom thought not fit to give: he not to invent this adulterate beauty, which even to chaste persons oft proves a cause of ruine, by becoming a snare to them that look upon it. The Holy Man said no more, and the Young Lady presently found her self wounded with the force of his Reasonings, but would not leave him till she had obtained the end of her errand, which he granted not without great importunity, and an humble.
and modest referring all to the Grace
of God, and so sent her home with a
double cure, her body cured of its di-
stemper, and her mind of its pride and
vanity; and she ever after led a most
humble, sober and pious life.

But it were to transcribe whole
Books, to tell you what the Fathers
(these three that I have so often men-
tion'd especially) have said in this case,
the cause being not more copiously
than elegantly managed by them; and thir-
ther I refer the capable Reader, who
has any further curiosity for these
things. The true beauty of a Christian
in those days lay not in external and
adventitious ornaments, but in the
goodness and purity of the mind: The
beauty of the body (says Clemens of
Alexandria) consists in a good complexi-
on and in apt symmetry, and propor-
tion of its parts; but the greatest
beauty in the world is that of the Soul,
when its adorned with the Holy Spirit,
and the excellent Graces of it, Justice,
Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, the
love of Goodness and Modesty, which is
the brightest and most lovely ornament
that the eye of man can behold: It is
not (says he) the exterior aspect of
the
Part 2. the man that is to be regarded, but the mind that is to be furnished and adorned with goodness and vertue; and therefore he wittily compares those women that curiously trick and trim up the body, but neglect how 'tis with the soul within, to the Egyptian Temples; look upon their outside, and they are most splendid and magnificent, encompassed with delicate Groves, built with large entries, and stately Portico's, surrounded with several rows of Pillars, the walls both within and without set off with stones of several Countries, curiously wrought and carv'd, the Temples themselves garnish'd with Gold, Silver, Amber, and all the glittering and precious stones that India or Ethiopia can afford; but enter within them and enquire for the Deity that is there worshipped, and you shall be gravely shewed behind a curtain a Cat or a Crocodile, or a Serpent of that Country, or some such ill-favoured beast, which is the residentiary or tutelar deity of that place. And just such (says he) do those women seem to me, who trim themselves with Gold, and are taken up in curling their hair, painting their faces, blacking their eyes, colouring.
ing their locks, and other undue Arts, Part 2 of softness and luxury, beautifying the outward ryle and fence; but if a man look within the veil and covering of the Temple, what is under all his gayness and finery, he shall be so far from meeting with what is truly beautiful, that it will excite this horror, and aversion; for he shall not find the Image of God dwelling there, as might reasonably be expected; but instead thereof some filthy and treacherous beast that possesseth the most inward recesses of the Soul, a lustful Ape, or that crafty serpent that devours the understanding of a man, and turns his Soul into a nest or den, full of most deadly venom, and the poion of his error and deceit.

I conclude this with the account which St. Gregory gives of his Sister Gorgonia, that she used no Gold to make her fine, no yellow hair, ordered into knots and curls, nor any other tricks to make her head a Scene and Pageantry, no loose and transparent garments, no lustre of stones and jewels, enlightening the air round about, and reflecting splendor upon them that wear them, no devices and arts of painting.
Part 2. no affection of beauty that may be easi-ly bought, no counter-working Gods Creation, dishonouring, reproaching, covering his workman-ship with false and deceitful colours, suffering a spurious and supposititious beauty to steal away that natural Image, which ought to be kept intire to God and the future state: all this was far from her; and though she very well understood the several modes and garbs of bravery amongst women, yet she thought none so honorable as the manner of her life, and that inward brightness that was lodg’d in her mind: the only redness that pleased her, was that which was the fruit of blushing and modesty; no other whiteness but what came through fasting and abstinence; leaving fucus’s and paintings, and living pictures, and fading beauty to those that belong to Plays and Theatres, and to such, for whom to blush and be ashamed is a shame and a disgrace. To which I add that of Tertullian, who after he had smartly condemned and confuted the Arts of unlawful beauty, the vanity of going in too curious, costly and excessive dresses, concludes with this counsel to the women of his time, to cloath them-selves
Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity.

selves with the silks of honesty, the fine Part 2. veitures of piety, the purple of modesty; and being thus beautified and adorned (says he) God himself will be your Lover.

C H A P. IV.

Of their great Temperance and Abstinence:

A vicious curiosity about meats and drinks a great temptation. Severely forbidden by the Christian Law. The ancient Christians curious only of such diet as ministered to health. They gratified not ease and delicacy. The great inconveniences of intemperance either in meats or drinks. Their chief care about spiritual food. For other things content with any provisions; manifested in several instances. An over-nice and superstitious abstinence from some kinds of food; condemned. The instance of Alcibiades the Martyr out of Eusebius. Christians unjustly accused by the heathens of excess and prodigality in their feastings.

E 2 Thy-
Part 2. Thyestean suppers laid to their charge.
The charge in both parts of it denied, and fully refuted by Tertullian, and other Christian Apologists.

Amongst the many temptations that besiege the life of man, there is scarce any into which we are more easily betrayed, than into a vicious curiosity about meats and drinks, and the excesses of an unruly appetite; therefore it is that the Christian Religion does so frequently inculcate upon us the Precepts of Sobriety and Temperance; to be temperate in all things, to watch and be sober, to cast off the works of darkness, to walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in excess of wine, revellings, and banquetings; to take heed that our hearts be not at any time overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and that we be not as the men of the old world, brutishly taken up with eating and drinking when the flood came and swept all away. The Law of Christ commands us to fast often, to keep under the body, and to make no provision for the flesh; if nature regularly governed be content with
with little, Religion will teach us to Part 2. be content with less. These Rules the first Christians exactly transcribed into their lives, being the greatest instances of real abstinence and mortification, which they both practised themselves, and pressed upon others: they knew very well that God had given men a Charter of freedom indifferently to use the Creatures, and to enjoy them in some degree, not only for necessity but delight; but yet were afraid to go so far as they might, or to do any thing that might look towards excess, or argue an irregular and unsober mind; they contented themselves with such provisions as were conducive to health and strength, without any studied seeking after those that were more luscious and delightful. 'Tis very true what S. Basili observes, that by reason of mens different ages and course of life, their different tempers and constitutions of body, and other circumstances, no one fixed and certain rule can be prescribed in this case: but yet our food and diet ought for the main to be regulated by the general end of it, which is not wantonly to please the palate, but to minister to health, and to repair the weakness
Part 2. ness and decays of Nature. Many (says Clemens Alexandrinus) like brute beasts live only that they may eat; but for us we are commanded to eat that we may live; for food and pleasure is not the work and design for which we live in the world, our residence here being in order to an incorruptible life; and therefore our nourishment ought to be easy and simple, and such as is subservient to the two main ends of life, health and strength. We ought to choose such food (as Justin Martyr tells his friends) not as may gratifie our ease and delicacy, but make our lives useful and serviceable; and if at any time overtaken with want, we should quietly acquiesce in that state: and therefore a little after he smartly declaims against all excess. Wine (says he) is neither to be drunk daily to excess, nor to be used as commonly as water: both indeed are Gods Creatures; but water necessary, wine given only to help and relieve the body; which [immoderate-ly taken] chains up the tongue, sparkles fire out of the eyes, makes the legs tremble, and the understanding being gone, readily takes off its cup of deadly poisson; contrary to Gods Ordina-
tion it turns the peaceful instruments of Husbandry into Swords and Spears. It may indeed be necessary sparingly to drink wine both Winter and Summer; but he that drinks it to excess, as a man that takes over-much of a medicine, like a Dog or a Swine betrays his own shame. But above all men in the world it least becomes us [Christians] as if we were votaries to luxury, to abuse the Creatures of God, and to make use of thirst as a pretence to drunkenness, seeing we ought to drink no more than what will serve to quench our thirst; not like those who swallowing down wine, as men do drink in a burning fever, quickly make an end of themselves through their intemperance. Nor are we less to take heed of Gluttony, contenting our selves with a spare diet, and such only as is necessary; not giving way to the infinite and unsatisfied cravings of a nice and intemperate appetite, which will have a thousand pretences to defend it itself; but ruling our selves according to the wise sentence of him who said, ἐπὶ τὸ μὴ ἑορτάζειν, that we are to eat only to satisfy our hunger. Thus that ancient Father. To this purpose
Part 2. also Clemens Alexandrinus discourses at large, representing the great evils and inconveniences of gluttony and excess, that it wastes the Estate, ruines the Body by impairing its health, bebauching the stomach, desflouring its taste, begetting an ill habit and temper, and sowing it with the seeds of all diseases; it dulls the mind, and renders it inept and sluggishe, and prepares it for the entertainment of any vice or wickedness; that although we are not absolutely bound to abstain from variety of meats, yet we are not to make them our desire or study, especially such as favour of niceness and delicacy, and are apt to pamper and excite lust and wantonness; for though 'tis true all things were especially made for man's sake, yet it is not convenient to make use of all, and at some times less than at others; to the advantageous use of a thing, respect being to be had, not only to the thing itself, but to the time, occasion, and manner of it: that therefore our meals for the main should be light and easie, not mixed with variety of dainties, but such as may prepare for fasting, and the exercises of Religion. Upon this account St. Cyprian in an Epistle, wherein he gives
Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity.

gives directions about Prayer, advises Part 2. them (and to make the counsel more effectual, tells them, that he was warn'd of it by immediate revelation from God) to eat and drink soberly and sparingly, that outward snares might not enfeeble that heavenly vigour and sprightliness that was in their breasts, lest their minds being over-charged with too plentiful meals might be less watchful unto prayer. The same counsel S. Hierom gives to Leta about the Education of her Daughter, that her diet should be thin and mean, and that she should never eat more, than she might arise with some appetite so as that after meals she might be presently fit either to read or sing Psalms.

When at any time invited to publick solemnities as marriages, and the like, the prudence of the Church thought fit to lay restraints upon them, and not only to forbid them light and ludicrous actions, as leaping or dancing, but that they should dine and sup gravely and modestly, as becomes Christians.

The chief care of Christians then was to become partakers, οἷς ἐποικ. τῷ ἀνθ. 204, as Clemens Alexandrinus styles it, of that divine food that is...
Part 2. is from above, and that only is capable to give real satisfaction, little regarding what provisions they had (so they had but any) for that part that dwelt here below. When Julian the Emperor to raise money for his Wars began to squeeze and oppress the Christians, he sent amongst others to St. Basil (who had formerly been his fellow-student at Athens) for a thousand pounds; the answer he sends him was, that it could not be expected there, where he had not so much provision beforehand as would serve for one day; that there were no arts of cookery at his house, nor knives stain'd with the blood of slaughtered provisions; that his greatest dainties were a few pot-bears, a piece of bread, and a little four vapid wine: no such exceedings as to stupifie his senses with fumes arising from a loaded stomach, and to render them incapable to discharge their functions through intemperance and excess. Chrysostom commends Olympias not more for the modesty of her Garb, than the meanness and sobriety of her diet, to which she had taught herself, that she had got the perfect mastery over all undue appetites and inclinations, and
and had not only bridled the horse, but Part 2.
tamed and reduced him into an entire
subjection, and taught her stomach to
receive only so much meat and drink
as was enough to keep her alive and
in health. This indeed was the great
end of their signal abstinence in those
days, that by subduing the flesh they
might keep the stricter hand over the
inordinate motions of corrupt nature.
When Celsus accused the Jews, and in
them obliquely the Christians for
needlessly abstaining from swines flesh,
and some other sorts of food, affirming
this to be no such great matter, when
the Pythagoreans wholly abstain'd from
eating any living creature, who yet
were never thought the better, or the
more dear to God for it; Origen an-
swers, that what-ever reason the Jews
did it for (God having appointed the
difference) this concern'd not Chris-
tians, that 'tis not what enters in at the
mouth that defiles the man, nor does meat
commend us to God, nor do we think
this abstinence any such great matter;
nor yet do we so indulge the belly, as
to affect or pursue such delights; that
there's a vast difference between us and
the Pythagoreans in this affair: they
indeed
Part 2. indeed abstain upon the account of their absurd and fabulous doctrine of the souls transmigration, or passing out of one body into another, and so forbear to kill or eat any living creature, left haply they may destroy and devour their own friends or children: but we in all our abstinence do it only to keep under the body, and to bring it into subjection, endeavouring to mortifie the deeds of the body, to expel and extinguish our members that are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, and every evil concupiscence and desire: where he fully vindicates the Christians in their abstemiousness and temperance from doing it out of any vain and foolish affectation, any nice and singular Opinion, any base and sordid, morose or unsociable temper; they were careful to keep the mean, and to avoid sordidness as well as Luxury; nor did they profess themselves enemies to the provisions of humane life any further, than as they were inconsistent with the ends of sobriety and Religion. As may appear from a memorable passage related by Eusebius out of the letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vien in France to
to those in Asia. Alcibiades (one of Part 2.
those who shortly after suffer'd Martyrdom) had accustom'd himself to a very rigid and fordid kind of life, rejecting all other sorts of food, except only bread and water: and this he did both before and after he was in prison; which it seems had an ill influence upon others; whereupon Attalus, one of the most eminent of those famous Martyrs, the day after his first being expos'd in the Amphitheatre, had it reveal'd to him, (for as yet says the Historian, the Divine Grace had not withdrawn itself, but they had the Holy Spirit as their immediate Councillor to instruct them;) which by the way may give countenance to those frequent visions and divine condescensions which Cyprian speaks of in his Epistles: To this Attalus it was reveal'd that Alcibiades did amiss in refusing to use the Creatures of God, and in thereby giving a scandal and an offence to others: upon which he laid aside his singularity, and with all thankfulness to God promiscuously ate any kind of food.

From the whole of what has been said it's very evident, what little reason the Heathens had to accuse the Christians
Part 2. Christians (in their agape or love-feasts especially) of excess and prodigality; for that they did Tertullian expressly affirms; Our little suppers (says he) besides as being guilty of other wickedness they traduce as prodigal, saying of us as Diogenes did of the people of Megara, that they supp'd as if they meant to dye to morrow. Nay, what were infinitely horrid and barbarous, they commonly charg'd them with Thyestian suppers, and eating man's flesh. To the first part of the charge, concerning their prodigality, Tertullian answers, that they could easilier see a mote in another's eye, than a beam in their own; if they look'd home they would find that 'twas their own tribes and precincts, wherein the very air was corrupted with the unflavoury fumes of their loaded tables, and over-charged stomachs; and yet all this was pass'd by, and only the poor Christians Triclinium call'd in question; that if they had any feast it was a love-feast, and what-ever cost was laid out upon it, was expended not for vain-glory, but upon the accounts of Piety and Religion; but to nourish Parasites and flatterers, but to refresh the Poor; that the order
order of the feast, was as sober and regular as the cause was honest, going no further than modesty would admit; they prayed to God before they ventured upon his creatures, ate but what sufficed hunger, drank no more than consisted with sober and modest men; and fed so, as remembering they were to rise at night to worship God: when they had done, they sung Psalms, either of their own composition or out of the Holy Volumes, and as they began, so they ended the feast with prayer, and then departed with the same care to preserve their modesty and chastity; so that they appeared not so much to have feasted at supper, as to have fed upon discipline and order. So be. For the other part of the charge, their feeding upon man's flesh at this common supper, 'twas a suggestion so savage and barbarous, as could have found belief with nothing but the very spirit of malice; we shall again meet with this objection in another place, and shall therefore here only note out of their Apologist, Athenag. that it was a charge never offer'd to be made good against them, nor prov'd in any of those many thousand trials which the Christians had had in all parts.
Part 2, parts of the Empire; that it was very unlikely they should be guilty of eating humane flesh, who did not think it lawful to be present at the gladiatory-spots where men were slain, or so much as to taste any blood at all.

So Biblia, the Martyr told her enemies, when being reproached with this in the midst of her torments, she cried out, how is it possible that we should devour Infants, as you charge us, who think it not lawful so much as to taste the blood of any Creature. For even till then, and a long time after, they observ'd that Canon of the first Apostolick Council, to abstain from things strangled and from blood. So far were they from being either barbarous or luxurious. No, our feasts (as he says in Minutius Felix,) are not only chaste but sober, we indulge not ourselves in banquets nor make our feasts with wine, but temper our cheerfulness with gravity and seriousness. And indeed their often watchings and fastings, and their constant observance of the strictest parts of devotion, sufficiently shewed how little they pamper'd or indulg'd the flesh, the signs whereof they every where carried in their very faces;
faces; and this was so notorious, that Part 2:
their very Enemies reproached them
with their trembling joints, and their
pale ghastly looks. And Lucian, gi-
ging an account of the Christian As-
sembly, into which he tells us Critias was
brought to be made a Proselyte, de-
scribes them to be A Company of Per-
sions with their Heads hanging down,
and pale Fares; which certainly did not
arise from their fear of Suffering, (for
no Men in the World were ever so will-
ing, nay so desirous of laying down
their Lives as they) but from their re-
quently abstinence and fasting. To which
purpose S. Basil's Comment is most ap-
proximate; where commending temperance,
or (as he calls it) Continence, using the
word in its largest sense, other Ver-
tues (says he) being mainly exercised
in secret, are not altogether so visi-
tible to the eyes of men: whereas Con-
tinence, where ever it is, will at first
fight betray itself; for as a good
Complexion, and an excellent Consta-
tution of Body, peculiarly design a
man to be an Athlete; or Champion;
so Leanness of Body, and that paleness
which is the fruit of Continence, evi-
dence a Christian to be a real Cham-

Part 2. pion for the Commands of Christ, van- 
quishing his Enemy in the weakness of 
his Body, and shews how able he is to 
contend in the Cause of Piety and Ver- 
tue. The very sight of such a man must 
needs be of great advantage to affect us, 
to behold him sparingly and moderately 
using even these things that are necessa-
ry, not paying Nature its tribute without 
some regret, begrudging the little time 
that he spends about it, and therefore 
making haste to get from the Table to 
return to his better Exercises and Im-
ployments.

C H A P. V.

Of their singular Continence and 
Chastity.

Their admirable Continence discovered 
in several particulars. Their Absti-
ence from Marriage. Their Marry-
ing only to comply with the end of the 
Institution. Seldom married more than 
once. Their Continence admired by 
Heathens. The Fathers generally se-
vere against Second Marriages. The
moderate judgment of Clemens Alex. Part 2.
andrinus in the case. The Canons of several Councils concerning it. Three sorts of Digamy, or Second Marriages. Their shunning all occasions and appearances of Lightness and Immodesty; abstaining from Publick Meetings, Feasts, Plays, &c. Constantine's Law, that no Widow should be forced to appear at Publick Tribunals. Another of Theodosius, that none should marry within twelve complete moneths after her Husband's decease. The promiscuous use of Births forbidden both by Canon and civil Laws. Unmarried persons, especially of Ecclesiastick Relation, not familiarly to converse together. Mulieres vestirei, who. How brought to: condemned by the Council of Antioch, and that of Nice. Clandestine Marriages disallowed. Their abhorring all Immodest Pictures and Discourses. The great Modesty of Gordonia. Their valuing Chastity above Life; submitting to any kind of Death rather than violate it; many choosing to kill themselves rather than be deslow'd. Several Instances of it. Impurity in Christians bewail'd as a great scandal; punished by the Church with very severe
were penalties. Several passages out of the Fathers and Councils noted to that purpose. Christians accused by the Heathens of Incest and Adultery. The summe of the Charge. Their Answer. The Heathens very unfit to bring in this Charge, being themselves so notoriously guilty; whole Nations, their wisest Philosophers, their very Gods themselves; this fully prov'd against them. The very Gentiles tacitly confessed the Christians innocent, by condemning them to be forcibly prostituted. A part of their Religion not to give way to wanton looks or unchaste desires. The eminent Prevalency of Christianity in Converting persons from Uncleanliness and Debauchery pleaded and asserted. The Original of the Accusation inquired into. Found to arise from the beastly practices of the Gnosticks, &c. who though guilty of the most notorious Villanies, and of these in particular, yet brooked themselves under the general Name of Christians. Some forced through fear to confess the Christians guilty of these Crimes.
A Third considerable Instance of that Sobriety and Moderation for which the Christians were so renowned of old, was their Continence, and abstaining from all manner of Uncleanness, which is that Vertue that we properly call Chastity; a Vertue for which how Eminent they were (notwithstanding what their Enemies heavily charged upon them to the contrary, of which afterwards) we shall take notice of in some few particulars.

First, The Christians of those Times were so far from breaking in upon any unchaste Embraces, that they frequently abstained even from lawful Pleasures, and kept themselves even from the honourable and undefiled Bed, never marrying all their Life. We are (says Olya- Min. Pol. vims) chaste in our speech, and chaster in our bodies; and very many of us, though we do not boast on't, do inviolably preserve a perpetual Virginity; and are so far from any extravagant Desires after incestuous Mixtures, that many stand at a distance from the most chaste and modest Embraces. Thus Jn. Ap. 2. p. 62. Stin Martyr tells the Emperours, that amongst the Christians there were a
Part 2. great many of either Sex, who had from their Childhood been educated in the Christian Discipline, who for sixty or seventy Years had kept themselves single and uncorrupt; and he wished the like could be shewn in all other sorts of Men. To the same purpose another Apologist; 'Tis very easy (says he) to find many amongst us, both Men and Women, who remain unmarried even in old age; conceiving that in this state they shall have fitter opportunities of drawing near to God. Not that they who persever'd in this course of Celibate did combine themselves into distinct Societies, and bind themselves under an oath of perpetual Virginity; (as the Humour was in after Ages;) for of this, not the least shadow appears in any of the Writings of those times, they lived promiscuously till towards the end of the third Century, applied themselves to the business of their place and station, and only lived single, that in those troublesome and hazardous Times of Persecution they might be less ensnared with the Entanglements of the World, and be more free for the Exercises of Religion.
Secondly, When they did marry, they generally professed they did it only to comply with the great end of the Institution, viz. the Propagation of Mankind; not to gratifie wanton and brutish Desires, but to answer the great end of Nature, that Humane Society might not fail: Either (say they) we marry not at all, but keep our selves always continent; or if we do marry, it is for no other end but the bringing forth and the bringing up of Children. Whoe ver amongst us takes a Wife, according to the Laws prescribed us, he reckons he does it onely for the beget ting of Children; within this his Desires are bounded and limited; as the Husbandman concerns himself no farther in Tilling his Ground, and Sowing of his Corn, than to bring forth the Crop at Harvest. Hence it was that they seldom married more than once. We willingly contain our selves (as he speaks in M. Felix) within the bound of Single Marriage, and either know but one Woman, (and that meerly out of a desire of Children) or none. The first Knot, being loosed by Death, they very rarely tied a second: which gained great Honour and Reputation.
Part 2: both to them and to their Religion with the Gentiles amongst whom they lived. Chrysostom tells us, that a Discourse happening on a time between him and his Master, who was a Gentile, concerning his mother, being told that she was a Widow, and after Inquiry concerning her Age, being answered that she was forty years old, and that she had liv'd twenty years of the time a Widow, the man was surpris'd with a strange Admiration, and cried out before all the Company, Be bold (faith he) what brave Women there are amongst the Christians! The truth is, such was the Heavenly Zeal and Temper of the first Ages of Christianity, that they would have no more to do with the World than they needed must, but industriously shunn'd all its burdens and encumbrances, amongst which they especially reckoned Marriage, a state not rashly to be engag'd in; for once it was allowable, but for a second time inexcusable. And indeed it cannot be denied but that many of the Ancient Fathers, Tertullian, Cyprian, Hierom, and others, did inveigh against second Marriages with too much bitterness and severity, violently pressing many passages in Scri-
Scripture to serve the Cause, training Part 2.
the string many times till it crack'd again; and not sticking to cen‐
sure and condemn Second Marriages as little bet‐
ter than adultery. Hear what one of
the Apologists says to it; Amongst us
every man either remains as he was
born, or engages himself in one onely
Marriage; for as for Second Marriages,
they are but a more plausible and de‐
corous kind of Adultery; our Lord af‐
suring us, that whoever puts away his
Wife, and takes another, commits adul‐
tery. Which place, as also another of
like importance, how perversely he in‐
terprets, and impertinently applies to
his purpose, I am not willing to remem‐
ber. Clemens Alexandrinus speaks in
the case with much more modesty and
moderation; As for those to whom
God has given the Gift of absolute
Continence, we think them happy:
we admire the gravity and stayedness
of those that content themselves with
a single Marriage; but yet say withall;
that Compassion ought to be had of
others, and that we should bear one ano‐
thers burdens, left he who seems to
stand fair do fall himself: and as for Se‐
cond Marriages, that of the Apostle is to
take
**Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.**

Part 2. take place, if they cannot contain, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn. However 'tis certain the Fathers of old generally did what they could to discourage Second Marriages. The ancient Canons (as Zonaras tells us) suspended such persons from the Communion for a whole Year; and the Council of Laodicea, though it determine not the Time, yet it requires that they should spend some small time at least in penance, in Fasting and Prayer, before they be received to the Communion. By the Canons that are call'd Apostolical, who ever after Baptism has engag'd in a Second Marriage is rendered incapable of any Degree in the Ministry. Accordingly Ephphanius reports of one Joseph, whom he knew, a convert'd Jew, and advanced to the Dignity of a Count by Constantine the Great, that when the Arrians would have laid hands upon him to have made him Bishop, he got off by this wile, by pretending himself to have been twice married. But though the Fathers and Ancient Councils were thus severe in this case, yet the rigour of their Censure will be much abated, if what some tell us be true, that many of their Passages
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

ages are not levell'd against Successive Part 2.
Marriages, but against having two
Wives at the same time. For as a Learn-
ed Man hath observed, there were three
forts of Digamy; the first a mans having
two Wives at once, this was condemn'd
by the Roman Laws: the second, when
the former Wife being dead the Man
married a second time: a third, when
for any flight cause a Man put away his
Wife by a Bill of divorce, and married
another, which though then frequent-
ly practis'd, and conniv'd at (if not al-
low'd) by the Laws of those Times,
was yet prohibited by the Decrees of
the Church; and of this last fort (says
he) many of the Ancient Canons are to
be understood.

Thirdly, They were infinitely care-
ful to shun all occasions and appear-
ances of Lightness and Immodesty, what-
ever might tend to inveigle their Sen-
es, and to debauch their Mind and
Manners, nay, whatever might but give
a Suspicion of Wantonness and Inconti-
nence. They declin'd as much as might
be going to all Publick Meetings, such
as Feasts, Plays, Shews, &c. Therefore
do discip.,
Cyprian severely chides with some Vir-
gins for being present at Weddings,
where
Part 2. where they laughed freely, could not but hear loose Discourses, see uncomely Carriages, feed upon luxurious Dishes, all which must needs not only kindle, but adde fuel to the fire, and fill their Minds with indecent thoughts and desires. S. Hierom on the other hand does as much commend some whom he knew, who always kept at home on festival days to avoid the Crowd and Gazes of the people, and would never go abroad at those times when they could not venture into the publick without the greatest care and custody of themselves. For this reason Constantine made a Law, that Matrons should not be forc'd upon the account of Debt to come out of their own Houses to appear before the publick tribunals, but that the business should be decided in such way, as might not betray the Modesty of that Sex. And when afterwards the fervour of Christianity began to abate apace, and persons had in a great measure loft that huge Reverence which former Times had for Continence and Chastity; Theodosius, to restrain them a little within the bounds of Decency, provided a Law, that no woman, of what Quality or Rank soever should marry again
again with in a Year at least, (i.e. with Part 2.
in twelve full moneths; whereas under the old Roman Laws the time of
Mourning was but ten, as a Learned Interpreter of that Law observes) af-
ter her Husbands death, and this he ratified by a double Penalty; a Note
of Perpetual infamy to be set upon the offending person, and the Loss of her
whole dower, and whatever Estate her Husband had bequeathed her, which
was to go to the Children she had by him, or (if none) to his next of kin.
By the Laodicean Council not only Clergy-men, and such as have entred
upon a state of Continency, but all Christian men whatsoever are forbid-
den to use the same common baths with Women. And for very good reason;
it being a thing (as Zonaras observes) both shameful and uncomely in itself,
and pernicious in its consequence: for how easily does an unlawful flame kin-
dle from such a spark? And when Hu-
mane Nature is of it self so ready to
spoil over, who would pour oyl upon
the fire? A thing ever look'd upon as
repugnant to all the Laws of Modesty,
yea, even by them that are without; this
being (says the Council) one of the
chief-
Part 2. chiefest things which the very Heathens condemn, and for which they censure and reproach us. Parallel to this, Photius and his Commentator Balsa-
man tell us of a Law of the Emperour
Justinian, making it a sufficient Cause of divorce, and losing her dowry, for a
Woman either to feast or bathe in the company of other Men without the
leave and consent of her Husband. Indeed in the first and purer Times they
took all imaginable care that unmarried persons, especially such as were
of Ecclesiastical cognizance, or had devoted themselves to a severer course of
Piety, should not commonly converse together. Cyprian writing to Pompo-
mine about the Virgins that had taken
Profession of Continence upon them,
but lived too familiarly with some persons that belonged unto the Church,
charges him that Men and Virgins
should not only not sleep near one an-
other, but not dwell together in the
same House, lest the Infirmity of their
Sex, and the Timperiness of their Youth,
should betray them into the snare of the
Devil. Wherefore, he commends Pom-
paminus for having suspended the Deacon
and the rest that had kept such famili-

Correspondence with those Virgins; Part 2; ordered that they should not be absolved, till they had sufficiently testified their Repentance, and made it appear by satisfactory evidence, that no unlawful Familiarity had passed between them, and that if ever they returned to the like Cohabitation, greater Penalties should be inflicted upon them. The Foundation of which ill Custom doubtless sprung, or at least took encouragement from hence; in those first Times of Christianity, it was usual for Clergy-men, such especially as were sent up and down to preach the Gospel, to have some grave and sober woman along with them, who might be helpful and assisting to them, and who was neither Wife, nor Concubine, but taken in either upon the account of necessary attendance, or the pretence of piety. These Women in the Writings of the Church (wherein there is frequent mention of them) are called such as were brought in, taken into the House as domestick Assistants to Ecclesiastick Persons. But this proving matter of Scandal and Inconvenience was not only cried out against by private Fathers, but by publick Synods, the
Part 2. the Council of Antioch held in the Reign of Aurelian the Emperor, Ano 272, in a Synodical Epistle, where-in they censure the Doctrines and Practices of Paulus Samosatensis, condemn this among the rest, that he and his Presbyters and Deacons kept there introduced Women, whereby horrible Inconveniences did arise; for besides the Snare and Temptation of it, although they should keep themselves innocent, yet they could not avoid the Suspicion and Scandal that would arise, and the danger of drawing in others by their bad Example. For which reason S. Basili writes to an old Presbyter in his Diocese, to abstain from the company of a Woman, with whom he was wont to cohabit; not so much to avoid temptation to Incontinence, (the man being then seventy Years of age) as that he may not lay a stumbling stone, and occasion of offence in his Brothers way. The same was universally forbidden by the great Council of Nice, and no man within the Clergy allowed to have any Woman near him, unless his Mother, his Sister, or his Aunt, or such only of whom there could be no Suspicion; as
as we find it in the third Canon of that Part 2 Council: in the ancient version whereof these mulieres extranae, strangers, by which name they are also called in a Law of the Emperor Honorius, prohibiting any Clergy-man whatsoever to keep company with these strange-women, limiting their converse and cohabitation within the very same relations, to which they are restrained by the Nicene Canon, which 'tis not to be doubted that Emperor had in his eye when he made that Constitution. And because Bishops were the highest order in the Church, therefore that their honour might be especially secured, care was taken that no Bishop under penalty of being deposed should entertain or cohabit with any woman whatsoever, either relation or stranger, that so all pretence either of temptation or scandal might be cut off. For the same reason it was that they disallowed all Clandestine marriages, which were not openly made in the face of the Church, accounting them no better than a state of Adultery, or Forplication. And as they were careful not to give offence to others, so they were not willing...
Part 2. willing themselves to come within the shadow of a temptation, they stood at a distance from whatever was offensive either to their eyes or ears; their ears they stopt against all loose idle songs, all filthy and obscene discourses, their eyes they shut against all uncomely objects, all wanton and lascivious pictures, as Clemens Alexandrinus expressly tells us; not doing any thing that seemed but to carry an all colour with it. Naiszen tells us of his Sister Gorgonia, a virtuous woman whose example we have often quoted, that for modesty and sobriety she went beyond all other women; that she reconcil'd the two opposite states of humane life, celibate and marriage; the one more sublime and divine, but more dangerous and troublesome, the other more humble, but withal more safe; that she avoided the inconveniencies of each, and chose what was most excellent out of both, the sublimity of the one, and the security of the other; shewing that neither of these states in it self did wholly tie us up either to God or the World, nor yet wholly separate us from them, so that the one should be absolutely rejected, or the other absolutely
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.  

ly commended, and embraced, but that Part 2.
it is the mind that admirably presides both over Marriage and Virginity. And withal further adds concerning her, that so great was her beauty, and modesty, that when she lay under a most acute and dangerous distemper, yet she refused to have any Physician come near her, as blushing that any man should either see or touch her.

Fourthly, They valued their innocence and their honour above their lives; and therefore chose to undergo the greatest dangers, to dye, yet to kill themselves rather than any violence should be offered to their chastity. As the fairest promises could not tempt them, so neither could the fiercest tortures affright them into any unchast compliance. When Maximiannus the Emperor governed in the Eastern parts, amongst other effects of his wild and brutish fury and extravagance, he stint'd all places, where he came with Adulteries and ravishments, abusing women, and deflouring Virgins; which succeeded well enough (says the Historian) with all others, except only Christians, who generously despising death, made light of the rage and fury.
Partur of the Tyran: the men underwent all sorts of punishments which cruelty could invent; the women bore up with a courage no less manly and unconquerable, and when any were drawn out to be abused, they rather submitted their lives to death, than their bodies to dishonour. Of these he tells us of one especially at Alexandria, a woman of great birth and fortunes, but much more famous for her Vertues, especially her modesty and chastity, which she stoutly defended; and preferred before her nobility or her riches, her excellent parts, or any accomplishments whatsoever. The Emperour had oft attempted her by all Arts of solicitation but all in vain; till at last not being able to prevail, his affection somewhat attemppering his fierceness and cruelty, he would not put her to death which she was most ready to have undergone, but spoil'd her of her estate, and then sent her into banishment; there being many hundreds of others at the same time, who not able to bear the violation of their chastity wherewith the Governours and Commanders threatened them, willingly subjected themselves to all kinds of
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

of racks and tortures, and the worst capital punishments which their enemies could inflict upon them. Nay, when the case so happen'd that they were set upon, and all their resolute-ness could not provoke the cruel kindness of their enemies to dispatch them, they would rather dispatch themselves, than fall into the rude hands of lust and wantonness. Thus did that famous Woman and her two Daughters, (mention'd by the same Author, whose names as Chryṣophora in an Oration on purpose in their commendation tells us,) were Domina the mother, Bernice and Prosdco, the daughters) eminent as well for the outward beauty and features of their bodies, as for the inward Vertues of their minds, being sought for as a prey to lust under the Doctrian persecution, they fled for it; but being found out by the Souldiers that were sent to search for them, and knowing there was no other way to escape, in their return they beg'd leave of the Souldiers, that for some private occasions, they might step a little out of the road; which being granted, setting themselves for what they had before-hand agreed on, as well as the time would...
Part 2 would give them leave; they unanimously threw themselves into the river, and there perished in the waters. The like he relates of a Noble Woman at Rome, wife to the Prefect or chief Governor of the City, (but a Christian) that Maximinus the Emperor being passionately enamoured with the love of her, sent Officers to fetch her, who breaking into the house, to the great terror of her husband, would violently have seiz'd on her; of whom she beg'd only so much time, as that she might a little dress and adorn her self; under which pretence, retiring into her chamber, she caught up a sword, and by a fatal stroke left the Messengers nothing but a dismal spectacle of amazement and horror. These instances (both of them highly applauded by Chrysostom and Eusebius) I quote not to justify a man laying violent hands upon himself as either lawful or laudable; whether in some such cases persons might not be acted by some divine motions, extraordinary and heroic impulses (the case of Sampson &c.) as St. Augustine inclines to believe; it is not very pertinent for me to enquire; it being enough to my purpose to observe, that
that they were great evidences how much they abhorred all uncleanness. None were ever more hearty enemies to Idolatry, and yet Origen at Alexandria (if that story be true) when put to this unhappy choice, either to sacrifice or defile himself, chose rather to commit idolatry than fornication. Though even that too was rather his Enemies act than his own, they thrusting the Frankincense into his hand and hailing him up to the Altar.

Firstly, When ever any was found guilty of the least uncleanness, it was looked upon and bewailed as a very heinous sin, and a great disfigure to the Christian name: What is it, then, that I hear (says Cyprian) how detestable should it be to you, what with the greatest grief and affliction of my mind I have understood, that there are some amongst you, who have defiled their bodies, the temples of God, even after they were purified by confession and cleansed by baptism, with filthy and infamous embraces.
Part 2. braces, promiscuously using the beds and lodgings of the women. When although they should be free from actual adultery, yet even in this it would be a fault of a mighty aggravation, that by their scandalous example others might be seduced into ruin. S. Basil writing to a Monk, who had been overtaken with this fault, elegantly bewails the greatness of his sin, as a dishonour to the strictness of his former profession; a reproach to those lips which had kis'd the mouths of so many Saints; to those hands which so many devout persons had embrac'd as pure and undefiled; to those knees before which so many servants of God had fallen down; as a being caught in the snare of a crafty Devil, a perfidious violation of his promises, a being become a sport and scorn to Jews and Gentiles, a confuting (what in him lay) that triumphant speech of Christ, that he had overcome the world, filling even to the place where he liv'd a cup of insanity and reproach. In the next Epistle he deals with the Woman, and treats her with the same elegant severity, though in both he so aggravates the case, as to excite them to repentance, and to a speedy
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

speedy recovery of themselves out of the Part.
snare of the Devil. But because good
words and persuasions were not cords
strong enough to restrain some men's
irregular lusts and passions, they twirled
with them the Discipline of the Church:
And therefore,

Sixthly. They were wont to punish
the breach of chastity by inflicting se-
vere penalties upon incontinent per-
sons. Amongst all the sins that were
most sharply punished in the ancient
Church, Adultery was one of the chief;
whoever was convicted of it was im-
mediately cast out of the Church, and
dis-owned as a rotten member; This
Tertullian tells us, first made Marcion
turn Heretic, for being found guilty
of lying with a Virgin, and for that
thrown out of the Communion of the
Church, he betook himself to one Cer-
don, a Master Heretic, and espoused
his Doctrines and Opinions. The truth
is, in those first times the punishment of
Adultery was very great, perpetual pen-
nance all a man's life, and scarce being
admitted into Communion at the very
hour of death, till Pope Zephyrinus a-
bout the year two hundred and six-
teen, considering the great inconveniences
of
Part 2. of so much severity, persons hereby being off driven into despair, and others discouraged from coming over to the Christian Faith, ordered that Penance in this case should be limited to a shorter time, which being ended, such persons might be received again into the bosom of the Church. This Decree gave great offence to the African Churches, most whereof stood up for the strictness of the ancient Discipline. Tertullian more especially inveighs against it with much bitterness and animosity, as a thing unfit in itself, and an innovation in the Church. The same Cyprian also plainly intimates, though he himself was for the more mild Opinion. By the Ancyran Council, held Anno three hundred and fifteen, it was Decreed, That whoever was guilty of Adultery, should be punished with a seven years Penance before they were admitted to the Communion. By the Synod of Hiberis, if a man after having done his Penance for the first fault, fell afterwards into the same sin again, he was not to be taken into Communion, no not at the hour of death. The same punishment they inflicted upon Bawds and such persons as for gain pro-
prostituted the bodies of their children, by selling them (or themselves rather, of whom their children were a part) to lust and ruin. S. Basil writing to Augustine rules for the conduct of discipline, and the measures of repentance, sets Adultery at fifteen years Penance, Fornication at seven, and then to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament. His brother Gregory Bishop of Nyssa, treating about the same affairs appoints Fornication to be punished with no less than nine years Penance and suspension from the Sacrament, and Adultery, and all other species of uncleanness with double that time; though allowing a liberty to the Spiritual Guide to contract this time, as the circumstances of the case or person might require. But both these last mentioned being but private Bishops their Canons could be no further obligatory than to those particular Dioceses, that were under their charge. And indeed their censures of the Church in this case did much vary according to time and place, in some more rigid and severe, in others more lax, and favourable, though in all, such as did abundantly shew what hearty enemies they were to all sinners.
and impurity whatsoever.

What has been hitherto said of the Modesty, the chaste and sober carriage of the Primitive Christians, will receive further light, if we consider how clearly they vindicated themselves from that malicious charge of Incest and Adultery, which the Heathens commonly charg'd upon them; so commonly, that we scarce find any of the ancient Apologists but takes notice of it and confutes it. The sum of the charge, as it is more formally drawn up by the Heathen in M. Felix, takes thus: That the Christians knew one another by certain privy marks and signs, and were wont to be in love with, almost before they knew one another; that they exercised lust and filthiness under a pretence of Religion, promiscuously calling themselves Brothers and Sisters, that by the help of so sacred a name their common Adulteries might become incestuous; that upon a solemn day they meet together at a feast [to means their love-feasts] with their Wives, Children, Sisters, Mothers, persons of every Age and Sex, where after they have well eaten and drunk, and begun to be warm and merry, heated with
with the excess of wine, a piece of Part 2.
meat is thrown for the dogs, who being
tied to the Candlesticks, begin to leap
and frisk about till they have run away
with; and put out the lights, and then
nothing being left but darkness, the
fit cover. and shadow for impudence
and villany, they promiscuously run a-
mongst one another into filthy and in-
cestuous embraces; and if they be not
all alike guilty of incest, 'tis not the
fault of their will, but the good for-
tune of their chance, seeing what actu-
ally happens to one, is intentionally the
lot of all. This is the tale; which
however absurd and incredible, yet
strangely found belief, or at least was
pretended to be believ'd amongst the
enemies of Christianity. Now, though
it be sufficiently refuted by what has
been already laid, yet we may observe
the Christians of those times further
pleading these Four things in their own
vindication.

First, That if the Charge had been
ture, yet the Heathens had little rea-
son to object it to the Christians, being
themselves so notoriously guilty in this
kind. For Adultery nothing more
common amongst them, and for Incest,
'twas
Part 2. 'twas a general indictment of whole Nations, the Persians usually lying with their own Mothers, the Macedonians and Egyptians marrying with their own Sisters, and this done even at Athens itself; their Histories full of them, their Plays and Tragedies which they frequented every day with great applause represented them as lawful and commendable. Socrates himself, the great glory of the Heathen world, was condemned at Athens amongst other things for sodomy, and the corrupting of Youth; and some of Plato's School have perished in the very act of Adultery. Nay their very gods themselves whom they worshipp'd and ador'd were highly guilty in this kind; they feign those things of us (says Athenagoras) which they themselves report of their own gods; whose lusts and wantonnesses 'tis no wonder if they style Mysterie; were they such hearty enemies to shameful and promiscuous mixtures, they must abhor their great god Jupiter, who begot children both of Rhea the Mother, and Proserpina the Daughter, and married with his own Sister. And who was (unless Orpheus their great Poet lies) more
more wicked and vile in this kind than Thyestes himself? Clemens Alexandrinus tells them, that as they had ordered the matter, by the Marriages, begetting Children, Adulteries, and Banquets of their gods, (which they set out in their Plays and Poems) they had turned Heaven into a Comic Scene, and made the Deity a piece of dramatick sport, and by satyric wit had jested Religion, and whatever was most Sacred into scorn and laughter. Nothing more usual amongst them (as he there observes) than to hang their rooms with the pictures of their gods drawn in the most lascivious and prodigious postures, engaged in the most filthy and dishonest actions, enough to shame intemperance it self. These (says he) are the original patterns of your soft effeminacy: this your beastly and shameful divinity: these the doctrines of your gods, co-partners with you in your uncleanness, and adultery. And whereas they might pretend, that these stories of their gods were only the extravagant inventions of their Poets, who took a liberty to say any thing to gratifie the people; Athanasius answers, that hereby they shook the very foundation of their gods, having
Part 2. having no other authority for their existence, than what account their Poets gave them; so that if they feign'd their actions, they might with equal reason be supposed to feign their very names and persons, there being the same ground of belief for the one as for the other; and that there was as much reason to believe they spake truth in this, as in the relation of any other matters of fact, concerning Achilles, Ulysses, Nestor, Hector, or any of the rest; all depending upon the same warrant and authority. This propagated looseness and uncleanliness to them under the notion and shadow of Religion; such as the gods are, such warrantably may be their Worshippers. Where-ever you are (says Tertullian) at home or abroad, or beyond the seas, Lust is your companion, which often stumbles upon Incest; whereas Chastity diligently and faithfully preserv'd keeps us from any such event, and we are as far from Incest, as we are from Whoredom, or any excess in a married state; yea, many prevent all possibility of this charge by containing themselves within perpetual Virginity. And yet though we are thus (says another Apologist) yet there
there want not those who object these parts of things to us; and, as 'tis in the Proverb, in quern tu quoque, the Strumpet reproaches the Honest Woman, for though they merchandise for Lust, and keep open Shop for all manner of Uncleanness, not abstaining from the Violation and Abuse of Youth, Males with Males committing that which is unseemly, though themselves are guilty of these Villanies, which they report also of their Gods, and do themselves boast of them as brave achievements, yet have they the face to accuse us of them. Adulterers and Sodomites as they are, they charge us who are either always continent, or never marry more than once, themselves in the mean while living like fishes, where the great ones subdue and swallow up the less. Such infamous Filthinesses are done amongst you, which we do not care to hear, and may much less defend; you laying things to the charge of chaste and modest men, which we could not believe that there should be such things done in the world, were not you your selves instances of them. This Consideration made Justin Ap. I. 51. Martyr thus freely and passionately bespeak the Senate; It were to be wished
Part 2. that some body getting up into a high place, should with a loud voice cry out, Be afraid, be afraid to charge those things, of which you your selves are openly guilty, upon the innocent and undeserving; to attribute what belongs o'ly to your selves and to your gods, to those with whom there is not so much as the shadow of any such thing to be found. Learn to be more wise and sober, and repent of such injustice.

Secondly, That the Heathens themselves did tacitly confess Christians to be innocent in this case, when their great care was how they might debauch them; 'twas a part of their severest Punishment to be prostituted, and exposed to Rudeness and Violence; a Penalty which they would never have inflicted upon them, had they really been such lewd profligate persons as their Enemies endeavoured to represent them. This Plea Tertullian urges in the close of his Apologie; Condemn, (says he) crucifie, and torment us; your cruelty and injustice is the evidence of our innocency, and therefore God suffers it to come upon us: for while you chuse rather to condemn a woman that is a Christian to the Stews than to
the Lions, you plainly confess that the Part 2.
Violation of Chastity is accounted by us a heavier penalty than any punishment or kind of death which you can inflict upon us.

An eminent Instance hereof (though of the other Sex) S. Hierom relates to this purpose: In the time of the Decian Persecution a Young man, a Christian, then in the flower and beauty of his Age, whose Constancy had been oft attempted by other means to no purpose, he was at last set upon in this manner; he was carried into a pleasant garden; and into a part of it, beller with Lilies and Roses, hard by the banks of a crystal River, whose soft murmurs, together with the musick made by the Leaves of the Trees wav’d by the gentle motions of the Wind, conspir’d to render it a place for pleasure and delight; here upon a bed of down the Young man was laid, and that he might not be able to help himself, or shift his posture, was tied down with silken Cords; the Company withdrawing, a beautiful Trumpet was sent in to him, who began to caress him with Kisses and Embraces, treating him with all the Arts of Wantonness, not consistent with mode-
Part 2. As to name. How to relieve himself in this case the poor man knew not; but finding the Temptation beginning to prevail, he presently bit off his tongue, and spit it in her face as she attempted to kiss him, by the greatness of his Pain extinguishing those sensual Titillations which her wicked Artifices began to kindle in him.

Thirdly, they confidently assured them that amongst Christians it was not only unlawful to be actually unclean, but to look after a Woman with wanton and Ap.2.61, unchaste desires. Our Lord (says Iustin Martyr) has told us that whoever looks after a Woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart; and that if our right eye offend us we must pluck it out: as therefore Humane Laws condemn two Wives; so by the Laws of our Master they are sinners who look upon a Woman with unfit Desires after her; for not only he that really commits Adultery is rejected by him, but even he that has a mind to it; not only our actions, but our very thoughts being open unto God: so Athenagoras. So far are we from any promiscuous Embraces, that we are not permitted.
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

In the freedom of an unchaste look; Part 2.

for, whoever (says our Lord) looks after a woman to desire her, has plaid the adulterer with her in his heart. We are not therefore allowed to use our eyes to any other purposes, than those for which God created them, viz. to be lights to the body. To abuse them to wantonness, is to be guilty of adultery, for as much as they know they were made for other ends, and cannot but be conscious to themselves of their own thoughts; and, how is it possible for men under such limitations to be otherwise than chaste and sober? For we have not to deal with humane laws, under which a man may be wicked, and yet escape; but our discipline was delivered by God himself; we have a Law, which makes our selves the rule and measure of righteousness towards others. According therefore to the difference of age we account some as sons and daughters, others as brethren and sisters; the more aged we honour in the place of parents; those therefore whom we account as sisters, or as allied to us in any other relation, we reckon it a matter of great concernment that they
Part 2: they should be chaste and incorrupt.

Fourthly, They pleaded that this objection would easily vanish, if they would but consider what a strange change and alteration was in this very case wrought upon persons at their first conversion to Christianity; immediately becoming quite of another spirit and temper from what they were before. We, who before time (says Justin Martyr, speaking of the Converting Power of the Christian Doctrine) did please our selves in fornications and uncleanness, do now solely embrace Temperance and Chastity: what an innumerable Company could I name of those who have left their Luxury and Intemperance, and come over to this kind of Life; for Christ came, not to call the chaste and righteous, [they needed it not] but the wicked, the incontinent, and the unrighteous, to repentance. And in his other Apologie he gives an Instance of a Woman, who having together with her Husband lived a very vicious and debauched Course of Life, after her Conversion to Christianity became strictly chaste and sober; and not content with this, she urged her Husband also to do the like.
laying before him the Doctrines of Christianity, and persuading him both by the rewards and punishments of another World; but he obstinately refusing, it begot a quarrel between them, which still ripened into a wider breach, till it became matter of publick Cognizance, and was an occasion for Justin Martyr, Ad Nati-
to write that excellent Apologie for the Christians. Upon this account Tertul-
lian justly condemns the Madness of the Heathens, and their unreasonable prejudice against Christianity, that they would hate their nearest Relations meerly for being Christians, though they saw how much they were every ways bettered by it in their Lives and Manners. The Father dis-inheriting his Son, of whom now he had no cause left to complain, but that he was a Chris-
an: the Master imprisoning his Servant, though now he had found him useful and necessary to him. But (what's more especially to the purpose) he tells us of some Husbands he knew, who though before to infinitely jealous of their Wives, (and possibly not without reason) that a Mouse could not stay in the room, but it must be a Gallant creeping to their Bed, yet when upon
Part 2. Their turning Christians, they became so eminently reserved, chaste, and modest, that there was not the least foundation for Suspicion, their jealousy was converted into hatred; and they said, they had rather their Wives should be Strumpets then Christians. So obstinately (says he) do men stand in their own light, and contend against those Advantages which they might reap by Christianity. This Argument, from the powerful and succisful Influence of the Christian Faith, Origen frequently makes use of. They must needs (says he) confess the Excellency and Divinity of Christ's Doctrine, who ever do but look into the lives of those that adhere to it, comparing their former Course of Life with that which they now lead, and considering in what Impurities, Lusts, and Wickednesses, every one of them, wallowed before they embraced this Doctrine, but since that they have entertained it, how much more grave, Moderate, and Constant are they become? Inasmuch that some of them out of a desire of a more transcendent Purity, and that they may worship God with a chasten Mind, deny themselves even the Pleasures of a
Ch. 5. Primitie Christianity.

Lawful Bed. The same he affirms else-Part 2.-where, that those whom the Gentiles Lib. 7. scorn'd as the most rude and sottish persons, being once initiated into the Faith and Discipline of the Holy Jesus, were so far from lasciviousness, filthiness, and all manner of uncleanness, that (like Priests wholly devoted to God) they altogether abstain even from allowed embraces; that there was no need for them (as some of the best among the Gentiles have done) to use Arts and Medicines to keep them chaste; not Guardians set over them to preserve their virginity; the Word of God being sufficient to expel and drive out all irregular appetites and desires. This also Tertullian observes as the Incomparable Excellency of the Christian Doctrine above that of the best Philosophers, that whereas Democritus was forced to put out his eyes, because not able to defend himself from the charms of beauty; a Christian could look upon a woman with chaste unseduced eyes, being at the same time inwardly blind as to any Temptation from his Luft. With such a mighty force did the Gospel come, and captivate mens Hearts into the obedience of the truth.
Part 2. truth. Thence Laertius makes this triumphant challenge, where discounting of the prevalency which the commands of God had upon the minds of men, as daily experience did demonstrate; Give me (says he) a man that's angry, furious, and passionate; and with a few words from God, I will render him as meek and quiet as a Lamb: Give me one that's lustful, filthy and vicious, and you shall see him sober, chaste and continent: the same he instances in most other Vices. So great (says he) is the power of the divine wisdom, that being infused into the breast of a man, it will soon expel that folly which is the grand parent of all vice and wickedness.

The innocency of Christians standing thus clear from this wicked imputation, it may not be amiss before we conclude to enquire a little into the rise and original of this absurd and malicious charge. Origen fathers it upon the Jews, as if they had falsely and spitefully invented it (as they did other things) to disgrace and prejudice Christianity, and he tells us that in some measure it succeeded accordingly, keeping many at a distance from the Christian Religion; and that even in his time
there were some who for this very reason would have no discourse or commerce with a Christian. But though both Jew and Gentile had malice and spite enough against the Christians, yet I can hardly think that it was a purely invented falsehood, but that it had some ground of pretence, though ill applied; and so we shall find it had; for which we are to know that in the most early times of Christianity there were several sorts of Heretics (who though they had their particular names, yet all called themselves, Christians, accounting that hereby they graced and honoured their party as Epiphanius tells us) the followers of Simon Magus, Menander, Marcion, Marcus, Basilides, &c. who all went under the general name of Gnosticks, and were under the pretence of Religion guilty of the most prodigious villanies, and particularly those we are speaking of. Ireneus reports of them that they gave up themselves to all filthiness and bestiality, not only privately corrupting the women whom they had inveagled into their Sect (as some of them returning after to the Church confessed with shame and sorrow) but openly and with bare face.
Part 2. marrying the Women whom they had seduced from their Husbands; committing the most Execrable Wickednesses, and laughing at the pious and Orthodox Christians, whom the Fear of God restrained from sin either in word or thought, as a Company of ignorant and silly Fellows; magnifying themselves, styling themselves perfect, and the seeds of Election. And much more in other places to the same purpose, where he gives account of the Prophane and Hellish Rites of their Assemblies. Of the Carpocratians, another Gang of those brutish Hereticks, Clemens Alexandrinus relates the same both as to their Doctrines and Practices, reporting the matter almost in the very same Circumstances wherein it is charg'd upon the Christians by the Heathen in Min. Felix, viz. that both Men and Women used to meet at supper, (which they had in imitation of the true Christian, or Love-feast) where after they had loaded themselves with a plentiful Meal, to prevent all shame (if they had any remain'd) they put out the lights and then promiscuously mix'd in Filthiness with one another, or else each sorting as they pleas'd. And of the
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 125

Gnostic Epiphanius tells us, that they Part 2. had their Wives in common, and if any stranger of their Party came to them, 42.
both Men and Women had this mark and sign to know one another by; stretching out their hands by way of Salutation, they used to tickle each other in the ball of the Hand, by which they were satisfied that the Stranger really was of their Gang and Party. Amongst their Brethren the Carpocrates, they were wont to mark their Disciples and Proselytes under the right ear with a Brand, a Slit, or a Hole, that they might the more readily discern them; (this agrees exactly with the Charge of the Heathens, that they knew one another at the first sight by private Marks and Signs;) and having thus own'd and receiv'd each other, they went to their Luxurious Feasts, and to those horrid Brutishnesses that followed after.

Now this being the Case with these Abominable Wretches, who yet had the face to call themselves Christians, it is no wonder if Jews and Gentiles, who were greedy of any occasion to bepsilon and reproach Christians, and rather than not find an occasion would make one,
Part 2. one, charg'd it upon all Christians, either not knowing it to be otherwise, or if they did, not willing to distinguish between true and false. And that this was the true and only rise and ground of the Charge, besides some intimations of it in Justin Martyr; we have it expressly asserted by Eusebius, as that which gave being to that absurd and impious opinion, which spread so fast amongst the Heathens, of the Christians being guilty of Promiscuous Mixtures, to the great reproach and execracy of the Christian Name. I do not deny but this malicious report might receive strength and encouragement from the Servants of some Christians, who being rack'd by the Heathens might confess what they put into their mouths, and this Charge among the rest. This the same Historian relates out of the Letters of the Churches in France; Certain Gentiles, who were Servants to some Christians, being apprehended, and having seen the Exquisite Torments which the Christians were put to, for fear of the like, did at the instance of the Souldiers, who urg'd them to it, confess, that the Christians had amongst them incestuous Mixtures, and Suppers...
furnished with *mans flesh*, laying such things to their charge as they held unlawful to speak or think of, or could believe were ever done by men: which being once divulged, they everywhere fell upon the Christians with the greatest rage and fierceness. So in the persecution under *Maximinus*, one of the *119 c.s.* Commanders that then resided at *Diocletianus*, laid hold of a few light inconsiderable women in the Market, and threatening them with the Rack, forc’d the Wretches publickly to confess that they had formerly been Christians, and that they knew all their vileness; that in their Religious Meetings they committed the most beastly actions; and indeed whatever else he would have them say that might disgrace Christianity. This *confession* of theirs he caused to be entred into the publick *Records*, and then transmitted it to the Emperor, by whose Command it was immediately published in all Cities and Places of the Empire. So industriously did the Malice of Men and Devils bend all the nerves of their power and subtilty (though in vain) either wholly to suppress, or at least to dishearten and battle out the Christians. Which brings me
128 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. 6.**

Part 2. me to the consideration of another Virtue no less remarkable in the Christians of those Times.

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**CHAP. VI.**

Of their Readiness and Constancy in Professing their Religion.

Their Courage and Undauntedness in professing the Truth, though reproach'd and persecuted. Their open and resolute owning it to the face of their Enemies, and in defiance of the greatest dangers. The story of Victorinus the Rhetorician converted by Simplician. The free and impartial Answers of Maris to Julian, of Basil to the Arrian Governor. Polycarp's refusing to fly when Officers were sent to apprehend him. His resolute Carriage before the Proconsul. The like of Cyprian. No Torments could make them deny Christ. Women unconquerable. The excellent Instance of Blandina and others. Divers voluntarily offering themselves. Others offering to plead the Cause of the Christians, though with the immediate
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity.

mediate hazard of their Lives. This Part A Boldness and Resolution noted as an argument of the Excellency of their Religion, and the Goodness of their Cause above that of the best Philosophers. Aristoteles flying for fear of Suffering for his Opinions. The cowardly Silence of Lambluchus his Scholars. This Resolution of theirs confessed by Heathens; Pliny, Apollo's Oracle in the case of Porphyry's Wife, Galen. The Constancy of Christians to their Religion, Proverbial.

When our Blessed Saviour sent out his Disciples to preach the Gospel, he acquainted them with the difficulties that were like to attend their Message; but withall bade them arm themselves with Constancy and Resolution; and not to regard the Scoffs and Reproaches, the Miseries and Sufferings that might fall upon them; not to fear them that could only kill the body; but to make a free and bold confession of his Name before the World, and cheerfully to take up their Crosses and follow him. And S. Paul, though himself then in Chains at Rome, exhorts the Christians to stand fast in one Spirit.
Part 2. with one mind striving together for the Faith of the Gospel, being in nothing terrified by their Adversaries, it being given them on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake: which made it very necessary for them to have their feet fixed with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. And certainly, if ever true Courage and Greatness of Mind appeared in any persons in the World, it was in the Christians of those times, who with such a generous and untrembled Mind defied dangers and torments, own'd and gloried in the Profession of Christianity against all the Threats, Reproaches, and Persecutions, which the worst of their Adversaries could make against them. We shall first see what account their Apologists give of it even before their Enemies, and then how they made it good in their Lives and Actions.

Ap. 2. p. 83. Justin Martyr speaking of the successful Propagation of the Gospel, immediately upon Christ's Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, The Apostles of Christ (says he) going forth from Jerusalem, preach'd the powerful Word in every place; although it were Capital either to preach or to profess the Name.
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity.

Name of Christ, which yet we do even try where embrace and teach: which if you (as Enemies) still go on to obstruct, the worst you can do is but to kill us, whereby you will do us no great harm, but will purchase to your selves, and to all those that unjustly persecute us, and persist impenitent in their Proceedings, the vengeance of Eternal Flames.

And when Trypho the Jew had charg'd Christianity for an Idle Story, and the Christians for no better than fools to quit all the Conveniences of this Life upon the account of it; the Martyr answers, that this proceeded from his Ignorance, and an implicit Assent to the absurd and malicious Insinuations of their Rabbins, who understood very little of the Scriptures; that would he but admit the true Reasons of Christianity, he would quickly understand how far they were from being in an error, and how little reason they had to quit their Profession, although men did sufficiently scorn and reproach them for it, and the Powers of the World endeavour to force them to renounce and forsake it: notwithstanding all which they chose rather to die, and cheerfully underwent it; being ful-
Part 2. ly assur'd, that what God had promised through Christ he would infallibly make good to them. And discoursing afterwards of the same matter, As for us (says he) that have entertain'd the Religion of the Holy Jesus, your selves know very well, that there's none throughout the world that's able to subdue or affright us out of our Profession; nothing being plainer, than that though our Heads be exposed to Swords and Axcs, our Bodies fastned to the Cross, though thrown to wilde beasts, harraffled out with chains, fire, and all other Instruments of torment, yet do we not start from our Profession; nay, the more these things happen to us, the faster others flock over to the Name of Jesus, and become pious and devout Followers of Christ, it being with us in this case as with a Vine, which being prun'd and trimm'd, and its luxurious Excrescences par'd off, brings forth more fruitful and flourishing Branches. How little he valued any danger in compe-tition with the Truth, he tells his Adversary he might know by this, that he would not stifle and conceal it, although they should immediately tear him in pieces for it; and therefore when
when he saw his Countrymen the Sa-Part 2. maritans seduc'd by the Impostures of Simon Magus, whom they held to be a God above all Principality and Power, he could not but by an Address make his Complaint to Caesar, not regarding the Hazards and Troubles that might ensue upon it. Tertullian giving the Heathens an account of that Christ 21. p. whom they worshiped, tells them they might well believe it to be true, for that no man might lie for his Religion, to dissemble in this case being to deny; a thing which could not be charg'd upon the Christians, who own'd and stood to it with their last drop of blood. We speak it (says he) and we speak it openly, yea while you are tearing our flesh, and shedding our blood, we cry aloud, that we worship God through Christ. So fully were they satisfied in the Truth of their Religion, as to be ready rather a thousand times to die than to deny it.

Nor were these meerly big words with which the Christians vapour'd in the sight of their Enemies, we shall find that they made them good by acting suitable to these Professions and Protestations. They did not then think
Part 2, it enough to espouse the Faith of Christ, unless they publicly testified it to the World; whereof this Instance amongst others: Victorinus, a Rhetorician of Rome, a Man of so great Note and Fame, that he had obtained the Honour of a Publick Statue, but a Zelous Defender of Paganism and Idolatry, had read the Holy Scriptures, by which being convinced he came to Simplician, and privately told him that he was a Christian; which the other refused to believe unless he saw him testify it in the publick Church; to which Victorinus returned with a little scorn, What are they then the Walls that make a Christian? This Answer he as oft returned as the other urg'd a publick Confession, for he was not willing to disoblige his great friends, who he knew would fall foul upon him; till by Reading and Meditation he gathered Courage, and fearing that Christ would deny him before the Holy Angels, if he should refuse to confess him before men, he became sensible of his fault, and was ashamed of his Vanity and Folly, and calling to Simplician, Let us go (said he) into the Church, I will now become a Christian; which when he had done, and had been thie...
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity.

thorowly instructed in the Faith of Christ, he offer’d himself to Baptism; and being to make the accustomed confession of his Faith, the Ministers of the Church offer’d him the liberty of doing it in a more private way, (as they were wont to do for those who were of a fearful and bashful temper) which he utterly refused, and openly made it before all the people; affirming it to be unreasonable that he should be ashamed to confess his hopes of Salvation before the people, who while he taught Rhetorick (wherein he hoped for no such reward) had publickly professed it every day. An action that begat great wonder in Rome, as it was no less matter of rejoicing to the Church. No dangers could then sway good men from doing of their Duty. Cyprian highly commends Cornelius for taking the Bishoprick of Rome upon him in so dangerous a time; for the Greatness of his Mind, and the unshaken Firmness of his Faith, and the undaunted Management of his Place, at a time when Decius the Tyrant threatened such heavy severities to the Ministers of Christianity, and would sooner endure a Corrival in the Empire, than a Bishop to sit at Rome.

How
Part 2. How freely, how impartially did they speak their minds, even to the Faces of their bitterest Enemies? When Maria Bishop of Chalcedon, a man blind with Age, met Julian the Emperour, he boldly charged him with his Atheism and Apostasy from the Christian Faith; Julian reproached him with his blindness, and told him his Galilean God would never cure him. To which the good old man presently answered, I thank my God, who has taken away my sight, that I might not behold the face of one that has laps'd into so great Impiety.

Were they at any time attempted by Arts of flattery and Enticement, the Charms would not take place upon them. So when Julian both by himself and the Officers of his Army set upon the Soldiers, and by fair promises of Preferments and Rewards sought to fetch them off from Christianty, though he prevail'd upon some few weak and unstable Minds, yet the far greatest part stood off; yea by many even of the meanest and most inconsiderable Quality his temptations were as resolutely beaten back, as the blow of an Engine is by a Wall of Marble. Nor were they any more shaken by Storms and
and Threatnings. When Modestus the Part 2
Governour under Valens the Arrian 1d. in laud.
Emperour could not by any means
bring over S. Basili to the Party, he threatened him with Severity; Dost
thou not fear this Power that I have?
Why should I fear, said Basili, what canst
thou do, or what can I suffer? The
other answered, the loss of thy Estate,
Banishment, Torment, and Death. But
threaten us with something else, if
thou canst (said Basili) for none of these
things can reach us; Confiscation of
Estate cannot hurt him that has no-
thing to lose, unless thou wastest these
tatter'd and threadbare Garments, and
a few books, wherein all my Estate lies;
nor can I be properly banished, who
am not tied to any place; where ever I
am 'twill be my Countrey, the whole
Earth is God's, in which I am but a pil-
grim and a stranger. I fear no torments,
my Body not being able to hold out
beyond the first stroke; and for death,
'twill be a kindness to me, for 'twill but
so much the sooner send me unto God,
for whose sake I live, and am indeed in
a great measure already dead, towards
which I have been a long time hastning.
And there's no reason to wonder at
this
Part 2. this freedom of Speech; in other things, we are meek and yielding; but when the Cause of God and Religion is concerned, overlooking all other things, we direct our Thoughts onely unto him; and then fire and sword, wilde beasts and engines to tear off our flesh, are so far from being a terror, that they are rather a pleasure and recreation to us. Reproach and threaten, and use your Power to the utmost, yet let the Emperour know, that you shall never be able to make us assent to your wicked Doctrine, no though you should threaten ten thousand times worse than all this. The Governour was strangely surpriz'd with the Spirit and Resolution of the Man, and went and told the Emperour, that one poor Bishop was too hard for them all. And indeed so big were their Spirits with a desire to assert and propagate their Religion, that they would not hide their Heads to decline the greatest Dangers. When the Officers were sent to apprehend S. Polycarp, and had with great industry and cruelty found out the place where he was, though he had timely notice to have escaped by going into another House, yet he refused, saying,
ing, the will of the Lord be done; and Part 2,
coming down out of his Chamber, fa-
luted the Officers with a cheerful and a
pleasant Countenance: as they were
carrying him back; two Persons of Emi-
nency and Authority met him in the
way, took him up into their Chariot,
labour'd by all means to persuade him
to do sacrifice; which when he abso-
lutely refus'd, after all their importu-
nities, they turn'd their kindness into
reproaches, and tumbled him with so
much violence out of the Chariot, that
he was sorely bruised with the fall; but
nothing daunted, as if he had received
no harm, he cheerfully went on his
way, a voice being heard as he went
along, as it were from Heaven, Polyc-
carp, be strong, and quit thy self like a
man. When he came before the Tri-
bunal, the Proconsul asked him whe-
ther he was Polycarp, which he presently
confess'd; then he attempted by all
Arts of Persuasion to urge him to deny
Christ, or to do but something that
might look like it, but all in vain;
These fourscore and six years (says he)
have I serv'd Christ, and he never did
me any harm; and how then can I bla-
sphere my Master and my Saviour? Be-
ing
Part of my urging urged to swear by the Emperor's name, he replied, Forasmuch as thou pressest me to do this, pretending thou knowest not who I am, Know I am a Christian; then the Proconsul told him, he would throw him to the wilde beasts unless he alter'd his Opinion: Call for them (answer'd Polycarp;) for we have no mind to change from better to worse: as counting that change onely to be honest and laudable, which is from vice to virtue. But if thou makest so light of Wilde Beasts (added the Proconsul) I'll have a fire that shall tame thee. To which the good old man return'd, You threaten, Sir, a fire that will burn for an hour, and presently be extinguish'd; but know not that there is a Fire of eternal Damnation in the Judgment to come, reserv'd for the punishment of all wicked men: But why delay you? execute whatever you have a mind to. This and much more to the same purpose he discoursed of, to the great Admiration of the Proconsul; being so far from being terrified with what was said to him, that he was filled with joy and cheerfulness, and a certain grace and Loveliness overspread his Face.
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity.

So likewise when Cyprian was brought before the Proconsul; Thou art (said he) Thascius Cyprian, who hast been a ringleader to men of a wicked mind; the Emperor commands thee to do sacrifice, and therefore consult thy Welfare. To which he answered, I am Cyprian, I am a Christian, and I cannot sacrifice to your Gods; do therefore what you are commanded: as for me, in so just a Cause there needs no Consultation. And when the Sentence was pronounced against him, he cried out, I heartily thank Almighty God, who is pleased to free me from the Chains of this Earthly Carcase. Had Torments and the very Extremities of Cruelty been able to sink their Courage, it had soon been trodden under foot; but it was Triumphant in the midst of Torments, and lift up its head higher, the greater the loads that were laid upon it; whereof there are Instances enough in the Histories of the Church: nay, in this Triumph even the weaker Sex bore no inconsiderable part. Eusebius tells us (among others that suffered in the French Persecution under M. Aurelius) of one Blandina, a good Woman, but of whom the Church was afraid how the
Prætendent Christianity. Ch. 6.

Part 2. She would hold out to make a resolute Confession, by reason of the Weakness of her Body, and the Tenderness of her Education; that when she came to the bore up with such invincible Magnanimity, that her Tormentors, though they took their turns from morning to night, and plied her with all kinds of Racks and Tortures, were yet forced to give over, and confess themselves overcome, wondering that a Body so broken and mangled should yet be able to draw its breath. But this Noble Athleta gain'd strength by suffering, she eased and refreshed herself, and mitigated the sense of present pain by repeating these words, I am a Christian, and, No evil is done by us. Nor did they onely generously bear these things for the sake of their Religion, when they were laid upon them, but many times freely offered themselves, confessing themselves to be Christians, when they knew that their Confession would cost their Lives. So did those Noble Martyrs whom Eusebius law at Thebais, Multitudes having been executed every day with all imaginable Cruelties; Sentence was no sooner pass'd against one Party of them,
Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 143

them; but others presented themselves before the Tribunal, and confessed that they were Christians, receiving the fatal Sentence with all possible expressions of Cheerfulness and Rejoicing. The same which he also reports of six Young men that suffered in Palestine, spontaneously addressing themselves to the Governor of the Province, owning that they were Christians, and ready to undergo the severest punishments. In the Acts of S. Cyprian's Passion we are told that the President having caus'd a mighty furnace to be filled with burning lime, and fire with heaps of Frankincense round about the brim of it, gave the Christians this choice either to burn the Frankincense in Sacrifice to Jupiter, or to be thrown into the Furnace; whereupon three hundred Men being arm'd with an unconquerable Faith, and confessing Christ to be the Son of God, leaped into the midst of the fiery Furnace, with whose Fumes and Vapours they were immediately suffocated and swallowed up.

There wanted not some, who in the hottest Persecutions durst venture to undertake the Cause of Christians, and to
Part 2. to plead it before the face of their bitterest Enemies; thus did Vettius Epagathus, a man full of Zeal and Piety, who seeing his fellow Christians unjustly dragged before the Judgment Seat, required leave of the President, that he might plead his Brethren's Cause, and openly shewed that they were not guilty of the least Wickedness and Impiety; but not daring to grant him so reasonable a request, the Judge took the advantage of asking him whether he was a Christian, which he publickly owning was adjudged to the same Martyrdom with the rest. Of Origen we read, that though then but eighteen years of Age, yet he was wont not only to wait upon the Martyrs in prison, but to attend upon them at their Trials, and the times of their Execution, kissing and embracing them; and boldly preaching and professing the Faith of Christ, insomuch that had he not been many times miraculously preserved, the Gentiles had petted him to death with stones, for they mortally hated him for his industrious and undaunted Propagation of the Faith. Nay, when but a Boy, and his Father Leontius was seiz'd upon, he wrote to
his Father most earnestly pressing him Part 2.
to persevere unto Martyrdom, and not
to concern himself what might become
of his wife and children, nor for their
sakes to decline that excellent cause he
was engaged in.

By this free and cheerful undergoing
the greatest miseries rather than deny
or prejudice their Religion, Christians
evidently demonstrated the goodness
of their Principles, and shewed
they were no such persons as their ene-
 mies commonly looked upon them; that
a Christian (as Ignatinus observes) is
not the child of fancy and persuasion,
but of true gallantry and greatness of
spirit, having so much hatred of the
World to grapple and contend with.
Those who are Malefactors (as Tertull-
an argues) desire to be concealed, and
shun to appear; being apprehended,
they tremble; being accused, they de-
ny; being racked do not easily nor
always confess the truth; however be-
ing condemn'd, they are sad, search
into and censure themselves, are un-
willing to acknowledge their wicked-
nesses to be their own, and accordingly
impute them either to their fate,
or Stars. But what is there like this
K
Part 2. to be found in Christians? Amongst them no man is ashamed, none repents him of being a Christian, unless it be that he was no sooner so; if marked out, he glories; if accused, he stands not to defend himself; being interrogated, he confesses of his own accord; being condemn'd, he gives thanks: what evil then can there be in this, which is so far from having any shadow of evil, any fear, shame, tergiversation, repentance, deplorableness, to attend it? What evil can that be, of which he that is guilty rejoices? of which to be accused, is their vote and desire; and for which to be punished is their happiness and felicity? This likewise

Adv. gent. Arnobius lays down as a grand evidence of the divinity of the Christian faith, that in so short a time it had conquered so much of the world, subdued men of the greatest parts and learning, made them willing to quit their beloved opinions, to forfeit their estates, to part with their ease and pleasures, and to submit to torments rather than violate the faith of Christ, or start from the station they had entred upon. By this excellent temper and carriage they admirably triumphed over the best men
men amongst the Gentiles, none of Part 2: whom durst engage to deep for the de- fense of their dearest sentiments as the Christians did for theirs; witness Plato, who set up the Academy, and brought in an obscure and ambiguous way of de- delivering his opinions, left by speaking out he should fall under the sentence and the fate of Socrates. Thus Origen puts Celsus in mind of Aristotle, who understanding that the Athenians in tended to call him to account for some of his (as they thought them) un-orthodox opinions, immediately removed his School, saying to his Friends, Let's he gone from Athens, lest we give them an occasion of being guilty of a second wickedness, like to that which they com mitted against Socrates, and lest they again offend against the Majesty of Phi losophy: it being alas! not kindness to the Athenians, but cowardise and fear of punishment, made him so hastily pack up and be gone, and leave his opinions behind him to shift for themselves as well as they could. Nay, Eunapius himself confesses that in the time of Constantine, when Paganism began to go down the wind, and Christianity to be ad vanced and honoured, their best Phi-
Part 2. Philosophers, the great Scholars of Iamblichus took sanctuary at a mysterious secrecy, and wisely kept their dogmata and opinions to themselves, sealed up under a profound and religious silence. No, they were the Christians only, the very meanest of whom durst stand by and defend naked truth in the face of danger and death it self; this being (as Eusebius notes) one of the most wonderfull things in Christian Religion, that they who embrace it, are not only ready to profess it in words, but entertain it with such a mighty affection and sincerity of soul, as willingly to prefer the bearing testimony to it even before life it self. And indeed this piece of right is done them by Pliny himself, where speaking of some, who having been accused for Christians, to shew how far they were from it, readily blasphemed Christ and sacrificed to the gods; he adds, none of which 'tis said that they who are truly Christians can by any means be compelled to do. Nay thus much is confessed by the Oracle it self, for when Porphyry, the great Philosopher, and acute enemy of the Christians, enquired of Apollo's Oracle, what god he should make his address to for the
the recovery of his wife back from Part 2. Christianity, the Oracle returned him this Answer, as himself reported in his Book τις εν λογίαις φιλοσοφιάς, not στοιχεία φιλοσοφίας, as tis corruptly in S. Augustine; a Book frequently cited both by Eusebius and Theodoret; where by the way in the Latin Version of Theodoret tis by a strange mistake rendered de Electorum Philosophia, as if it had been έκλογή: in this Book concerning the Philosophy drawn from Oracles, he tells us he received this answer that he might as well, and to better purpose attempt to write upon the surface of the water, or to fly like a bird in the air, than to reduce his wife from those wick-ed sentiments she had taken in. And Θαλγόν γιά this was so common and notorious that it became in a manner Proverbial; whence that of Galen, when he would express how pertinaciously the Philo-sophers adhered to those sentiments they had once drunk in, and how very hard and almost impossible it was to convince them, Suidner says he, may a man undeceive a Jew or a Christian, and make them renounce svamy the doctrines of Moses or of Christ, than Philosophers and Physitians that are
CHAP. VII.

Of their Exemplary Patience under Sufferings.

Christianity likely to engage its followers in suffering, and why. Continual Edicts put forth against Christians. The form of those Imperial orders exemplified out of the Acts of the Martyrs: The fierce opposition of the Roman Emperours; and their probable hopes of having destroyed Christianity evidenced from several Inscriptions to that purpose found in Spain. The greatness of the torments Christians endured; some of the ordinary kinds of them described. The Cross; the pain and ignominy of it; persons crucified with their heads downwards. The Rack; what Catastæ ad Pulpitum post Catastam. Ungulae: one of these kept and worship'd as a Relique at Rome. The Wheel. Burning. Throwing to wilde beasts. Being condemned.
condemned to Mines; their treatment there, and the case of such persons. Some of the extraordinary ways of punishment used towards Christians. Torn asunder by branches of trees: burnt in pitch'd coats: boil'd in pots of oil or lead, &c. Their carriage under their sufferings sedate and calm; meek and patient. Their refusing to make use of opportunities to avoid suffering. Whether they might fly and withdraw in times of persecution: Allow'd and Pradis'd in some cases; two instances in. Where persons were of more than ordinary use and eminency. Where they were weak for the present, and not like to hold out. Prov'd by particular instances. Their cheerful offering themselves to the rage and fury of their enemies, confessed by the relation of their Judges and bitterest Adversaries, Tiberianus, Arrius Antonius, Lucian. The earnest desire of Martyrdom in Ignatius, Laurentius, Origen, and others. When unjustly condemned, their Judges thanked for condemning them. Their glorying in suffering and being crucified. Babylas the Martyr's chains buried with him. No signs of
an impatient mind under their bitterest torments. An account of their cheerful suffering out of Cyprian. Their patience wondered at by their Enemies. Their grand support under suffering; the hopes and assurance of a reward in Heaven. The case of the forty Martyrs in S. Basil. Psalms sung at the Funeral of Christians, and Lights carried before the Corps, and why. Christianity vastly increased by the patience and constancy of Christians, Justin Martyr's account of his conversion by this means. Julian generally refused to put Christians to death, and why. The Testimonies of several Heathens concerning the Christians courage and patience under sufferings.

That the Christian Religion at its first appearing in the World was likely to engage its followers in miseries and sufferings, could not be unknown to any that considered the nature of its doctrine, and the tendency of its design. The severity of its precepts so directly opposite to the corrupt and vicious inclinations of men; the purity of its worship so flatly contrary
trary to the loose and obscene rites and Part 2. solemnities of the Heathens; its absolute inconsistency with those Religions which had obtained for so many Ages, which then had such firm possession of the minds of men, and all the powers and policies of the world to secure and back them, could not prophesie to it any kind of welcome entertainment. *This Sect* (for so they call'd it) was every where not only spoken, but fought against; for since men have a natural veneration for Antiquity, and especially in matters of Religion, they thought themselves concerned to defend that way, that had been conveyed to them from their Ancestours, and to set themselves with might and main against whatever might oppose it: especially the great ones of those times and the Roman Emperours made it their master-design to oppress and stifle this infant Religion, and to banish it out of the World. Hence those Imperial orders that were daily sent abroad into all parts of the Empire, to command and impower their Governours to ruine and destroy the Christians; of which that we may the better apprehend the form of them, it may not be amiss to set down
Part 2. down one or two of them out of the acts of the Martyrs. This following was agreed upon both by the Emperours and the whole Senate of Rome. Decius and Valerian Emperours, Triumphers, Conquerours, Augusti, Pious, together with the whole Senate, have by common consent decreed thus: Whereas we have received the gifts and blessings of the gods, by whom we enjoy victory over our enemies, as also temperate seasons and fruits in great plenty and abundance; since we have found them our great benefactors, and to supply us with those things that are universally beneficial to all: We therefore unanimous-ly decree, that all orders of men, as well children as servants, soldierys as private persons, shall offer sacrifices to the gods, doing reverence and supplication to them. And if any shall dare to violate our divine order thus unanimously agreed upon, we command, that he be cast into prison; and afterwards exposed to several kinds of torments; if by this means he be re-claimed, he may expect no mean honours from us. But if he shall persist contumacious, after many tortures let him be beheaded, or thrown into the sea, or cast out to be devoured by dogs and birds of prey.
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

But especially if there be any found Part 2.
of the Religion of the Christians. As
for those that obey our decrees, they shall
receive great honours and rewards from
us. So happily fare ye well.

To this we may add that short Re-
script of Valerian. Valerian the Empe-
ror to the Ministers and Governors of
Provinces. We understand that the pre-
cepts of the Laws are violated by those
who in these days call themselves Chris-
tians. Wherefore we will, that apprehend-
ing them, unless they sacrifice to our gods,
you expose them to divers kinds of pun-
ishments; that so both justice may have
place without delay, and vengeance in
cutting off impieties having attain’d its
end, may proceed no further. This
course they prosecuted with so much
vigour and fierceness, that some of
them boasted, that they had absolute-
ly effected their design. Witness those
Trophies and Triumphant Arches that
were every where erected to perpetuate
the memory of their Conquest over
Christianity; whereas of these two In-
scriptions found at Clunia in Spain are
a sufficient evidence.

DIOCLE-
The other,

DIOCLETIAN. CAES.
AUG. GALTERIO. IN. ORI
ENTE. ADOPT. SUPERS
TITIONE. CHRIST--
UBIQ. DELETA. ET. CUL
TU. DEOR. PROPAGATO.

The meaning of both which is to
shew, that DIOCLESIAN and his Colleague
MAXIMIANUS had every where extin-
guished the wicked Superstition of
Christ, so pernicious to the Common-
wealth, and had restored Paganism and
the worship of the gods. But long be-
fore them we find NERO (the first Em-
perour that raised persecution against
the Christians, as Tertullian notes) so
active
active in the business, as to glory (or Part 2: some flatterers in his behalf) that he had done the work. Witness an Inscription found also in Spain.

\[\text{NERONI. CL. CAIS. AUG. PONT. MAX.}\]

\[\text{OB. PROVINC. LATRONIB.}\]

\[\text{ET. HIS. QUI. NOVAM.}\]

\[\text{GENERI. HUM. SUPR. STITION. INCULCAB.}\]

\[\text{PURGATAM.}\]

This Inscription was set up in memory of his having purged the Country of Robbers, and such as had introduc'd and obtruded a new Superstition upon mankind. The Christians it's true are not particularly nam'd in it (probably the Gentiles so much detested the very name of Christian, that especially in publick Monuments they would not mention it) yet can it be meant of no other. For besides that this Character of Inculcating their Superstition admirably agrees to Christians, who sought by
Part 2. by all means to instil their Principles into the minds of men; besides that Superstition was the common Title by which the Gentiles were wont to denote Christianity; besides this, there was not (as Baranius observes) any other New Religion at that time, or long before or after, that appeared in the world; to be sure none that could be the object of Nero's persecution. And how he entertain'd this, Tertullian sufficiently intimates, bidding them search their own Records, and they would find. And from this very Inscription alone it's evident, they thought, that (at least in that part of the world) they had wholly extirpated and rooted it out. By all which we may guess, what not service the Christians had on't under those Primitive Persecutions. Indeed their sufferings were beyond all imagination great, which yet did but so much the more exercise and advance their Patience, the bitterness of their sufferings making their patience more eminent and illustrious. Of which that we may take the true measure, 'twill be necessary to consider these two things, the greatness of those torments and sufferings which the Christians generally
nerally underwent; and then the Part ner of their carriage under them.

For the first the greatness of those torments and sufferings which they underwent, they were as bad as the wit and malice of either Men or Devils could invent; in the consideration whereof we shall first take a view of those punishments which were more standing and ordinary, familiarly used amongst the Greeks and Romans, and then of such as were extraordinarily made use of towards the Christians: Amongst their ordinary methods of Execution, these six were most eminent, the Cross, the Rack, the Wheel, Burning, Wilde Beasts, Condemning to Mines.

1. The Cross deserves the first place in our account, not only as having been one of the most ancient and universal ways of punishment amongst the Gentiles, and from them brought in amongst the Jews, but as being the instrument by which our Blessed Saviour himself was put to death. Omitting the various and different forms and kinds of it, which were all used towards the Primitive Christians, I intend here only that that was most common, a straight piece
Part 2, piece of wood fixed in the ground, having a transverse beam fastened near the top of it, not unlike the letter T, though probably it had also a piece of wood arising above the top of it. And there were two things in this way of punishment, which rendered it very severe, the pain and ignominy of it. Painful it must needs be, because the party suffering was fastened to it with nails driven through his hands and feet, which being the parts where the nerves and sinews terminate and meet together, must needs be most acutely sensible of wounds and violence: and because they were pierced only in these parts so far distant from the Vitals, this made their death very lingering and tedious, doubled and trebled every pain upon them: Insomuch that some out of a generous compassion have caused malefactors first to be strangled before they were crucified, as Julius Caesar did towards the Pirates whom he had sworn to execute upon the Cross. But no such favour was shewed to Christians; they were suffered to remain in the midst of all those exquisite pangs, till mere hunger starved them, or the mercy of wild beasts.
or Birds of prey dispatch'd them. Thus Part 2.

S. Andrew the Apostle continued two whole days upon the Cross, teaching the people all the while. Timotheus and his Wife Maura, after many other Torments, hung upon the Cross nine days together before they completed their Martyrdom. Not was the shame of this way of Suffering less than the pain of it, Crucifixion being the peculiar punishment of Slaves, Traytors, and the vilest Malefactors, insomuch that for a Free man to die thus was accounted the highest Accent of Ignominy and Reproach; therefore the Roman Historian calls it servile supplication, a punishment proper to Slaves. Sometimes they were crucified with their Heads downwards; thus S. Peter is said to have been crucified; thus those Egyptian Martyrs, who hung in this posture till they were starv'd out of the World. But this punishment of the Cross soon after the World was become Christian, Constantine took away out of reverence to our Saviour, not being willing that that should be the punishment of the vilest Malefactors, which had been the instrument whereupon the Son of God had purchased Salvation for Mankind.
II. The Rack, called in Latine Equum, either from the Situation of the Offenders Body upon the Engine, resembling a man on horseback, or rather from the bearing or holding of him up to it by Ropes and Screws. The first design of it was to torment the guilty, or the suspected person to make him confess the Truth: what the particular Form of it was is not agreed amongst Learned men, but this we may probably conceive, that it was an Engine fram'd of several pieces of Timber joyn'd together, upon the top whereof upon a long board the suffering person being laid along upon his back, and fastned to it by his Hands and Feet, the Engine was so contriv'd with Screws and Pullies, that all his Members were distended with the utmost violence, even to a luxation of all the Parts; and this more or less according to the Torturers pleasures. Sometimes they were hung by the Hands and Feet under the top-board of the Engine, and tormented in that posture. This Rack was a punishment which the Christians were very frequently put to. Much of the same nature was that which they call'd the Catasta, being a piece of Wood raised up like a little Scaffold, upon which Christians
Ch. 7. **Primitiv Christianity.**

Fears were set, that their Torments might be more conspicuous; thence that Proverb in Cyprian, *Ad Pulpitum post Catariam venire, speaking of Aurelius a Confessor, who having been publickly tormented upon this Engine was after ordained a Reader in the Church, and promoted to read the Scriptures out of the Pulpit, as he had lately confessed Christ upon the Scaffold.* In this, as in that of the Rack, there were certain Additional Torments made by, Instruments called *Ungula,* which were a kind of Iron *pin-saw,* made with sharp Teeth, with which the Flesh was by piece-meal pull'd and torn off their backs.

In the time of Pope **Paul the Third,** one of these *Ungula,* as the Author of the *Roma Subterranea* tells us, was amongst other things found in the *Vatican Cemetery* amongst the Monuments of the Martyrs, and laid up amongst the other *Reliques* of that Church as an *inestimable* treasure, and a worthy **Object of Religious Worship**; being there kept to be seen and ador'd by all *Christian People.* And another of their *Writers*
Part ters being about to describe it, tells us that though altogether unworthy of such a favour, yet he was bless'd with the sight of it, and that (as became him) he kiss'd and embraced it with great veneration. Which by the way seems to me a little strange, that it should be account'd an honour and a kindness done to the Martyrs, to adore that which was the instrument of their Torture. Might they not by the same reason as well worship their executioners, and pay a religious respect to the Ashes of those who dragg'd them to the Stake, tore off their Flesh, and put them to death with all imaginable Pain and Torture?

III. The Wheel. This was a round Engine, to which the Body of the condemned person being bound, was not only extremely distended, but whirl'd about with the most violent distortion; the Pain whereof was unconceivable, especially as used towards the Primitive Christians, the Wheel to which they were bound Naked being sometimes full of iron pricks, sometimes a Board full of sharp-pointed Iron pricks being plac'd under it; so that every time the Body of the Martyr came to it, they rak'd off the Flesh with inexpressible
pressible Torment. Thus were serv'd Part 2.
those three Martyrs, Felix the Presby-
ter, Fortunatus and Achilles the De-
cons, at Valentia in France, and hundreds p.249.
more in other places.

IV. Burning. This was done some-
times by staking them down to a Pile
of Wood, and setting it on fire. Thus
suffer'd Julianus and others in the Per-
secution at Alexandria. Sometimes by
laying them to roast at a slow gentle
Fire, that they might die with the
greater Torment. Otherwhiles they
were hung up either by the Neck, Hands
or Feet, and a Fire made under them,
either to burn or choak them. Or burn-
ing Torches held to several parts of their
naked bodies. Sometimes they were pla-
ced in an iron chair, or laid upon an iron
grate, which was either made red hot, or
had a Fire continually burning under it.
Of all which ways of Execution, and
some other near akin to them, were it
not too tedious I could easily give abun-
dant Instances. This was accounted one
of the prime ways of capital punishments,
and none were adjudged to it but the
greatest villains, the meanest and vilest
persons.
Part 2. V. Throwing to Wilde Beasts. This was a Punishment very common amongst the Romans to condemn a man to fight for his Life with the most savage Beasts, Bears, Leopards, Lions, &c. and was usually the portion of the vilest and most despicable Offenders; under which Notion the Gentiles looking upon the Christians did most commonly condemn them to this kind of death; a thing so familiar, that it became in a manner proverbial, Christianos ad Leones, Away with the Christians to the Lions. And that they might be devoured with the more ease, they were many times tied down to a stake; sometimes cloath'd in beasts skins, the more eagerly to provoke the rage and fury of the wilde beasts against them.

VI. Condemning to the Mines. To this the Romans adjudg'd their slaves; and the most infamous Malefactors; and to this too the Christians were often sent. What their treatment was in those places, besides their continual Toyl and Drudgery, Cyprian lets us know in a Letter to Nemesian and the rest that labour'd in the Mines, viz. that they were cruelly beaten with Clubs, bound with Chains, forc'd to lie upon the hard, cold,
cold, damp ground, confounded with bun-ger, nakedness, the deformity of their Heads half shaved, after the manner of Slaves, and forc'd to live in the midst of Filth and Naftiness. Besides which they were wont to be mark'd and branded in the Face, to have their right eye pull'd out, and their left foot disabled by cutting the nerves and sinews of it: not to say, that being once under this Condemnation, all their estate was forfeit to the Publick Treasury, and themselves for ever reduc'd into the condition of slaves. These were some of the more usual ways of Punishment amongst the Romans, though exercis'd towards the Christians in their utmost rigour and severity. I omit to speak of Christians being scourg'd and whip'd even to the tiring of their Executioners, especially with Rods called Plumbate, (whereof there is frequent mention in the Theodosian Code) which were Scourges made of Cords or Thongs with leaden Bullets at the end of them: of their being Ston'd to death, their being beheaded, their being thrust into stinking and nasty Prisons, where they were set in a kind of Stocks with five holes, their Legs being stretch'd asunder.
Part 2. to reach from one end to the other.

We shall now consider some few of those unusual Torments and Punishments which were inflicted only upon Christians, or (if upon any others) only in extraordinary cases. Such was their being tied to Arms of Trees, bent by great force and strength by certain Engines, and being suddenly let go, did in a moment tear the Martyr in pieces, in which way many were put to death in the Persecution at Thebais. Sometimes they were clad with coats of Paper, Linen, or such like, dawb'd in the inside with Pitch and Brimstone, which being set on fire, they were burnt alive. Otherwhiles they were shut into the belly of a brazen Bull, and a Fire being kindled under it, were consumed with a Torment beyond imagination. Sometimes they were put into a great Pot or caldron full of boiling Pitch, Oyl, Lead, or Wax mixed together; or had these fatal Liquors by holes made on purpose poured into their bowels. Some of them were hung up by one or both Hands, with Stones of great weight tied to their Feet to augment their Sufferings. Others were anointed all over their Bodies with Honey, and at mid-day fast-
ned to the top of a Pole, that they might be a prey to Flies, Wasps, and such little Cattel, as might by degrees inflame and torment them to death. Thus besides many others it was with Marcus Bishop of Arethusa, a Venerable Old man, who suffered under Julian the Apostate; after infinite other Tortures they dawb'd him over with Honey and Jellies, and in a Basket fastned to the top of a Pole expos'd him to the hottest Beams of the Sun, and to the fury of such little Insects as would be sure to prey upon him. Sometimes they were put into a rotten ship, which being turn'd out to Sea was set on fire. Thus they serv'd an Orthodox Presbyter under Valens the Arrian Emperour, the same which Socrates reports of fourscore pious and devout men, who by the same Emperours command were thrust into a Ship, which being brought into open Sea was presently fir'd, that so by this means they might also want the honour of a Burial. And indeed the Rage and Cruelty of the Gentiles did not onely reach the Christians while alive, but extend to them after death, denying them (what has been otherwise granted amongst the most barbarous
Part 2. Now people) the convenience of Burial, exposing them to the ravage and fierceness of dogs and Beasts of prey, a thing which we are told the Primitive Christians reckoned as not the least Aggravation of their Sufferings. Nay, where they had been quietly buried, they were not suffered many times (as Terentian complains) to enjoy the asylum of the Grave, but were plucked out, rent, and torn in pieces.

But to what purpose is it any longer to insist upon these things? Sooner may a man tell the Stars, than reckon up all those Methods of Misery and Suffering which the Christians endured. Eusebius, who himself was a sad Spectator of some of the later Persecutions, professes to give over the Account, as a thing beyond all possibility of Expression; the Manner of their Sufferings, and the Persons that suffered, being hard, nay impossible, to be reckoned up. The truth is, (as he there observes, and Cyprian plainly tells Demetrius of it) their Enemies did little else but set their Wits upon the Tentors to find out the most exquisite Methods of Torture and Punishment; they were not content with those old ways of Torment which
which their Forefathers had brought Part 2.
in, but by an ingenious Cruelty daily
invented new, striving to excel one
another in this piece of Hellish Art, and
accounting those the Wittiest persons
that could invent the bitterest and
most barbarous Engines of Execution;
and in this they improved so much,
that Ulpian, Master of Records to Alexander Severus the Emperour, and the
great Oracle of those Times for Law,
writing several Books De Officio Procons-
sultis, (many parcels whereof are yet
extant in the Body of the Civil Law)
in the seventh Book collected toge-
ther the several bloody Edicts which
the Emperours had put out against the
Christians, that he might shew by what
ways and methods they ought to be
punished and destroyed, as Lactantius
tells us. But this Book (as to what
concerned Christians) is not now extant,
the Zele and Piety of the first Chris-
tian Emperours having banished all
Books of that nature out of the World,
as appears by a Law of the Emperour
Theodosius, where he commands the
Writings of Porphyry, and all others
that had written against the Christian
Religion to be burned. The reason
why
Part 2. why we have no more Books of the Heathens concerning the Christians extant at this day.

Having given this brief specimen of some few of those grievous Torments to which the Primitive Christians were exposed (they that would have more, must read the Martyrologies of the Church, or such as have purposely written on this subject) we come next to consider what was their behaviour and carriage under them. This we shall find to have been most sedate and calm, most constant and resolute; they neither fainted nor fretted; neither railed at their Enemies, nor sunk under their hands, but bore up under the heaviest Torments, under the bitterest Reproaches, with a Meekness and Patience that was invincible, and such as every way became the Milde and yet Generous Spirit of the Gospel. So Justin Martyr tells the Jew; We patiently bear (says he) all the Mischief which are brought upon us either by Men or Devils, even to the Extremities of Death and Torments, praying for those that thus treat us, that they may find Mercy, not desiring to hurt or revenge ourselves upon any that injure us, according
eording as our great Lawgiver has com-
manded us. Thus Eusebius reporting the hard Usage which the Christians met with during the Times of Persecu-
tion, tells us that they were betrayed and butchered by their own Friends and Brethren; but they as Courageous Champions of the True Religion, ac-
customed to prefer an Honourable death, in defence of the Truth, before life itself, little regarded the cruel U-
sage they met with in it; but rather as became true Souldiers of God, arm-
ed with patience, they laughed at all methods of Execution, Fire and Sword, and the Piercings of Nails, Wilde Beasts, and the Bottom of the Sea, Cutting and Burning of Limbs, Putting out Eyes, and Mutilation of the whole Body, Hunger, and Digging in Mines, Chains and Fet-
ters; all which for the great Love that they had to their Lord and Master, they accounted sweeter than any Happiness or Pleasure whatsoever. Nay, the very wom*n in this case were as courageous as the men, many of whom undergoing the same Conflicts, reaped the same Rewards of their Constancy and Vertue. But this will more distinctly appear in a few particular cases.

First,
Part 2. First, When ever they were sought for in order to their being condemned and executed, they cared not to make use of opportunities to escape. Polycarp at his apprehension refused to fly, though going but into the next House might have sav'd his Life. Cyprian writing to the Confessors, commends them, that when they were oft desired (I suppose he means by their Gentile, Friends and Relations) to go out of Prison, they chose rather to abide there still, than to make their own Escape, telling them, they had made as many Confessions as they had had Opportunities to be gone, and had rejected them. Though (tis true) he himself withdrew from Carthage when the Officers were sent to take him and carry him to Utica, yet he did it (as he tells his People) by the Advice of some Friends, but for this reason, that when he did suffer he might suffer at Carthage, whereof he was Bishop, and that those Truths which he had preached to them in his Life, he might seal before them with his Blood; a thing he earnestly and daily begged of God, and which was granted to him afterwards. And if they did not run away from suffering.
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 179

ing, much less did they oppose it, and Part 3.
make Tumults and Parties to defend themselves; no, they were led as Lambs to the slaughter, and as Sheep before the Shearers, are dumb; so opened not their mouth, but committed their Cause to him that judges righteously, and who has said, Vengeance in mine, and I will repay it. None of us (says Cyprian to the Governor) when apprehended makes resistance, nor (though our Party be large and numerous) revenges himself for that unjust Violence, that you offer to us. We patiently acquiesce in the assurance of a future Vengeance; the innocent, trussle under the wrongs of the guiltless quietly submit to pains and tortures; knowing for certain, that whatever we now suffer shall not remain unpunished, and that the greater the Injury that is done us, the fiercer the Persecutions we endure, the more just and heavy will be that Vengeance that will follow it. Never was any wicked Attempt made against Christians, but a Divine vengeance was soon at the heels of it. But though they thus resolutely stood to't, when the Honour of their Religion lay at stake, yet it must not be denied, that in some cases they
Part 2. they held it lawful and convenient to fly in Times of Persecution. Tertullian indeed in a Book purposely written on this subject, maintains it to be simply and absolutely unlawful for Christians to fly at such a time; an Assertion which with all the Subtilties of his Wit, and the Foulness of his African Eloquence he endeavours to render fair and plausible. But besides the Strictness and rigid Severity of the Man at all times, this Book was composed after his complying with the Sect of the Montanists, whose peculiar Humour it was to outdo the Orthodox by overstraining the Austerities of Religion, as appears not only in this, but in the case of marriages, fasts, penances, and such like. Otherwise before his espousing those Opinions he seems elsewhere to speak more favourably of fleeing Persecution. But what ever he thought in the Case, 'tis certain the Generality of the Fathers were of another mind, that Christians might and ought to use prudence in this Affair, and at some times withdraw to avoid the Storm when it was a coming, especially in these two Cases:

1. When persons were of more than
ordinary use and eminency, the saving part of whom might be of great advantage to the Church. Thus S. Paul was let down the wall in a basket, when the Governour of Damascus sought his life. Thus Cyprian withdrew from Carthage, and lay hid for two years together, during which time he gave secret orders for governing of the Church. Thus Athanasius, when Syrianus and his Souldiers broke into the Church, to apprehend him, was by the universal cry both of Clergy and people persuaded and in a manner forced to retire and save himself, in which retirement he continued so long, that the Arrianus charg'd him with fear and cowardice, insomuch that for his own vindication he was forced to write an Apology for himself, wherein he learnedly and eloquently discourses the whole affair, justifying himself from the instances of the Old Testament of Jacob, Moses, David, Elias; from the example of Christ himself and his Apostles in the New, from the plain and positive allowance of the Gospel, when they persecute you in one City, flee into another, and that when they should see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place.
Part 2. Place (i.e. the miseries that were to come upon Jerusalem by the Roman Army) they should fly unto the mountains, and if upon the house top, or in the field, not turn back to fetch any thing that was left behind; that 'twas necessary for the Apostles to shun the storm, because they were the instruments immediately deputed to propagate and convey the Gospel to the World; that they were herein initiated by the Primitive, Saints and Martyrs, who wandered about in deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth, being equally careful to avoid the two extremities of rashness and cowardice; they would neither thrust themselves upon danger, nor basely run from death, when call'd to it, like wise Physicians reserving themselves for the use of those that needed their assistance. All which and a great deal more he rationally urges in that Apology.

II. Another case wherein they accounted it lawful for persons to retire under persecutions was, when being but new Converts, and as yet weak in the faith, they look'd upon them as not likely to bear the shock and brunt of the persecution; in this case they thought
thought it better for them to withdraw Part 3 for the present, than to put them under a temptation of being drawn back to Paganism and Idolatry. Thus when Gregory Bishop of Neocæsarea saw the Decian persecution grow extreme hot and violent, considering the frailty and infirmity of humane nature, and how few would be able to bear up under those fierce conflicts that must be undergone for the sake of Religion, persuaded his Church a little to decline that dreadful and terrible storm; telling them 'twas a great deal better to save their souls by flying, than by abiding those furious trials to run the hazard of falling from the faith: and that his counsel might make the deeper impression upon them, and he might convince them that in thus doing there was no danger or prejudice to their souls, he resolved to shew them the way by his own example, and himself first retiring out of the reach of danger, retreated to the mountainous parts thereabouts that were freest from the rage and malice of the enemy. Nor was this any impeachment of their zeal and readiness for suffering, but only a prudent gaining a little respite for
Part 2. a time, that they might suffer with greater advantage afterwards. They did not desire to save their heads, when the honour of their Religion call'd for it, nor ever by indirect means sirow'd themselves out of danger, when once engaged in it, though they did sometimes prudently prevent it, reserving themselves for a more convenient season. Thus Cyprian withdrew a little, not out of fear of suffering, but a desire to prevent his being put to death in an obscure place (which his enemies had designed) being desirous his Martyrdom should happen in that place where he so long liv'd, and so publickly preached the Christian faith.

Secondly, they were so far from declining suffering, and being terrified with those miseries which they saw others undergo, that they freely and in great multitudes offered themselves to the rage and fury of their enemies; embracing death as the greatest honour that could be done them; they strove (as Sulpitius Severus observes, speaking of the ninth persecution) which should rush first upon those glorious conflicts; men in those days (as he adds)
adds;) much more greedily seeking Part 2. Martyrdom in the cause of Christ, than in after-times they did for Bishopricks and the preferments of the Church. Lucian who certainly had very little love to Christians, yet gives this account of them: The miserable wretches (says he, ἀναθαλάκτοις) do verily persuade them, i.e. those of their own party, that they shall surely be immortal, and live for ever; upon which account they despise death, and many of them voluntarily offer themselves to it. Indeed they did ambitiously contend who should be first crown'd with Martyrdom, and that in such multitudes, that their enemies knew not what to do with them, their very persecutors grew weary of their bloody offices. Tiberianus the President of Palestine in his relation to the Emperor Trajan (recorded by Joannes Matala, mentioned also by Suidas) gives this account of his proceedings against them; I am quite tire'd out in punishing and destroying the Galileans (call'd here by the name of Christians) according to your commands; and yet they cease not to offer themselves to be slain: Nay, though I have labour'd both
Part 2. Both by fair means and threatenings to make them conceal themselves from being known to be Christians, yet can I not stave them off from persecution. So little regard had they to sufferings, nay so impatient were they till they were in the midst of flames. This made Arrius Antoninus the Proconsul of Asia, when at first he severely persecuted the Christians, whereupon all the Christians in that City like an Army voluntarily presented themselves before his Tribunal, to be surpriz'd with wonder, and causing only some few of them to be executed, he cried out to the rest, O unhappy people, if you have a mind to dye, have you not halters, and precipices enough to end your lives with, but you must come hither for an execution? So fast did they flock to the place of torment, faster than dromes of beasts that are driven to the shambles. They even long'd to be in the arms of suffering. Ignatius though then in his journey to Rome in order to his execution, yet by the way as he went could not but vent his passionate desire of it: O that I might come to those wild beasts, that are prepar'd for me; I heartily wish that I may presently meet with them;
I would invite and encourage them speedily to devour me, and not be afraid to set upon me as they have been to others; nay, should they refuse it, I would even force them to it: I am concern'd for nothing either seen or unseen, more than to enjoy Jesus Christ. Let fire and the cross, and the rage of wild beasts; the breaking of bones, distortion of members, bruising of the whole body, yea all the punishments which the devil can invent, come upon me, so as I may but enjoy Christ. They even envied the Martyrdom of others, and mourned that any went before, while they were left behind. When Laurentius the Deacon espied Sixtus the Bishop of Rome going to his Martyrdom, he burst into tears, and passionately call'd out, Whither O my Father art thou going without thy Son? Whither so fast O holy Bishop without thy Deacon? Never didst thou use to offer Spiritual sacrifice without thy Minister to attend thee; what have I done that might displease thee? Hast thou found me degenerate and fearful? Make trial at least, whether thou hast chosen a fit Minister to wait upon thee. To this and more to the same import,

M 4
Part 2. the good Bishop replied, Mistake not my Son, I do not leave thee nor forsake thee: Greater trials belong to thee; I like a weak old man receive only the first skirmishes of the battle, but thou being youthful and valiant hast a more glorious triumph over the enemy reserved for thee: Cease to weep, thy turn will be presently, for within three days thou shalt follow me. So pious a contention was there between these good men, which of them should first suffer for the name of Christ. 'Tis memorable what we find concerning Origen though then but a youth, that when a great persecution was raised at Alexandria, wherein many suffered, he was so eagerly inflamed with a desire of Martyrdom (especially after his Father had been seized upon and cast into prison) that he expos'd himself to all dangers, and courted torments to come upon him; and had certainly suffered, if his Mother after all other intreaties and persuasions to no purpose had not stolen away his clothes by night, and for mere shame forced him to stay at home.

To these I shall add but one Example of the weaker Sex. When Valens the
the Arrian Emperor (who persecuted Part 2 the Orthodox with as much fury and bitterness as any of the Heathen Emperours) came to Edessa and found there great numbers of them daily meeting in their publick assemblies, he severely check'd the Governour, and commanded him by all means to rout and ruine them. The Governour though of another perswasion, yet out of common compassion gave them private notice of the Emperours commands, hoping they would forbear. But they not at all terrified with the news, met the next morning in greater numbers, which the Governour understanding went to the place of their assembly; as he was going, a woman in a careles dress leading a little child in her hand rush'd through the Governours Guard, who commanding her to be brought before him, asked her why she made so much haste? That I may the sooner come (said she) to the place where the people of the Catholick Church are met together; Knowest thou not (said he) that the Governour will be there to day, and kill all whom he finds there? I know it well (answered the woman) and therefore make so much
Part 2. much hasted, left I come too late, and be deprived of the Crown of Martyrdom. And being asked, why she carried her little Son along with her, she answered, That he also may partake of the common sufferings, and share in the same rewards. The Governor admiring the courage of the woman, turn'd back to the Palace, and dissuaded the Emperor from his cruel resolution, as what was neither honourable in itself, nor would conduce to his purposes and designs.

Thirdly, When they were condemned, though it was by a most unjust sentence, and to a most horrid death, they were so far from raging or repining, that instead of bitter and tart reflections, they gave thanks to their enemies for condemning them. A Christian being condemn'd (says Tertullian) thanks his Judges, he takes it for a favour to dye for so good a cause. That they persecute us (says Clemens of Alexandria) it is not, because they find us to be wicked, but because they think we wrong the world by being Christians, and by teaching and persuading others to be so; as for us, they do us no harm; death does but the sooner send
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

Send us to God; if therefore we be wise, Part 3. we shall thank them that are the occasion of our more speedy passage thither. And elsewhere he tells us of S. Peter, that seeing his Wife going towards Martyrdom, he exceedingly rejoiced that she was called to so great an honour, and that she was now returning home, encouraging and exhorting of her, and calling her by her name, bade her to be mindful of our Lord: Such (says he) was the wedlock of that blessed couple, and their perfect disposition and agreement in those things that were dearest to them.

When Lucius one of the Primitive Martyrs was charged by Urbanus the Roman Prefect for being a Christian, only because he offer'd to speak in behalf of one that had very hard measure, he immediately confess'd it, and being forthwith condemned, he heartily thanked his Judge for it, that by this means he should be deliver'd from such unrighteous Governours and be sooner sent home to his Heavenly Father. No joyfuller message could be told them, than that they must dye for the sake of Christ: Though we contend with all your
Part 2. your rage and cruelty (as Tertullian
Ad Scapul. tells the President Scapula) yet we
freely offer our selves, and rejoice
more when we are condemned, than
when we are absolved and released by
you. In despite of all the malice of
their enemies they accounted the in-
struments of their torment, the ensigns
of their honour and their happiness:
When the Heathens reproached them
for dying such an infamous death as
that of the Cross, and in derision styled
them Sarmenticii and Semaxii for being
burnt upon a little stake to which
they were bound with twigs; Tertul-
lian answers for them, This is the habit
of our victory, this is the embroidered gar-
ment of our conquest, this the triumphant
chariot wherein we ride to Heaven.
When in prison, they looked upon
their Chains as their Ornaments, as add-
ing a beauty and lustre to them,
with which they were adorn'd against
the time of their sufferings, as the bride
is with fringes of gold and variegated
ornaments against the day of her
espousals. For this reason Babylas the
Martyr commanded that the Chains
which he had worn in prison should be
buried with him, to shew that those things
things which seem most ignominious are for the sake of Christ most splendid and honourable; imitating therein the great Apostle, who was so far from being ashamed of, that he took pleasure in Bonds, Chains, Reproaches, Persecutions, Distresses for Christ's sake, professing to Glory in nothing but the Cross of Christ.

Fourthly, When ever they were actually under the bitterest torments, they never discovered the least sign of a furious or impatient mind, but bore up with a quietness and composure which no sufferings could overcome. Cyprian exhorting the Martyrs to courage and constancy, tells them this of those that had gone before them, that in the hottest conflict they never stirred, but maintained their ground with a free confession, an unshaken mind, a divine courage, destitute indeed of external weapons, but armed with the shield of Faith; in torments they stood stronger than their tormentors; their bruised and mangled limbs proved too hard for the instruments wherewith their flesh was rack'd and pull'd from them; the blows though never so oft repeated could not conquer their impregnable
Part 2. pregnable Faith, although they did not only slice and tear off the flesh, but rake into their very bowels; and let out blood enough to extinguish the flames of persecution, and to allay the heats of the everlasting fire. And in another place speaking of the persecution under Decius at Rome, he tells us that the Adversary did with an horrible violence break in upon the Camp of Christ, but was repulsed with a strength as great as that wherewith he came upon them: that then he craftily attempted the more rude and weak, and subtly endeavoured to set upon them singly, hoping the easlier to circumvent them; but that he found them like a well-compactéd army, sober and vigilant, and prepared for battel; that they could dye, but could not be overcome; yea therefore unconquerable because not afraid to dye; that they did not resist those that rose up against them, being ready not to kill them that assaulted them, but to lay down their own lives and to lose their blood, that they might make the more haste to get out of a cruel and malicious world. Indeed so admirable was their patience and readiness to dye, that their very enemies
enemy's stood amaz'd at it. When S-Part 2-
meon the second Bishop of Jerusalem, Ensfib.lib.
and of our Saviour's kindred according
the flesh, had by the command of
Anicur the Governor of Syria been
tortur'd with all the arts of cruelty for
many days together, he bore it with
such courage, that the Proconsul him-
sell, and all that were present greatly
wonder'd that a man of an hundred
and twenty years of age should be able
to undergo so many miseries and tor-
ments. Of the Martyrs that suffered
together with S. Polycarp, the Church
of Smyrna gives this account. That all
that were present were astonish'd
when they saw them whipp'd till the
cords made way to the inmost veins
and arteries, till the bowels and the
most hidden parts of the body appear-
ed. They were raked with shells of
fishes, laid all along upon sharp-point-
ed stakes driven into the ground, exer-
cised with all sorts of torments, and at
last thrown to be devoured of wild
beasts; all which they bore with a
mighty patience and constancy. Nay,
as we find it in the first part of that
Epistle (contracted by Ensfibins, but
published at large by Bishop Usher) so
great
Part 2. great was their patience and magnificity, that in all these sufferings not any of them gave a sigh or a groan: The holy Martyrs of Christ (says the Epistle) evidently shewing us, that during this sad hour of suffering they were strangers to their own bodies, or rather that our Lord himself stood by them and familiarly conversed with them, and that being partaker of his Grace they made light of these temporal torments, and by one short hour delivered themselves from eternal miseries: The fire which their tormentors put to them seemed to them but cool and little, while they had it in their thoughts to avoid the everlasting and unextinguishable flames of another world; their eyes being fixed upon those rewards which are prepared for them that endure to the end; such as neither ear hath heard, nor eye hath seen, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, but which were shewn to them by our Lord, as being now ready to go off from mortality, and to enter upon the state of Angels.

Thus reason'd those forty Martyrs in S. Basil, that suffered at Sebastia in Armenia in the Reign of Licinius, when the Governor to contrive a new method
mod of Torment, had commanded them to stand naked all night in cold frosty weather (which in those more Northern Countries is extreme sharp and bitter, it being then the depth of Winter, and the North Wind blowing very fierce) in a pond of Water; they first gave thanks to God that they put off their clothes and their sins together, and then comforted one another by balancing their present Hardships with their future Hopes; Is the Weather sharp? (said they,) but Paradise is comfortable and delightful: Is the frost cold and bitter? the rest that remains is sweet and pleasant; let us but hold out a little, and Abrahams Bosome will refresh us; we shall change this one night for an eternal Age of Happiness; let our feet glow with very cold, so as they may for ever rejoice and triumph with Angels; let our hands sink down, so as we may have liberty to lift them up to God. How many of our Fellow Soldiers have lost their Lives to keep Faith to their temporal Prince? and should we be unfaithful to the true King of Heaven? How many have unjustly died for their Crimes and Villanies? and shall we refuse it in the Cause of righteousness?
Part 2. and Religion? "Tis but the flesh that suffers, let us not spare it; since we must die, let us die that we may live. Thus generously did they bear up under this uncomfortable state; their ardent Desires of Heaven from within extinguishing all sense of Cold and Hardship from without. Nay, when a little before their Commander had set upon them both with Threatnings and Promises, assuring them, that if they would but deny Christ, they should make their own terms for Riches and Honour: they told him, that he laid his snares at a wrong door; that he could not give them what he endeavoured to take from them; nor could they close with his Offers, without being infinitely Losers by the bargain; that 'twas to no purpose to offer a little of the World to them, who despised the whole of it; that all these visible Advantages were nothing to what they had in hope and expectation; all the Beauty and Glory of Heaven and Earth not being comparable to that state of Blessedness, which is the portion of the Righteous; the one being short-lived and transitory, the other permanent and perpetual; that they were ambitious of
of no gift, but the Crown of Righteousness; nor sought after any other glory, but what was heavenly; that they feared no Torments but those of Hell, and that Fire that was truly terrible. As for those Punishments they inflicted, they accounted them but as the blows of Children, and the ill Usage that their Bodies met with, the longer 'twas endured, the more way it made for a brighter Crown. Such was the temper, such the support of these Christian Soldiers, these true Champions of the Christian Faith.

Indeed this Consideration was one of the greatest Cordials that kept up their Spirits under the saddest Sufferings, that they were assured of a Reward in Heaven. Amongst us (says Cyprian) there flourishes strength of hope, firmness of Faith, a fixed erected amongst the Ruines of a tottering Age, an immovable vertue, a patience serene and cheerful, and a Soul always serene and certain of its God. As for Want or Danger, what are these to Christians, to the Servants of God, whom Paradise invites, and the favour and plenty of the heavenly Kingdom expects and waits for? They are always glad, and rejoice in God, and...
Part 2: resolutely bear the Evils and Miseries of the World, while they look for the Rewards and Prosperities of another Life. The great Philosophers (as Eusebius observes) as much as they talk'd of immortality, yet by their Carriage they shewed that they looked upon it but as a trifling and childish fable; whereas (says he) amongst us even girls and children, the most unlearned and (measured by the Eye) the meanest and most desppicable persons, being assisted by the help and strength of our blessed Saviour, do rather by their actions than their words demonstrate and make good this Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. This Julian confesses of the Christians, though according to his custom he gives them bad words, calls them Atheists and Irreligious Persons, that being acted by some Evil Spirits they persuade themselves that Death is by all means to be desir'd, and that they shall immediately fly to Heaven, as soon as their Souls are freed from the fetters of the Body. Hence it was that in those times Christians were wont to sing Hymns and Psalms at the Funerals of the Dead, to signify that they had attain'd their rest, the end of their labours.
bours, the Retribution of their Troubles, Part 2. 
the Reward and the Crown of their Conflicts and Sufferings, as Chrysostom tells us; part of which Psalms he else-tells us were, Retitn unto thy rest. 
O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bounti-
fully with thee: and, I will fear no evil, 
because thou art with me: and again, Thou art my refuge from the trouble that compasses me about. For the same reason, 
as being a sign of joy and cheerfulness, he there tells us that they carried lights burning before the Corps. By all which he tells us they signified, that they carried forth Christians as Champions to the Grave, glorifying God, and giving thanks to him that he had crowned the deceased person, that he had delivered him from his Labours, that he had taken him to himself, and set him beyond the reach of Storms and Fears.

But to return: There was scarce any one Instance of Religion, wherein Primitive Christianity did more openly approve it self to the World, and more evidently insult over Paganism, than the generous Courage and Patience of its Professors. By this they commend ed both the truth and excellency of their Religion, and conquer'd their
Part 2: very Enemies into an embracing of it.

Hear how Laetanius pleads the Argument, and triumphs in the Goodness of his Cause: By reason (says he) of our strange and wonderful Courage and Strength, our additions are made to us; for when the people see men torn in pieces with infinite variety of Torments, and yet maintain a Patience unconquerable, and able to tire out its Tormentors; they begin to think (what the Truth is) that the consent of so many, and the perseverance of dying persons cannot be in vain; nor that patience itself, were it not from God, could hold out under such Racks and Tortures. Thieves, and men of a robust Body, are not able to bear such Tearing in pieces; they groan and cry out, and are overcome with pain, because not endued with a Divine Patience; but our very children and women (to say nothing of our men) do with silence conquer their Tormentors, nor can the hottest Fire force the least groan from them. Let the Romans go now and boast of their Martinus and Regulus, of the one for delivering himself up to his Enemy to be put to death, because he was ashamed to live a Prisoner; of the other for
burning his hand at the command of part 2.

the enemy to save his life. behold, with us the weaker sex, and the most tender age can suffer all parts of their body to be torn and burnt, not out of necessity, because they might not escape if they would, but out of choice, because they believe in god. this is that true vertue, which philosophers indeed vainly boast of, but never really possessed. this and more to the same purpose that eloquent apologist there urges to the great honour of his religion. by the force of such arguments justin martyr confesses that he was brought over from being a platonick philosopher to be a christian; for when he saw the christians, whom he had so often heard accused and traduced, undauntedly going to die, and embracing the most terrible executions that were prepared for them: i thought with myself (says he) that it was not possible such persons should wallow in vice and luxury; it being the interest of all wicked and voluptuous persons to spine death, to dissemble with princes and magistrates, and to do any thing to save their lives.

this certainly could not but be a huge
huge satisfaction to all prudent and considerate men, that the Christians were guided by better Principles than ordinary, and that they were fully assured that theirs was the true Religion, and that they taught nothing but what they firmly believed to be true. For to maintain such Patience and Constancy even unto Death, (says Origen, speaking of the Apostles propagating the Doctrine of Christ) is not the fashion of those who feign things of their own Heads; but is a manifest Argument to all candid and ingenuous Readers, that they knew what they writ to be true, when they so cheerfully endured so many and such grievous things only for the sake of the Son of God, in whom they had believed. No Dangers could affright them, no Threatnings or Torments could baffle them out of their Profession. Therefore when Celsus accused the Christians for a fearful sort of men, and such as lov'd their Carcases well; Origen answers, No such matter, We can as cheerfully lay down our Bodies to suffer for Religion, as the hardiest Philosopher of you all can put off his Coat. And indeed the Gospel did mightily prosper and triumph in the midst of these
these dreadful Sufferings, men ratio. Part 3.
nally concluding, that there must be
something more than humane in that
Doctrine, for which so many thus deep-
ly ventur'd. So Tertullian tells Scapula c. i. p. 72.
in the Conclusion of his Book: It's to
no purpose to think this Sect will fail,
which you will see to be the more built up,
the faster 'tis pull'd down; for who is
there, that beholding such eminent Pa-
tience, cannot but have some Scruples start-
ed in his mind, and be desirous to inquire
into the Cause of it, and when he once
knows the Truth, be himself moved to
close with it and embrace it. There-
fore Julian the Apostate out of a cursed
policy refused many times openly to
put Christians to death, partly because
he envied them the honour of being
Martyrs, partly because he saw that they
were like new mown grass, the ofser it
was cut down, the thicker it sprang up
again.

I shall add no more concerning this
subject, but the testimony which the
very enemies of Christians gave them
in this Cause. Julian the Emperour
(whom we so lately mention'd, and
who fought against Christians with
their own weapons, making use of those
Scri-
Part 3. Scriptures: which he had studied while he was amongst them) when the Christians complained to him of those Oppressions and Injuries which the Governors of Provinces laid upon them, made light of it, and dismissed them with this virulent Sarcasm, *Your Christ* (says he) *has given you a Law, that when you suffer unjustly, you should bear it resolutely, and when oppressed and injured should not answer again.* And so certainly they did, undergoing all kinds of Miseries, and Death itself, with so unconcerned a mind, that elsewhere he censures them for this very reason to be acted by the Spirit of the Devil. Hence Porphyry, in a Book that he wrote against the Christians, calls their Religion *τὸ βασανιζον τὸλομεῖα, a piece of barbarous boldness; barbarous, because so different from the way of Worship amongst the Greeks, with whom every thing was barbarous that agreed not with their Principles and Institutions: boldness, because the Christians shewed such an undaunted Courage in bearing Miseries and Torments, chusing to die a thousand times rather than to deny Christ, and sacrifice to the Gods. For this reason the Heathen in *M. Felix* *St. of p.7* styles the Christians men of an undone, furious,
Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 203

... and desperate party, respecting their Part 2: fearles. and resolute carriage under Sufferings: for so he explains himself presently after: Is it not a strange folly, and an incredible boldness? They despise Torments that are present, and yet fear those that are future and uncertain; and while they fear to die after death, in the mean time they are not afraid to die. So silyly do they...
Part 2. done them than to be called in question, and that they had much rather be put to death for their Religion, than to have their lives spared to them: by which means they became Conquerors, chusing rather to part with their Lives, than to do what you impose upon them. Let me advise you (says he) who are ready to despone with every earthquake that happens to you, to compare your selves with them: they in all their dangers are securely confident in their God; while you at such a time neglect the Gods, and have little or no regard, either to other Rites, or to the Worship of that Immortal Deity, but banish the Christians that worship him, and persecute them unto death. So forcibly did the Majesty of Truth extorte a Confession from its greatest Enemies.

The End of the Second Part.
Primitive Christianity:
OR, THE
RELIGION
OF THE
Ancient Christians
In the first Ages of the Gospel.

PART III.
Of their Religion as respecting other men.

CHAP. I.
Of their Justice and Honesty.

Christian Religion admirably provides for Moral Righteousness. Do as you would be done by, the great Law of Christ.
Christ. This rule highly prized by Severus the Emperor. The first Christians accounted honesty and an upright carriage a main part of their Religion. Their Candour and Simplicity in their words; abhorring Lies and Mental Reservations, though it might save their Lives. Their Veracity such, as no need to be put to their Oaths. Some few of the Fathers against all Swearing: allowed by the greatest part in weighty cases. That they took Oaths proved from Athanasius, and their taking the Sacramentum Militare. The form of the Oath out of Vegetius. The same expressly affirmed of the more Ancient Christians by Tertullian. Why refusing to swear by the Emperours genius. Oaths wont to be taken at the Holy Sacrament upon the Communion Table, or the Holy Gospels. Some against all Oaths, only to prevent a possibility of Perjury. Bearing False Witness condemned and strictly punished by the Ancient Church. A famous Instance of Divine Vengeance pursuing three False Accusers. Christians careful in the conduct of their Actions. Their Integrity in matters of Distributive Justice: in Commuta-
tive Justice avoiding all fraud and ever-reaching. S. Augustine's Instance. Niceroratus forced to fly to avoid the punishment of Cheating and Sacrilege. The Christians unjustly accused of Sacrilege by the Heathens. The occasion of it. Pliny's Testimony of the Honesty of Christians. Theft and Rapine severely condemned. Christians for doing all the good they could. Their Care to right and relieve the oppressed. The Gentiles charged Christians with Murder and Eating Mans Flesh. A brief Representation of the several Answers returned to it by the Christian Apologists. The true rise of the Charge found to spring from the barbarous and inhumane practices of the Gnosticks mentioned by Irenaeus and Epiphanius.

Having given some Account of the Religion of the Ancient Christians, both as it respected their piety towards God, and their sober and virtuous carriage towards themselves; we come in the last place to consider it in reference to their carriage towards others, which the Apostle describes under the Title of Righteousness, under which
Part 3. which he comprehends all that Duty and Respect wherein we stand obliged to others; whereof we shall consider these following Instances: Their Justice and Integrity in matters of Commerce and Traffic; Their Mutual Love and Charity to one another; Their Unity and Peaceableness; and Their Submission and Submission to Civil Government.

I begin with the first, their just and upright Carriage in their outward Dealings. One great design of the Christian Law is to establish and ratify that great principle which is one of the prime and fundamental Laws of Nature, to hurt no man, and to render to every one his due; to teach us to carry ourselves as becomes us in our Relations towards Men. Next to our Duty towards God the Gospel obliges us to be righteous to men, sincere and upright in all our Dealings, not going beyond, nor defrauding one another in any matter; to put away Lying, and to speak truth to each other as fellow members of the same Christian Brotherhood and Society. It settles that golden Rule as the Fundamental Law of all just and equitable Commerce, that all things what-
whatsoever we should do Part 3 to us, we should even do so to them; this being the sum of the Law and the Prophets; than which as no rule could have been more equitable in itself, so none could possibly have been contrived more short and plain, and more accommodated to the common cases of humane life. Upon the account of these, and such like excellent precepts, Alexander Severus the Roman Emperor had so great an honour for our Saviour, that he was resolved to build a Temple to him, and to receive him into the number of their gods; and though he was over-rul'd in this by some who having consulted the Oracle, told him, that if it were done, all men would become Christians, and the Temples of the gods would be left naked and empty; yet in his most private Chapel he had the Image of Christ amongst those of many Noble Hero's and deified persons, to whom he pay'd religious adoration every Morning; and particularly for this precept, that what we would not have done to our selves, we should not do to others (which his own Historian confesses he learnt either from the Jews or Christians, but most certainly from
Part 3. from the Christians, in whose mouths it so often was, and in whose Gospel it was so plainly written;) he so highly valued it, that in all publick punishments he caused it to be proclaimed by a common Crier; nay, was so hugely fond on’t, that he caused it to be written upon the walls of his Palace, and upon all his publick Buildings, that if possible, every room in his Court, and every place in the City might be a silent Chancery and Court of Equity.

So vast a reverence had the very enemies of Christianity for the Gospel upon this account; that it so admirably provides for the advance of civil righteousness and justice amongst men; which however it has been fleighted by some even amongst Christians under the notion of moral Principles, yet without it all other Religion is but vain, it being a strange piece of folly for any to dream of being godly without being honest, or to think of being a disciple of the first, while a man is an enemy to the second Table. Sure I am, the Christians of old look’d upon honesty and an upright carriage as a considerable part of their Religion; and, that to speak truth, to keep their words, to
to perform oaths and promises, to act Part 3. sincerely in all their dealings, was as sacred and as dear to them as their lives and beings. Speech being the great instrument of mutual commerce and traffic, shall be the first instance of their integrity; They ever used the greatest candor and simplicity in expressing their mind to one another, not pretending what was false nor concealing what was true; yea, yea, and nay, nay, was the usual measure of their transactions; a lie they abhor'd as bad in all, as monstrous in a Christian, as directly opposite to that truth, to which they had consigned and delivered up themselves in baptism, and therefore would not tell one, though it were to save their lives. When the Heathens charged them with folly and madness that they would so resolutely suffer, when a parcel of fair words might make way for them to escape, telling them 'twas but doing or laying as they were bid; and that they might secure their consciences by mental reservations; Tertullian lets them know that they rejected the motion with the highest scorn, as the plain artifice and invention of the devil. When we are ever so
Part 3. most severely examined (says Justin Martyr) we never deny our selves, counting it impious in any thing to dissemble or deny the truth, as we know the contrary is acceptable unto God: and though we could (as they told the Emperours) when questioned, evade or deny it, yet we scorn to live upon any terms, by which we must be forced to maintain our lives by lies and falsehood.

This honest and ingenuous simplicity they practised to that exactness and accuracy, that for a Christian to be put to his oath was accounted a disparagement to his fidelity and truth. So Clemens Alexandrinus tells us; he that approves himself and is tried (says he) in this [i.e. the Christian] way of piety and Religion, is far from being forward either to lie or swear: For an oath is a determinative assertion, with a calling God to witness for the truth of it: But how shall any one that is faithful, so far render himself unfaithful or unworthy of belief, as to need an oath, and not rather make the course of his life a testimony to him as firm and positive as an oath, and demonstrate the truth of his assertion by the
the constant and immutable tenor of Part 3. his words and actions. It's enough therefore (as he presently adds) for every good man either by way of affirmation or denial to give this assurance, ἐπεί οὐκ ἐμπροσθεν, I speak truly, to satisfy any that apprehend not the certainty of what he says; for towards those that are without he ought to have such a conversation as is most worthy of belief, so as no oath should be required of him; and towards himself and those of his party to preserve such an even and equitable temper of mind, as is a piece of voluntary Justice. This and much more he discourses to the same purpose.

For this and some other reasons, but especially from some mistaken places of Scripture, where 'tis said, swear not at all; some of the antient Fathers held all taking of an oath unlawful; but besides that those few that did, were not herein constant to themselves, the far greatest part were of another mind, and understood the prohibition either of swearing by creatures (which was the case of the Jews, and which our Saviour and St. James principally aim at) or of light rash,
Part 3. and false swearing. For otherwise that the Primitive Christians did not think it unlawful to take an oath in serious and necessary cases, is most evident. Athanasius speaking of his accusers, whom he desired might be put to their oath, tells us, that the best way to attest the truth of what is spoken is to call God to witnesses; that this (says he) is the form of swearing which we Christians are wont to use. And indeed though we had no other argument, it would be plain enough from hence, that they served in the Wars, and frequently bore arms even under the Heathen Emperours, which 'tis evident they could not do without first taking a military oath to be true to their General, and to die rather than desert their station. And this, Vegetius an Heathen Author, though living in the time of the younger Valentinian expressly reports of them, that when their names were entred upon the Muster-rol, they were wont to take an oath, the particular form whereof he there sets down, viz. That they swore by God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the Majesty of the Emperour, which next to God is to be loved and honoured by mankind:

This
This agrees very well with that account which Tertullian had long before given of the Christians, when being accused by their enemies of high treason, amongst other reasons, because they refused to swear by their Emperors; he answers, that though they would not swear by the Emperors genius, their genii or tutelar deities being nothing else but devils, yet they did swear by the Emperors safety, a thing more august and venerable than all the genii in the World: In the Emperors they own God's Institution and Authority, & would therefore have that to be safe, which he had appointed, and accordingly accounted it the matter of a lawful oath; but for the demons or genii (says he) we use adjurare, to adjure them, so as to cast them out of men; non dejurare, not to swear by them, and thereby confer the honour of Divinity upon them. For the same reason they denied to swear by the fortune of the Emperor, because amongst the Heathens she was accounted a deity, and honour'd with religious worship.

Thus we see that they refused not to ensure and ratifie their faith by the formality of an oath, to which that they might add the greater reverence, and
Part 2: and solemnly, they were wont many times to take it at the receiving of the holy Sacrament as we find in the case of Novatian and his followers; for taking their hands wherein they held the Sacramental Elements within his own, he caused them to swear by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that they would not desert him. But because this may be thought to have been only the artifice of an heretic to bind his followers the faster to his party; S. Chrysostom (though himself no good friend to taking oaths) sufficiently assures us, 'twas customary to come into the Church and to swear upon the Communion Table, taking the Book of the Holy Gospels into their hands: The same appears from the case proposed to Gregory Nazianzen by Theodoret Bishop of Tyana, and by the instance of Evagrius Nazianzen's Arch-deacon at Constantinople, who had it revealed to him in a vision, that some persons lay in wait for him, and that therefore he must presently be gone; the person that revealed it assuring him he would knock off those fetters that were upon him, if he would swear to him upon the Holy Gospels that he would immediately...
mediately depart, which was accordingly done. And as their caution was great in taking of an oath, so their care was no less in making of it good; they knew that in this solemn transaction they did in a more peculiar manner calling God as a witness of what they said, and a revenger in case of falsehood and the violation of it: this made them greatly afraid of perjury, which they looked upon as a sin of a deeper and more than ordinary dye; and one reason I conceive why some of the Antients were against all swearing (and Clemens Alexandrinus confirms me in it) was, because they would not come so much as within the danger or possibility of perjury. Such as have sworn rashly, or in unlawful cases, S. Basil earnestly exhorts to repentance, and that they would not persist in an obstinate defence of their impiety; and for such as are guilty of perjury he appointed that they should be suspended and banished the communion for eleven years together.

The like severity, though not altogether so great, they used in case of hearing false witness: If any Christian falsely accused another before the Church
Part 3. Church (for in those days they allowed no appeals to Heathen Tribunals) he was to be punished, i.e. suspended the Communion, the only punishment the Church in those days could inflict, according to the nature of the crime which he charged upon the other, according to the decree of the Liberine Council; if he made good his charge, yet if he had concealed it a considerable time before he revealed it, he was to be suspended for two years; the reason probably being, because by this delay the criminal person had had opportunity to infect others, by propagating his vicious example to them. But that they might not let the door open and give encouragement to base and malicious tempers, they ordain'd, that although the person should be really guilty of the crimes he was charged with, yet if the accuser did not sufficiently prove it in conventu Clericorum before the Ecclesiastical Senate, he should be punished with a five years suspension; and because then they had an honour and veneration for Ministers above all other men, they ordain'd, that whosoever should falsely accuse a Clergy-man, a Bishop, Presbyter; or
Ch. 1. Primitie Christianity. 219

or Deacon with any crime, which he Part 3.
could not make good, should not be
received into Communion even at the
hour of death. The truth is, they were
exceeding tender of any mans reputa-
tion, readier to add to it, than to de-
tract from it, or to fasten any undue
imputation upon him. S. Basil com-
mending Gregory Thaumaturgus, has
this of him amongst the rest; Out of
regard (says he) to the threatening of
our Lord he durst never call his Bro-
ther fool: no anger, wrath or bitterness
proceeded out of his mouth: Slander-
ing he hated as a quality greatly op-
posite to a state of salvation: pride and
envy were strangers to that innocent
and guileless soul: He never approac-
ed the altar, till first reconciled to his
brother: All false and artificial speech-
es, and such as are cunningly contrived
for the slander and detraction of o-
thers, he greatly abominated; well
knowing, that every lie is the spawn
and issue of the devil, and that God
has threatened to destroy all those that
speak lies. And so indeed he oftentimes
does even in this world, not respiting
such persons to the tribunals of the o-
ther world; whereof we meet with
this
Part 3. this memorable example. **Narcissus** Bishop of Jerusalem, a man of admirable piety and holiness of life, shined with so glorious a lustre in the place where he lived, that the brightness of his conversation offended the sore eyes of other men: Three more especially not able to bear the eminent strictness of his life, and being themselves guilty of very great enormities, thought to escape themselves by accusing him. Whereupon they laid a very hainous crime to his charge, and to beget the greater credit with them that heard it, solemnly ratified it with their oaths: The first imprecating upon himself that he might be burnt, if it were not true; the second, that his body might be consumed by some noysom and pestilent disease; the third, that he might lose his sight. The good man thought notwithstanding all this he stood right in the thoughts of all true Christians, who knew his life to be too clear and blameable to be sullied with the breath of such vile fellows, yet not being able to bear it, withdrew himself to an Eremits life in the wilderness. But the restless eye of the divine vengeance quickly overtook these perjured wretches,
wretches, and caught them in their own snares; the first by a little spark that casually and whereof no account could be given, happened in his house, was in the night himself, family, and house universally burnt to ashes; the second was from head to foot overrun and consumed by such a disease as he had wished upon himself; the third that saw all this, and feared the righteous and inevitable vengeance of God upon himself, confessed the whole plot and combination, and testified his repentance with so deep a sorrow, that with the multitude of his tears he lost his sight.

We have seen how exact the Christians were about their words, that they should be harmless and inoffensive, and the true conveyances of their minds; nor were they less careful about the conduct of their actions, whether of distributive or commutative Justice. For matters of distributive Justice, so far as it concerns a fair hearing and impartial determining of trials and causes, rewarding the good, and punishing the bad, they had little opportunity to shew themselves; Christians in the first Ages being seldom invested
Part 3. vested with any external Authority and Power, till the Empire submitted to Christianity, and then we find them executing their places with the most unbyassed uprightness and integrity. St. Basil speaking of an excellent person (though he names him not) who was sent to be Governor of Neocaesarea where he was Bishop, but presently undermin'd and ou't by the accumulations of sions that could not bear his free and impartial carriage; and his temper so extremly opposite to flattery, says this of him, that he was a most rigid observer of Justice, courteous and easie of access to them that were oppressed, but his presence severe and terrible to the injurious and transgressours of the Law: He was the same, to rich and poor, equally at leisure for both; of all men, he exceedingly abhor'd taking bribes, never favouring any beyond the Equity of his Cause; and which was above all, he was one that designed to reduce Christianity to its antient dignity and perfection. The same Natalzen reports of his own Father, and reckons it one of the excellent properties for which he accounted him a Christian even
Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity.

even before he embrac'd Christianity, Part 3, that he so exactly observed justice himself, and so impartially administered it to others; that though he went through very great offices in the State, yet he made not one farthing's addition to his own revenue, though he saw some before his eyes, who with Briareus his hands laid hold upon the publick treasures, and therewith filled their own Coffers.

In matters of Commutative Justice, and ordinary transaction between man and man they observed the rule, to deal with others, as they would be dealt with themselves; they took no advantage of any man's ignorance or unskilfulness, so as to grasp that commodity at a far under-rate, of which they knew the seller did not understand the true price and value, and that if he did, he would not part with it at such a price. To this purpose S. Augustine tells us he knew a man (probably he means himself, though out of modesty he conceals it) who having a Book offered him to be sold by one that understood not the price of it, at a very small under-rate, took the Book, but gave him the full price according to its just rate and
and value, which was a great deal more than the seller asked for it. And the truth is, in such cases advantage cannot honestly be taken of men's weakness or mistake, because no man if he understood the true worth and value of his commodity, can be supposed willing to part with it at a too-under rate. And if they were thus far from craftily over-reaching much more from secretly or openly invading of what was another's, right and property; no cheating or eouzenage no acts of dishonesty and deceit were allowed or practised amongst them; or if any such were discovered they were immediately protested against by the whole Society of Christians. Cornelius Bishop of Rome, giving Cyprian an account of Novatus the Heretic and his companions, tells him of one Nicostratus, that not only cheated his Lady and Patronefs, whole estate and revenues he managed, but carried away a great part of the treasures of the Church (whereof he was Chief Deacon) the portion and maintenance of poor Widows and Orphans (a crime says he, reserved for perpetual punishment, i.e. for the judgment of God in the other world, being
Ch. r. Primitive Christianity. 225

too great for any in this) whereupon Part 3 he was forced to fly from Rome into Africk, to avoid the shame and prosecution of his Rapine and Sacrilege; though when he came there, they did not only refuse to admit him into Communion, but openly exposed the Wickedness of him and his Confederates to the Abhorrence of all men. By which may appear the Falsity of that Charge of Sacrilege which the Gentiles brought against the Christians; to which though certainly it primarily respected their declared Enmity against the Idolatrous Temples and Worship of the Heathens; yet Tertullian answers; You look upon us (says he) as Sacrilegious Persons, and yet never found any of us guilty of wrong or injury, of any rapine and violence; much less of Sacrilege and Impiety. No, they are your own Party, that swear by and worship your Gods, and yet rob their Temples; that are no Christians; and yet are found to be sacrilegious. And afterwards he adds this further Vindication of them: As for us (says he) we deny not any pledge that's left with us, we adulterate no mans Marriage Bed, we piously educate and train up Orphans, and relieve the Ne-
Part 3. Necessities of the Indigent, and render no man evil for evil. If there be any that dissemble our Religion, let them look to, we disown them for being of our Party; why should we be worse thought of for others Faults? or why should a Christian answer for any thing but what concerns his own Religion, which no man in so long a time has prov'd to be Cruel or Incestuous? Nay, when we are burnt and most severely dealt with, 'tis for the greatest Innocency, Honesty, Justice, Modesty, for our Truth and Faithfulness, and our Piety to the Living God. And that these were not a parcel of good words which the Christians spoke in their own behalf, will appear, if we consider the Testimony which Pliny (who was far from being partial to them) gives of them, for being commanded by the Emperour Trajan to give him an account of the Christians, he tells him, that after the strictest Examination which he could make even of those that had renounced Christianity, he found this to be the greatest fault that they were guilty of, that they used harmlessly to meet to worship Christ, and at those Meetings to bind themselves by a Sacrament [or an Oath] that they would not
not do any Wickedness, that they might be Part
firmly obliged not to commit theft, Rob-
bberies, Adulteries, not to falsifie their Words,
or to deny any thing wherewith they
were intrusted, when it was required of
them.

Gregory Bishop of Nocæa in a Ca-
nonical Epistle, which he wrote to re-
mind several Disorders and Irregulari-
ties which had happened amongst the
Christians of those parts by reason of,
the Inroads and Devastations which the
Goths and other barbarous Nations had
made amongst them, does amongst oth-
er things especially take notice, how
uncomely in itself, how unsuitable to
Christians it is to covet, and to grab
what is another mans, how inhuman
to spoil the oppressed, and to enrich
ourselves by the Blood and Ruines of
our miserable Brethren. And whereas
some might be apt to plead, they did
not steal, but onely take up what they
found; He tells them, this Excuse
would not serve the turn, that what-
ever they had found of their Neigh-
bouris, noy though it were their Ene-
mies, they were bound to restore it,
much more to their brethren, who were
Fellow Sufferers with them in the same
Part 1. Others thought it warrant enough to keep what they found, though belonging to others, having been such deep losers themselves. But this (he tells them) is to justify one wickedness with another; and because the Goths had been Enemies to them, they would become Goths and Barbarians unto others. Nor did they only keep themselves from doing injuries to others; they were ready to do them all the right, all the kindness, that lay in their power, especially to vindicate the Poor and Helpless from the power and violence of those that were too Mighty for them. Therefore when the Fathers of the Synod of Sardis took notice that some Bishops used to go to Court upon by-errands and private designs of their own, they Ordain'd, That no Bishop should go to Court, unless either immediately summoned by the Emperor's Letters, or that their Assistance was required to help the oppressed, to right Widows and Orphans, and to rescue them from the unjust Grasps of potent and merciless Oppressors; and that in these cases they should be ready (either by themselves, or some deputed by them) to present their Petitions, to plead their Cause,
Ch. I. Primitive Christianity.

Caused, and to lend them all the Assistance Part they were able to afford.

I should not in this place have taken any notice how far the Ancient Christians were from murder, and offering violence to any man's life, but that it was a common charge brought against them by the Gentiles, that they used to kill and devour an Infant at their Christian Meetings, especially when any was first to be initiated into their Assemblies: the story is thus dressed up by the Acute Heathen in M. Felix: An infant being covered all over with meal, (the better to deceive the unwary) is set before him that is to be initiated and taken in; he ignorant of what it really is, is appointed to cut it up, which he effectually does by many secret and mortal wounds; wherupon they greedily lick up the blood, and ravenously tear off and snatch away the several parts of it; and with this sacrifice their Confederacy and Combination is made, and by the Conscience of so great a Villany they are mutually obliged to silence. Such Sacred Rites as these being more horrid and barbarous than the biggest Sacrileges in the World. To this Monstrous and Horrid Charge the Christians returned these
these Answers; That they appeal'd to the common Faith of Mankind, whether they could really believe them to be guilty of these things, so abhorrent to all the Principles of Humane Nature; and to the Christians' known Principles and Practices in all other things, that they should measure the Christians by themselves, and if they themselves could not be guilty of such things, they should not suspect it by the Christians, who were enlisted with the same Principles of Humanity with other men; that they were so far from being Friends to Murder or Manslaughter, that they held it unlawful to be present at the Gladiatory Sports, where mens Lives were so wantonly sacrificed to the Pleasure and Curiosity of the People; that they accounted it Murder for any Woman by evil arts to procure abortion, to still the embryo, to kill a Child in a manner before it be alive, it being much at one to hinder Life, as to take it away, to kill a man, or destroy what would be one, seeing he truly destroys the fruit that kills it in the seed; that it was not likely they should delight in mans Blood, who never tasted any Blood at all, abstaining from things strangled.
Strangled, and from Blood. And that the very Heathens themselves confessed this, when amongst the several arts they used to discover whether men were Christians, they used to offer them bladders full of blood, knowing that they held it unlawful to taste any; and therefore it was mightily improbable they should thirst after humane Blood, who abhorred even the Blood of beasts: that they heartily believed the Resurrection of the Dead; and therefore would not make themselves the sepulchres of those Bodies which were to rise again, and feed upon them, as they did upon other Bodies which were to have no Resurrection: that the truth was, if this Charge was true of any, it was true only of the Gentiles themselves, amongst whom these things were daily allowed and practised: that Saturn (one of their chief Deities) did not only expose, but eat his own Children; to him Infants in Africk were offered in sacrifice by their own Parents, a Custom that openly continued till the Proconsulship of Tiberius, which though he abolished, yet it continued still in corners in Tertullian's days. To his Son Jupiter they offered humane Sacrifices.
Part 3, even in Rome itself, and that even to the time of M. Felix, as he himself testifies; which is no more than what Porphyry himself (after he had reckoned up in how many parts of the World human Sacrifices were in use) confesses was done at Rome in the Feast of Jupiter Latiatis even in his time. Many other Instances of such barbarous Practices are there produced by those two Apologists, which they urge with great advantage upon their Adversaries, whom they challenged to make any such thing good against them.

And no sooner did Discipline begin to be regularly settled, but their Principles herein were every where confirmed by the Canons of the Church, either private or publick. The Woman that industriously made herself miscarry, was adjudged to be guilty of murder, and condemn'd to the same punishment, a ten years penance; which was adjudged to be the Case of any that brought forth upon the way and expos'd her Infant. By the Law of the State, made by the Emperour Valentinian, whosoever, whether Man or Woman, kill'd an infant, was to be subject to the same Capital Punishment as if he had
had kill'd an adult person, which may very well be understood even of Infants kill'd in the womb, the punishment whereof was formerly for the most part no more than banishment. He that was guilty of Wilful Murder was by S. Basil's Rule to undergo a Twenty years Penance before he was admitted to the Sacrament; though by several passages in Tertullian it appears that Homicides in his time were more severely treated by the Church, for they were not onely bound to a Perpetual Penance, but were not absolv'd at death. But this Severity shortly after began to relax, and such persons, though obliged to acts of Repentance all their Life, yet at Death were absolved, and admitted to Communion, as is expressly provided by the Decree of the Ancyran Council.

Thus clear did the Christians all along stand from any just Suspicion of that gross piece of inhumanity which their Enemies so confidently charged upon them. As for the rise and occasion of this malicious Charge, it was doubtless of the same growth with that of their incestuous mixtures, (spoken of before) both springing from the abominable Practises of some filthy Heretics,
Part. 3. ticks, who shelter'd themselves under the name of Christians, Epiphanius particularly reporting of the Gnosticks what the Heathens generally charged upon the Christians; for he tells us of them, that at their Meetings they were wont to take an infant begotten in their promiscuous Mixtures, and beating it in a mortar, to season it with honey and pepper, and some other Spices and Perfumes, to make it palatable; and then like swine or dogs to devour it; and after to conclude all with Prayer: and this they accounted their perfect Passover. I am not ignorant that a Learned man will by no means believe, that any of the ancient Hereticks did ever arrive to so much barbarousness and Immunity, as to be guilty of such things, and conceives them to have been feigned merely out of hatred to those pestilent Hereticks; but there's little reason to suspect the truth of it, Epiphanius assuring us, that he had the account that he gives from the mouths of the Gnosticks themselves; and that many of the women who were deceived into those abominable Errors did not only discover these things to him, but that he himself in his younger years, while he was in Egypt, had been assaulted by them, and
and by all the Arts of Flattery and Per-part
sation, of Wantonness and Immodesty,
had been set upon to joyn himself to
them. And certainly tis not imagina-
able, that a person so Venerable for
Learning and Piety as Epiphanius was,
should impose upon us by feigning the
gross and notorious a Fallhood. Be-
sides, whoever reads Ireneum in whose
time these Hereticks were most ripe and
predominant, and considers the Account
that he gives of them, which he mainly
received from the persons of their own
Party, after they were returned back to
the Church, will see little reason either
to think any Wickedness too great for
them to boggle at, or to doubt of the
Truth of what he reports concerning
them.

CHAP.
Of their Admirable Love and Charity.

The excellent temper of the Christian Religion. The Gospel principally enjoys Kindness and Charity. The Primitive Christians eminently of this Spirit. They accounted all Brethren, but Christians more especially. Their Mutual Love noted and recorded by their Enemies. Their mighty Zeal and Charity for the Souls of Men, to recover them from Vice and Error to Truth and Virtue. This the matter of their daily Prayer and most serious Endeavours, even towards their greatest Enemies. Pamphilus his Charity in bestowing Bibles freely upon the Poor. Preachers maintained for converting the Gentile Phoenicians to Christianity. The famous story of S. Johns hazarding himself for the regaining a young man debauched by bad Companions. Monica's care and solicitude about S. Augustine. Some that have sold themselves for Slaves, that they might convert their Heathen or Heretical Masters. Christians
Primitives of communicating the Part 2.
Knowledge of their Religion. Their
Charity as it respected the Necessities of
the outward Life. This noted in seve
ral Instances of Charity. Their liberal
Providing for the Poor. The Bounty of
particular persons. Divers Instances
of it. The immense Charity of Epi
phanius.
Exemplary Vengeance upon
some that abused it. The Poor account ed
the Treasure and Ornaments of the
Church: represented in the case of Lau
rentius the Deacon, and a story rela
ted by Palladius. Their visiting and
assisting the Sick in their own persons:
eminently noted in the Empress Pla
cilla and the Lady Fabiola. The Chri
stians care of their Brethren in a great
Plague at Alexandria. Persons ap pointed on purpose to cure and attend
the Sick. The Parabolani who. Their
Office and Number. Redemption of
Captives. Great Summes contributed
by Cyprian and his People for it.
Church Plate sold to redeem Chri
tians, nay, captiv'd Enemies. Christians em
bondaging themselves to redeem others.
The strange Charity of Paulinus Bishop
of Nola, making himself a Slave to ran
soms a poor Widow's Son. Their care
about
about the Bodies of the dead. Decent Burial very fit and desirable. A piece of Piety remarkable in the Christians of those times. Their Abstaining from the common Custom of Burning the dead as barbarous. The great Cost they laid out upon their Funerals in Embalming, Interment, &c. The Copistae who: What their Office and Order. The Decani or Deans in the Church of Constantinople; their Number, and Duty. Their providing fit places of Sepulchre. Their Coemeteria or Burying places in the Fields. Burying in Cities and Churches when brought in, and to whom first granted. Their Coemeteria under ground. What kind of places they were. The great Number and vast Capacities of them. A particular account of one out of Baronius, discovered in his time. How the Christians were enabled to all these Acts of Charity. At first all in common; after, by usual Contributions. The standing Stock or Treasury of the Church. This Charity of Christians largely attested by Julian and Lucian. Their Love and Charity Universal. Doing good to Enemies. An Excellency proper to Christians. This manifested in several remarkable Instances. Plainly
That the Christian Religion was immediately designed to improve and perfect the Principles of Humane Nature, appears as from many other Instances of it; so especially from this, that it so strictly enjoins, cherishes, and promotes that natural kindness and Compassion, which is one of the prime and essential Inclinations of Mankind; where ever the Gospel is cordially complied with, it begets such a sweet and gracious Temper of Mind, as makes us Humble, Affable, Courteous, and Charitable, ready and disposed to every good work, prompt to all Offices of Humanity and Kindness; it fles off the Ruggedness of mens Natures, bateth a Rude, Churlish, and Pharisaical Temper, and infuses a more Calm and treatable Disposition. It commands us to live and love as Brethren, to love without Hypocrisy, to have fervent Charity amongst our selves, and to be kindly affectioned one towards another. It lays the Summe of our Duty towards others in this, to 'love our neigh-
neighbour as ourselves. This our Saviour seems to own as his proper and peculiar Law, and has ratified it with his own solemn Sanction. A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another: and then makes this the great visible badge of all those who are truly Christians; By this shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if you have love one to another.

And so indeed it was in those first and best Ages of Religion; for no sooner did the Gospel fly abroad into the world, but the Love and Charity of Christians became Notorious, even to a Proverb, the Heathens taking notice of the Christians of those times with this particular Remark. See how these Christians love one another. They were then united in the most happy Fraternity (a Word much used by Christians in those days, and objected against them by the Heathens) they liv'd as brethren, and accounted themselves such, not only as being sprung from one common Parent, (for in this respect that they had Nature for their common mother, they acknowledged the very Heathens to be brethren, though other
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 24 t

wise little deserving the Name of men) Part 31 but upon much higher accounts, viz, that they had one and the same God for their Father, drank all of the same Spirit of Holiness, were brought out of the same womb of Darkness and Ignorance into the same Light of Truth, that they were partakers of the same Faith, and Co-heirs of the same Hope. This Lucian himself confesses of them, and that it was one of the great Principles that their Master instilled into them, that they should all become brethren; after once they had thrown off the Religion of the Gentiles, and had embraced the Worship of their great crucified Master, and given up themselves to live according to his Laws. The truth is, so ready, intire, and constant was their Kindness and Familiarity, that the Heathens accused them for having privy Marks upon their Bodies, whereby they fell in love with each other at first sight. Indeed they never met but they embraced one another with all the demonstrations of a hearty and sincere Affection, saluting each other with an holy kiss, not only in their own Houses, but at their Religious Assemblies, as a badge and bond of that Christian Fellowship.
Part 3. Worship and Communion that was maintained amongst them.

But the Love and Kindness of those Christians of old did not lie only in a smooth Complemental Carriage, or in a parcel of good words, depart in peace, be you warm'd or fill'd; but in the real Exercises of Charity and Mercy. Now because the two great Objects of Charity are, the Good of Mens souls, and their outward and bodily Welfare and Happiness, we shall find that the Primitive Christians were highly Eminent and Exemplary for both these. The Soul being of a much higher and nobler Nature, and consequently infinitely more precious and valuable than the Body, they were accordingly infinitely careful and solicitous to save mens Souls, to recover them out of the Snare of the Devil, and the Paths of Ruine, by making them Christians; and bringing them over to the knowledge of the truth; for this they pray'd daily and earnestly.

We Christians (says Cyprian to the Proconsul) serve the one and true God that made Heaven and Earth; and pray to him night and day, not only for our selves, but for all men, and for the Safety of the Emperours themselves. From this
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

This no Injuries nor Unkindnesses could Part 2\

discourage them. Justin Martyr tells the Jew, that they pray'd for them, and

all others that were unjustly their Enemies, that repenting of their Wicked-

nnesses, and ceasing to blaspheme Christ Jesus, who by the Greatness of his

Works, the Uncontrolableness of the Miracles performed in his Name, the Ex-

cellence of his Doctrines, and the Clear-

ness of the Prophecies fulfilled in him, appeared to be altogether innocent and

unblameable, and that rather believing in him, they might together with Chris-

rians be saved by him, at his second glorious Coming, and not be condemn-

ed by him to Everlasting Flames. We pray for you (says he) that Christ would

have mercy upon you, for he has taught us to pray for our enemies, to love them,

and be merciful to them. And afterwards, when he had reckoned up all

those wicked and malicious Artifices which the Jews had used both against

Christ and Christians, yet notwithstanding all this (says he) we are so far from

hating either you, or those who at your suggestion believe these things of us,

that we pray that all of you may repent, and obtain mercy from God, the gra-

Q. 2 cious
Primitiv Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 3. Ciusous and compassionate Parent of the World. The Gnosticks were the greatest scandal that ever was to Christianity, and the occasion of many of those Persecutions, and most of those horrible Calumnies which the Heathens brought upon the Christians, and yet see how Irenaeus treats them; We pray for them (says he) and beg of them not to continue in the Pit which they have digged to themselves, but to depart from their sottish and idle Vanities, to turn to the Church of God, that Christ may be formed in them, and that they may know the onely true God, the Creator of the World. This we beg of them, loving them to better purpose than they think they love themselves: for our Love is true and wholesome, (if they will receive it) like a sharp Plaster indeed, but it will eat away the proud flesh, take down the swelling and vanity of their Minds; for which cause we will not cease by all means to apply it to them. The same Origen tells Celsus, that though both Jews and Gentiles turn'd their backs upon the Doctrine of Christ, and charged them for being impostors and deceivers, yet they would not give over thus honestly to de-
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

deceive men, to make them of Loose Part 3.
persons to become Sober and Temperate, or to bring them on towards it; of Dishonest to make them Righteous, of Unwise to make them Prudent, at least to bring them into the way to these things; of Fearful and Timorous to render them Hearty and Courageous, especially as oft as they are to contend for their Religion and Piety towards God. How earnestly and passionately does Cyprus beg of the Proconsul Demetrian and the Gentiles to provide for their Happiness and Safety, to accept of the Counsels and Assistance which the Christians offered, who loved them not the worse for all the Torments and Sufferings they laid upon them; that they returned Kindness for Hatred, and by the Miseries they endured shewed to them the way to Heaven; that now was the time to make their peace with God, and to secure Salvation; that there was no place for repentance on the other side the Grave, the Stations of the other World being fix'd and unchangeable; that therefore they should believe and live so, that they might eternally rejoice with them, whom they did now so afflict and persecute.
Part 3. In pursuance of this Design they spared neither pains nor cost, that they might instruct men in the way to Heaven. 'Tis said of Pamphilus the Martyr, that amongst other Instances of his Charity, he used freely and readily to bestow Bibles upon all that were willing to read; for which purpose he had always great Numbers of those Holy Volumes by him, that as occasion serv'd he might distribute and bestow them. By these means mercifully furnishing those with these Divine Treasures, whose Purses could not otherwise reach to the price of the Scriptures, far dearer in those days than they are since Printing came into the World. We find S. Chrysostome so Zelous for Converting the Gentiles to Christianity, that for this very end he maintained many Presbyters and Monks in Phœnicia, partly at his own Charge, and partly by the Assistance of Pious and well-dispos'd Persons, whose onely work it was to catechise and instruct the Heathens in the Principles of the Christian Faith; and that the business might succeed more effectually, he procur'd a Law from the Emperour Arcadius, (yet extant in the Theodosian Code) directed to
Ch.2. Primitive Christianity.

Eutychian, Prefect of the East, that the Part 3 Pagan Temples should be orderly taken down, that so they being destroyed, the whole matter of the Gentile Superstition might be abolished. Upon the executing of which Law great Mutinies were raised by the Country People, many of the Monks wounded, and some slain, and the rest wholly disheartened to proceed in the business, (these doubtless being those very Monks against whom Libanius so severely declaims for so mercilessly destroying the Pagan Temples.) Whereupon Chrysostom (who was then in Banishment) writes to them to bear up with a Christian and Invincible Patience, encourages them resolutely to go on in so good a work; tells them that God would not be wanting to stand by them, and to reward them in this and the other Life, and promises them (though his incomes at this time were very small) that their former Pensions should be paid them, and all things necessary provided for them. And indeed with how much care and solicitude the good man's mind was filled about this business, he sufficiently intimates in a Letter written to another person whom he had employed

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Ad Rufin. Presbyt. ep. 126. p. 763
ployed about this Affair. Nor did they in those times regard ease or safety any more than they did Cost and Charges in this matter, exposing themselves to any dangers that they might do good to the Souls of men.

I might easily shew that this Consideration had a great Influence upon the Sufferings of the Primitive Martyrs, willingly running any Hazards, cheerfully enduring any Miseries, that they might gain others to the Faith, and prevent their Eternal Ruine: But that famous story of S. John the Apostle shall serve instead of many, the summ of which is this: Coming to a place near Ephesus in his Visitation of the Churches, he espied a Youth of a comely shape and pregnant parts, and taking hold of him delivered him to the Bishop of the place with this Charge, (which he repeated once and again) I commend this person to thee to be looked to with all care and diligence, and that in the presence of Christ and the Church. The Bishop undertook the Charge, received the Young man into his House, instructed him, and at last baptized him. Which being done, he thought he might remit a little of the Strictness of his Care; but
but the Young man making an ill use of Part 3. his Liberty, fell into bad Company, by whose arts and snares he was seduced into ways of Riot and Wickedness; till despairing of all hope of Pardon from God, he let loose the reins to all manner of Exorbitancy, and agreeing with his Confederates, they combind themselves into a Society of Highway-men, and made him their Captain, who quickly became as far beyond the rest in Fierceness and Cruelty, as he was in Power and Authority. S. John upon occasion returning some while after to the same place, after he had dispatched his other business, required from the Bishop the pledge he had left with him: who wondering and not knowing what he meant; I mean (said S. John) the Young man, 'tis the Soul of my Brother that I require. The old man with a dejected look and tears in his eyes answered, He's dead: and being demanded by what kind of Death, answered, He's dead to God; for, alas, he's become a villain, and instead of the Church is fled with his Companions to the Mountains to be a Thief and a Robber. The Apostle renting his Cloaths, and bewailing that he had so ill behaved.
Part 3. trusted his Brothers Soul, immediately call'd for a Horse and a Guide, and made haste to the Mountains; where being taken by those that stood Sentinel, he begg'd to be brought before their Captain, who stood ready arm'd some way off; but as soon as he perceiv'd 'twas S. John that was coming towards him, he began to be ashamed, and to run as fast as he could. The Apostle not regarding his own Age and Weakness follow'd after with all his might; and when his Legs could not overtake him, he sent these passionate Exclamations after him; Why, O my Son, dost thou fly from thy aged and unarmed Father? Take pity of me, and fear not, there is yet hope of Salvation for thee. I will undertake with Christ for thee; if need be I will freely undergo death for thee, as our Lord did for us, and lay down my own Life to ransom thine; onely stay and believe me, for I am sent by Christ. With that he staid, and with a dejected look throwing away his Arms, he trembled, and dissolved into Tears; he embraced the Aged Apostle with all possible Expressions of Sorrow and Lamentation, as if again baptized with his own Tears. S. John assured him he had obtained his par-
pardoned of Christ, and having fasted and prayed with him and for him, and with all the arts of consolation refreshed his shattered and disconsolate mind, brought him into, and restored him to the Church.

This story, though somewhat long, I was the willinger to produce, both because so remarkable in itself, and so great a testimony of that mighty tenderness and compassion which they had for the souls of men; for whose sake they thought they could never do, never venture far enough. S. Augustine confesses, c. 9. p. 155, and tells us what infinite pains his Mother Monica took about the conversion of her husband Patricius, how unweariedly she sought to endear herself to him, by all the arts of meek, prudent, and sober carriage; how submissively she complied with his rigorous and unoward humours; how diligently she watched the aptest times of insinuation, never leaving till at last she gained him over to the faith. Nor was her care and sollicitude less for her son Augustine, who being hurried away with the Lewdnesses of youth, and intangled with the impieties of the Manichean heresie, was the hourly sub-

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Part 3. Jeft of her Prayers and Tears. She plied him with daily Counsels and Intreaties, implored the help and assistances of Good men, and importuned Heaven for the Success of all; not being able to gain any quiet to her Mind, till S. Ambrose (with whom she had oft advised about it) sent her away with this assurance, that it was not possible that a Child of so many tears should perish. No sooner was his Conversion wrought, but her spirit was at ease, and she now desired no more. Himself tells us, that discoursing with her alone some few days before her Death concerning the State of the Blessed, and the Joys of Heaven, she at last broke off with this Farewel; For my part, Son, I have now no further hopes or pleasures in this world; there was but one thing for which I desidered to live, that I might see thee a Catholic Christian before I died; this my good God has abundantly blessed me with, having let me see thee despising the Felicities of this Life, and entered into his Family and Service; so that what do I make any longer here? Nay, so great a zeal had they for the good of Souls in those days, that many did not stick to engage themselves in temporal Slavery for no other
other end but to deliver others from spiritual bondage. Thus Serapion, called Sindonites, (because he never wore more than one poor Linen Garment), one of the Primitive Ascetics, fell himself to a Gentile Player, that serv’d the Theatre; with whom he liv’d and underwent the meanest Offices, till he had converted him, his Wife, and whole Family, to Christianity, who upon their Baptism restored him to his Liberty, whereupon he freely returned them back the money which he had receiv’d as the price of his Servitude, which by mutual consent was given to the Poor. Coming afterwards to Lacedemon, and hearing that a principal person of the City, a very good man otherwise, was infected with the Manichean Heresie; one of the first things he did was to insinuate himself into his Family, telling himself to be his Slave; in which condition he remained for two years together, till he had brought his Master and his whole Family off from that pernicious Heresie, and restored them to the Church; who did not onely bless God for it, but treated him not as a servant, but with that kindness and reverence that is due to a brother and a father. This
Part 3. This was the good spirit and genius of those days, they entirely studied and designed the Happiness of men, were willing and desirous freely to impart the Treasuries of the Gospel, and wished that in that respect all Mankind were as rich and happy as themselves. So far were they from that malicious Imputation which Celsus fastned upon them, that if all men would become Christians they would not admit it: To which Origen flatly returns the lie; and tells him the Falseness of it might appear from this, that Christians (as much as in them lay) were not backward to propagate their Doctrine through the whole World; and that some of them had peculiarly undertaken to go up and down not only in Cities, but in Towns and Villages, to bring over others to the true Religion. And that they did not this out of any designs of gain or interest to themselves was plain, because they often refus'd to receive necessary Accommodations from others; or if they did, they were such only as were barely and absolutely necessary for the present turn, when as far greater Liberalities have been offered to them. Nay, some
some of the ancient Canons expressly re-
require, that no man, who has either He-
reticks or Infidels in his Family, shall be
admitted to the Order either of Bishop,
Presbyter, or Deacon, who has not first
converted those persons to the true Chris-
tian Faith.

Having seen what Kindness and Cha-
rrity they expressed to mens souls, we
come next to that which respected
their bodies, and the Necesilities of the
outward Life; this they shewed in se-
veral Instances; we shall consider some
of the most material. In the first place
they took special care to provide for
the poor, and such as were unable to
help themselves: this Cyprian in his
Retirement gave especially in charge
to the Presbyters and Deacons of his
Church, that by all means they should
mind the Poor, and furnish them with
whatever was necessary for them. Dio-
mythus Bishop of Corinth testifies of the
Church of Rome, that they did not one-
ly eminently provide for their own
Poor, but with great Liberality admi-
ister to the Necesilities of other Chur-
ches, plentifully relieving what ever
Indigent Brethren came to them, or
where ever they were though at the
great-
Part 3. greatest distance from them. And of the Church of Antioch Chrysostom tells us, that in his time, though the Revenues of it were but small, yet besides its Clergie, besides strangers, lepers, and such as were in bonds, it daily maintained above three thousand Widows and Maids. Indeed the Bounty of those Times was almost incredible. S. Cyprian upon his turning Christian sold his Estate to relieve the Wants of others, and could not be restrained from it either by the Persuasions of others, or the Considerations of what he might be reduced to himself. After his entrance upon the Ministry, his Doors were open to all that came; from whom no Widow ever returned empty: to any that were blind he would be their Guide to direct them; them that were lame he was ready to lend his Assistance to support them; none were oppressed by might, but he was ready to defend them. Cæsarius S. Basil's Brother, made one of his will when he died, I will that all my Estate be given to the poor. Nazianzen reports of his Father, that he was so kind to the Poor, that he did not only bestow the surplusage of his Estate upon them, but even part of
of what was receiv'd for necessary uses; Part 3.
of his Mother, that an Ocean of wealth
would not have filled her unsatisfied
desire of doing good, and that he had
often heard her say, that if it were
lawful she could willingly have sold
her self and children, to have expend-
et the price upon the uses of the poor;
and of his Sister Gorgonia, that she was
immensely liberal, Job-like her gate
was open to every stranger, she was
eyes to the blind; feet to the lame, and
a mother to Orphans; her estate was as
common to the poor, and as much at
their need, as every one's is to himself;
dispersing and scattering abroad; and
according to the counsel of our Savi-
our, laying up her treasure in heaven.

They gave not only according to,
but beyond their ability; trusting to
the goodness and fidelity of heaven to
supply what wanted, which many times
made the return with overplus by
ways uncommon and extraordinary.
Sozomen relates of Epiphanius Bishop
of Salamine in Cyprus, that having
spent all his own estate in pious and
charitable uses, in relieving the needy,
and such as were by shipwreck and the
mercy of the sea cast upon the coast.
Part 3. He freely dispensed and distributed the goods and treasures of his Church (which by the bounty of charitable persons from all parts, who thought they could not better lodge their estates than in the hands of so good a man, was very rich and wealthy) and that with so liberal a hand, that the Steward or Guardian of the Church finding its stock begin to grow very low, with some resentment told him of it, charging him as too profuse and open-handed; All which notwithstanding he remitted nothing of his accustomed bounty to the poor. At length all being spent, a stranger on a sudden comes into the Stewards lodgings, and delivers into his hands a great purse of gold, without any discovery either who 'twas that brought it, or who 'twas that sent it. And indeed so vast and universal was the charity of this good man, that it sometimes made him liable to be imposed upon by crafty and designing persons, whereof the Historian in the same place gives this remarkable instance. A couple of beggars meeting Epiphanius, and knowing the charitableness of his temper, to draw the greater alms from him, a-
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

greed to put this trick upon him. One of Part 3:
them lies along upon the ground, feigning himself to be dead, the other standing by him passionately bewailed the death of his companion, and his own poverty, not able to give him burial. Epi-
phanes pitted the man, persuaded him to bear his loss patiently, and not to expect that his companion should in this world rise any more, bid him take care for his burial, and withal gave him what was sufficient for it. No sooner was he gone out of sight, but the beggar comes to his companion, jogs him with his foot, and commends him for so ingeniously acting the cheat: Rise (said he) and with what we have got let's be merry and jolly to-day. But, alas! the Comedy was turned into a tragic scene; the man was really dead, and could not be recovered by all his cries or sturting; which his companion no sooner perceived but with all haste makes after the Bishop, cries and tears his hair, confesses the cheat, and begs that his companion might be restored to life; but all in vain: the Bishop bids him be content, and tells him that God would not undo what he had done. Leaving a fair warning to men (says the

Historian)
Part 3. Historian that the great God who sees and hears all things, reckons those mockeries that are put upon his servants as if done to himself. But this only upon occasion of that great charity which they then upon all occasions extended to the poor. The truth is, they then looked upon the poor as the treasure and ornament of the Church, by whom as by bills of Exchange they returned their estates into the other world. When Decius the Emperor demanded of Laurentius the Deacon of the Church of Rome the Churches treasures, he promised after three days to produce them; in which time having gathered together the blind and the lame, the infirm and the maim, at the time appointed he brought them into the Palace, and when the Emperor asked for the treasures he had promised to bring with him, he shews him his company, Behold (said he) these are the treasures of the Church, those eternal treasures, which are never diminished, but increase; which are dispersed to every one, and yet found in all. This passage brings to my mind (though it more properly belongs to the next instance of charity) what Palladius relates of Macarius, a Presbyter.
Presbyter and Governour of the Hospital at Alexandria; there was a Virgin in that City very rich, but infinitely covetous and uncharitable: She had been oft attempted and set upon by the persuasions of good men, but in vain; at last he caught her by this piece of pious policy. He comes to her, and tells her that a parcel of Jewels, Emerauds and Jacinths, of inestimable value, were lodg'd at his house, but which the owner was willing to part with for five hundred pieces of money, and advises her to buy them: She catching at the offer, as hoping to gain considerably by the bargain, delivered him the money, and intreated him to buy them for her, knowing him to be a person of great piety and integrity. But hearing nothing from him a long time after, till meeting him in the Church, she asked him what were become of the Jewels: he told her he had laid out the money upon them (for he had expended it upon the uses of the Hospital) and desired her to come and see them, and if the purchase did not please her, she might refuse it. She readily came along with him to the Hospital, in the upper rooms whereof
Part 3: the women were lodged; in the lower the men. He asked her which she would see first, the Jacinths, or the Eunuchs; which she leaving to him, he brought her first into the upper part, where the Lambs, Blind and Cripple-women were disposed, and see, said he, the Jacinths that I spoke of: Then carrying her down into the lower rooms he shewed her the men in the like condition, and told her, These are the Eunuchs that I promised, and jewels more precious than these I think are not to be found; and now, said he, if you like not your bargain, take your money back again. The woman blushed, and was troubled to think, she should be hald to that, which she ought to have done freely for the love of God. Afterwards she heartily thanked Macarius, and betook her self to a more charitable and Christian course of life.

Next to this, their charity appeared in visiting and assisting of the sick; contributing to their necessities, refreshing their tired bodies, curing their wounds or sores with their own hands. The sick (says the antient Author of the Epistle in Justin Martyr, if it be not Justin himself) are not to be neglected;
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

lected; nor is it enough for any to say, Part 3: I have never learnt to serve and give attendance: For he that shall make his delicacy or tenderness unaccustomed to any hardness to be an excuse in this case, let him know it may soon be his own; and then he'll quickly discern the unreasonable excess of his own judgment, when the same shall happen to him, that he himself has done to others. But there were no such nice and squeamish stomachs in the good Christians of those times. S. Hierom tells us of Fabiola a Roman Lady, a woman of considerable birth and fortunes, that she sold her estate, and dedicated the money to the uses of the poor; she built an Hospital (and was the first that did so) wherein she maintained and cured the infirm and miserable, or any sick that she met withal in the streets; here was a whole rendezvous of Cripples, hundreds of diseases and distempers here met together, and her self at hand to attend them: sometimes carrying the diseased in her arms, or bearing them on her shoulders; sometimes washing and dressing those filthy and noysome sores, from which another would have turned...

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Part 3. ed his eyes with contempt and horror; otherwhile preparing them food; or giving them physic with her own hand. The like we read of Placilla the Empress, wife to the younger Theodosius, that she was wont to take all possible care of the lame or wounded, to go home to their houses, carry them all necessary conveniencies and to attend, and assist them not by the ministry of her servants and followers; but with her own hands. She constantly visited the common Hospitals, attended at sick beds for their cure and recovery, tasted their broths, prepared their bread, reached them their provisions, washed their cups with her own hands, and underwent all other offices which the very meanest of the servants were to undergo. Thus also the Historian reports of Deogratias the aged Bishop of Carthage under the Vandalic persecution, that having sold all the plate belonging to the Church to ransom the Captive Christians, and wanting places conveniently to bestow them, he lodged them in two large Churches, provided for the needy, took care of the sick, himself every hour visiting them both by day and night, with Physici-
ans attending him to superintend their Part 3.
cure, and diet suitable to their several cases, going from bed to bed to know what every one stood in need of. Nay,
how often did they venture to relieve their brethren when labouring under such distempers as seemed immediately to breath death in their faces? Thus in
that sad and terrible plague at Alexandria, which though it principally raged amongst the Gentiles, yet seiz'd
also upon the Christians, Many of the brethren (says the Historian) out of the excessive abundance of their kindness and charity, without any regard to their own health and life, boldly ventured into the thickest dangers, daily visiting, attending, instructing, and comforting their sick and infected brethren, till themselves expired and died with them: Nay, many of them whom they thus attended recovered and lived, while they who had looked to them died themselves; as if by a strange and prodigious charity they had willingly taken their diseases upon them, and died themselves to save them from death. Thus 'twas with
the Christians, while the Gentiles in the mean time put off all sense of humanity,
Part 3. nity; when any began to fall sick amongst them, they presently cast them out, shun'd their dearest friends and relations, left them half-dead in the high-ways, and took no care of them either alive or dead.

And that this work of charity might be the better managed amongst Christians, they had in many places (and particularly in this of Alexandria) certain persons whose proper office it was to attend and administer to the sick: They were called Parabolani, (because especially in pestilential and infectious distempers they did παραβάλλειν, cast themselves into an immediate hazard of their lives) and were peculiarly deputed ad curanda debilium aegra corpora, (as the law of the younger Theodosius expresses it) to attend and cure the bodies of the infirm and sick. Their numbers it seems were very great, insomuch that upon any tumultuary occasions they became formidable even to the Courts of Civil Judicature; upon complaint whereof made to the Emperour, Theodosius reduced their number to five hundred; which being found too little, by a second Constitution he enlarged it to six hundred. The truth is,
these Parabolani were a kind of Clergy Part 3. Physitians; for that they were under an Ecclesiastical cognizance is plain, being reckoned up with the Clergy, and accordingly by the latter Constitution of Theodorus are appointed to be chosen by, and to be immediately subject to the Bishop of the place.

A third instance of their love and Charity (and which S. Ambrose calls the highest piece of liberality) was their care of those that were in captivity, Òsscr. lib. 2. groaning under the merciless tyranny and oppression of their enemies, to relieve them under, and redeem them out of their bondage and slavery. Cyprian in a letter to the Bishops of Numidia about this very thing, the redemption of those Christians amongst them that had been taken captive by the Barbarians, elegantly bewails their misery, and earnestly presses their redemption, and as a help towards it sent them Sextertium Rigalt. in centum millia nummum; which Rigalt. loc. computes to twenty-five thousand pounds French, though others more truly reduce it to a much lower sum, p. 131. viz. seven thousand five hundred, or two thousand five hundred Crowns; which he and his people had liberally con-
Part 3 contributed to it. Of Acacius Bishop of Amida we read in Socrates, that when the Roman army had taken seven thousand Persians captive, and would neither release them without a ransom, nor yet give them food to keep them alive; this good Bishop, with the consent of the Clergy of his Church, caused all the Gold and Silver Plate and vessels that belonged to their Church to be melted down, ransom'd the wretches, fed them, and then freely sent them home to their own Prince: with which generous Charity the King of Persia (as he well might) was strangely amaz'd, finding that the Romans knew how to conquer an enemy by kindness, no less than by force of arms. The like S. Ambrose relates of himself, that he caused the Communion Plate of his Church to be broke in pieces to redeem Christians taken captive by the enemy; for which though he was blam'd by the Arrian party, yet he elegantly defends the fact, as not only a justifiable, but a proper and eminent act of charity. And indeed 'tis the only case wherein the Imperial Constitutions make it lawful to sell or pawn the Plate and gifts belonging to the Church, it being otherwise made
made sacriledge to receive them, and Part 3. the things absolutely forfeited by those that bought them. This was very great, but yet we meet with a stranger Charity than this in the Primitive Church, some that have parted with their own liberty to purchase freedome unto others; So S. Clemens assures us in his famous Epistle to the Corinthians. We have known many amongst our selves (says he) who have delivered themselves into bonds and slavery, that they might restore others to their liberty; many who have hire'd out themselves servants unto others, that by their wages they might feed and sustaine them that wanted. Of which this one strange instance shall suffice. Under the Vandallic persectution many Christians were carried slaves out of Italy into Africk, for whose redemption Paulinus then Bishop of Nola had expended his whole estate; at last a widow comes to him, intreats him to give her as much as would ransom her only Son then slave to the King of the Vandals Son-in-law; he told her he had not one penny left, nothing but his own person, and that he would freely give her to make her best of, and to procure her sons ransom; this the wo-
Part 3. man look'd upon from a person of his quality as rather a deriding her calamity, than a pitying of her case: but he assur'd her he was in earnest, and at last induced her to believe him; whereupon they both took shipping for Africa, whither they were no sooner come, but the good Bishop addressed himself to the Prince, beg'd the release of the widows Son, and offer'd himself in his room. The issue was, the woman had her Son restor'd her, and Paulinus became the Princes slave, who employ'd him in the dressing and keeping of his Garden. How he afterwards ingratiates himself into the favour of his Master and came to be discovered to him who he was, how the Prince set him at liberty, and gave him leave to ask what he would, which he made no further use of than to beg the release of all his Countrey-men then in bondage, which was accordingly granted, and all joyfully sent home with their ships laden with Corn and Provisions. I omit as not pertinent to my purpose; they that are desirous to know more of it may read it in the Dialogues of S. Gregory, from whence I have borrowed the story. This certainly was Charity with a wit-
a witness, an act that will find more to Part 3.
admire and commend it, than to imitate and follow it.

A fourth instance of Primitive Charity, was the great care they took about the bodies of the dead, in giving them decent and where they could, honourable burial; all men naturally have a kindness for their bodies, and therefore desire, that what has so long been the mansion of an immortal tenant, may upon its dislodging be orderly taken down, and the ruins of it laid up with honour and safety. Mans body besides that 'tis the cabinet of an invaluable jewel, is a curious piece of artifice, fearfully and wonderfully made, the excellent contrivance of the divine omniscience, and in that respect challenges not to be carelessly thrown aside, or rudely trampled in the dirt. This seems to be the common sense of mankind, it being the care and practice of almost all Nations in the world religiously to enshrine the Remains of their deceased friends in Tombs and Sepulchres; thinking it but reasonable to testify so much kindness to their departed friends, as to honour their memories, and to secure from rude barbarous violence.
Part 3.

Hence what they left behind them when they put off mortality. Sure I am this was eminently the care of Christians; no dangers or threatnings could affright them from doing this last office to their deceased brethren, especially such as had been Martyrs and Champions for the Truth. The Roman Clergy in an Epistle to them of Carthage reckons it as one of the greatest instances of Charity; above that of relieving the poor, ministering to the sick, or the rest which they there enumerate and reckon up; tells them that it could not be neglected without great danger, and that fidelity in this matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him. Dionysius Bishop of Alexandria speaking of the Plague that raged there (which we mentioned but now) commends the Christians for assisting their sick dying brethren, that they closed their eyes, laid them out, washed their bodies, dressed and adorned them up for burial, and carried them out upon their own shoulders, which they cheerfully did, notwithstanding the imminent danger that attended it; and that it was not long before others were called to do the same offices for them.
them. Their Bodies they decently Part 3. committed to the ground, for they abhorred the custom so common amongst the Gentiles of burning the bodies of the dead; which they did, not (as the Heathens objected,) because they thought that their bodiss once burnt to ashes would be difficultly brought to a Resurrection (a doctrine which they strenuously asserted, and held fast as the main pillar of their comfort and confidence,) but because they looked upon it as inhumane and barbarous, and contrary to the more ancient and better usage of mankind in this matter. Tertullian calls this way of burial by inhumation a piece of piety, and tells De Animi us they abstained from burning the Corps, not as some did, because they thought that some part of the soul remained in the body after death, but because it savour'd of savageness and cruelty. Therefore their enemies to do them the greater spite, did not only put them to death, but very often burn their dead bodies, and sprinkle their ashes into the Sea, partly to hinder them from a decent burial, and partly (as in that tumult at Alexandria under Julian,) that nothing might be left of them.
274. Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 3. them to be honour'd as the remains of Martyrs. As Christianity got ground, this more civil way of inhumation did not only take place, but rooted out the contrary custom even amongst the Gentiles themselves. For though the Emperor Theodosius the Great gives some intimation of it as remaining in his time, yet not long after it wholly ceased, as is expressly acknowledged by Macrobius, who liv'd in the time of the younger Theodosius.

Nor did they ordinarily content themselves with a bare interment, but prepared the body for its funeral with costly Spices, and rich odours and perfumes, not sparing the best drugs and ointments which the Sabeans could afford, as Tertullian plainly testifies. They who while alive generally abstained from whatever was curious and costly, when dead were embalm'd and entombed with great art and curiosity. Whence: Eunapius (much such a friend to Christianity, as Julian or Porphyry) derides the Monks and Christians of Egypt for honouring the season'd and embalm'd bones and heads of Martyrs, such (says he) as the Courts of Justice had condemned, and put to death for their
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

their innumerable villanies. This cost Part 3.
the Christians doubtless bestowed up-
on the bodies of their dead, because they
looked upon death as the en-
trance into a better life, and laid up
the body as the candidate and expec-
tant of a joyful and happy resurrec-
tion. Besides, hereby they gave some
encouragement to suffering; when men
law how much care was taken to ho-
nour and secure the reliques of their
mortality; and that their bodies should
not be persecuted after death.

This their enemies knew very well,
and therefore many times denied them
the civility and humanity of burial; to
strike the greater dread into them.
Thus Maximus the President threatned
Tharacus the Martyr, that although he
bore up his head so high upon the con-
sidence, that after his death his body
should be wound up. and embalm'd
with ointments and odoriferous spices,
yet he would defeat his hopes by cau-
sing his body to be burnt, and sprink-
ling his ashes before the wind.

Thus after, they had put Polycarp to
death, they burnt his body out of spite
to the Christians who had beg'd it of
the Proconsul, only to give it a solemn
interr-
Part 3. interment; whereupon gathering his bones which the mercy of the fire had spared, they decently committed them to the earth, and there used to meet to celebrate the memory of that pious and holy man.

During those times of persecution they were very careful to bury the bodies of the Martyrs, some making it their particular business by stealth to inter those in the night, who had suffered in the day; this they did with great hazard and danger, many of them (as appears from the ancient Martyrologies) suffering Martyrdom upon this very account. Afterwards, when the Church was settled, there was a particular Order of men call'd Copiata, (either सं सं कृमते, from the pains they took, or else सं सं कृमते, because they committed the bodies of the dead to the grave, the place of ease and rest,) appointed for this purpose, about the time of Constantine, or to be sure his Son Constantius, in two of whose Laws they are expressly mentioned, and in the latter said to be lately instituted. Their office (as Epiphanius tells) was to wrap up and bury the bodies of the dead, to prepare their graves, and to int
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

terr them: and because inhumation and Part 3.
giving burial to the dead was ever ac-
counted in a more peculiar manner,
a work of piety and religion; there-
fore these persons were reck-
ened if not strictly Clergy-men, at least
in a Clergy-relation, being in both
Laws of Constantius enumerated with,
and invested in the same immunities
with the Clergy. By the Author in
St. Hierom they are styled Fossarii,
grave-makers, and by him plac'd in the
first and lowest order of the Clerici,
and exhorted to be like good old To-
bit in Faith, Holiness, Knowledge, and
Vertue. In the great Church of Con-
stantinople they were called Decani, or
Deans, (but quite distinct from the Pa-
latin Deans spoken of in the Theodosian
Code, and frequently elsewhere; who
were a military order, and chiefly be-
longed to the Emperors Palace) they
were one of the Collegia or Corpora-
tions of the City. Their number was
very great; Constantine is said to have
appointed no less than, MC. of them:
But by a Law of Honorius and Theodo-
sius, they were reduc'd to DCCCCL;
till afterwards Anastasius brought them
back to their former number, which
was
Part 3. was also ratified and confirmed by Justinian, their particular duties and offices both as relating to the dead, and all other things are largely described in two Novels Constitutions of his to that purpose.

Nor did they only take care that the body might be prepared for its funeral, but to provide it of a decent and convenient Sepulchre, wherein it might be honourably and securely laid up; a thing which had been always practised by the more sober and civiliz'd part of mankind. Their burying-places (called Polyanthres, Crypte, Arènaria, but most commonly Cæmeteria or Dormitories, because according to the notion which the Scripture gives us of the death of the Righteous, Christians are not so properly laid to dye as to sleep in the Lord, and their bodies to rest in the grave in expectation of a joyful resurrection) were generally in the fields or gardens, it being prohibited by the Rom.

Laws, and especially an ancient Law of the XII Tables to bury within the City walls. This held for some Centuries after Christianity appeared in the world; and longer it was before they buried within Churches; within the
the out-parts whereof to be interred, Part 3.
was a priviledge at first granted only to
Princes and Persons of the greatest rank
and quality. Chrysostome assures us that
Constantins the Emperor reckoned he
did his Father Constantine the Great a
peculiar honour, when he obtained to
have him buried in the Porch of the
Church which he had built at Constantinople to the memory of the Apostles,
and wherein he had earnestly desired
to be buried, as Eusebius tells us; and
in the same many of his Successors were
interred; it not being in use, then, nor
some hundreds of years after for per-
sons to be buried in the body of the
Church, as appears from the Capitula of
Charles the Great, where burying in the
Church, which then it seems had crept
into some places, is strictly forbid-
den.

During the first ages of Christianity,
while the malice of their enemies per-
secuted them both alive and dead,
their Cemeteria were ordinarily under
ground, imitating herein the custome of
the Jews, whose Sepulchres were in Ca-
vens and holes of rocks, though doubt-
less the Christians did it to avoid the
rage and fury of their enemies; not so
much
Part 3. Much upon the account of secrecy; for their frequent retiring to those places was so notorious, as could not escape the observation of their enemies, and therefore we sometimes find the Emperors Officers readily coming thither; but it was upon the account of that Sacredness and Religion that was reckon'd to be due to places of this nature, it being accounted by all Nations a piece of great impiety, *Manes temerare Sepultos*, to disturb and violate the ashes of the dead. They were large vaults dug in dry sandy places, and arched over, and separated into many little apartments, wherein on either side the bodies of the Martyrs lay in distinct Cells, each having an Inscription upon Marble, whereon his Name, Quality, and probably the time and manner of his death were engraven: Though in the heats of Persecution they were forced to bury great numbers together in one common grave (*LX. Prudentius* tells us he observ'd) and then not the names, but only the number of the interred was written upon the Tomb. Indeed the multitudes of Martyrs that then suffered required very large conveniences of interment. And so they had, infomuch
in somuch that the last publisher of the Part 3. Roma Subterranea assures us, that though those Cæmeteria were under ground, yet were they many times double and sometimes treble, two or three stories one still under another.

By reason hereof they must needs be very dark, having no light from without, but what peep'd in from a few little cranies, which filled the place with a kind of sacred horror, as S. Hierom informs us, who while a youth, when he went to School at Rome, us'd upon the Lord's day to visit these solemn places. Built they were by pious and charitable persons, (thence called after their names,) for the interriment of Martyrs, and other uses of the Church; for in these places Christians in times of persecution were wont to hide themselves, and to hold their Religious Assemblies, when banished from their publick Churches, as I have formerly noted. Of these about Rome only Bar-Ronius reckons up XLIII, and others to the number of threescore. We may take an estimate of the rest by the account which Baronius gives of one, called the Cemeterie of Priscilla, discovered in
Part 3. in his time, An. 1578, in the Via Salaria about three miles from Rome, which he often viewed and searched: It is (says he) strange to report, the place by reason of its vastness and variety of apartments appearing like a City under ground. At the entrance into it there was a principal way or street much larger than the rest, which on either hand opened into diverse other ways, and those again divided into many lesser ways and turnings, like lanes and alleys within one another. And as in Cities there are void open places for the Markets; so here there were some larger spaces for the holding (as occasion was) of their Religious Meetings, wherein were placed the Effigies and Representations of Martyrs, with places in the top to let in light, long since swept up. The discovery of this place caused great wonder in Rome, being the most exact and perfect Cemeterie that had been yet found out. Thus much I thought good to add upon occasion of that singular care, which Christians then took about the bodies of their dead. If any desire to know more of these venerable Antiquities, they may consult Onuphrius de Cemeteriis,
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

terius, and especially the Latin Edition of the Roma Subterranea, where their largest curiosity may be fully satisfied in these things.

Many other instances of their Charity might be mentioned, their ready entertaining strangers, providing for those that laboured in the Mines, marrying poor Virgins, and the like, of which to treat particularly would be too vast and tedious. To enable them to do these charitable offices, they had not only the extraordinary contributions of particular persons, but a common stock and treasury of the Church. At the first going abroad of the Gospel into the world, so great was the Piety and Charity of the Christians, That the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul, neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common; neither was there any among them that lacked; for so many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. But this community
284 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 3. Munity of goods lasted not long in the Church; we find S. Paul giving order to the Churches of Galatia and Corinth for weekly offerings for the Saints, that upon the first day of the week (when they never fail'd to receive the Sacrament) they should every one of them lay by him in store according as God had pro-

ferred him. This custom Justin Martyr assures us still continued in his time; for describing the manner of their as-

semblies on the Lords day, he tells us that those who were able and willing contributed what they saw good; and the collection was lodg'd in the hands of the Bishop or President, and by him distributed for the relief of Widows and Orphans, the sick or indigent, the imprison'd or strangers, or any that were in need. In the next age they were reduced to monthly offerings, as appears from Tertullian, who gives us this account of them in his time. That at their Religious Assemblies upon a monthly day (or oftner if a man will, and be able) every one according to his ability laid by somewhat for charitable uses (they put it into a kind of poor man's box call'd Arca, that stood in the Church) this they did freely, no man
man being forced or compelled to it; Part 3.
leaving it behind them as a stock to
maintain piety and religion; for 'tis
not spent (says he) upon feasts or drink-
ing-bouts, or to gratifie gluttony and
intemperance; but laid out in relie-
ing the needy, burying the dead, pro-
viding for Orphans, supporting the a-
ged, recruiting the spoyle, supplying
the imprisoned, and those that were in
mines; bonds, or slavery for the pro-
fection of Christianity.

This was the fruit of Primitive de-
vo
tion. Palladius tells us of two Bro-
thers, Paesius and Esaias, Sons of a
wealthy Merchant, that their Father
being dead, and they resolving upon a
more strict and religious course of life,
could not agree upon setling their E-
states in the same way; at last dividing
their Estates, they disposed them thus.
The one gave away his whole Estate at
once, setling it upon Monasteries,
Churches, and Prisons, for the relief of
such as were in bonds, and betaking
himself to a Trade for a small mainte-
nance for himself, gave himself up to
prayer and the severer exercises of Re-
ligion. The other kept his Estate in
his own possession, but built a Mona-
stery,
Part 3. Story, and taking a few Companions to dwell with him, entertain'd all strangers that came that way, took care of the sick, entertained the aged, gave to those that needed, and every Saturday and Lord's day caused two or three tables to be spread for the refreshment and entertainment of the poor; and in this excellent way spent his life.

Now that this account that we have given of the admirable Bounty and Charity of the ancient Christians is not precarious; and meerly what the Christians tell us of themselves, we have the testimony of two open enemies of Christianity, Julian and Lucian, both bitter enemies to Christians, and the fiercer, because both, as 'tis supposed, apostates from them, and their testimony is considerable upon a double account, partly because having lived amongst the Christians they exactly knew their ways and manners; and partly because being enemies to them they would be sure to speak no more in their commendation than what was true. Julian speaking of the Galileans, tells us that by their charity to the poor they begot ἵνα ἔστω ἀλλήλων ἀδελφοι, the greatest admiration of their Religion.
Religion in the minds of men. And Part 3.
in an Epistle to the High-Priest of Ga-
latia, bewailing the desolate state of
the heathen-world, the ruine of their
Temples, and the great declension of
Paganism at that time; notwithstanding all his endeavours to make it suc-
cceed under the influences of his Go-
vernment; he advises the High-Priest
to promote the Gentile interest by the
same method, which the wicked Reli-
gion of the Christians did thrive by, i.
e. by their bounty to strangers, their
care in burying of the dead, and their
holiness of life; and elsewhere, The
poor (says he) having no care taken of
them, the wicked Galileans know very
well how to make their advantage of it,
for they give themselves up to humanity
and charity; and by these plausible and
insinuative ways, strengthen and encrease
their wicked and pernicious party; just
as men cheat little children with a cake,
by two or three of which they tempt them
to go along with them; till having got
them from home, they clap them under
batches, transport and sell them, and so
for a little seeming pleasure they are con-
demned to bitterness all their life; and
no otherwise (says he) 'tis with them; they
Part 3. They first inveigle honest minded men with what they call their feasts of Love; banquets, ministry and attendance upon tables, and then seduce them into their wickedness and impiety. This as at once it shews his venom and malice according to the humour of the man; for it openly bears witness out of the mouth of an enemy to the most excellent and generous spirit of the Gospel. The other testimony is that of Lucian; (who if not a Christian himself, for Suidas his Σαυδᾶς ήν ἀνθρώπος does no way intimate him to have been a Christian Preacher, notwithstanding what the generality of Writers have inferred thence; was yet however intimately acquainted with the affairs of Christians) who bringing in his Philosopher Peregrinus amongst other Sects joyning himself to the Christians, tells us what care they took of him, when cast into prison they improved all their interest to have him released: But when this could not be granted, they officiously used all possible service and respect towards him; in the morning old women, widows, and children flock'd early to the prison doors; and the better fort got leave of the Keepers to sleep with
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 289

with him in the prison all night: then they had several sorts of banquets, and their sacred discourses. Nay, some were sent in the name of the rest, even from the Cities of Asia to assist and encourage him, who brought him great sums of money under pretence of his imprisonment; it being incredible what readiness they shewed, when any such matter is once nois'd abroad, and how little they spare any cost in it. After which he tells us of them in general, that they equally contemn all the advantages of this Life, and account them common, foolishly taking up their principles about these things without any accurate search into them; insomuch that if any subtle and crafty Fellow, that knows how to improve his advantage, come amongst them, he grows very rich in a little time, by making a prey of that simple and credulous People.

There's one circumstance yet behind concerning the love and charity of those times, very worthy to be taken notice of, and that is the universal extent of it, they did good to all, though more especially to them of the household of Faith; i.e. to Christians: they did not confine their bounty merely within the
Part 3. narrow limits of a party, this or that Sect of Men, but embraced an Object of Love and Pity where ever they met it. They were kind to all men, yea to their bitterest Enemies, and that with a Charity as large as the circles of the Sun that visits all parts of the World, and shines as well upon a stinking Dung-hill, as upon a pleasant Garden. 'Tis certainly the strange and supernatural Doctrine of our Saviour, You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. This indeed is the proper Goodness and Excellency of Christianity, as Tertullian observes, it being common to all men to love their Friends, but peculiar only to Christians to love their enemies. And Athenagoras, I remember, principally makes use of this Argument to prove the Divinity of the Christian Religion, and challenges all the great Masters of Reason and Learning amongst the Heathens to produce any, either of themselves or their Disciples, of so pure and refined a temper, as could instead of hating love their Enemies, bear curses.
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianit

ours and read ing, with an undisturbed mind, and instead of reading again to bless and speak well of them, and to pray for them who lay in wait to take away their Lives. And yet this did Christians; they embraced their Enemies, pardoned and prayed for them, according to the Apostle's Rule, When their enemy hungered they fed him, when he thirsted they gave him drink, and would not be overcome of evil, but overcame evil with good. When Nazianzen (then Bishop of Constantinople) lay sick, a Young man came to his Bed's feet, and taking hold of his Feet, with tears and great lamentation passionately begg'd pardon of him for his Wick edness; the Bishop asking what he meant by it, he was told that this was the person that had been inform'd by a wicked Party to have murdered him, and now being stricken with the conscience of so great a Wickedness, came to bewail his Sin. The good man immediately prayed to Christ to forgive him, desiring no other satisfaction from him, than that henceforth he would forsake that Heretical Party, and sincerely serve God as became a Christian. Thus when Paul the Martyr was ha-

The text is a passage from a historical or religious work, discussing the actions of early Christians and their treatment of their enemies. The text is difficult to read due to the historical corruption and the style of writing.
Part of his Execution, he only beg'd so much respite till he might pray (which accordingly he did) not only for the Peace and Happiness of Christians, but for the Conversion of Jews and Samaritans, for the Gentiles that they might be brought out of error and ignorance, to the knowledge of God and the true Religion; he prayed for the people that attended his Execution; nay, (such his vast goodness and charity) for the very Judge that condemned him; for the Emperours, and the very Executioner that stood ready to cut off his Head, earnestly begging of God not to lay that great wickedness to their charge. Nay, they did not think it enough not to return evil for evil, or barely to forgive their Enemies, unless they did them all the kindness that lay in their power. Polycarp plentifully feasted the very Officers that were sent to apprehend him; the same which S. Mamas the Martyr is also said to have done, treating the Soldiers with the best Supper he had, when sent by Alexander the cruel President of Cappadocia to seize upon him. And we read of one Paschomius an Heathen Soldier, in the first times of Con-
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

Constantine, that the Army being well prepared near Starv'd for want of necessary Provisions, and coming to a City that was most inhabited by Christians, they freely and speedily gave them whatever they wanted for the Accommodation of the Army. Amaz'd with this strange and unwonted Charity, and being told that the people that had done it were Christians, whom they generally prey'd upon, and whose Profession it was to hurt no man, and to do good to every man, he threw away his Arms, became an Anchorist, and gave up himself to the strictest Severities of Religion. This also Julian the Emperour plainly confesses; for urging Arsacius the Chief Priest of Galatia, to take care of the Poor, and to build Hospitals in every City for the entertaining of poor Strangers and Travellers, both of their own and other Religions; he adds, For it's a shame (says he) that when the Jews suffer none of theirs to beg, and the wicked Galileans relieve not only their own, but also those of our Party, that we only should be wanting in so necessary a duty. So prevalent is Truth as to extort a Confession from its most bitter and virulent Opposers. Of this I shall one-
Part 3. ly add one instance or two more, proper enough to be inferred here. Ense-bing, speaking of that dreadful Plague and Famine that happened in the Eastern Parts under the Emperor Maximinus, wherein so many whole families miserably perished, and were swept away at once; he adds, that at this time the Care and Piety of the Christians towards all evidently approved it fell to all the Gentiles that were about them; they being the only Persons that during this sad and calamitous State of things performed the real Offices of mercy and humanity; partly in ordering and burying of the Dead (thousands dying every day, of whom no care was taken) partly in gathering together all the poor that were ready to starve, and distributed Bread to every one of them. The Fame whereof fill’d the ears and mouths of all men who extolled the God of the Christians, and confessed that they had shewed themselves to be the truly Pious and Religious Persons. And indeed the Charity was the more remarkable, in that the Christians at this very time were under a most heavy Persecution. Thus in the terrible Plague
that in the times of Gallus and Volusianus, Part 3, especially in Carthage, when innumerable multitudes were swept away every day, and the streets filled with the carcases of the dead, which seemed to implore the help of the living, and to challenge it as their right by the common laws of humane nature; but all in vain, every one trembling, flying, and shifting for themselves, deserting their nearest friends and kindred, none staying unless it was to make a prey. In this sad and miserable case Cyprian (then bishop of the place) calls the Christians together, instructs them in the duties of mercy and charity, puts them in mind that it was no great wonder if their charity extended to their own party; the way to be perfect was to do something more than Heathens and Publicans, to overcome evil with good, to imitate the divine benignity, to love our enemies, and (according to our Lord's advice) to pray for the happiness of them that persecute us; that God continually made his sun to rise, and his rain to fall, not only for the advantage of his own children,
Part of their dress, but for all other mens: and that therefore they should imitate the example of such a father, who professed themselves to be his children. Immediately upon this they unanimously agreed to assist their common Enemies, every one lending help according to his Rank and Quality. Those who, by reason of their Poverty could contribute nothing to the charge, did what was more, they personally wrought and laboured, an Assistance beyond all other Contributions. By which large and abundant Charity great Advantage redounded not to themselves only but the Household of Faith, but universally unto all.

I shall summe up what hath been said upon this Argument in that Elegant Discourse which Lactantius has concerning Works of Mercy and Charity. Since Humane Nature (says he) is weaker than that of other creatures, who come into the World armed with offensive and defensive Powers, therefore our Wise Creator has given us a tender and merciful Disposition, that we might place the safeguard of our Lives in the mutual Assurances of one another. For being all created by one
Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity.

God, and springing from one common rent, we should reckon ourselves akin, and obliged to love all mankind; and (that our innocency may be perfect) not only not to do an injury to another, but not to revenge one when done to our selves; for which reason also we are commanded to pray for our very enemies. We ought therefore to be kind and sociable, that we may help and assist each other. For being our selves obnoxious to misery, we may the more comfortably hope for that help, in case we need it, which our selves have given unto others. And what can more effectually induce us to relieve the indigent, than to put our selves into their stead, who beg help from us? If any be hungry, let us feed him; if naked, let us cloath him; if wronged by a powerful oppressor, let us rescue and receive him. Let our doors be open to strangers, and such who have not where to lay their head. Let not our assistance be wanting to widows and orphans. And (which is a mighty instance of charity) let us redeem the captive, visit and assist the sick, who are able to take no care of themselves; and for strangers and the poor (in case
Part 3, they die; let us not suffer them to want the convenience of a grave. These are the Offices and the Works of Mercy, which whoever does, offers up a true and grateful Sacrifice to God; who is not pleased with the blood of beasts, but the charity of men; whom therefore he treats upon their own terms, has mercy on them whom he sees merciful, and is inexorable to those who shut up their bowels against them that ask them. In order therefore to our thus pleasing God let us make light of Mony, and transmit it into the heavenly Treasures, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal, nor Tyrants are able to seize and take it from us; but where it shall be kept to our Eternal Advantage under the custody of God himself.
Of their Unity and Peaceableness.

The Laws of Christ tend to beget a Peaceable Disposition. This seen in our Saviour himself, in his Apostles and the whole Body of Christians. The account Justin Martyr gives of them. The World overrun with Quarrels before Christ's coming. The happy Alteration that succeeded upon his Appearance in it. This particularly urged by Eusebius. How much Christians contributed to the Peace and Quietness of the World. Their Unity among themselves. Canonical Epistles; the several sorts of them; Συναγωγάς, Απολειμάτων, Εἰσίματα. What their Nature and Tendency. Differences presently endeavoured to be healed. The great Care and Solicitude of Constantine that way. An eminent instance of Condescension and Self-denial in Gregory Nazianzen for the Peace of the Church. Difference in Rituals and lesser matters no hinderance of Peace and Christian Communion; manifested in the Case of Polycarp and Anicetus Bishop of Rome. Christians not
THE Primitive Christians being of such a Meek, Compassionate, and Benevolent Temper, as we have represented them, it cannot be thought but that they were of a very Quiet Disposition and peaceable Conversation; and the having been so large in that will excuse me for being shorter in this. When our Blessed Saviour came to establish his Religion in the World, he gave a Law suitable to his Nature, and to the Design of his coming into the World, and to the Exercise of his Government as he is Prince of Peace, a Law of Mildness and Gentleness, of Submission and Forbearance towards one another; we are commanded to follow peace with all men, to follow after the things that make for peace, as much as in us lies to live peaceably with all men. We are forbidden all Feuds and Quarrels, enjoined not to revenge ourselves, but to give place unto wrath, to let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from us, with all malice, to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one ano-
another, even as God for Christ's sake for. Part 3.
gives us. These are the Laws of Christianity, which whenever they are duly en-
tertained produce the most gentle and
good-natur'd Principles, the most innocent and quiet Carriage. This eminently appeared in the Life of our Blessed Saviour, who was the most incomparable Instance of kindness and civility, of peace and quietness, we never find him all his Life; treating any with Sharpness and Se-
verity but the Scribes and Pharisees, who were a pack of furious, malicious, ill-natur'd Fellows, and could be brought up,
on by no other Methods; otherwise his Mildness and Humility, the Affability and Obligingness of his Conversation, and his remarkable Kindness to his great-
est Enemies, were sufficiently obvious both in his Life and Death, and such was the Temper of his Disciples and Followers, this Excellent Spirit (like lea-
ten) spreading it self over the whole Mass of Christians, turning the Briar into
a Myrtle tree, and the Vulture into a Dove. See the Account which Justin ap. 23. 6.
the Martyr gives of them. We, who formerly valued our Money and Estates
before all things else, do now put them into a common stock, and distribute them
Part 3. them to those that are in need. We, who once hated each other, and delighted in mutual Quarrels and Slaughters, and according to the custom refused to sit at the same Fire with those who were not of our own Tribe and Party; now since the Appearance of Christ in the World live familiarly with them, pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those that unjustly hate us to order their Lives according to the Excellent Precepts of Christ, that so they may have good hope to obtain the same Rewards with us from the great Lord and Judge of all things.

But for the better understanding of this it may be useful to observe, what a remarkable Alteration in this respect the Christian Religion made in the World. Before Christ's Coming the World was generally overrun with feuds and quarrels, mighty and almost implacable Animosities and Divisions reigning amongst Jews and Gentiles; the Jews looked upon the Gentiles as dogs and outcasts, refused all Dealings with them, even to the denial of Courtesies of common Charity and Civility, such as to tell a man the way, or to give him
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 303

him a draught of Water; they reproach, Part 3d them as the Vilest and most Pro-
ligate part of Mankind, sinners of the Gentiles, as the Apostle calls them, according to the usual Style and Title. Nor did the Gentiles less scorn and despise the Jews, as a Pitiful and Con-
temptible Generation, stopping their Nostrils, and abhorring the very Sight of
them, if by chance they met them; they looked upon them as an unsoci-
able people, as enemies of all Nations, that did not so much as with well to any;
nay, as haters even of Mankind, as Tacitus and their Enemies in Josephus
represent them. The E-
fect of all which was, that they oppressed and persecuted them in every
place, trod them under their feet, till at last the Romans came, and
finally took away both their Place and Nation. Thus stood the Case between
them till the Arrival of the Prince of Peace; who partly by his death, where-
by he broke down the partition-wall be-
tween Jew and Gentile, partly by the Healing nature and tendency of his De-
Erine,
Part 3. He, partly by the quiet and peaceable carriage of his Followers, did quickly extirpate and remove those mutual feuds and animosities, and silence those passionate and quarrelsome divisions that were amongst men.

This Argument Eusebius particularly prosecutes, and shews that while the Nations were under Paganism and Idolatry, they were filled with Wars and Troubles, and all the effects of Barbarous Rage and Fury; but that after the Divine and Peaceable Doctrine of our Saviour came abroad, those Differences and Calamities began to cease; according to the Predictions that were of him, that there should be righteousness and abundance of peace in his days; that men should beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; that Nation should not lift up sword against Nation, nor learn war any more; that this must needs be, in some measure, the effect of his Appearance, his Doctrine being so fitly calculated to soften the rough and brutish manners of men, and to train them up in milder and more humane Institutions. And a little after he makes it an uncontrollable Argument of the Truth and
that it teaches men to bear the Reproaches and Provocations of Enemies with a generous and unshaken Mind, and to be able not to revenge our selves, by falling foul upon them with the like Indignities and Affronts; to be above Anger and Passion, and every inordinate and unruly Appetite; to administer to the Wants and Necessities of the Helpless, and to embrace every man as our Kindred and Countryman, and though reputed a stranger to us, yet to own him as if by the Law of Nature he were our nearest Friend and Brother.

How much their Religion contributed to the Publick Tranquillity, by forbidding Pride, Passion, Covetousness, and such sins as are the great Springs of Confusion and Disturbance, Justin Martyr tells... the Emperours: As for Peace, (says he) we above all men in the World promote and further it; forasmuch as we teach that no Wicked man, no Covetous or Treacherous person, no Good or Vertuous man can lie hid from the Eye of God, but that every man is travelling either towards an Eternal Happiness or Misery, according to the desert and nature of his Works: and all men know
Part 3. know and believe this, no man would dare for a few moments to deliver up himself to vice and wickedness, knowing 'twould lead him on to the Condemnation of Everlasting Fire; but would rather by all means restrain himself, and keep within the bounds of Vertue, that he might obtain the rewards that are dispens'd by God, and avoid the Punishments that are inflicted by him. The truth is, our blessed Lord came not to inspire men with Principles of Revenge and Passion, to teach them to return evil for evil, but to encourage Love and Gentleness, to teach men to overcome by Suffering, and to obtain the reward by Meekness and Patience. Isidore the Pelusiot, treating of that place, To him that smites thee on the right cheek turn the other also, has this short discourse upon it: The great King of Heaven came down from above to deliver to the World the Laws of an Heavenly Conversation; which he has proposed in a way of Conflict and Striving, quite contrary to that of the Olympick Games. There he that fights and gets the better receives the crown; here he that is stricken and bears it meekly, has the Honour and Applause: there he that
Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

...nurns the other cheek, is celebrated in the theatre of Angels, for the Victory is measured not by Revenge, but by a wise and generous Patience. This is the new law of Crowns; this is the new way of Conflicts and Contentions.

Such was the Temper, such the Carriage, of Christians towards their enemies, and them that were without; within themselves they maintained the most admirable Peace and Harmony; and were in a manner of one heart and soul. They liv'd in the strictest Amity, and abhor'd all Division as a Plague and Firebrand. But because men's understandings not being all of one size, nor all Truths alike plain and evident, differences in men's judgments and opinions must needs arise; no Schism ever arose in the Church about any of the more considerable Principles of Religion, but it was presently bewailed with the universal resentment of all Pious and Good men, and the breach endeavoured to be made up; no ways left unattempted, no Methods of Persuasion omitted that might contribute to it.

When Novatus (or rather Novatian) V 7 had
Part 3. had made some disturbance in the Church of Rome concerning the receiving the
Lapsed into Communion, Dionysius (the
good Bishop of Alexandria) writes to
him to extinguish the Schism, tells him
'tis better to suffer anything than that
the Church of God should be rent in
pieces; that it's no less glorious, and
probably more illustrious, to suffer Martyrdom to keep Division out of the
Church, than to die for not Sacrificing
to Idols; for in the one case a man suf-
sfers Martyrdom onely upon his own ac-
count, but in the other he suffers for
the advantage and benefit of the whole
Church. And Cyprian positively affirms,
(according to the Apostles Resolution
of the Case) that without this Unity
and Charity a man cannot enter into Hea-
ven; and that although he should deli-
ver up himself to the flames, or cast his
body to wilde beasts, yet this would not
be the Crown of his Faith, but the Pu-
nishment of his falshood, not the glori-
ous exit of a Religious Vertue, but the
issue of Despair; such a one may be ki-
led, but he cannot be crowned. -----He
that rents the Unity of the Church,
destroyes the Faith, disturbs the Peace,
dissolves Charity, and profanes the Holy
Sac
Sacrament. How severely they brandished all Schism and Division in the Church, how industriously they laboured to take up all Controversies among Christians, and to reconcile dissenting brethren, to maintain Concord and Agreement amongst themselves, and to prevent all occasions of Quarrel and Dissention, might be easily made to appear out of the Writers of those times. Hence those Canonical Epistles (as they called them) where-with persons were wont to be furnished when going from one place to another; of which there were especially three sorts. First, Euvarex, or Commendatory Epistles, mentioned by S. Paul, and were in use amongst the Heathens. They were granted to Clergymen going into another Diocese by the Bishop that ordained them, testifying their Ordination, their Soundness and Orthodoxy in the Faith, the Innocency and Unblamableness of their Lives. To those that had been under, or had been suspected of Excommunication, declaring their Absolution, and recommending them to be received in the number of the faithful. Lastly, they were granted to all, whether Clergie or Lay, that were to travel, as Tickets of Hospitality, that
Part 3, wherever they came, upon the producing these Letters they might be known to be Catholic and Orthodox, and as such received and entertained by them. A piece of Prudence which Julian the Apostate admired in the Christian Constitution, the like whereof he endeavoured to establish in his Pagan Reformation. The Second sort were Ἀποστολικά, Letters Dimissory, whereby Leave was given to persons going into another Diocese, either to be ordained by the Bishop of that place, or if ordained already, to be admitted and incorporated into the Clergy of that Church. Upon which account the ancient Councils everywhere provide that no stranger shall either receive Ordination at the hands of another Bishop, or exercise any Ministerial act in another Diocese, without the consent and Dimissory Letters of the Bishop of that place from whence he comes. The third were Εἰρήνικα, Letters of Peace, granted by the Bishop to the Poor that were oppressed, and such as fled to the Church for its protection and assistance: but especially to such of the Clergy as were to go out of one Diocese into another, it being directed to the Bishop of that Dio-
Diocese, that he would receive him, that so he might take no offence, but that peaceable Concord and Agreement might be maintained between them. By these Arts the Prudence of those Times sought to secure the Peace of the Church, and as much as might be prevent all Diflentions that might arise. And where matters of any greater moment fell out, how quickly did they flock together to compose and heal them?

Hence those many Synods and Councils that were conven'd to umpire Differences, to explain or define Articles of Faith, to condemn and suppress the Disturbers of the Church, and Innovators in Religion. What infinite care did the good Emperour Constantine take for composing the Arrian Controversies which then began first to infect and overrun the World? How much his Heart was set upon it, his solicitous Thoughts taken up about it, how many troublesome Days and restless Nights it cost him, with what strong and nervous Arguments, what affectionate Intreaties he presses it, may be seen in that excellent Letter (yet extant in his Life) which he wrote to the Authors of those
Part 3. impious and unhappy Controversies.

But when this would not do, he sum-
om'd the great Council of Nice, cons-isting of three hundred and eighteen Bi-
shop's, and in his Speech at the opening
of that Council conjur'd them by all
that was dear and sacred to agree, and
to compose those Dissentions which
were risen in the Church, which he fe-
eriously protested he looked upon as
more grievous and dangerous than any
War whatsoever, and that they created
greater trouble and inquietude to his
Mind, than all the other Affairs of his
Empire. And when several of the Bi-
shop's then in Council had preferred
Libels and Accusations one against an-
other, without ever reading them he
bundled and sealed them all up toge-
ther, and having reconciled and made
them Friends, produc'd the Papers, and
immediately threw them into the Fire
before their Faces. So passionately de-
sirous was that good Prince to extin-
guish the Flames, and to redeem the
Peace of the Church at any rate.

Were any ejected and thrown out of
the Church, of which there might be
a suspicion of private Grudges or De-
signs, the Nicene Council wisely pro-
vided,
vided, that in every Province a Synod should be held twice a year, where all the Bishops meeting together might discuss the case, and compose the difference. Or (as Joseph the Egyptian in his Arabick Version of that Canon tells us) an Arbitrator was to be appointed between the differing Parties to take up the Quarrel, that it might not be a scandal to Religion.

Nor did there want meek and peaceable-minded men, who valued the publick welfare before any private and personal Advantage, and could make their own particular Concerns strike fail, when the Peace and Interest of the Church call'd for it. When great Contests and Confusions were raised by some perverse and unquiet persons about the See of Constantinople, (then possessed by Gregory Nazianzen) he himself stood up in the midst of the Assembly, and told the Bishops how unfit it was, that they who were Preachers of Peace to others, should fall out amongst themselves, begg'd of them even by the Sacred Trinity to manage their Affairs calmly and peaceably; and, If I (says he) be the Jonas that raises the Storm, throw me into the Sea, and let these storms
Part 3. Storms and tempests cease. I am willing to undergo what ever you have a mind to; and though innocent and unblamable, yet for your peace and quiet sake, am content to be banished the throne; and to be cast out of the City; only according to the Prophets counsel, be careful to love truth and peace: and therewith freely resigned his Bishoprick, though legally settled in it by the express Command and Warrant of the Emperour, and the universal desires and acclamations of the People.

The same excellent Temper ruled in S. Chrysostom, one of his Successors in that See; when having elegantly pressed the Unity of the Church, and refuted those petty Cavils which his Adversaries had made against himself: But if you (says he to his People) suspect these things of us, we are ready to deliver up our Place and Power to whomsoever you will; onely let the Church be preserved in peace and unity. This was the brave and noble disposition of Mind, to which S. Clemens sought to reduce the Corinthians, after they had fallen into a little Schism and disorder: Who is there among you (says he) of that generous Temper, that compassionate and charita-
ble Disposition? Let him say, if this Part 3: Sedition, these Schisms and Contentions have arisen through my means, or upon my account, I'll depart and be gone whithersoever you please, and will do what the People shall command; only let Christ's Sheepfold, together with the Elders that are placed over it, be kept in peace.

Nay, when Good men were most Zealous about the Main and Foundation Articles of Faith, so as sometimes rather to hazard peace than to betray the truth, yet in matters of indifferency, and such as only concerned the Rituals of Religion, they mutually bore with one another, without any Violation of that Charity which is the great Law of Christianity... Thus in that famous Controversie about the keeping of Easter, so much agitated between the Eastern and Western Churches, Irenæus in a Letter to Pope Victor (who of all that ever sat in that Chair had raised the greatest stirr about it) tells him, that Bishops in former times, however they differed about the Observation of it, yet always maintain'd an entire concord and fellowship with one another, the Churches being careful to maintain a peaceable communion,
Part 3. Union, though differing in some particular Rites and Ceremonies, yea even when their Rites and Customs seemed to clash by meeting together at the same place. Thus when Polycarp came to Rome from the Churches of the East to treat with Pope Anicetus about this and some other affairs, though they could not satisfy each other to yield the Controversie, yet they kissed and embraced one another with mutual endearments, received the Holy Communion together; and Anicetus (to do the greater Honour to Polycarp) gave him leave to celebrate and consecrate the Eucharist in his Church, and at last they parted in great peace and friendship; the difference of the Observation not at all hindering the Agreement and Harmony of the Churches, it being agreed amongst them by common consent (says Sozomen speaking of this passage) that in keeping this Festival they should each follow their own custom, but by no means break the peace and communion that was between them; for they reckoned it (says he) a very foolish and unreasonable thing, that they should fall out for a few Rites and Customs, who agreed in the main Principles of Religion.

The
The Christians of those times had too deeply imbibed that Precept of our Saviour, Love one another as I have loved you, to fall out about every nice and trifling Circumstance; no, when highliest provoked and affronted they could forbear and forgive their enemies, much more their brethren, and were not like the wafjif Philosophers amongst the Heathens, who were ready to fall foul upon one another for every petty and inconsiderable difference of Opinion that was amongst them. So Origen tells Celsus; Both amongst your Philosophers and Physicians (says he) there are Sells that have perpetual Feuds and Quarrels with each other; whereas we, who have entertained the Laws of the Blessed Jesus, and have learnt both to speak and to do according to his Doctrine, bless them that revile us; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat. Nor do we speak dire and dreadful things against those that differ from us in Opinion; and do not presently embrace those things which we have entertain'd; but (as much as in us lies) we leave nothing attempted that may persuade them to change for the better, and to give up them-
Chapter IV.
Of their Obedience and Subjection to Civil Government.

Magistracy the great Band of Publick Peace. This highly secured by Christianity. The Laws of Christ that way express and positive. Made good in his own practice, and the practice of his Apostles. The same Spirit in succeeding Ages, manifested out of Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Tertullian, and Origen.

tours a solemn part of their publick Worship. Their ready payment of all Customs and Tributes, and their Faithfulness in doing it. Christians such even under the heaviest Oppressions and Persecutions, and that when they had power to have righted and revenged themselves. An excellent passage in Tertullian to that purpose. The temper of the Christian Soldiers in Julian's Army. The famous story of Mauricius, and the Thebæan Legion under Maximianus reported at large out of Eucherius Lugdunensis. The injustice of the Charge brought against them by the Heathens, of being Enemies to Civil Government. Accused of Treason, Of their refusing to swear by the Emperor's genius. Their denying to sacrifice for the Emperor's safety, and why they did so. Their refusing to own the Emperor for Gods, and why. Their not observing the Solemn Festivals of the Emperors, and the reasons of it. Accused of Sedition and holding Unlawful Combinations. An account of the Collegia and Societies in the Roman Empire. Christianity forbidden upon that account. The
The Christian Assemblies no unlawful Conventions. A vast difference between them and the unlawful factions forbidden by the Roman Laws. Their confident challenging their Enemies to make good one Charge of Disturbance or Rebellion against them. Their Laws and Principles quite contrary. The Heathens themselves guilty of Rebellions and factions, not the Christians. The Testimony given them by Julian the Emperor. A reflection upon the Church of Rome for corrupting the Doctrine and Practice of Christianity in this affair. Their principles and policies in this matter. Bellarmines position, That 'tis lawful to depose Infidel and Heretical Princes, and that the primitive Christians did it not to Nero, Diocletian, &c. only because they wanted power, censured and refuted. This contrary to the avow'd principles of honest Heathens.

How much Christian Religion transcribed into the Lives of its Professors contributes to the Happiness of Men, not only in their single and private Capacities, but as to the publick Welfare of Humane Societies, and to the com-
common Interests and Conveniences of Part 3. Mankind, we have already discovered in several Instances; now because Magistracy and Civil Government is the great support and instrument of External Peace and Happiness, we shall in the last place consider how Eminent the first Christians were for their Submission and Subjection to Civil Government. And certainly there's scarce any particular Instance wherein Primitive Christianity did more triumph in the World, than in their Exemplary Obedience to the Powers and Magistrates under which they lived; honouring their Persons, revering their Power, paying their Tribute, obeying their Laws, where they were not evidently contrary to the Laws of Christ, and where they were, submitting to the most cruel Penalties they laid upon them with the greatest calmness and serenity of Soul. The truth is, one great design of the Christian Law is to secure the Interests of civil Authority; our Saviour has expressly taught us, that we are to give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsars, as well as unto God the things that are Gods. And his Apostles spoke as plainly as words could speak it; Let every
every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also, for they are God's Ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Where we may take notice both of the strictness and universality of the Charge, and (what is mainly material to observe) this Charge given the Romans at that time when Nero was their Emperor, who was not onely an Heathen Magistrate, but the first persecutor of Christians, a man so prodigiously brutish and tyrannical, that the whole scarce ever brought forth such another Monster, ἑξίλους μοιρήν ἀνθρώπων, as the Orator truly styles him, A Beast in the shape of a Man. The same Apostle amongst other Directions given to Titus for the discharge of his Office, bids him put the people in mind to be subject to principalities and
and powers, and to obey Magistrates. S. Pe-Part 3. ter delivers the same Doctrine to a tittle, Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King as Supreme, or unto Governours as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; for so is the will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

Such are the commands, and such was the practice of Christ and his Apostles. When a tax was demanded of him, though he was the Son of God, he refused not to pay tribute unto Cæsar, even when it put him to the expence and charges of a Miracle. When arraigned for his Life at Pilates Bar, he freely owned his Authority, and cheerfully submitted to that wicked and unrighteous Sentence, though able to command more than twelve legions of Angels for his Rescue and Deliverance. The Apostles, though unjustly scourged before the Council, yet made no tart Reflections, but went away rejoicing. When Herod had cut off S. James his Head, and consigned Peter in prison to the same Butchery and Execution, what arms did the Christians use, rise up and...
Part 3. put him out of the Throne, scatter libels, raise tumults or Factions in the City? Oh no, the Churches Weapons were prayers and tears, their only refuge in those evil times.

Nor did this excellent Spirit die with the Apostles; we find the same temper ruling in the succeeding Ages of Christianity. The Christians (says one of the Ancients) obey the Laws that are made, and by the Exactness of their Lives go beyond that Accuracy, which the Law requires of them; they love all men, though all men study to afflict and persecute them. Are there any (as Athenagoras concludes his Address to the Emperours) more devoted to you than we? who pray for the Happiness of your Government, that according to Right and Equity the Son may succeed his Father in the Empire, that your Dominions may be enlarged, and that all things may prosper that you take in hand; and this we do as that which turns both to yours and our own Advantage, that so under you leading a quiet and peaceable Life, we may cheerfully obey all those Commands which you lay upon us. S. Polycarp a little before his Martyrdom wrote to the Christians at
at Philippi, earnestly exhorting them all Part to obey their Rulers, and to exercise all Patience and Long-suffering towards them. And when he stood before the Proconsul, he told him, that this was the great Law of Christianity, that we are commanded by God to give all due Honour and Obedience to Princes and Potentates, such as is not prejudicial to us; i.e. (for so doubtless he means) such as is not contrary to the Principles of our Religion. Tertullian tells us, 'twas a solemn part of the Church Service in his time, to pray for the Happiness and Prosperity of the Princes under whom they liv'd: We pray (says he) for the Emperors, for the Grandees and Ministers of State, for the prosperity of the Age, for the quietness of Affairs, for the continuance of their Lives and Government; that God would give them a long Life, a secure Reign, an undisturbed House, powerful Armies, faithful Senators, honest Subjects, a quiet People, and indeed whatever they can wish for, either as Men or Emperors. They that think (says he) that we are not sollicitous about the safety of Princes, let them look into the Commands of God recorded in our Scriptures, which we freely expose to the View of all;
Part 3. there they'll find that we are enjoyn'd to pray for the happiness of our very enemies and persecutors; and who are so much such as they? And yet we are plainly and particularly commanded to pray for Kings, for Princes, and all that are in Authority, that the state of things may be quiet and peaceable. A Christian being an enemy to no man, is much less so to his Prince. Thus when Celsus seemed to object, as if the Christians refused to help the Emperours in their Wars, Origen answers, that they did really assist and help him, and that rather with divine than humane Weapons, according to the Command of the Apostle, I exhort, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for Kings and all that are in Authority. And he tells him, that the more Eminent any man is for Piety and Religion, he will be able to afford greater Assistance to his Prince, than a great many Armed Souldiers that stand ready to fight for him, and to destroy his Enemies.

For all customs and tributes none ever paid them more freely than they. For your taxes and tributes (says Justin Martyr to the Emperours) we are above all
all other men everywhere ready to Part 3. bring them in to your Collectors and Officers, being taught so to do by our great Master, who bad those that asked the question whether they might pay Tribute unto Caesar, to give unto Caesar the things that are Caesars, and unto God the things that are Gods. For which reason we worship none but God: and as for you, in all other things we cheerfully serve you, acknowledging you to be Emperours and Governours of Men, and praying that together with your Imperial Power you may have a wise and discerning Judgment and Understanding. If the Emperor command me to pay Tribute, (says another of their Apologists) I am ready to do it; if my Lord command me to serve and obey him, I confess my Obligation to it. Man is to be serv’d with that Respect that is due to Man; but God onely, who is Invisible and Incomprehensible, is to be religiously fear’d and honour’d: if commanded to deny him, I must disobey, and die rather than be found pernicious and ingratitude to him. So Tertullian tells them, that al-though they refused to pay the Taxes rated upon them for Maintenance of

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Part 3. the Heathen Temples, yet for all other Tributes they had cause to give the Christians thanks for so faithfully paying what was due, it being their Principle to abstain from defrauding of others; inasmuch, that should they examine their Accounts how much of the Assessments was lost by the fraud and couzenage of them of their own Party, they would easily find that the Christians denial to pay that one Tax was abundantly compensated and made up in their honest payment of all the rest. The truth is, they were admirably exact and conscientious, as in all their actions, so especially in those that related to the Publick, and concern'd their duty and obedience to their Rulers and Governors.

Nor were they thus onely in prosperous Times, but under the heaviest Persecutions, as indeed the Rod was seldom off their backs. The last mentioned Apologyst bids their Judges go on to butcher them, and tells them they did but force those souls out of their bodies, which were praying to God for the Emperours Happines, even while their Officers were doing of it. And Cyprian tells the Proconsul, that as badly
ly as they were used, yet they ceased Part 3. not to pray for the Overthrow and Ex-
pulsion of the Common Enemies, for reasonable Showers, and either for the removing or mitigating Publick Evils, begging of God day and night with the greatest instance and importunity for the Peace and Safety of their Per-
secutors, endeavouring to pacifie and propitiate God, who was angry with the Iniquities of the Age. Nor were they thus kind and good-natur'd, thus submissive and patient for want of Pow-
er, and because they knew not how to help it: Tertullian answers in this case, that if they thought it lawful to return evil for evil, they could in one night with a few Firebrands plentifully revenge themselves; that they were no small and inconsiderable Par-
ty, and that they needed not betake themselves to the little arts of skulking Revenges, being able to appear in the capacity of Open Enemies; that though but of yesterdays standing, yet they had filled all Places, all offices of the Empire; and what Wars were not they able to manage, who could so willingly give up themselves to be slain? Did not the Law of Christianity ob-
Part 3. oblige them to be killed rather than to kill; nay, that they need not take up Arms and rebel; for their Party was so numerous, that should they but agree together to leave the Roman Empire, and to go into some remote corner of the World, the loss of so many Members would utterly ruine it, and they would stand amazed and affrighted at that solitude and desolation that would ensue upon it, and have more enemies than loyal subjects left amongst them; whereas now they had the fewer enemies for having so many Christians.

The Christians then opposed not their Enemies with the Points of their swords, but with solid arguments and milde intreaties. Thus when Julian the Emperor urg'd his Army, which was almost wholly made up of Christians, to wicked Counsels and the Practices of Idolatry, they withstood him onely with prayers and tears, accounting this (says my Author) to be the onely Remedy against Persecution. So far were they from Resisting or Rebelling, that they could quietly die at the Emperours Command, even when they had Power lying at their foot. I cannot in this place omit the memorable Instance of
Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity.

of the Theban Legion, being so exceed-Part 3.
ingly apposite and pertinent to my pur-
pose, and so remarkable as no Age can
furnish out such another Instance; I shall
set down the story intirely out of the
Author himself, the account of their Mar-
tyrdom written by Eucherius Bishop of
Lyons, who assures us he received the re-
lation from very credible hands; and it
is thus:

Maximianus Caesar (whom Diocletian
had lately taken to be his Collegue in
the Empire) a bad man, and a bitter
Persecutor of the Christians, was sent
into France, to suppres a Mutiny and
Rebellion risen there; to strengthen his
Army there was added to it a Band of
Christians called the Theban Legion,
consisting (according to the manner of
the Romans) of six thousand six hundred
sixty Faithful, Expert, and Resolute
Souldiers. Coming to Octodurum (a place
in Savoy) and being ready to offer Sa-
crifice to the Gods, he causes his Ar-
my to come together, and commands
them under a great Penalty to swear
by the Altars of their Gods, that they
would unanimously fight against their
Enemies, and persecute the Christians,
as Enemies to the Gods; which the The-
bean
Part 3. The Legion no sooner understood, but they presently withdrew to Agaunum, (a place eight miles off, call'd at this day S. Mauritius, from Mauricius the Commander of the Legion; a place equally pleasant and strong; being encompassed about with craggy and inaccessible Rocks) to avoid if it might be the wicked and sacrilegious Command, and to refresh themselves, tired with so long a March; but the Emperor taking notice of the Army as they came to swear, quickly missed the Legion, and being angry sent Officers to them to require them forthwith to do it; who enquiring what it was that they were commanded to do, were told by the Messengers, that all the Souldiers had offered Sacrifices, and had taken the forementioned Oath, and that Caesar commanded them to return presently and do the like. To whom the Heads of the Legion mildly answered; That for this reason they left Oetodurus, because they had heard they should be forced to Sacrifice; that being Christians, and that they might not be defiled with the Altars of Devils, they thought themselves oblig'd to worship the living God, and to keep that Religion
gion which they had entertained in the Part 3: East to the last hour of their Life: that as they were a Legion they were ready to any Service of the War; but to return to him to commit Sacrilege as he commanded they could not yield.

With this Answer the Messengers returned and told the Emperour, that they were resolved not to obey his Commands; who being transported with anger, began thus to vent his passion: Do my Souldiers think thus to slight my Royal Orders, and the holy Rites of my Religion? Had they only despis'd the Imperial Majesty, it would have call'd for publick vengeance, but together with the contempt of me, an Affront is offered to Heaven, and the Roman Religion is as much despis'd as I am. Let the obstinate Souldiers know, that I am not onely able to vindicate my self, but to revenge the quarrel of my Gods. Let my faithful Servants make haste, and dispatch every tenth man, according as the Fatal lot shall fall upon him. By this equal death let those whose lot it shall be to die first, know how able Maximian is severely to revenge both himself and his Gods. With that the Command is given, the Executioners sent, the Emperours plea-
Part 3. pleasure made known, and every tenth man is put to death; who cheerfully offer'd their necks to the executioners, and the only contention amongst them was, who should first undergo that glorious death. This done, the Legion is commanded to return to the rest of the Army. Whereupon Mauricius the General of the Legion, calling it a little aside, thus bespake them: I congratulate (most excellent Fellow Souldiers) your courage and valour, that for the love of religion the command of Caesar has made no impression upon you; you have seen your Fellow Souldiers, with minds full of joy, undergoing a glorious death; how much afraid was I, left being arm'd (and how easie is it for such to do so) you should under a pretence of defending them have endeavour'd to hinder their happy Funerals. ——See, I am encompassed round with the bodies of my Fellow Souldiers, whom the dismal executioner has torn from my side; I am besprinkled with the blood of the Saints, my clothes dyed with the relics of their sacred blood; and shall I doubt to follow their death, whose example I so much congratulate, and admire? Shall I concern my self to think
think what the Emperor commands, Part 3. who is equally subject to the same law of Mortality with myself? ———— I remember we once took this military oath, that with the utmost hazard of our Lives we would defend the Commonwealth; this we then engaged to the Emperors, though no heavenly Kingdom was promised to us: and if we could promise this out of Devotion to a military Service, what then is to be done, when Christ promises so much to them that engage with him? Let us willingly expole our Lives to this most precious death; let us shew a Masculine Courage and an unviolated Faith. Methinks I see those Blessed Souls standing before Christ's Tribunal, whom the Emperors Officer just now banished out of their Bodies: that's the true glory which will recom Pence the shortness of this Life with a blessed Eternity. Let us by the Messengers unanimously return this Answer to the Emperor; We acknowledge, Cæsar, that we are your Souldiers, and took up Arms for defence of the Empire; nor did we ever basely betray our trust, or forsake our station, or deserv'd that the brand either of Fear or Cowardise should be set upon us; nor should
should we stick now to obey your Commands, did not the Laws of Christianity, wherein we have been instructed, forbid us to worship Devils, and to approach the polluted Altars of the Gods. We understand you are resolved either to defile us with Sacrilegious Worship; or to terrify us with a Decimation; spare any further search concerning us, know we are all Christians, our Bodies we yield subject to your Power, but our Souls we reserve entire for Christ the Author and the Saviour of them.

This was no sooner spoken, and universally agreed to by the Legion, but it was carried to the Emperor, who exasperated with such a Generous Resolution, commanded a second decimation, which was immediately executed, and the rest as before. commanded to return to Octodorus; hereupon Exuperius the Ensign catching up his Colours, thus addressed himself to them; You see me (most excellent Fellow Soldiers) holding these Ensigns of Secular Warfare; but these are not the arms that I call you to, these are not the Wars to which I excite your Courage and Valour; 'tis another kind of Fighting that we are to choose; they are not these swords that
that must make our way into the Heavenly Kingdom; we stand in need of an undaunted Mind, an invincible Defence, a maintaining the Faith which we have given to God, to the very last. ——-Let the dismal Executioner go and carry his Message to his bloody Master, and tell him thus; We are, O Emperor, your Soldiers, but withall (which we freely confess) the Servants of God; to you we owe Military Service, to him Innocency; from you we have received wages for our Labours, from him we had our very lives and beings: we cannot herein obey the Emperor so as to deny God, the Author of our Lives, yea and of yours too, whether you will or no. Nor is it, Sir, any Despair (which is always stoutest in greatest straits) that makes us thus resolute against you; we have (you see) arms, and yet make no resistance, choosing rather to die than to overcome, and deftious rather to perish innocent, than to live rebellious and revengeful. If you have a mind to appoint us to any greater and severer Torments, we are ready for them. Christians we are, and therefore cannot persecute those that are so. You must needs acknowledge the
the unconquerable Courage of this Legion; we throw down our Arms, your Officer will find our right hands naked, but our Breast armed with a true Catholick Faith. Kill us, and trample on us, we undauntedly yield our Necks to the Executioners Sword: these things are the more pleasant to us, while setting light by your Sacrilegious Attempts, we hasten apace to the Heavenly Crown.

Maximianus being told this, and despairing now to break their Constancy, commands his whole Army to fall upon them and cut them off, which they did accordingly without any difference of Age or Person, mangling their Bodies, and then taking the Spoils, the Emperor having so appointed, that who ever kill'd any of the Legion should have the Spoils of him whom he kill'd. And thus they died with their Swords in their Hands, when they might have preserved their Lives, (especially in a place so advantageous) by force of Arms, or to be sure have sold them at the dearest rate. This story I have been willing to set down the more at large, because so remarkable in all its Circumstances, and containing the most un-
unparallel'd Instance of Christian Piety. Part 3. and Submission, (next to that of our Blessed Saviour) that I think was ever known to the World.

This is the account of those Noble Menol. Gr. Martyrs: onely to prevent Mistakes we are to take notice, that there was another Mauritius Commander of a Legion in the East, (mentioned in the Greek Metanologies) who together with seventy of his Souldiers were condemned by, and suffered under this self-same Emperour Maximianus, for refusing to do Sacrifice; their Martyrdom being recorded by Simeon Metaphraistes, but the account quite different both as to persons and things from that which is here related.

By what has been said we may see the Injustice of that Charge which the Heathens sometimes laid upon the Christians, that they were disturbers of the Peace, and enemies to Civil Government; an Indictment so purely false, and without any shadow of a real pretence to cover it, that the ingenious Heathen in Minutius Felix (though raking up all the Calumnies he could find, and putting the deepest die upon every Charge which Wit and Eloquence could...
Part 3. could put upon it, yet) had not the face so much as once to mention it. But however, as groundless as it was, they were frequently charg'd with it. Sometimes they were accused of disloyalty and Treason, either because they would not swear by the Emperours genius, or not sacrifice for his safety, or not worship the Emperours as Divi, or Gods, or not celebrate their festivals in the same way with others. For the first, their refusing to swear by the Emperours genius, we have heard before what Tertullian answers to it, That it was in effect to give Divine Honour to Devils. To the second, their not sacrificing for the Emperours safety, he answers, That none sacrificed to so good purpose as they, for that they offered up Prayers to the True, Living, and Eternal God, for the Safety of the Emperours, that God, whom the Emperours themselves did above all others desire should be propitious and favourable to them, as from whom they knew they deriv'd their Government. For the third, their refusing to own the Emperours for Gods, he tells them, They could not do it, partly because they would not lie in saying so, partly because they durst not by
Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity.

by doing it mock and deride the Emperor, nay, that he himself would not be willing to be styled God, if he remembered that he was a man, it being Mans Interest to yield to God; that the Title of Emperor was great enough, and that he could not be call'd God, without being denied to be Emperor; that he was therefore great, because less than Heaven; and that if he would needs be a deity, he must shift conquer Heaven, lead God in Triumph, set guards in Heaven, and impose tribute upon that place. For the last, their not observing the solemn festivals of the Emperours, for which they were accounted Enemies to the publick, they pleaded that their Religion and their Conscience could not comply with that vanity, that luxury, and debauchery, and all manner of Excess and Wickedness that was committed at those times; that the publick joy was expressed by that which was a publick disgrace, and those things accounted honourable upon the solemn days of Emperours, which were unfit and uncomely to be done upon any days; and that there was little reason they should be accused for not observing that, where looseness of manners was ac-
Part 3. accounted loyalty, and the occasion of luxury a part of Religion.

Otherwhiles they were accused of sedition, and holding unlawful combinations, which arose upon the account of their Religious Assemblies, which their Enemies beheld as societies erected contrary to the Roman Laws. That we may the better apprehend what these societies were, (in the number whereof they reckoned the Christian Meetings) and how condemned by the Roman Laws, we are to know that in the Infancy of the Roman Commonwealth Numa Pompilius, to take away the Difference between the Sabines and the Romans, divided the People into Colleges and little Corporations, (answerable to which are our City Companies) according to their several trades and occupations, Goldsmiths, Dyers, Potters, Curriers, &c. which together with the City increased to a great number; (Panciroll out of both Codes gives us an account of thirty six) to these he assigned their several Halls, Times of Meeting, and Sacred Rites, and such Immunities as were most proper for them. But besides these appointed by Law, several Colleges in imitation
on of them were erected in most parts of the Empire, partly for the more convenient dispatch of business, but principally for the maintenance of mutual love and friendship. All these Societies had their Solemn Meetings, and customary feasts, which in time degenerated into great Excess and Luxury, insomuch that Varro in his time complained that the Excess and Prodigality of their Suppers made Provisions dear; and much more reason had *Tertullian to complain of it in his time. Answerable to these Colleges amongst the Romans were the ἓπειρα, or Societies amongst the Grecians, who also had their stated and common Feasts, such were the ἐθνικὴ amongst the Cre-tians, the νοστία at Lacedæmon, and so in other States of Greece. But these Meetings (those of them especially that were not settled either by the Decree of the Senate, or the Constitution of the Prince) partly by reason of their Number, and the great Confluence to them, partly by reason of their Luxurious Feasting, began to be looked upon by the State with a jealous eye, especially after that the Commonwealth was turned into a Monarchy, the Empe-

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Part 3. Mourns beholding them as fit nurseries to plant and breed up treasonable and rebellious designs, and therefore frequently forbade them under very severe Penalties. Thus Julius Caesar, who first laid the Foundation of the Empire, reduced these Colleges to the ancient standard, putting down all that were supernumerary and illegal; wherein he was also followed by his Successor Augustus; and the succeeding Emperours very often put out strict Edicts against them, prohibiting them as dangerous and unlawful Combinations.

Under the Notions of these Societies it was, that the Christian Congregations came to be forbidden; several persons confederated into a Combination, and constantly meeting at a common Feast rendering them suspicious to their Enemies. Hence Pliny giving the Emperour an account of the Christians, and especially of their assembling at their Solemn Feasts of Love, tells him, that they had forbore ever since, according to his Command, he had published an Edict to forbid the Heterie or Societies. And indeed the Christian Assemblies, whereat they usually had the Lords Supper, and their Love Feasts look-
looking somewhat like those illegal meetings, (especially as beheld with the eye of an enemy) it was the less wonder, if the Heathens accused them of hatching Treason, and the Magistrates proceeded against them as Contemners and Violators of the Law.

But to this the Christians answered, Tert. Apol. c.38. p.30. That their meetings could not be accounted amongst the unlawful factions, having nothing common with them; that indeed the Wisdom and Providence of the State had justly prohibited such Factions to prevent Seditions, which might thence easil[y] over-run and disquiet all Councils, Courts, pleadings, and all Meetings whatsoever. But no such thing could be suspected of the Christian Assemblies, who were frozen as to any ambitious designs of Honour or Dignity, strangers to nothing more than publick Affairs, and had renounced all Pretences to external pomps and pleasures: that if the Christian Assemblies were like others, there would be some reason to condemn them under the Notion of Factions; but to whose prejudice (say they) did we ever meet together? we are the same when together, that we are when asunder;
Part 3. der; the same united, as is every single person, hurting no man, grieving no man; and therefore that when such Honest, Good, Pious, and Chaste Men met together, it was rather to be called a Council than a Faction. To which Origen adds, That seeing in all their Meetings they sought nothing but Truth, they could not be said to conspire against the Laws, seeing they designed nothing but to get from under the power and tyranny of the devil; who had procured those Laws onely to establish his Empire faster in the World. For elsewhere he bids Celsus or any of his Party shew any thing that was seditious amongst the Christians: that their Religion arose not at first (as he fallly charg'd it) out of Sedition, might appear in that their Legislator had so severely forbidden Killing and Murder, and that the Christians would never have entertained such mild Laws, as gave their Enemies opportunities to kill them like Sheep delivered to the slaughter without making the least resistance. Thus Arnobius confidently challenges the Heathens whether they could reject Christianity upon the account of its raising Wars, Tumults, and Se-
Seditions in the World. No, those Part 3. were things which they might find nearer home. You defame us (says Tert. Ad Scap. tullian) with Treason against the Emperor, and yet never could any Albimians, Nigrians, or Cassians, (persons that had mutinied and rebelled against the Emperours) be found amongst the Christians; they are those that swear by the Emperours genii, that have offered Sacrifices for their safety, that have often condemned Christians; these are the men that are found Traitors to the Emperours. A Christian is no mans Enemy, much less his Prince; knowing him to be constituted by God, he cannot but love, revere, and honour him, and desire that he and the whole Roman Empire may be safe, as long as the World lasts. We worship the Emperor as much as is either lawful or expedient, as one that is next to God; we sacrifice for his safety, but 'tis to his and our God; and so as he has commanded, only by holy Prayer; for the great God needs no Blood or Sweet Perfumes, these are the banquets and repast of devils, which we do not only reject, but expel at every turn. But to say more concerning this, were to light a
Part 3. A candle to the Sun. Julian the Emperour (though no good friend to Christians, yet) thus far does them right, that if they see any one mutinying against his Prince, they presently punish him with great Severities.

And here we may with just reason reflect upon the Iniquity of the Church of Rome, which in this instance of Religion has so abominably debauched the Purity and Simplicity of the Christian Faith. For they not onely exempt the Clergie (where they can) from the Authority and Judgment of the secular Powers, whereby Horrible Enormities do arise, but generally teach, that a Prince once excommunicate, his Subjects are absolv’d from all Fealty and Allegiance, and he may with Impunity be deposed or made away. How shall such a Prince be thundred against with Curses and Deprivations, every bold and treacherous Priest be authorised to brand his Sacred Person with the odious Names of Infidel, Heretick, and Apostle, and be Apostolically licensed to slander and belibe him, and furnished with Commissions to free his Subjects from their Duty and Allegiance, and to allure them to take up Arms against him? And if these
these courses fail, and men still continue Part 3: Loyal, they have Disciples ready by secret or sudden Arts to send him out of the World. And if any man's Conscience be so nice as to boggle at it, his Scruples shall be removed, at worst it shall pass for a venial Crime, and the Pope perhaps (with the help of a Limitation that it be done for the Interest of the Catholic Cause) by his omnipotence shall create it Meritorious.

Cardinal Bellarmine (whose Wit and Learning were employed to uphold a tottering Cause) maintains it stiffly; and in express terms, that if a King be an Heretick or an Infidel, (and we know what they mean by that, nay he particularly names the reformed Princes of England amongst his Instances) and seeks to draw his Dominions unto his Sect; it is not onely lawful, but necessary, to deprive him of his Kingdom. And although he knew that the whole course of Antiquity would fly in the face of so bold an Affertion, yet he goes on to assert, that the reason why the Primitive Christians did not attempt this upon Nero, Dioclesian, Julian the Apostate, and the like, was not out of conscience, or that they boggled out of
Part 3. A sense of Duty, but because they wanted means and power to effect it. A bold piece of Falshood this, and how contrary to the plain and positive Laws of Christ, to the meek and primitive Spirit of the Gospel! But by the Cardinals leave it could not be for want of Power; for if (as Seneca observes) he may be master of any man's Life that undervalues his own, it was then as easy for a Christian to have slain Nero or Dioclesian, as it was of later times for Gerard to pistol the Prince of Orange, or Ravillac to stab the King of France. Nay, take one of his own Instances, Julian the Apostate, a Prince bad enough, and that left no Method unattempted to seduce his Subjects to Paganism and Idolatry, yet though the greatest part of his Army were Christians, they never so much as whispered a trea- sonable Design against him, using no other arms (as we noted out of Nazi- anzen) but prayers and tears. Had S. Paul been of their mind, he would have told the Christian Romans quite another story, and instead of bidding them be subject to Nero, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake, would have instructed them to take all oppor-
tunities to have murdered or deposed Part 3. him. But I shall not reckon up the Villanies they have been guilty of in this kind, nor pursue the odious and pernicious Consequences of their Doctrine and Practice. Thus much I could not but take notice of, being so immediately opposite to the whole tenor of the Gospel, and so great a scandal to Christianity. And I verily believe that had the Primitive Christians been no better Subjects than their Emperours were Princes, had they practised on them those bloody Artifices which have been common amongst those that call themselves the onely Catholics, that barbarous dealing would have been a greater curb to the flourishing of the Gospel than all the ten Persecutions. For how could an Impartial Heathen ever have believed their Doctrine to have been of God, had their Actions been so contrary to all Principles of Natural Divinity? Sure I am, Pagan Rome was in this case more orthodox, and their Pontifices far better Doctors of Divinity. Their Lex Julia (as Ul. Lib. 7. de Pian their great Lawyer tells us) allotted the same Penalty to sacrilege and treason; placing the one the very next step.
Part 3. Step to the other; thereby teaching us that they looked upon Treason against the Prince as an affront next to that which was immediately done against the Majesty of Heaven. And Marcellus the great Statesman in Tacitus lays it down for a Maxim, that Subjects may wish for good Princes, but ought to bear with any. And shame it is that any should call themselves Christians, and yet be found worse than they, their Principles and Practices more opposite to the known Laws of God and Nature, more destructive to the Peace and Welfare of Mankind.

CHAP. V.
Of their Penance, and the Discipline of the Ancient Church.

This why last treated of. The Church as a Society founded by Christ has its distinct Laws and Privileges. What the usual Offences that came under the Churches Discipline. All Immorality open or confessed. Lapsing into Idolatry the great sin of those Times. How many ways usually committed. The Traitors who, and their Crime. What
What Penalties inflicted upon delinquent persons. Delivering over to Satan, what. This extraordinary Concise Power why vested in the Church. The common and standing penalty by Excommunication. This practised amongst the ancient Gauls. An account of it out of Cæsar. In use amongst the Jews. Thence derived to the Christians. This Punishment how expressed by Church Writers. Managed according to the nature of the faults. The rigor of it sometimes mitigated. Delinquent Clergie-men degraded, and never admitted but to Lay-communion. Instances of it. An account of the rise of Novatianism, and the Severity of its Principles. Stil’d Cathari. Condemned by the Synod at Rome. Offenders in what manner dealt with. The Procedure of the action described by Tertullian. Penitents how behaving themselves during their Suspension. The greatest not spared. The Case of Philippus and Theodosius. This Severity why used. Penances called Satisfactions, and why. The use of the word [Satisfaction] in the ancient Fathers. Penitents how absolved. After what time. In the power of Bishops to extend or shorten these Penitentiary Humiliations. Four particular...
lar cases observed, wherein the time of Penance might be shortened. In what sense Communion is denied by some ancient Canons to Penitents at the hour of death. This Discipline administered primarily by Bishops. By his leave Presbyters and (in necessity) Deacons might absolve. The publick Penitentiary when and why instituted, when and why laid aside. Penitents taken into Communion by Martyrs and Confessors. This power abused to excess. Cyprians complaint of the excessive numbers of Libels of Peace granted by the Martyrs to the Lapsed, without the knowledge of the Bishop. The form of these Pacifick Libels exemplified out of Cyprian. Other sorts of Libels. The Libellatici who. Thurificati. Several sorts of Libellatici. The Libellatici properly so called. Their manner of Address to the Heathen Magistrate to procure their exemption from Sacrificing. That they did not privately deny Christ, proved against Baronius. The Piety and Purity of the Primitive Church matter of just admiration.
Having travelled through the several stages of the Subject I had undertaken, I should here have ended my journey; but that there one thing remains, which was not properly reducible under any particular Head, being of a general relation to the whole; and that is to consider what Discipline was used towards offenders in the ancient Church. Onely premising this, that the Christian Church being founded and established by Christ as a Society and Corporation distinct from that of the Commonwealth, is by the very nature of its Constitution (besides what positive ground and warrant there may be for it in Scripture) invested with an inherent Power (besides what is borrowed from the Civil Magistrate) of censoring and punishing its Members that offend against the Laws of it, and this in order to the maintaining its Peace and Purity. For without such a Fundamental Power as this, 'tis impossible that as a Society it should be able to subsist, the very nature of a Community necessarily implying such a Right inherent in it. Now for the better understanding what this Power was, and how exercised in the first Ages of the Church,
Part 3. Church, we shall consider these four things; What were the usual crimes that came under the Discipline of the Ancient Church; What penalties were inflicted upon delinquent persons; In what manner Offenders were dealt with; And by whom this Discipline was administered.

First, What the usual crimes and offences were which came under the Discipline of the Ancient Church. In the general they were any Offences against the Christian Law, any Vice or immorality that was either publick in itself, or made known and made good to the Church. For the holy and good Christians of those times were infinitely careful to keep the Honour of their Religion unspotted, to stifle every sin in its birth, and by bringing Offenders to publick shame and penalty, to keep them from propagating the malignant influence of a Bad Example. For this reason they watched over one another, told them privately of their faults and failures, and (when that would not do) brought them before the cognizance of the Church. 'Tis needless to reckon up particular Crimes, when none were spar'd. Onely because in those days (by reason of the violent Heats of Persecution,) the great
great Temptation which the weaker and Part 3. more unsettled Christians were exposed to, was to deny their Profession, and to offer sacrifice to the Heathen Gods; therefore lapsing into Idolatry was the most common sin that came before them, and of this they had very frequent Instances, it being that which for some Ages mainly exercised the Discipline of the Church. This sin of Idolatry or denying Christ in those times was usually committed these three ways: Sometimes by exposing the Scriptures to the rage and malice of their Enemies, which was accounted a virtual renouncing Christianity. This was especially remarkable under the Diocletian Persecution in the African Churches. For Diocletian had put forth an Edict that Christians should deliver up their Scriptures and the Writings of the Church to be burnt. This Command was prosecuted with great rigour and fierceness, and many Christians to avoid the storm delivered up their Bibles to the scorn and fury of their Enemies. Hence they were styled Tradiores, (of whom there is frequent mention in Optatus and S. Augustine) with whom the Orthodox refusing to joyn after the Persecution was over, the difference
Part 3.ence broke out into Schism and Factions, and gave birth to that unhappy Sect of the Donatists, which so much exercised the Christian Church. Otherwhiles Christians became guilty of Idolatry by actual sacrificing or worshipping Idols; these were called Thurnificati, from their burning Incense upon the Altars of the Heathen Deities, and were the grossest and vilest sort of Idolaters. Others again fell into this sin by basely corrupting the Heathen Magistrate, and purchasing a warrant of Security from him, to exempt them from the Penalty of the Law, and the necessity of sacrificing and denying Christ; these were called Libellatici, of whom we shall speak more afterwards.

Secondly, What penalties and punishments were inflicted upon delinquent persons, and they could be no other than such as were agreeable to the Nature and Constitution of the Church, which as it tranacts onely in spiritual matters, so it could inflict no other than spiritual Censures and Chastishments. 'Tis true indeed, that in the first Age especially, the Apostles had a power to inflict bodily punishments upon offenders, which they sometimes made use of upon great occasions, as S. Peter did towards ...
Ananias and Sapphira, striking them dead upon the place for their notorious couzenage and gross hypocrisy. And S. Paul punished Elymas with blindness for his perverse and malicious opposition of the Gospel; and this doubtless he primarily intends by his delivering over persons unto Satan, for no sooner were they excommunicated and cut off from the body of the Faithful, but Satan as the common Serjeant and Jaylor seized upon them, and either by actual possessing, or some other sign upon their Bodies, made it appear that they were delivered over into his power. This could not but strike a mighty terror into men, and make them stand in awe of the censures of the Church; and questionless the main design of the Divine Providence in affording this extraordinary gift was to supply the defect of Civil and Coercive Power, of which the Church was then wholly destitute, and therefore needed some more than ordinary assistance, especially at its first Constitution, some visible and sensible punishments, to keep its Sentence and Determinations from being slighted by bold and contumacious Offenders. How long this Miraculous Power lasted in the Church I know not, or whether at all
Part 3. All beyond the Apostles Age. The common and standing Penalty they made use of was Excommunication or Suspension from Communion with the Church; the cutting off and casting out an offending person as a rotten and infected member, till by Repentance and wholesome Discipline he was cured and restored, and then he was re-admitted into Church-society, and to a participation of the Ordinances and Privileges of Christianity.

This way of punishing by Excommunication was not originally instituted by our Lord or his Apostles, but had been anciently practised both amongst Jews and Gentiles. 'Twas commonly practised by the Druids, (as Cæsar, who lived amongst them, informs us) who, when any of the people became irregular and disorderly, presently suspended them from their Sacrifices. And the persons thus suspended were accounted in the number of the most impious and execrable persons. All men stood off from them, shunn'd their company and converse as an infection and a plague: they had no benefit of Law; nor any Honour or respect shewn unto them; and of all punishments this they accounted most extreme and severe. So far he; gi-
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

ying an account of this Discipline amongst the ancient Gauls. In the Jewish Church nothing was more familiar; their three famous degrees of Excommunication, נידין Niddui, שрем Cherem, שמחת Shammatha, are so commonly known, that 'twere impertinent to insist upon them. From the usage of the Jews it was amongst other Rites adopted into the Christian Church, practised by the Apostles, and the Churches founded by them, (whereof we have Instances in the New Testament) but brought to greater perfection in succeeding times. 'Tis variously expressed by the ancient Writers, though much to the same purpose. Such persons are said Abstineri, to be kept back, a word much used by Cyprian and the Synod of Illiberis; ἀποικεῖσθαι, to be separated, or to be separated from the body of Christ, as S. Augustine oft expresses it, ἐκκόλοθος τῶν κοινωνίων πνευμάτων, to be wholly cut off from Communion, as 'tis in the Apostolick Canons. Sometimes can. 28. πρωτότοκος in the κοινωνία, as the Laodicean Syn.-can. 28. nod calls it, to be thrown out of the Church, to be anathematiz'd, and without the Communion and Pale of the Church, as the Fathers of the Council of Gangra have it.

This
Part 3. This suspension and the penance that accompanied it was greater or less, longer or shorter, according to the nature of the crime, sometimes two, three, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty years, and sometimes for the whole life; nay, in some cases it was not taken off at death, but persons were left to the judgment of God, without any testimony of their reconciliation to the Church. Though herein the severity was mitigated, not only by private bishops, but by the great council of Nice, which ordained, that penitent persons should not be denied the communion at the hour of death. Of all which cases, or the most material of them, we have in the foregoing discourse produced particular instances in their proper places. If the person offending happened to be in orders, he forfeited his ministry; and though upon his repentance he was restored to communion, yet it was only as a lay person, never recovering the honour and dignity of his office. Thus Cornelius bishop of Rome giving Fabius of Antioch an account of the clancular and schismatical ordination of Novatian, tells him, that one of the bishops that ordained him return'd after to the church, with tears be-
bewailing his offence, whom at the instance of the people he received into lay communion. The same Cyprian writing about this very case relates of Trophimus Epist. 52. p. (who was either the very Bishop mentioned by Cornelius or one of his colleagues) that returning to the Church with great demonstrations of Repentance he was re-admitted, but no otherwise than in the capacity of a Layman. And speaking elsewhere of Basilides his Repentance, he tells us, he had no thoughts of retaining his Bishoprick, making account he was very well dealt with, if upon his Repentance he might but communicate as a Laick, and be received amongst the number of the Faithful. This S. Basil tells us was an ancient Canon and Practice of the Church, and accordingly ordains, that a Deacon guilty of Fornication should be deposed from his Office, and being thrust down into the rank of the Laity, should in that quality be admitted to Communion.

Indeed they strove by all ways imaginable to discourage sin, never thinking the Curb strong enough, so they might but keep persons within the bounds of Order and Regularity; inomuch that by some the string was stretched too far, and
and all pardon denied to them that had
sinned. This uncomfortable Doctrine was
if not first coined, yet mainly vended, by
the Novatian Party. For Novatus, S.Cyprians
Presbyter, being suspended by
him for his vile Enormities fled over to
Rome, and there joyn'd himself to No-
vatian a Presbyter of that Church, (these
two Names are frequently confounded
by the Greek Writers) who ambitiously
fought to make himself Bishop, and to
thrust out Cornelius newly elected into
that See; but not being able to compass
his design, between them they started
this amongst other heretical Opinions,
That the Lapsed (who through fear of
Suffering had fallen in the time of Per-
secution) were not to be admitted to repen-
tance, and that though they should
never so oft confess their sins, and never
so sincerely forsake them, yet there was
no hope of Salvation for them, at least-
wise (for so I incline to understand
them) that it was not in the Power of
the Church to absolve or give them any
hopes of Pardon, leaving them to the
judgment of God; styling themselves
(and not onely as Balsamon affirms, iron-
ically styling by others) by the Name of
Cathari, the pure and undefiled Party.
Ch.5: Primitive Christianity.

But they were herein presently condemned by a Synod of sixty Bishops, and more than as many Presbyters and Deacons gathered at Rome, (and the Decree consented to and published by the rest of the Bishops in their several Provinces) concluding that Novatus and his Party, and all that had subscribed to his most inhumane and merciless Opinion, should be cast out of the Church; and that the Brethren who in that sad Calamity had fallen from their Profession, should be healed and restored by the arts and methods of Repentance. Which brings us to consider,

Thirdly, How and in what manner Offenders were dealt with, both as to their Suspension and penance; and as to their Absolution. This Affair was usually manage after this order; at their Publick Assemblies (as we find in Tertullian) A.D. 394. amongst other parts of their holy Exercises, there were Exhortations, Reproofs, and a divine censure; for the judgment is given with great weight, as amongst those that are sure that God beholds what they do; and this is one of the highest preludiums and forerunners of the judgment to come, when the delinquent person is banished from the Communion.
Prmtive Christianity. Ch. 5.

Part 3. Munion of Prayers, Assemblies, and all holy commerce. By this passage we clearly see, that the first thing in this solemn action was to make reproofs and exhortations, thereby to bring the Offender to the right and acknowledgment of his Faults; then the sentence or censure was passed upon him, whereby he was suspended, not only from the Communion of the Holy Eucharist, but from all holy commerce in any (especially publick) Duty of Religion. We cannot imagine, that in every person that stood under this capacity, a formal sentence was always denounced against him, it being many times sufficient, that the fact he had done was evident and notorious, as in the case of the lapsed that had offered Sacrifice, for in this case the Offender was look'd upon as ipso facto Excommunicate, and all Religious Commerce forborn towards him. 'Tis true, that in some cases the Martyrs (as we shall see more anon) finding such Lapsed persons truly penitent did receive them into private Communion, so did those Martyrs Dionysius Alexandrinus speaks of in his Letter to Fabius Bishop of Antioch, they took the Penitents that had fallen into Idolatry into their company, and communicated.
municated with them both at Prayers and Meals; but to publick Communion they were never admitted till they had exactly fulfilled the Discipline of the Church which principally consisted in many severe acts of Repentance and Mortification, more or less according to the nature of the Offence.

During this space of Penance they appeared in all the Formalities of Sorrow and Mourning, in a fordid and squalid Habit, with a sad Countenance, and a Head hung down, with Tears in their eyes, standing without at the Church doors, (for they were not suffered to enter in) falling down upon their knees to the Ministers as they went in, and begging the Prayers of all good Christians for themselves, with all the Expressions and Demonstrations of a sorrowful and dejected Mind, reckoning the lower they lay in repentance, the higher it would exalt them; the more fordid they appeared, the more they should be cleansed and purified; the less they spared themselves, the more God would spare them. At these times also they made open confession of their Faults, this being accounted the very spring of Repentance, and without which they conclu-
Part 3. ded it could not be real: Out of confession (says Tertullian) is born repentance, and by repentance God is pacified. And therefore without this neither Riches nor Honour would procure any admission into the Church. Thus Eusebius reports, that when Philippus the Emperor would have gone in with the rest of the Christians upon Easter Eve, to have partaken of the Prayers of the Church, the Bishop of the place would by no means suffer it, unless he first made confession of his sins, and passed through the Order of the Penitents, being guilty of very, great and enormous sins; which 'tis said he very willingly submitted to, testifying by his actions his real and religious fear of the Divine Majesty. This story, though as to the main of it, it might be true, yet as fastned upon Philip the Emperor, I have formerly shewed it to be false, and that it's rather meant of one Philippus, who was Governor in Egypt, and professed himself a Christian; but however this was, 'tis certain that a person as great as he, Theodosius the Great, for his bloody and barbarous Slaughter of the Thessalonians, was by S. Ambrose Bishop of Milan suspended, brought to publick Confession, and forced to undergo
go a severe course of Penance for eight moneths together; when after great demonstrations of a hearty Sorrow and sincere Repentance, not more rigidly imposed upon him, than readily and willingly received by him, after his usual Prostrations in the Church, (as if unworthy either to stand or kneel) crying out in the words of David, My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word; after having oft torn his hair, beat his forehead, water'd his cheeks with tears, and humbly beg'd peace and pardon, he was absolved, and restored to Communion with the Church; of which passage they who would know more may find the story largely related by Theodoret.

This Severity was used towards Offenders, partly to make them more sensible of their sins, partly to affright and deter others, but principally to give satisfaction both to God and his Church concerning the reality and sincerity of their Repentance. Hence it is that these Penances in the Writings of those times are so often called Satisfactions; for when ever those Fathers use the word, 'tis either with respect to Men or God; if to Men, then the meaning is, that by these...
Part 3. external acts of Sorrow and Mortification they satisfy the Church of their Repentance, and make reparation for those offences and scandals which they had given by their sins: if to God, then it is taken for the acknowledgment of a man's fault, and the begging of pardon and remission. Thus Cyprian speaking of the state of impenitent sinners, aggravates it by this, that they do peccare, nec satisfacere, sin, but make no satisfaction; i.e. (as in the very next words he explains it) they do not peccata defere, confess and bewail their sins. And before, discoursing about God's being the only object of tears and sorrow for sin, which is to be addressed to God and not Man, he tells us 'tis God that is to be appeased by satisfaction, that he being greatly offended is to be intreated by a long and full Repentance, as being alone able to pardon those sins that are committed against him. So that the satisfaction which they reckon'd they made to God consisted in seeking to avert his displeasure, and to regain his forfeited favour by a deep contrition and sorrow for sin, by a real acknowledgment and forsaking of their faults, and by a humble giving to God the glory both of his Mercy and his
his Justice. Thence Confession is called by Tertullian the counsel or intend-}

ement of Satisfaction. And a little after he describes it thus; Confession (says he) is that whereby we acknowledge our offence to God, not as if we were ignorant of it, but in as much as by confession satisfaction is forwarded, by confession repentance is produced, and by repentance God is appeased. The same both he, Cyprian, and others, frequently use in the same sense; which I note the rather because of that absurd and impious Doctrine so current amongst the Papists, and which they pretend to derive from these very Fathers, that by works of penance compensation is made to God for the debt of punishment that was contracted, whereby at least the temporal penalties due to them are meritoriously expired and done away. But this, besides that it is flatly repugnant to the Doctrine of Antiquity, how much 'tis derogatory to the honour of Divine Grace, and the infinite satisfaction of the Son of God, I shall not now stand to dispute. To return therefore: This term of Penance was usually exacted with great rigor, and seldom dispensed with, no Indulgence or Admission being granted till the full time was completed.
Part 3. Therefore Cyprian smartly chides with some Presbyters, who had taken upon them to absolve the Lapsed before their time; and that whereas in lesser offences men were obliged to the just time of Penance, and to observe the order of Discipline, they in a crime of so heinous a nature had hand over head admitted them to Communion before they had gone through their Penance and Confession, and fulfilled the regular Customs and Orders of the Church.

The time of Penance being ended, they addressed themselves to the Governors of the Church for Absolution, hereupon their Repentance was taken into examination, and being found to be sincere and real, they were openly readmitted into the Church by the Imposition of the Hands of the Clergy, the Party to be absolved kneeling down between the knees of the Bishop, or in his absence of the Presbyter, who laying his Hand upon his Head solemnly blessed and absolved him; whence doubtless sprang that absurd and senseless Calumny which the Heatlens laid upon the Christians, that they were wont Sacerdotes colere genitalia; so forward were they to catch at any Reproach which the most crooked and
and malicious Invention could insinuate Part 3. and suggest. The Penitent being absolved, was received with the universal joy and acclamation of the people, as one returned from the state of the dead, (for such 'tis plain they accounted them while under a state of guilt, especially the Lapsed, as Cyprian positively affirms them to be) being embraced by his Brethren, who blessed God for his return, and many times wept for the joy of his recovery, who upon his Absolution was now restored to a Participation of the Lords Supper, and to all other acts of Church Communion, which by his Crimes he had forfeited, and from which he had been suspended, till he had given satisfactory evidence of his Repentance, and purpose to persevere under the exact Discipline of Christianity. This was the ordinary way wherein they treated criminals in the Primitive Church; but in cases of necessity, (such as that of Danger of Death) they did not rigidly exact the set time of Penance, but absolved the person, that so he might die in the Peace and Communion of the Church. The story of Serapion at Alexandria we have formerly mentioned, who being suddenly surprised with death
Part 3. Death while he was under the state of Penance, and not being able to die till he had received Absolution, sent for the Presbyter to testify his repentance and absolve him; but he being also at that time sick, sent him a part of the consecrated Elements which he had by him, upon the receiving whereof he breathed out his soul with great comfort and satisfaction, that he now died in Communion with the Church.

The truth is, the time of these Penitentiary Humiliations often varied according to the circumstances of the case, it being much in the power of the Bishops and Governours of the Church to shorten the time, and sooner to absolve and take them into Communion, the medicinal virtue of Repentance lying not in the duration, but the manner of it; as St. Basil speaks in this very case. A Learned man has observed to my hand four particular Cases wherein they were wont to anticipate the usual time of Absolution: The first was, (what I observed but now) when persons were in danger of death; this was agreed to by Cyprian, and the Martyrs, and the Roman Clergy, and the Letters (as he tells us) sent through the whole World to all the Chur-
Churches. This also was provided for Part 3. by the great Council of Nice, That as can.13. for those that were at the point of death, the ancient and Canonical Rule should be observed still, that when any were at the point of death, they should by no means be deprived of the last and necessary viaticum, i.e. the Holy Sacrament, which was their great symbol of Communion. And here for the better understanding some Passages it may not be unuseful once for all to add this Note, That whereas many of the ancient Canons (of the Illiberine Council especially) positively deny Communion to some sorts of Penitents even at the hour of death, they are not to be understood, as if the Church mercilessly denied all indulgence and absolution to any Penitent at such a time, but only that it was thought fit to deny them the use of the Eucharist, which was the great pledge and testimony of their Communion with the Church.

The second Case was in time of eminent Persecution, conceiving it but fit at such times to dispense with the rigor of the Discipline, that so Penitents being received to the grace of Christ, and to the Communion of the Church, might be
be the better armed and enabled to contend earnestly for the Faith. This was resolved and agreed upon by Cyprian and a whole Council of African Bishops, whereof they give an account to Cornelius Bishop of Rome, that in regard Persecution was drawing on, they held it convenient and necessary, that Communion and Reconciliation should be granted to the lapsed, not only to those that were a dying, but even to the living, that they might not be left naked and unarmed in the time of Battle, but be able to defend themselves with the shield of Christ's Body and Blood. For how (say they) shall we teach and persuade them to shed their blood in the Cause of Christ, if we deny them the benefit of his Blood? How shall we make them fit to drink the cup of Martyrdom, unless we first admit them in the Church to a right of Communication to drink of the cup of the Blood of Christ? A third Case wherein they relaxed the Severity of this Discipline was, when great multitudes were concerned, or such persons as were likely to draw great Numbers after them; in this case they thought it prudent and reasonable to deal with persons by somewhat milder and gentler methods;
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

... thods, left by holding them to terms of Part 3. Rigor and Austerity, they should pro-
voke them to fly off either to Heathens or to Heretics. This course Cyprian tells us he took, he complied with the neces-
sity of the times, and like a wise Physi-
cian yielded a little to the Humour of the Patient, to provide for his health, and to cure his wounds; and quotes herein the Example of Cornelius of Rome, who dealt just so with Trophimus and his Par-
ty; and elsewhere, that out of an earnest desire to regain and settle the Bre-
thren, he was ready to connive at many things, and to forgive any thing, and did not examine and exact the greatest Crimes with that full Power and Severity that he might; insomuch that he thought he did almost offend himself in an over-liberal remitting other mens of-
fences. Lastly, in absolving Penitents, and mitigating the rigors of their Re-
pentance, they used to have respect to the person of the Penitent, to his dignity, or age, or infirmity, or the course of his past life; sometimes to the greatness of his humility, and the impression which his present condition made upon him. Thus the Ancyran Council impowers Bishops to examine the manner of mens Conv...
Part 3. Penance and Repentance, and accordingly either to moderate or enlarge their time of Penance, but especially that regard be had to their Conversation both before and since their Offence, that so Clemency and Indulgence may be extended to them. So for the case of persons of more than ordinary rank and dignity, or of a more tender and delicate constitution, Chrysostom determines, that in chastising and punishing their Offences they be dealt with all in a more peculiar manner than other men, lest by holding them under over-rigorous Penalties they should be tempted to fly out into despair, and so throwing off the Reins of Modesty, and the Care of their own Happiness and Salvation, should run headlong into all manner of Vice and Wickedness. So wisely did the Prudence and Piety of those times deal with Offenders, neither letting the Reins so loose as to patronize presumption, or encourage any man to flia, nor yet holding them so strait as to drive men into despair.

The fourth and last Circumstance concerns the persons by whom this Discipline was administered: now though 'tis true, that this Affair was managed in the pub-
lick Congregation, and seldom or never Part done without the consent and approbation of the people, (as Cyprian more than once and again expressly tells us,) yet was it ever accounted a ministerial act, and properly belonged to them. Tertullian speaking of Church Censures adds, That the Elders that are approvd, and have attain'd that Honour, not by Purchase but Testimony, preside therein. And Firmilian Bishop of Cæsarea Cappadocia in a Letter to S. Cyprian, speaking of the Majores natu, the Seniors that preside in the Church, tells us, that to them belongs the power of Bapizing, Imposing Hands, (viz. in Penance and Ordination.) By the Bishop it was primarily and usually administered, the determining the time and manner of Repentance, and the conferring Pardon upon the penitent Inner, being acts of the highest Power and Jurisdiction, and therefore reckoned to appertain to the highest Order in the Church. Therefore it is provided by can. 32:4, the Illiceine Council, that Penance shall be prescribed by none but the Bishop; only in case of necessity, such as Sickness and Danger of Death, by leave and command from the Bishop, the Presbyter or Deacon might impose Penance and Absolve.
Accordingly we find Cyprian amongst other Directions to his Clergy how to carry themselves towards the Lapsed, giving them this, that if any were overtaken with sickness or present danger, they should not stay for his coming, but the sick person should make Confession of his sins to the next Presbyter, or (if a Presbyter could not be met with) to a Deacon, that so laying hands upon him he might depart in the peace of the Church.

But though while the number of Christians were small, and the bounds of particular Churches little, Bishops were able to manage these and other parts of their Office in their own persons, yet soon after the task began to grow too great for them; and therefore about the time of the Decian Persecution, when Christians were very much multiplied, and the number of the Lapsed great, it seemed good to the Prudence of the Church, partly for the ease of the Bishop, and partly to provide for the modesty of persons in being brought before the whole Church to confess every crime, to appoint a publick penitentiary, (some holy, grave, and prudent Presbyter) whose Office it was to take the Confession of those
Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

those sins which persons had committed Part 3. after baptism, and by Prayers, Fastings, and other Exercises of Mortification, to prepare them for Absolution. He was a kind of Censor morum, to inquire into the Lives of Christians, to take an account of their Failures, and to direct and dispose them to repentance. This Office continued for some hundreds of years, till it was abrogated by Nectarins (S.Chrystom's Predecessor in the See of Constantinople) upon the occasion of a notorious scandal that arose about it. A Woman of good rank and quality had been with the Penitentiary, and confessed all her sins committed since Baptism; he enjoyn'd her to give up her self to Fasting and Prayer; but not long after she came to him and confessed, that while she was conversant in the Church to attend upon those holy Exercises, she had been tempted to commit folly and lewdness with a Deacon of the Church, whereupon the Deacon was immediately cast out; but the People being exceedingly troubled at the scandal, and the Holy Order hereby exposed to the scorn and derision of the Gentiles, Nectarins, by the advice of Endemon a Presbyter of that Church, wholly took away the Office of the
Part 3. the publick Penitentiarie, leaving every one to the care and liberty of his own Conscience to prepare himself for the holy Sacrament. This account Socrates assures us he had from Eudamon's own mouth. And Sozomen adds, that almost all Bishops followed Nectarius his example in abrogating this Office.

But besides the ordinary and standing Office of the Clergy we find even some of the Laity, the Martyrs and Confessors, that had a considerable hand in absolving Penitents, and restoring them to the Communion of the Church. For the understanding of which we are to know, that as the Christians of those times had a mighty reverence for Martyrs and Confessors, as the great Champions of Religion, so the Martyrs took upon them to dispense in extraordinary cases; for it was very customary in times of Persecution for those, who through fear of suffering had lapsed into Idolatry, to make their Address to the Martyrs in prison, and to beg peace of them, that they might be restored to the Church; who, considering their petitions, and weighing the circumstances of their case, did frequently grant their requests, mitigate their Penance, and by a note signified un-
der their Hands signify what they had done to the Bishop, who taking an account of their condition, absolved and admitted them to Communion. Of these Libelli, or Books granted by the Martyrs to the lapsed, there is mention in Cyprian at every turn, who complains they were come to that excessive number, that thousands were granted almost every day: This many of them took upon them to do with great smartness and authority, and without that respect that was due to the Bishops, as appears from the note written to Cyprian by Lucian in the name of the Confessors; which because 'tis but short, and withall shews the form and manners of those pacifick Libels, it may not be amiss to set it down; and thus it runs: All the Confessors to Cyprian the Bishop, greeting. Know that we have granted peace to all those, of whom you have had an account what they have done, how they have behaved themselves since the commission of their crimes; and we would that these presents should be by you imparted to the rest of the Bishops. We wish you to maintain peace with the holy Martyrs. Written by Lucian of the Clergie, the Exorcist and Reader being present. This was looked upon as very peremptory and magisterial, and there-
therefore of this confidence and presumption, and carelessness in promiscuously granting these letters of peace, Cyprian not without reason complains in an Epistle to the Clergy of Rome.

Besides these Libels granted by the Martyrs, there were other Libelli granted by Heathen Magistrates, (of which it may not be impertinent to speak a little) whence the Lapsed that had had them were commonly called Libellatici, and they were of several sorts; some writing their Names in Libellis, in Books, and professing themselves to worship Jupiter, Mars, and the rest of the Heathen Gods, presented them to the Magistrate; and these did really sacrifice, and pollute not their souls only, but their hands and their lips, with unlawful Sacrifices, as the Clergy of Rome expresses it in a Letter to S. Cyprian; these were called Thurificati and Sacrificati, from their having offered Incense and Sacrifices. Somewhat of this nature was that Libel that Pliny speaks of in his Epistle to the Emperor Trajan, presented to him while he was Proconsul of Bithynia, containing a Catalogue of the names of many, some whereof had been accused to be Christians and denied it, others confessed they had been
so some years since, but had renounced Part 3.
i t; all of them adoring the Images of
the Gods and the Emperour's Statue, of-
fering Sacrifice; and blaspheming Christ;
and were accordingly dismissed and re-
leased by him. Others there were who
did not themselves sign or present any
such Libels, but some Heathen Friends
for them, (and sometimes out of kindness
they were encouraged to it by the Ma-
gistrates themselves) and were hereupon
released out of prison, and had the fa-
vour not to be urged to Sacrifice. Nay,
Dionysius of Alexandria speaks of some
Masters, who to escape themselves com-
pelled their servants to do Sacrifice for
them, to whom he appoints a three years
Penance for that sinful compliance and
dissimulation. A third sort there was,
who finding the edge and keenness of
their Judges was to be taken off with a
Summe of money, freely confessed to them
that they were Christians and could not
Sacrifice, prayed them to give them a Li-
bel of Dismission, for which they would
give them a suitable Reward. These
were most properly called Libellatici and
Libellati. Cyprian acquaints us with the
manner of their Address to the Heathen
Magistrate, bringing in such a person
thus,
Part 3. thus speaking for himself: I had both read and learnt from the Sermons of the Bishop, that the Servant of God is not to sacrifice to Idols, nor to worship Images; wherefore that I might not do what was unlawful, having an opportunity of getting a Libel offered, (which yet I would not have accepted had it not offered it self) I went to the Magistrate, or caused another to go in my name and tell him, that I was a Christian, and that it was not lawful for me to sacrifice, nor to approach the Altars of the Devils, that therefore I would give him a Reward to excuse me, that I might not be urged to what was unlawful. These, though not altogether so bad as the Sacrificati, yet Cyprian charges as guilty of implicate Idolatry, having defiled their Consciences with the purchase of these Books, and done that by consent which others had actually done.

I know Baronius will needs have it (and boasts that all that had written before him were mistaken in the case) that these Libellatici were not exempted from denying Christ, nor gave money to that end; that they onely requested of the Magistrate, that they might not be compelled to offer Sacrifice, that they were
were ready to deny Christ, and were willing to give him a reward to dispense with them only so far, and to furnish them with a Libel of Security, and that they did really deny him before they obtained their Libel. But nothing can be more plain both from this and several other passages in Cyprian, than that they did not either publicly or privately sacrifice to Idols, or actually deny Christ; and therefore bribed the Magistrate, that they might not be forced to do what was unlawful. And hence Cyprian argues them as guilty by their wills and consent, and that they had implicitly denied Christ, how? by actually doing it? No, but by pretending they had done what others were really guilty of. Certainly the Cardinals mistake arose from a not right understanding the several sorts of the Libellatiti, the first whereof (as we have shewn) did actually sacrifice and deny Christ.

And now having taken this View of the Severity of Discipline in the Ancient Church, nothing remains but to admire and imitate their Piety and Integrity, their infinite Hatred of Sin, their Care and Zeal to keep up that Strictness and Purity of Manners that had rendred their ...
Part 3. Religion so Renowned and Triumphant in the World. A Discipline, which how happy were it for the Christian World, were it again resettled in its due power and vigour! which particularly is the judgment and desire of our own Church concerning the Solemn Quadragesimal Penances and Humiliations: In the Primitive Church (says the Preface to the Communion) there was a godly Discipline, that at the beginning of Lent such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open Penance, and punished in this World, that their Souls might be saved in the Day of the Lord; and that others admonished by their example might be the more afraid to offend. Which said Discipline it is much to be wish'd might be restored again.

FINISH
# A Chronological Index of the Authors cited in this Book.

According to the Vulgar Computation; with an account of the Editions of their Works.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Editions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apostolo-Canones Constitutiones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Par.1618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clemens Romanus</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oxon.1633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionysius Areopagita</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Antw.1634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignatius Antiochenus</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td>Amfter.1646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polycarpus</td>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lond.1647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdias Babylonius</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>apud Euseb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jutinus Martyr</td>
<td>155</td>
<td></td>
<td>Par.1566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smyrnensis Ecclesia</td>
<td>168</td>
<td></td>
<td>Par.1636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melito Sardensis</td>
<td>170</td>
<td></td>
<td>apud Euseb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athenagoras</td>
<td>170</td>
<td></td>
<td>Par.1636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionysius Corinth. Episc.</td>
<td>172</td>
<td></td>
<td>apud Euseb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theophilus Antioch.</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
<td>Par.1636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatianus</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
<td>ibid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers</th>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>Commentaries</th>
<th>Editions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hegesippus</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
<td>apud Euseb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irenee</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>adv. Heresies</td>
<td>Par. 1639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polycrates Ephes. Episc.</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>Epistol.</td>
<td>apud Euseb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrullianus</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>Opera</td>
<td>Par. 1664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clemens Alexandrinus</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>Opera</td>
<td>Par. 1641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutius Felix</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>Octavius</td>
<td>Par. 1668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origenes</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>Opera Lat.</td>
<td>Par. 1634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contra Cel.</td>
<td>Cant. 1638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregorius Nycephor.</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mogn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprianius</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td>Par. 1668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornelius Papa</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td>apud Cypr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firmilianus</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>Epistol.</td>
<td>apud Cypr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontius Diaconus</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>Vit. Cypr.</td>
<td>apud Euseb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionysius Alexander</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>Epistol.</td>
<td>Par. 1668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnobius</td>
<td>297</td>
<td></td>
<td>L. Bat. 1660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laconianus</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td>Par. 1668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commodianus</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>Opit. Gentes.</td>
<td>apud Euseb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constatinius M.</td>
<td>325</td>
<td></td>
<td>Par. 1528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eusebius Caesarienensis</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>Orat. ad SS.</td>
<td>Par. 1659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>de Præp. Evang.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hæstor. Eccl.</td>
<td>Par. 1631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>de locis Hebr.</td>
<td>Amst. 1658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heidelb. 1601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athanasius</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>Opera</td>
<td>Par. 1668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius Firmicus</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>de Error. Prof. Rel.</td>
<td>Lond. 1633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optatus Milevicanus</td>
<td>370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephraem Syrus</td>
<td>370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambrosius</td>
<td>370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basilii M.</td>
<td>370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregorius Nazianzenus</td>
<td>370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregorius Nyssenus</td>
<td>380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epiphanius</td>
<td>389</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palladius</td>
<td>390</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theophilus Alexandrinus</td>
<td>390</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo. Chrysothemus</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hieronymus</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachius Amafenus</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudentius</td>
<td>405</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustinus</td>
<td>410</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innocentius Papa</td>
<td>416</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulinus Nolanicus</td>
<td>420</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>A.D.</td>
<td>Books</td>
<td>Editions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulinus Presbyter</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>Vit. Ambr.</td>
<td>apud Ambr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severus Sulpitius</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>Hist. Sacr.</td>
<td>L.Bat.1635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximinus Taurinensis</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>Homil.</td>
<td>Lugd.1655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philipostorgius</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>Hist. Eccl.</td>
<td>Genev.1643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orontius</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>adv. Paganos</td>
<td>Col.1561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isidorus Pelusiotus</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>Epist.</td>
<td>Heidelb.1605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo. Cassianus</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>de Infit. Monach.</td>
<td>Lugd.1574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socrates</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Hist. Eccl.</td>
<td>Par.1668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sozomenus</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>Hist. Eccl.</td>
<td>Gen.1612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodoretus</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>Hist. Relig.</td>
<td>Par.1555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Uticensis</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>Epist.</td>
<td>Hanov.1617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo. Malela</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>de perfec. Vand.</td>
<td>Par.1569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregorius M.</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>Chronic.</td>
<td>apud Uffen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photius</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>Dialogi.</td>
<td>Col.1610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ado Viennensis</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>Bibliothec.</td>
<td>Rothom.1553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suidas</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>Nomocan.</td>
<td>Par.1615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregorius Presbyter</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>Martyrolog.</td>
<td>apud Sur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simeon Metaphraetis</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>Lexic.</td>
<td>Gen.1518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Const. Harmenopolus</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td>Vite Sanctorum</td>
<td>apud Sur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexius Arifatus</td>
<td>1166</td>
<td>Schol. in Can.</td>
<td>Par.1618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicephorus Calistus</td>
<td>1310</td>
<td>Schol. in Can.</td>
<td>in Synodic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthaeus Blatares</td>
<td>1335</td>
<td>Hist. Eccl.</td>
<td>Par.1630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephus Aegyptiues</td>
<td>1390</td>
<td>Nomocan.Alphab.</td>
<td>Oxon.1672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephus the Jew</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Paraphras. Arab.</td>
<td>Oxon.1672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conciliorum</td>
<td>Gen.1611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Antiquir. Jud.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
M. Varro
M. T. Cicero
Ant. Chr. Nat.
Jul. Caesar
C. Tacitus
Plinius Secundus
Suetonius
Brutus, Chronographi.
Plutarchus
Celsus Epicurus
Lucianus
Galenus
Arrianus
M. Antoninus Imp.
Dion. Cassius
Ulpianus J. C.
Porphyrius
Lampridius
Vulcanus Gallicanus
Julianus Imp.
Eutropius
Eunapius
Libanius
Ambianus Marcellinus
Vegetius
Symmachus
Zosimus
Macrobius
Simplicius

Flour. A.D.
98
100
110
110
110
110
146
185
141
224
229
250
361
364
319
319
319
270
380
410
422
530

Books.
Epistol.
Vitae Caesar.
Opera
Serm. Verus
Opera
Oper. edit. Graec.
in Epist. terp.
de rebus suis
Hist. Rom.
de offic. Procons.
de Abstinence.
Vit. Alex. Sever.
Vit. Avid. Coh.
Opera
Hist. Rom.
de vit. Philosoph.
Orationes
Hist. Rom.
de re Milit.
Epistolae
Hist. Nov.
Saturnal.
Com. in Epist.

Editions.
Amst. 1649
L. Bat. 1853
L. Bat. 1551
Apud Exon.
Par. 1324
Apud Orig.
Salm. 1518
Ven. 1525
Cant. 1655
Cant. 1655
Hal. 1566
in Digest.
Cant. 1655
Hist. August.
L. Bat. 1661
Par. 1650
Inter Script.
Aug. 1668
Gen. 1616
Par. 1627
Script. 1588
Weigel. 1679
Lugd. 1598
ad calc. Hero.
Lugd. 1611
L. Bat. 1628
L. Bat. 1640

Councils Heldin A. D.
Concilium
Africanum sub Cypriano contra Novatum 250 Sam.
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