

be much more corrupt, and others much more pure; and the Purer part be so much the lesser, and oppressed and vilified by the more corrupt, that the most part should not discern their Purity, but take them (as they did the *Waldenses*) for Hereticks. 3. And that two parts or more of this Catholick Church may so fall out among themselves, as that one of them shall deny the other to be part of the Catholick Church, when yet they really for all that censure remain parts of it, as much as they: And hereupon may grow a contest between them, which of the two is the true Catholick Church, and one part may say, It is we and not you; and the other may say, It is we and not you: and no man shall be able to discern which of the two is the Catholick Church, because it is neither of them, but each are a part. 4. And though the Bodies of the members are visible, and their Worshipping actions Visible, and their Profession audible, yet the faith Professed is not Visible; nor the Truth of their Profession, or of their Christianity, or Church; Truth being the object of the Intellect, and not of sense. 5. And though the true members of the Church do know the true Church, and so it is apparent unto them, yet most that are not members of it, do not know it. Arrians and Mahometans know us to be men professing such and such Articles of faith: but they know not that to be the true faith, nor us to be the true Church, but judge the contrary. In this sense (contained in these Propositions) it is that Protestants deny the Church to have been alwayes Visible, and not as the Papists commonly mistake them.

Prop. 4. We are agreed that this Catholick Church is but One: There are not two Visible, nor two Mystical Catholick Churches: Nor are the Mystical and Visible, two: *Bel-larmine* might have spared all his labour that he hath bestowed in vain upon this point, to prove that the Visible and Invisible are not two Catholick Churches. The Protestants are further from that Opinion then the Papists: and it is more suitable to the Popish Interest and Cause to be of that Opinion, then to the Protestants. If it were not that they are past learning, by the advantage of their Infallibility, and especially of one man, and one so mean, condemned by them, and that it is unlawfull to be a Teacher of Error, I could tell them of a new device by the advantage of this distinction of Catholick Churches, for the modelling

modelling their mistakes into a more specious plausible form, then now it appeareth in to the rest of the Churches. But we are glad of their company in any Truth, and therefore will not disagree from them in that which makes against themselves.

One Objection I once heard a Learned Anabaptist cast in our way, viz. *There may be a Visible Church of hypocrites: therefore the Mystical and Visible may be two.* Answ. But the Question was of the Catholick Church, and not of a particular Church. We confess that some members of the Catholick Church are Mystical and Visible in the several respects before mentioned: and that some are Visible and not Mystical, or as *Bellarmino* well calls them, *Dead Members, and not Living*; and that the Church as Visible is more comprehensive then the Church as Regenerate, or Invisible, and yet all but *One Church*, though it have more members in it in one respect then in another: And we confess that its possible for twenty or an hundred of these Dead members to constitute a particular Church by themselves (though it is not usual for Visible Churches to be without Living members:) and so there may be a particular Visible Dead Member (Analogically called a Member,) or a particular Visible Church that is thus Dead; and these be parts of the Catholick Church as Visible. But yet there is not two Catholick Churches, One Visible, and the other Invisible, one alive and the other Dead. In a Corn field there are, 1. Good Corn. 2. Stricken, blasted Corn, that hath a name and shew, but in deed no Corn. 3. Tares, darnell, cockle, and such weeds. It is called, *A Field* as it containeth them all: It is called [*a Corn field*] only from the Corn. The Univocal proper parts of a Corn field, is the Corn only: The Visible and Analogical parts are also the blasted ears: The darnel and cockle are no parts, but noxious accidents. There are not two fields of Corn, one of true Corn. and the of other blasted ears: And yet the Corn field, taken largely and Analogically, hath more parties in it then true Corn: and you may perhaps have some particular sheaves that are wholly of that which is blasted: which you will call a sheaf of Corn Analogically only: but a sheaf of weeds you will not at all call a sheaf of Corn. Even so in the Catholick Church, there are sincere Christians which are true and living members; and there are Hypocrites which are Analogically members; and there are locally mixed many that by denying essential points of the Chri-

stian faith, or by notorious Impiety, do declare themselves to be weeds, and no members of the Church at all.

Prop. 5. We are also Agreed that this One Visible Catholick Church, is One Political Holy Society, as united in Jesus Christ the Head, who teacheth and ruleth it by his Ministers and other Officers, in the several parts, according to the necessity of each. We call it One Political Society, 1. Principally because that all the Church is united in this One Sovereign, or Head, the Lord Jesus: and therefore it is called his body. 2. They have all the same holy doctrine of faith, and Law to live by, and be judged by. 3. They have all Church Officers of the same sort under Christ to teach and govern them. 4. They have all the same kind of Holy Ordinances, as Reading, Preaching, Praying, Praise, Sacraments, &c. appointed them by the Lord. 5. They are all engaged in One and the same Holy Covenant to the Lord: More might be mentioned (and shall be God willing, in a peculiar Treatise of Catholicism, or the Catholick Church) And though Christ himself be not now seen among us, yet may he truly be called a Visible Head. For 1. He sometime lived visibly on earth. 2. And is now the Visible King of all the Church, as he is in the Heavens. Though we see him not, the Celestiall Inhabitants do. It is but little of the world that seeth the Pope, any more then they see Christ: If one unseen to us may be a pretended Visible Head, the other may be truly so. So that the Body, Head, Laws, Worship, &c. being Visible, so is the Policy.

Prop. 6. We are agreed also, that all these Christians, and particular Churches, are obliged by Christ, even by the very Law of Nature, and the ends of their calling, and the General Laws of the Gospell, to live in as much Love, and Unity, and Peace as they can; and to hold as full and extensive communion as they can: that is, as far as their work requireth, and their Capacity will permit and enable them; those that are cohabitans and members of one Congregation, must hold local communion in that Congregation, unless Necessity prohibite. Those that through distance are incapable of joining in the same Assemblies, should yet be conjoined, 1. In the same Lord, Faith, Baptism, Covenant, Profession. 2. In the same bond of Christian special Love. 3. In the use of the same sort of holy worship, as to the Substance, though they differ in circumstances,

as in the Word, Prayer, Praises, Sacraments, &c. 4. And in one sort of Church Officers and Government. And as far as we have to do with each other, all this should be manifested, and we should readily own one another as Brethren and true Churches, notwithstanding lesser differences.

Prop. 7. To these ends it is meet that the Bishops or Pastors of the Churches should hold in way of Association, as frequent Assemblies as is needfull, for the maintaining of mutual Love and Correspondency, and right understanding of each other, and to manifest their unity, and assist each other in the work of God; that it may be the more successfully carried on by united strength against all oppositions.

Prop. 8. These Associations should so far know the members Associated, as is necessary to the holding of a Christian Communion with them, and therefore should not admit all into their Association, but such as either produce the Evidences of sound faith and Holy life, or *litteras communicatorias*, certificates from credible members of their communion, that the persons are fit for their Communion.

Prop. 9. These Associations are principally for the Union and Communion of Churches, and therefore must apply themselves to the maintaining and promoting of Unity.

Prop. 10. Such Associations should therefore have their set times of frequent meeting in Synods, for Ordinary help of one another, besides extraordinary meetings on extraordinary occasions, which none should neglect.

Prop. 11. We agree that such Associated Pastors may have their Moderators either *pro tempore*, or stated as the cause requireth. And that it is no great matter whether he be called a President, Bishop, Moderator, &c. in which all should have liberty, so far as that the peace of the Church be not cast away for such names.

Prop. 12. We are also agreed that whatsoever shall be concluded in order to the Union and Communion of Churches, in any of these Synods, the particular Associated Members must observe, they being thereto obliged, by Vertue of those General precepts that require us to do all in Unity and Concord, and with one mind and mouth to glorifie God, and to avoid divisions, &c. Except they be such things as cannot be obeyed, unless we violate

violate the Law of God. Thus far the Canons, that is, Agreements of lesser Synods or greater are obligatory.

Prop. 13. We are also Agreed, that when ever the good of the Church requireth it, there may be Greater Assemblies also held, consisting of many of these conjunct, or speciall members delegate by the rest: And that this course should extend as far as our capacity will allow in needfull cases.

Prop. 14. Lastly we shall grant, that where Pastors cannot through distance or other Impediments, hold Synods, or any particular Churches cannot send any competent members to such Synods, yet may they, when its needfull, by messengers certifie each other of their faith, professions, practises, and particular doubts and cases, and so hold communion, in some degree; owning each other as Brethren in one Lord, and by such intercourse of Messengers and Letters as we are capable of, assisting, and seeking assistance from each other: As *Basil* and the rest of the Eastern Bishops did to the Western in their distress while they had hope. And the faith of all the Churches that are neer enough for any externall communion, being thus known, their *Litera Communicatoria* may be valid and satisfactory, when any member passeth into other parts.

Thus far I hope we are Agreed: This much I am sure we hold our selves: But now the difference followeth.

We hold that this Universal Church (which is one in Christ their Head, as the world is one Kingdom in God the absolute Sovereign King) is by Christ distributed into many Congregations, dispersed over the face of the Earth, and that these as severall Corporations in one Kingdom, have all their particular Governours and Order. All forcible Government we ascribe to the Magistrate, and deny it to the Pastors of the Church. And that teaching and Guidance which is called Ecclesiastick Government, we suppose is the work of every Pastor in his flock, and the Ordering of the communion of Churches, by Canons, Agreements (and their execution in part) is the work of Synods. And as in this Kingdom, all the Free-schools are governed by the Schoolmasters, who are all under the Prince, and Laws, without any General Schoolmasters to Teach, or Oversee, and Rule the rest, (and without Synods too, though they may

meet

meet when their mutual Edification requires it,) and yet all the Schools in England are in Peace, because no Archschoolmasters presume to rob the Magistrate of his power: Even so we judge, that if Pastors do but Teach and Guide their severall flocks, and the Magistrate keep and use his power of forcible Government, that is, in seeing that they do their Offices faithfully, and no Archpastors presume to take the power of the Magistrates out of their hands, the Churches may have quietness and peace: (still allowing a greater Necessity of Communion, and so of Synods, among Churches then among Schools, and reserving the rod to the secular power.) And we conceive, that most of the stir that Popes and Popish Prelates have made about Church Government, hath been but to rob the Magistrate of his due, and to become themselves the Church-Magistrates through the world.

But that the Church hath any Politicall Universal Head but Christ alone, either a Vice-god, or Vice-Christ, either Pope or Council; that any one is as Pope *Julius* saith of himself, [*in the place of God, the maker of all things and Laws,*] this we deny; That the whole Church on Earth, is so one Politicall Society, as to be under any one terrestial numerical Head, whether personal or collective, Pope, Council, or Patriarks, having power of Legislation, or judgement over the whole, and by whom each member is to be Governed, this we deny: and think it as absurd (and much more sinfull) as to affirm that all the world must needs have one Visible Monarch under God to represent him; and that he is no subject to the God of Heaven, that acknowledgeth not this Visible Universal Monarch. We deny that the Church is such a Society: We deny that it hath such an Head: We deny that it hath any such universal Humane Laws: We deny that the parts of it are to be conjoynd by the subordinate Officers (Cardinals, Patriarks, Archbishops, or what ever) of such an usurping Sovereign. We affirm that no Christian should fancy or assert that any such Head and Order for unity is appointed by Christ; or that it is Desirable, or Rome to be the better liked of because it pleaderth for such an Order, or vainly boasteth of such of an unity; or that any should dare to contrive the promoting of it. Yea we maintain that such fancies and contrivances are the most notable means of

the division, or desolation of the Churches; And that it is the notable hinderance of the unity of all the Christian Churches, that such a false Head and Center of unity is set up, and an Impossible Impious unity pleaded for, and furiously sought by fire and sword, instead of the true desirable unity: And that the Churches will never have true unity and peace if these principles of theirs be not disgraced and disowned, and the true principles better understood.

I shall now give you some Arguments for our Assertion, and then in the End shall give you the true Grounds and Means of unity.

CHAP. III.

Our Arguments for the Negative.

IN the management of the Arguments for the Negative, I shall principally deal with them that would Head the Church with a Council, that is, would make the Church to be autonomically, and be the Sovereign, or chief Governour of it self, or the Church Representative of the Church reall (as they use to call them.) As to them that Head it with the Pope, I have said enough already, and others much more, especially *Blondell* unanswerably. Yet I shall partly take them also in my way, though I deal principally with the other.

And these brief Arguments may serve to confute the Vice-christship or Sovereignty of the Pope.

1. There is no such Head Instituted by Christ. The Scripture pretenses for it I have before confuted, and they are so poor, that they vanish of themselves.

2. The Popes Sovereignty is against the Judgement of the Ancient Fathers, and practise of the Primitive Church, as I have proved in this and a former Book.

3. It is against Tradition, as brought down to us by the greatest part of the Church on earth by far, as is before proved.

4. It is against the Judgement of the far greatest part of the present Catholick Church, as is proved.

5. It is the meer effect of pride and tyranny: a plain design

sign to set up one man over all the world for his greatness, and their hurt.

6. The pretense of this Sovereignty is the consequent only of *Romes* greatness, and the will of Emperours, that to conform the Ecclesiastical state to the civil, did give a Primacy to the Bishop of *Rome* within the Empire.

7. It is a meer Impossibility for one man to be the Sovereign of all the Churches in the world, and do the work of a Sovereign for them. He had need of many millions and millions of Treasure to defray the charge. (which *Peter* had not.) While he pretends to govern all the world, he doth but leave them ungoverned, or not by him. How can he govern all those Churches in the Dominions of Infidels, that will not endure his Government? There are more then all the Papists in the world now from under his Government voluntarily, that could not be governed by him if they would.

8. There are yet visible many great Churches that were planted by the Apostles, or in their dayes, and never were under *Romes* Sovereignty to this day, as the *Etheopians*, *Persians*, *Indians*, and most that were without the verge of the Roman Empire.

9. There is no use for such an Head, as I shall shew anon, of Councils.

10. There is not so much Reason for it, or possibility of it, as that One man must be King or Monarch of all the world. Considering that spiritual Government requireth residency, and can less be done by Deputies then temporal: And that Princes are truly Church-Governours also in their kind and way.

11. It is an intolerable usurpation of the Power of all Christian Princes and Pastors, who conjunctly in their several wayes are intrusted by God with the Government of the Churches under them.

12. To make such a Sovereign, is to make a new Catholick Church, that Christ never made.

13. And its the most notorious schism, dividing themselves from all the Catholick Church, that are not their subjects.

14. And inhumane cruelty to damn all (as much as Heathens at least) that believe not in the Pope, be they never so holy.

15. To set up a Vice-god (as Pope *Julius* paraphrastically called himself) and a Vice-christ on earth over all the Church (as the Papist commonly do, maintaining that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ) is to set up an Idoll, and a name of Blasphemy, against Jesus Christ, whose prerogative it is to be the sole Universal Head; And therefore he must needs be an Antichrist, whether he be The Antichrist or not. This much to the Pope.

Dr. Hammond on

1 Tim. 3. c. faith,
[And such
all the
particular
Churches

Thes. The *Catholick Church of Christ is not one Visible Political body, as joyned to one Universal Visible Head or Sovereign, (save only Christ:.) And consequently it is not the way to heal the Churches divisions, to draw all into such a body, or endeavour such an Union.*

of the whole world considered together under the supream Head, Christ Jesus, dispensing them all by himself, & administering them severally, not by any one *aeconomus*, but by the several Bishops as inferiour Heads of Unity to the several bodies so constituted by the several Apostles in their plantations; each of them having an *autonomia*, a several distinct Commission from Christ immediately, and subordinate to none, but the supream donor or plenipotentiary.]

This I make good by these following Arguments, which reach both the Italian Papists, that would have the Pope to be the Head or Sovereign; and the French and Cassandrian, who would have a General Council to be the Head, and the Pope only to be the chief Patriarch, and the *Principium Unitatis*: For if I prove that the Body is not one, as Headed by any except Christ, I shall say enough against both these opinions: But yet as is said, it is principally against the later (who are for the Headship of a Council) that I shall direct my Arguments; because they are the busie Reconcilers, and because the rest are so largely confuted already on both sides.

Argument 1. *That which is the true form of the Catholick Church of Christ, it retaineth de facto at this day: But it retaineth not a Political Union under a Visible Terrestrial Universal Head: therefore this is not the true form of the Catholick Church.*

Or, what the Catholick Church is *quoad essentiam*, that it is also *quoad existentiam*: But it is not such a Body *quoad existentiam*; therefore not *quoad essentiam*.

If any will grant the conclusion, *quoad essentiam vel formam*, and

and say that this Policy, Head and Union are not essential to the Church, but separable accidents tending only *ad melius esse*, he will give away his cause: For the *Pars Imperans* and *pars subdita* are the two essential parts of a body Politick, or Republick; whether Civil or Ecclesiastical, as a soul and body are the parts of man: and if it want either part, the essence is destroyed; It hath lost its Political form. But I need not stand on this, because the case is past controversie, and I know not of any that make the objection, or will go on such terms: I am sure those do not that I have now to deal with. Another thing there may be that is called a Church, without this Form or Head, but not this same thing or body that now we speak of.

The Major proposition I prove thus: The Church of Christ is a true Church at this day, or retaineth its essential parts: therefore it retaineth its form. If its essentials were not in existence, the Church were extinct, or did not exist: But that the Church is not extinct or nulled, the opponents will easily grant, and the promise of Christ will easily prove; The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

The Minor I prove thus; If the Catholick Church be now Headed with one Visible Head (beside Christ,) then it is either the Pope or a General Council. But it is neither of these. That it is not the Pope, the French will grant. And 1. Its proved at large by many a volume of Protestant writers; and 2. By the present visible state of the Church; The greatest part of the Church on Earth (and all those in Heaven) disown the Universal Sovereignty or Headship of the Pope; The Greeks, Abasines, Armenians, Protestants, &c.

That it is not a General Council appeareth, in that there is no such thing in *Natural* or *Moral Existence*. Not in *Natural existence*; For where is it? when called? how long have they fate? But this none will affirm.

Not in *Moral existence*; For there is no such thing pretended, nor possible. I confess the Common wealth is not dissolved at the death of the Prince; because a Successor being determined of by Law (as in hereditary Government,) there is one hath presently right to the place, though he want solemn admittance; or if elective, yet *Res non moritur*, both because the successor hath an *Intentional Moral being* in the Fundamental Law, and

the Intention of the Electors conjunctly, and they presently make an actual choice, or else the power so far as is necessary for execution, falls in the mean time into the hands of some Trustees of the Republick, while they are electing, and the Sovereign is *in fieri*: Or if it be in some dissolvable body, whose actual Session is intermitted, yet they are still in Moral being, and ready to assemble, and the Sovereignty for so much as is of ordinary exercise, even over the Universal body, is in the mean time in the hands of some other Assembly, who therefore may be said to partake of the Sovereignty.

But none of this is so in the present case. Here is no General Council *ordinarily* in natural being; and therefore in the vacancy not in Moral being: There is none that pretendeth to be in Moral being: For the Council of *Trent*, which was the last pretended General Council, is dissolved; and the Pope would not take it well if any shall call another without him: and no time is appointed for it: The Decennial Council determined of at *Constance*, is an empty name: and that Decree did but serve to prove, that really General Councils are not the Supream Governors of the Church: For no one obeyeth them in that. And whether ever the Pope, or any one else will call a General Council again, we cannot tell. So that now there is none, nor we know not whether there ever will be. But further.

Argum. 2. *That which is the Head, or form of the Catholick Church (or any way Necessary to its Being or Unity) hath ever been found in it, or at least within this thousand years, or at least in the primitive purer ages, or sometime at least: But a true General Council is not always in being, nor ever was within this thousand years, no nor in the purer ages, nor ever at all: therefore it is no Head of the Church, nor necessary to its unity.*

The Major will not be denied. The proof of any branch of the Minor may serve turn: much more of all. 1. That a General Council hath not been this forty years in being, all men will confess. If the Church have been Headless forty years, or wanted any thing Necessary to its Being or Unity, then was it so long no Church, or many Catholick Churches, which are known untruths.

2. If the Church have had any General Council within this thousand years, it was either that of *Trent*, that of *Constance*,
Basil,

Basil, Florence, the Laterane, &c. But none of these were such. For 1. there were no Bishops from the most of the Christian world. I have told you before how few at *Trent* did the most egregious parts of their work (few more then forty:) The Churches of *Syria, Armenia, Ethiopia*, and the most of the Christian world, were never so much as fairly invited to be there. If at *Florence* the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, and two or three *Greeks* more were present, what's that to all the Churches of the *Greek* Profession through the world? besides all others. The ancient Councils called General, contained All the Bishops that could and would come. For all were to be there, and not one Bishop chosen by two hundred, or by a Prince, instead of two hundred. But at these later Councils were neither all, nor so much as any Delegates (though but chosen by hundreds to represent them) from most of the Churches of the world. Besides the packing and fore-resolutions of the Popes, that ruled all, and many other Arguments that nullifie these pretended General Councils. I say not that all of them were useless; but none of them were any more like to Oecumenical or Universal, then *Italy* and its few servants are like to all the Christian world.

And that the Ancient Councils were not General, I mean, the four first, or any like them, I easily prove. 1. From the Original of them, and the Mandates, and the Presidents, and Ratifications, and Executions. It was the *Roman* Emperors that called them, and that sent their Mandates to the Lieutenants and other secular Officers to see to the execution, and to the Bishops to be there: It was the *Roman* Emperors that by themselves or their Lieutenants, were present to Rule them all according to the proportion of secular interest. It was the same Powers that Ratified them, and what they ratified went for currant, and their Ratification was sought by the Bishops to that end. It was the same Power that banished them that obeyed not, and compelled men to submit to them. Now let any man of Reason tell me, what Power *Constantine, Theodosius, Martian*, or any *Roman* Emperor had to summon the Bishops that were subjects in the Dominions of all other Princes through the world? What Authority had they out of their own Dominion?

2. Yea *de facto*, the case is known, 1. That they did not summon the Bishops of other Princes Dominions. 2. That those Bishops (at least no considerable number were there.) What Mandates or Invitations were sent to all the Churches of *India, Ethiopia, Persia*, or the parts of *Parthia, Armenia, Ireland, Scotland, &c.* that were out of the Roman Power? Whoever those one or two were that *Eusebius* calls Bishops of *Persis, Parthia, Armenia*, it's a plain case, that there were no due Representatives of all or any of these Churches there, that were without the verge of the Empire. No *Brittish, Irish*, (that is, then *Scottish*) Bishops were there, nor any from abundance other Churches. And the other Councils after that at *Nice*, make less pretense to such a thing. So that it is most evident that General Councils then were but of the Bishops of the Empire, or the *Roman world*, unless a Bishop or two sometime might drop in that lived next them. And was the Church no wider then the Empire? Let *Baronius* himself be judge, that tells you of the Churches planted by the primitive Preachers, in *India, Persia*, and many other parts of the world. Let *Godignus* be judge, that confesseth the *Ethiopians* had the Gospel since the Apostles days (and I pray in what age were they Papiſts?) Let *Raynerius* be judge, that saith the Churches of *Armenia* and others planted by the Apostles were not subject to the Church of *Rome*? Let the Antiquities of *Brittain* and *Ireland* be evidence. But the case is undeniable. All this noyse then of General Councils comes but from a supposition that the *Roman world* was the whole Christian world. A small mistake! We home-bred Rusticks may shortly be as well able to prove that a *London Convocation* was a General Council! *Pighius* pleading for the Pope, saith plainly, that General Councils were the devise of *Constantine*. And the Popes themselves do fetch the most specious Evidences for their primacy from the Decrees or Edicts of Emperors, *Valentinian, Gratian* and others. And what power had those Emperors at the other side of the world?

3. And then before the *Nicene Council*, what General Councils were there since the Apostle days? None doubtless that the world now knows of. It's senseless enough to think that 350 *Roman Bishops* at the second Council of *Nice*, or the 150 Bishops in the third Council at *Constantinople*, or the 165 Bishops

at

at the second Council at *Constantinople*, or the 150 Bishops at the first there, were the Universal Church of Christ? But it will be more ridiculous to say, that the new-found *Concilium Sinuesfanum*, imagined without proof to meet in a certain Cave, for the deposition of an Idolatrous Pope, were a General Council. Where then was the Head, the unity, the form of the Church for 300 years? Was it governed all that time, think you, by a General Council? yea or ever one day since the Apostles?

Well, but was there ever such a thing at all? Indeed men have a fairer pretence when the Church was contained in a family, or a City, or a narrow space, to call the meetings of the Apostles or other Christians then, by the name of a General Council, but they are hard put to it, if this be all. The great Instance insisted on is the Council, *Act. 15*. But were the Bishops of all the Churches there? or summoned to appear? *Act. 14. 23*. they had ordained them Elders in every Church; but few of them were there, *Timothy, Titus*, abundance were absent. It is plain, that it was to the Apostles and Church at *Hierusalem* as the Fountain, and best informers that they sent. Not because these were the Universal Church, but because they were of greatest knowledge and authority. If it could be proved that all the Apostles were there, it would no more prove them a General Council, then that the Deacons of one Church were ordained by a General Council, *Act. 6*. And *Matthias* and *Justus* put to the Lot by a General Council, *Act. 1*. and that Christ appeared to a General Council after his Resurrection, and gave the Sacrament of his Supper to a General Council before his death. So that it is most evident from the event, that Christ never made a General Council the Head or Governor of his Church; and that there never was such a thing the world, much less continually.

Argum. 3. The form or unity (no nor the well-being) of the Catholick Church, dependeth not on that which is either unnecessary, unjust, or naturally or morally impossible: But a true General Council is none such: It cannot be: or if it were it would be unnecessary and unjust. Therefore it is not the Head or Sovereign Governor of the Church, on which its being, unity, (or well being) doth depend.

I have nothing here to prove but the Minor. And 1. I shall prove the Impossibility. 2. The non-necessity. 3. The unjustice of a General Council : and so that no such thing is to be expected.

A true General Council consisteth of all the Pastors or Bishops of the whole world ; or so many as Morally may be called All. A General Council of Delegates from all the Churches, must consist of so many proportionably chosen, as may signifie the sense and consent of all, or else it is a meer name and shadow. Both these are Morally, if not Naturally Impossible : as I prove.

1. From the distance of their habitations, some dwell in *Mesopotamia*, some in *Armenia*, some in *Ethiopia*, some in *Mexico*, the *Philippines*, or other parts of the *East* and *West-Indies* : some at *St. Thome's*, some dispersed through most of the *Turks* Dominions. Now how long must it be, before all these have tidings of a Council, and summons to appear, or send their Delegates? Who will be at the cost of sending messengers to all these? Will the Pope? Not if he be no richer then *Peter* was. How many hundred thousand pound will it cost before that all can have a lawful summons? And when that is done, it will be long before they can all in their several Nations meet, and agree upon their Delegates, and their instructions. And when that is done, who shall bear their charges in the journey? Alas, the best of the Churches Pastors have had so little gold and silver, that they are unable themselves to defray it. A few Bishops out of each of these distant Countries, will consume in their journey a great deal of money and provision. To provide them shipping by Sea, and Horses, and all other necessities by land, for so many thousand miles, will require no small allowance.

And then consider, that it must be voluntary contribution that must maintain them. And most love their money so well, and know so little of the need of such journeys and Councils, that doubtless they will not be very forward to so great a contribution.

And it is not to be expected that Infidel Princes will give way to the transporting of so much money from their countries on the Churches occasions, which they hate.

But suppose them furnished with all necessities, and setting forward ;

forward; How long will they be in their journey? Shipping cannot always be had: Many of them must go by land: It cannot be expected that some of them should come in less than three, or four, if not seven years time to the Council. And will ever a General Council be held upon these terms?

2. Moreover the persons for the most part are not able to perform such journeys. Bishops are Elders: Most of them are aged persons. The wisest are they that are fit to be trusted in so great a business by all the rest: And few attain that maturity but the aged: Especially in the most of the Eastern & Southern Churches that want the helps of Learning which we have. And will the Churches be so barbarous as to turn out their aged faithful Pastors upon the jaws of death? Some of them are not like to live out so long time as the journey, if they were at home. They must pass through raging and tempestuous Seas, through Deserts and enemies, and many thousand miles where they must daily conflict with distress. It were a fond conceit, to think that (without unusual providences) ten Bishops of a thousand should come alive to the Council, through all these labors and difficulties.

And moreover, it's known how few bodies will bear the Seas, and so great change of air: How many of our Souldiers in the Indies are dead, for one that doth survive? And can ancient Bishops, spent with studies and labors, endure all this? Most studious painful Preachers here with us are very sickly, and scarce able to endure the small incommodities of their habitations: And could they endure this?

3. Moreover abundance of the Pastors of the Churches live under Mahometans and other Infidels, that will not give them leave to travail so far into the Countries of Christian Princes on such occasions. They hate us and our Religion. They are oft at war with us, and then would hang those Bishops as Intelligencers that should offer to come among us.

4. And they must many of them pass through the Countries of other Princes, that are Infidels, and oft in war with the parts which they come from or go to. And it cannot be expected that in such cases they should allow them passage through their Countries. If one do, all will not: When poor *Lithgow* had travailed nineteen years, he was tortured, strappado'd and dis-

joynted, and made a cripple at *Malaga* in the *Spanish* Inquisition. And thanked God and the *English* Embassador that he sped so well.

5. Even at home in *Europe*, the Princes are so commonly in Wars (as are *France*, *Spain*, *Venice*, *Sweden*, *Denmark*, *Polland*, the Emperor, *Brandenburgh*, *Holland*, *Portugal*, *England*, *Transylvania*, &c. at this very day) that there is not the least probability that they should all or half consent to have so many of their subjects pass into their enemies Countries to reside so long. Jealousies raised by particular Interests would make it Treason.

6. Moreover many Princes understand that the Pope hath no power to call such Councils, nor any man else: and they know the design of the Pope to subject the world to himself. And therefore they will abhor that their subjects should travail so far at his call, that hath such designs, (or at another mans that hath no authority to call them.) This hath made the Emperor of *Habassia* so resolutely resist the Popes pretensions (as *Godignus*, *Maffaus*, and others do declare) Few Princes will endure to have their subjects brought under a forreign Power.

7. And if you suppose all the Bishops come to the Council, the very number out of all the Christian world, (to make any thing like a General Council) would be so great, as would be unfit for one, or two, or ten, or twenty Council houses or Assemblies.

8. And they would be incapable of conferring, through diversity of languages. Few of the *Abassines*, *Egyptians*, *Syrians*, *Armenians*, or of most of the world, understand and speak any language that would commonly be understood and used in a Council. Nor is it possible to do it by Interpreters. For so many Interpreters cannot be used to tell all that understand not, what every man saith, and to expound their minds to others. This would waste an age in a Council; so that such a Council would be a very *Babel*.

9. And Councils use to be so long, that it cannot be expected that after so many years journey, old men should live to see the issue, or do any great matters there. Eighteen years at *Trent* would consume a great many of the Bishops: How many

many even of the Popes own Legates dyed before that Council could be finished ?

10. And if they should live to see the end , can you dream that they should live to perform the like tedious dangerous journeys and voyages to bring back the Decrees of the Council to their Churches ? Judge now whether such Councils are not Naturally Impossible.

I will add but this. No men can be compelled. And to make all the world at once agree to so difficult a task, and agree upon the time and place, must be a Miracle. One will be for it, and another against it. One for one time and place , and another for another, through most of the world. We see how hardly any two Princes can agree upon times , places, and all circumstances in their Treaties.

2. Let us next enquire , of what Necessity such a Council is. If it be Necessary for Church government, it is either to make Laws, or to execute them. But for neither of these : therefore they are not Necessary.

1. Christ hath made us Laws already sufficient for salvation. And I hope he hath not constituted so loose a Society, and left his Body to such mutations, as that they must so frequently have new Laws. And if it must , sure it must be from their Sovereign, who hath reserved the Legislative Power to himself as his Prerogative. Legislation is the highest act of Supremacy, and chief flower in the Crown of Sovereignty. The Church is Christs subjects, and shall subjects make their own Laws ? Scripture is sufficient. If this be all that we need General Councils for , to make Universal Laws to the Church, we can spare them as well as Traytors in a Common-wealth.

And for Execution of Laws , it is either Magisterial , by force of the Sword ; and this they have nothing to do with, it being the Princes right. Or it is for the Excommunicating Church-offenders : And to cast them out of particular Churches is the work of the Pastors of those Churches. Others cannot know the persons , and hear the cause. If all Church-causes should come to a General Council, Millions of men must be attending them at once.

And if it be to judge who shall be cast out of the Communion of the Churches , and what Churches themselves are to

be excommunicated, the Synods of neighbour Pastors are to do as much of that as is to be done. Where then is the Necessity of such Councils at such rates? *Augustine* said that drunkenness in his time was grown so strong, that there must be a Council to suppress it. Could they do such feats as to cure Drunkenness, Whoredom, Covetousness, Pride, I would be for them.

3. If a General Council were called, it must be a most unjust Assembly. For, 1. It would be guilty of cruelty and destroying the Church of Christ, by killing so many of the Pastors as aforesaid.

2. It would be guilty of cruelty and Church destroying by the starving and desertion of the flocks at home. What will become of the poor peoples souls, when they are left to the Wolves, to Hereticks, and Deceivers, and to the temptations of their own flesh, and the world, being for ten or twenty years, or for ever deprived of their Pastors under pretense of a General Council? *Basil* in his seventieth Epistle tells the Western Bishops, that they of the East could not come to sollicite their own cause with them. For, saith he, If any one of us (*N. B.*) do for the least moment leave his Church, he presently leaveth his people to deceivers. And on this ground he shews that they could not so much as spare Bishops to be meer Messengers to them: Much less could they have spared a sufficient number to stay seven or ten years together. If any think that such Necessities are unusuall, he knows not the world. And Councils are most usefull if ever, when necessities are greatest.

3. In Councils things are carried by Votes: and so *Abassia*, *Armenia*, *Mexico*, and places so remote that they can send but one or two, would be out-voted by that corner of the world where the Council is called, that can send in proportionably an hundred for one; and so under the name of a General Council, a faction might promote any heresie or carnal interest, and no Churches would be so enslaved as those that send at the dearest rates. *Italy* and a few more parts, at *Trent*, would over-vote all the Churches of East and South, and set up what interest or opinion they please: And so if one corner of the Church can err, all may err, for all the Council: Where there is an equal interest, there should be an equal power in Councils: which will certainly be otherwise,

4. If