

agree among themselves in their Fundamentals and Essentials of the Church, we have small encouragement to think of uniting on any of their grounds.

Argum. 19. *The Sovereign Power or Headship over the Church is a thing undoubtedly revealed in the Holy Scripture: (For we cannot imagine that the Scripture should be silent in so weighty a point, without intolerable accusation of it.) The Sovereign Power or Headship of Pope or Council is not revealed in the Holy Scripture. Therefore, &c.*

They have not yet produced a Text to prove either of them. Those produced by the *Italians* for the Popes Headship, are disclaimed by the *French*, as meaning no such thing; and our Writers have largely manifested their abusing of the Text. So have they done of those that are brought for the Headship of Councils. These texts are spoke to so fully by *Chamier*, *Whitaker*, *Amesius*, and abundance more, that I think it in vain to do it here again. That of *1 Tim. 3. 15.* that the Church is the pillar and ground of Truth, doth not speak a word of a General Council, nor a word of Headship: The whole Church united in Christ, is the Pillar and Ground, that is, the certain Receptacle and retainer of the Truth, the Law of Christ being written in their hearts.

None seems more to favour their conceit then *Ephes. 4. 15, 16.* which *Grotius* fastens on. But even that is against them, and not for them. For 1. It is Christ and only Christ that is here said to be the head, and all other parts contradistinguished, and excluded from Headship, and the Body is not said to be united in them. 2. And it is by association, and mutual communication of their several gifts, that the parts are compacted together, and edifie the whole; and not by meeting in any one, and deriving from it.

Object. *But were not the Apostles General Officers, and so the Church united in General officers?* Answ. This is little to the Question. For 1. the Apostles had one among them to be the Sovereign or Head of the rest, but were of equal power. 2. Nor did a major part of their whole number make such a Head for the Church to unite in, nor do we read that ever a Major vote carryed it among them against a Minor; for they were all guided by the Spirit. Yet its true that they met often together then a General Council can. 2. The Apostles as extraordinarily qualified

qualified, and as the Secretaries of the Spirit, have no successors: But the Apostles as ambulatory unfixed Ministers, had even then many companions: For *Barnabas, Luke, Apollo*, and abundance more, did then go up and down preaching, as well as the Apostles; yet had not any one of them a special charge of Governing all the Churches: nor yet all of them united in a body: For the Apostles called not the Evangelists and other fellow workers to consult in Councils about the Government of the whole; But both they and their helpers, did severally what they could to teach and settle the Churches. 3. Who be they now that are the Apostles successors? If all the Bishops in the world, the case is as we left it. If any small number of Primates or Patriarcks, how shall we know which and how many? If they be not twelve, why should one Apostle have a successor, and not others? But there are no twelve only that lay claim to the succession. And if you go further, who can limit, and say who, and how many they be, and how far the number may be increased or decreased, and by whom? In *Cyprians* dayes he and his fellows in the Council at *Carthage* declare that all Bishops were equal, and none had power over other. And so thought others in those times. Nor was there then any number of Bishops that claimed to be the sole successors of the Apostles, to rule all the rest. And if they had, when the Church increaseth, the Rulers must increase. But this is not to the main point.

Argum. 20. *The Scripture doth appropriate the Universal Headship to Christ only, and deny it to all others: therefore neither Pope nor Council are the Universal Head.*

Eph. 5. 23. It is the peculiar Title of Christ to be Head of the Church, to whom it must be subject, *1 Cor. 11. 3.* The Apostle would have us know that the Head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the Head of Christ is God. So that there is a particular Head over some parcell of the body below Christ: but to be the Universal Head of every man, is the proper Title of Christ. In *1 Cor. 12.* the unity of the body and diversity of the members is more largely expressed then any where else in Scripture; and there when the said unity of the body had been so fully mentioned, the Apostle comes to name the Head of that Unity, *Vers. 27.* which is only Christ, [*New*

ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular] The Church is never called the body of the Pope, or of a Council, but the body of Christ: yea (as was even now said) in the next words the *Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers* are enumerated to the particular members, contradistinct from the Head, so far are all, or any one of them from being the head themselves. And in *Col. 2. 10, 17, 19.* it is Christ only that is called the Head, and the body is said to be of Christ, and he only is mentioned as the Center of its Unity [*And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints, and bands having nourishment ministred and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*] And *Col. 1. 18.* And he is the Head of the body, the Church.] If any say that you cannot hence argue Negatively that therefore no one else is the Head, I answer, They may as well say, when it is affirmed that [*the Lord he is God*] you cannot thence conclude that *Baal is not God.* The Apostle plainly speaks this of Christ as his peculiar honour: And he spoke to men that knew well enough that natural bodies have but one Head, unless they be Monsters: And he would not so oft insist on this Metaphor, intending so great a disparity in the similitude, and never discover any such intention; So in *Ephes. 1. 22.* He gave him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.]

And in *Ephes. 4.* the Apostle purposely exhorteth us to the observation of this unity; and purposely telleth us by a large enumeration wherein it doth consist: but in all he never mentioneth the Pope or a Council: yea he plainly excludeth them, *Vers. 3, 4. &c.* [*Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: There is one body, and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all: But unto every one of us is given Grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ — He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the Faith, &c. —*] so then you see there is but one Lord of the Church; therefore the Pope or Council is not Lord (in name or deed.) And *Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, and Doctors,* are

are the member contradistinguished from this *One Lord*, and whose diversity is purposely mentioned, they being the matter or parcels that must have their unity in some other, but not the Church to be united in them. Here is then no mention among all these [*Ones*] of one earthly Head, whether Pope or Council, not of *One Apostle* that was the Head of the rest. If such a thing had ever come into the Apostles mind, he would sure have mentioned it on such occasions as these, and not have quite forgotten it; yea and contradict it so evidently.

1 Cor. 6. 15, 17. Our bodies are the members of Christ, (not of the Pope) and he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit (not he that is joined to the Pope.)

Gal. 3. 28. We are all one in Christ Jesus (not in an earthly Head) Many and many times doth the Apostle exhort them to be of *one mind, and accord, and take heed of schism, and maintain peace*, and he reproveth their divisions at large: yet doth he never mention such a sin as dividing from an earthly Head, nor ever once direct them to a Pope or General Council as the Center of their unity, or the necessary means of curing divisions. *Peter* himself exhorteth them to be *all of one mind*, *1 Pet. 3. 8.* but never to be all united in him as their head. The Apostle *Paul* is punctual in describing the Officers of the Church, and the peoples duty to them. But he never describeth a Pope, or any earthly Head of that Church: nor ever telleth the people of their duty to such: And if such a supposed fundamental should be quite forgotten by men that believed it, and taught others that which was necessary to be believed, it were incredibly strange. That *Paul* writing to the Romans should never mind them of the honour of their Sea, or their duty to their super-eminent Prelate, was his forgetfulness or unbelief. And surely he would never have so sharply reproveth them of *Corinth* for contentions, in saying *I am of Paul, and I of Apollo, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ*, if he had thought they must have been united in *Cephas*; without once telling them of such a means of union and reconciliation. He saith [*Is Christ divided?*] as much as to say, you must be all united in him: but he saith not [*Is Cephas divided?*] but plainly makes the exalters of *Cephas* a party that was guilty of division, and *Chap. 3. 3, 4, 5.* tells them plainly that this shewed that they were carnal. And speak-

ing of all others in his own person and Apollos, saith [*Who then is Paul, or who is Apollo, but Ministers by whom ye believed?*] They had not then learned to answer [*Why Cephas is the Head of the Church.*] And 1 Cor. 4 6. He speaks as if it were purposely to a Papist [*All these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to my self and to Apollo for your sakes: that ye might learn in us not to think (of men) above that which is written: that no one of you be puffed up for one against another*] What not for Peter? no not for Peter himself. And doubtless Paul did not believe his supremacy, when he so presumed to reprove him to his face, Gal. 2. So 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17. there is mention of our being *all one bread, and one body*: but thats because we are all partakers of *that one body of Christ*, and not because we are united in the Pope or any other.

Moreover when the Disciples strove who should be greatest, Christ expressly rebuketh such thoughts, and instead of granting any of them that desire, he denyeth it to them all, Mat. 22. 25, 26. Luke 22. 26. *The Kings of the Gentiles rule over them, and are called gracious Lords, but with you it shall not be so.* Bellarmine indeed can merrily hence gather that there must be one appointed to be the greatest, because Christ saith, *He that will be Greatest, let him be the servant of all.* This is to make good their charge against the Scripture, that it is a nose of Wax by their presumptuous abuse of it; as some men would prove the Apostacy of the Saints, by their own Apostatizing, when yet they prove it not, though they ruine themselves. Did not Christ by these words reprehend their seeking of a Supremacy? And yet doth he grant it?

Ob but it is only Tyranny that Christ forbiddeth them. Answ. That which Christ acknowledgeth in the Kings of the Nations, without reprehension, that is it which he denyeth to his Disciples. But it is not Tyranny but Dominion which Christ thus acknowledgeth in, and alloweth to the Kings of the Nations: therefore it is not Tyranny but Dominion which he forbiddeth to his Disciples; That which Christ here speaketh of the Kings of the Nations, is somewhat common to all Kings, and so as Kings. But Tyranny was not common to all Kings, nor to them as Kings: therefore it is not Tyranny that he speaks of. Moreover its plain that it is a Greatness in Desire and Affectation that is the subject of

Christ's

Christ's speech, and not an allowed supremacy, and that he forbids this Supremacy in the following words, [*Let him be the servant of all*] q. d. [*I allow in my Kingdom to the Preachers of the Gospel no other Greatness or superiority above others, but what consisteth in holiness, and humility, and doing good, and so in disclaiming of Ruling Greatness.*] In Luke 9. there's mention of [*him that was least, &c.*] It follows not thence that one was appointed to be the lowest. And if the will of Christ were known to them that one should be the Supream, and this was *Peter*, what need they strive any further about it; or why doth he not rebuke them for resisting their Supream?

Again I say, that I cannot see how it can stand with the wisdom or goodness of Christ the Law-giver of his Church, or the perfection of his Laws, or how it can be any way probable, that he should be wholly silent of so great a point as the Headship and Center of the Churches Unity; never giving us either the Name or Titles of such a Head, nor the seat of his Empire, nor appointing him his work, nor directing him how to do it when he hath the greatest work in the world to do (as these men suppose) and such as surpasseth the strength of man, yea of a thousand men; never giving him any advice and direction for the determining of his very many occurrent difficulties; nor once giving us any of his power, nor telling us of his prerogative, nor telling us what officers he shall appoint under him, and how; nor once telling any man of his duty to obey him; never telling us any thing of the succession of this Sovereign in whom it shall reside; nor once telling us historically of the exercise of any of his power: I say that not a word of this should be mentioned by Christ or his Apostles, even when there was so great occasion, when *Peter* was among them, when there was striving for supremacy, when the Churches were lamentably contending about the preheminance of their teachers, and some were for one, and some for another, and some for *Cephas* himself; and when so many heresies arose, and hazarded the Churches, as among the *Corinthians*, *Galatians*, and others there did; This is a thing so hard to be believed by one that believeth the wisdom and love of Christ, that I must say for my part, it surpasseth my belief. Especially (as is said) when also so much is said against the Supremacy contend-

ed for. All this I speak of any earthly Head, whether Pope or Council.

Object. *But (say the Papists) you can allow Princes to be the Heads of the Church: why then not a Pope?* Answ. We acknowledge Princes and Pastors over parts of the Church, but not over the Church Universal. Every Corporation may call the Major or Bayliff a subordinate Head of that Corporation, but not of the Kingdom.

Object. *There may be a Prorex, a Viceking: and why not then a Vicarious Head of the Catholick Church?* Answ. 1. Because a Kingdom is not so big as all the world, or all that is and may be Christian. 2. Because a King having Dominion, hath power of doing all that by others that he cannot do himself: But a Pastor being a Minister, hath no such power given him, but must do his work himself. 3. Because the work of the Ministry requires far more labour and attendance. So that it is an utter Impossibility that any man should be able to do the work of a supream Ruler of all the Christian world, yea or the hundredth part of it, as it must be done. 4. And lastly, because Christ hath made no such Prorex, or Vice-head: and none can have it without his commission.

Object. *But the Civil power hath been exercised by an Emperour over more then all the Christian world: And why then may not the Ecclesiastical?* Answ. 1. Its notoriously false that ever Emperour had so extensive a Dominion. 2. The Gospel must be preached over all the world; and therefore we must consider the possible future extent of the Church, and not only the present existent state. 3. There are many millions of Christians mixt in the Dominions of Infidel Princes among other Religions, which makes the Government of them the more difficult. 4. I shewed before from the nature of the work many other difficulties, which make a difference.

Object. *Monarchy is the best Government; therefore the Church must have it.* Answ. The Monarchy of God is best: but among men it is according to the state of the Rulers and subject. One way is better in some cases, and another in others. 2. For one man to be Monarch of all the Christian world, is not best, when by taking a thousand times more upon him then he can do, he will ruine instead of ruling well. 3. You may as

well

well say, An Universal Civil Monarch over all the world is best; therefore so it must be: but when will you prove that? But if I mistake not in my conjecture, it is the thing that the Jesuites have lately got into their heads, that the Pope must have the Universal Sovereignty Ecclesiastical and Civil; that so an Universal peace may be in the world.

Obj. *There was but One High Priest before Christ.* *Answ.* 1. No more there was but one Temple; Will you therefore have no more? Nor but one civil Monarch in that Church: Would you have no more? I partly believe it. 2. It was easie for one to Rule so small a Nation as *Judea* in comparison of all the world. 3. Prove you the Institution of your Supremacy, as we can prove the Institution of *Aarons* Priesthood, and the taking of it down again, and we will yield all. 4. That Priesthood was a Type of Christ the Eternal Priest, and is ended in him, as the Epistle to the *Hebrews* shews at large.

Obj. *There is a Monarchy among Angels and Devils.* *Answ.* 1. Its a hard shift when you must go to another world for your pattern: But for your Argument fetcht from Hell, I will leave it with you: but for that from Heaven, I say, theres no proof of it. And if there were, till you can prove that our work and fitness for it is the same as Angels, and that the Lord hath appointed the same form here, you have said nothing.

But because this Question is largely handled by abundance of our Learned Writers, I shall say no more to it here, but conclude, that by this which is already said in brief, it is manifest, that *The Catholick Church of Christ is not one Visible Political Body, as joined to any One Universal Visible Head or Sovereign, besides Christ.*

If any being driven from this hold, shall say, that yet there are several Patriarcks that Govern the several Provinces of the Christian world, though there be no head but Christ. I answer, 1. If there be no earthly Head and Center of unity, then I have the main cause. These Patriarcks may and do at this day, unreconcilably disagree among themselves. This therefore will not serve for a unity. 2. When (as is aforesaid) you have well proved the Institution of these Patriarcks, and how many they be, and who, and the power of Princes to make new ones, (and

(and not to forbear it, and to pull down the old ones:) and when you have answered the foregoing Arguments, as many of them as extend to Patriarchal power also, as well as Universal Headship, then we shall take this further into consideration. In the mean time, I supersede, as having done that which I think necessary to take off men, from inclining to *Rome*, and reproaching of Churches, upon the erroneous Conceit of the Nature and unity of the Catholick Church; as if it were One, as under One Earthly Visible Head.

CHAP. IV.

Opening the true Grounds on which the Churches Unity and Peace must be sought, and the means that must be used to attain so much as is here to be expected.

Quest. **B**UT if this be not the way of the Churches Unity, which is? and what should we desire and endeavour for the attaining it? For the distractions of the Church are so great through our divisions, that it makes us still apt to suspect that we are out of the way.

Though it be a great work to answer this question rightly, and a hundred, a thousand times greater to answer it satisfactorily (that is, to satisfie prejudiced incapable men with a right answer,) yet I shall attempt it by casting in my thoughts; or to speak more confidently, by declaring so much as I am certain is the will of God concerning this weighty thing.

And here I shall first lay down those grounds upon which we must proceed, if we will do our duty for the union of the Church. 2. I shall tell you what must be done to reduce them into Practice.

1. **T**HE first General Ground is this [Peace and Holiness must be carried on together: Yea Peace must be sought as a Means to Holiness: and therefore Holiness which is the End, must be preferred.] The wisdom that is from above, is first

Pure,

Pure, then Peaceable, Gentle, easie to be intreated, &c. *1am. 3.* A man may be saved that cannot attain Peace with men: and therefore we are commanded to seek it as an uncertain good, *Rom. 12. 18.* If it be possible, as much as in you lyeth, live peaceably with all men: But no man can be saved without Holiness, *Heb. 12. 14.* Follow Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see God. There is a kind of Unity among Devils. For if Satan were divided against Satan, how could his Kingdom stand? *Mat. 12.*

There is a Peace in a state of misery and sin, which hindereth mens recovery. For when the strong man armed keeps his house, the things that he possesseth are in Peace.

It is a state of greatest danger on earth to be United in evil, and to have Peace in a way of sin. And therefore it is no wonder if there be more lovers of Peace then of Holiness, and more that will cry out of our Divisions then of our ungodliness, and more that cry out of so many Religions, then of irreligiousness and ungodliness. For nature may make a man in love with Unity and Peace, but not with Holiness; for with that it is at Enmity. Hence it is that we hear so many Worldlings, Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers cry up unity, and cry down so many minds and wayes: And hence it is that so many, such wicked livers do turn Papists on supposition that there is more unity with them. And so the Popish party among us are the sink into which the filth and excrements of our Churches are emptied.

2. The second General Ground. From hence it followeth that the first closure of the members of the Church must be upon principles of Faith and Holiness: and therefore only between the Professors of Faith and Holiness. And therefore we ought not to be solicitous of obtaining a Unity with open ungodly men; For what Communion hath light with darkness? or what concord hath Christ with Belial? If men will not agree with us in the great Principles of Godliness, nor join with us in avoiding crying sins, and living an Holy life; it is they that are the Separatists, and withdraw from our communions. If they will not come to us in Piety, we must not come to them in Impiety. And to attempt a union with them in Government and Ceremonies, when we cannot bring them to a Union with us in seeming Godliness, is as vain as to attempt to an Association

with the dead, and to make a marriage with a stinking Corps. It is therefore but a carnal stir that Papists, and some Reconcilers make to have a Union so General, as shall take in the most impious rabble that ought to be excommunicated, and should conjoin the living and the dead. And therefore in some cases we are all called to separate, by him that calleth us in other cases to unity: And he tels us that he came not to send peace, (with such) but division.

3. The third General Ground. Unity and Peace are such excellent things, and so much depend upon Love and Holiness, and suppose also so much Illumination, that the perfection of them is reserved for Heaven: and as it is but a small measure of Illumination, and Love and Holiness that is here attainable, in comparison of that which we shall have in heaven; so it is but a small measure of Peace and Concord: And therefore though our desires and endeavours should go as high as we can, yet our expectations on earth must not fly too high. This hath been my own error. I have not sufficiently considered, that perfect Peace, as well as perfect Holiness is the prerogative of Heaven, and that true Peace will be imperfect while the Light and Vertue which is supposed to it is imperfect. And it is a blind absurd conceit of them that wonder we have not perfect Unity, when yet they murmur at Piety, and think a little may serve the turn, and any sin is tolerable that directly against God, but not disunion.

So much for the General Grounds: The Particular Grounds are these following.

1. Ground. **I**T is the Prerogative of the Lord Jesus to be the only Head and Sovereign of the Church. And his will revealed is our Law, and in him only must we center: and not in any Vicarious Universal Head: And from him must all receive their power: and all must worship God according to his præscript. *Eph. 4. 3, 4, 5. & 1. 21, 22. Mar. 28. 18, 19. Col. 1. 18. Acts 4. 12. & 3. 22. & 7. 37. Mat. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 22. 1 Cor. 1. 12. Gal. 2. 9, 10.*

2. Gr. The Holy Scriptures with the Law of Nature, are the only Laws of Christ: unless as he may possibly by extraordinary

nary Revelation, oblige some person to a particular duty, nor contrary to that word, but left undetermined: which yet is so rare a thing that men must not rashly presume of such a matter, 1 Tim. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 7, 8, 9. Isa. 8. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 6. 2 Tim. 3. 17. Dent. 12. 32. Mat. 15. 9, 11.

3. It is the prerogative of Christ himself to be the supremam, absolute and final Judge of the sence of his own Laws, and of the causes that are to be tried thereby.

And therefore it is treasonable folly to attribute any of this to man: and to cry out for an Absolute Judge of Controversies here on earth: when one saith, This is the sence of Scripture, and another saith that is the sence: saith the Papist, [But who shall be Judge?] To which I answer, How far man is Judge, I shall tell you in the next: but the Absolute Judge, and the final Judge is only Christ. He that made the Law is the proper Judge of the sence of his own Laws: Do you not know that Christ will come to judgement, and that all secrets must then be opened by him, and he must decide what man cannot? Man is to Judge but *in tantum; ad hoc; secundum quid*; limitedly; so far as he must execute; but Christ only Judgeth entirely, finally and absolutely, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4, 5. 1 Tim. 5. 24. Jam. 4. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 1. 17. & 2. 23. 1 Cor. 2. 15. Act. 23. 3. 1 Cor. 13. 9, 10, 11, 12. Mark 7. 9, 13.

4. All Councils whether General, or Provincial, or Classial, which consist of the Bishops or Pastors of several Churches met together, are appointed and to be used directly, but *gratia Unitatis, & Communionis Christianae*, and not directly *gratia regiminis* for the Governing of Pastors, in order to Unity and Communion, and not as a Regimental, as to the Pastors. This Proposition which is of exceeding consequence, was voluntarily asserted to me, without my own asking his opinion, by that Learned, Judicious man Arch-Bishop Usher; a man well known to be acquainted with the Judgement and practice of the Antients, if any other whoever. His words were these, [Councils are not for Government, but for Unity; not as being in order of Government over the several Bishops; but that by consultation they may know their duty more clearly, and by agreement maintain Unity; and to this end they were anciently celebrated] Himself a Primate, recommended to others these mo-

derate Principles. And this middle way of Reverend *Usher* is the true healing Mean, between them that would have properly Governing Councils, and them that would have none, or think them needless, or but indifferent things.

But yet (as is before mentioned in the tenth Proposition) consequentially we are obliged to perform the Agreements of these Councils, if they be agreeable to the General Rules of the Scriptures, or if our performance be not forbidden by the Word of God; Because we are under the General obligation to do all things in as much unity, concord and peace as we can, *Gal. 2. per totum. 1 Cor. 3.5, 22. 2 Cor. 13. 11. & 1 Cor. 1. 10. & 4. 6. Mat. 20. 25. Phil. 3. 16. & 4. 2. Mat. 23. 8, 9, 10. 1 Pet. 5. 3.*

And I grant that Pastors are related to the Universal Church, as well as to a particular, and are to have a common care of the whole, though they have a special charge only of their particular flocks. Therefore many Pastors in a Synod are Pastors as well as disjunct, and therefore their acts are authoritative Governing Acts as to the flock. But 1. to the Pastors themselves, they are not properly Governors, no more in Synods then out. 2. And as to the flocks, they are not in a direct superiour order above their particular Pastors; but only from their concord are accidentally more to be regarded and obeyed then a single Pastor, as a Colledge of Physitians is more to be regarded then a single Physitian, not as being of higher authority, but of greater credit, in cases where men must be trusted.

5. A Council consisting of Bishops or Pastors that by distance are not incapable of ordinary local Communion, whether it be a General Council (as they are commonly called, which are not such properly) or National, or Provincial, 1. As they are Christians singly, have a Judgement of Discerning, what is sound Doctrine, and whom to judge Catholics and fit for their Communion: And 2. As they are single Pastors, they have the Judgement of Direction, what Doctrine to recommend as sound to their people (limited to the Superiour Direction of God by his Word,) and whom they must hold or not hold Communion with: And this is an Authoritative Direction, which may be accompanied with a Commanding, as an Herald or Purservant may command in the Princes name. 3. And as they are many Pastors in Council assembled, they have a Judgement of Concord,
or

or Power to enter solemnly into Consultations for mutual information, and then into Agreements, for the right performance of their duty, in recommending that which is sound Doctrine to their people, and receiving the true members of the Catholick Church, and rejecting such as are to be rejected.

So that the most General Councils of true Pastors *ceteris paribus*, are to be most revered by the Princes and people, and in cases where they are sure it is lawful to follow their Agreements, though they be not satisfied of the necessity of it *a natura rei*, they ought to follow them on the account of unity; and also in cases meerly doubtful to them in point of Doctrine, to be ballanced by their judgements rather then by the Judgement of single Pastors, and more then by any other humane judgement *ceteris paribus*: which exception I add, because a smaller Assembly, yea a single Pastor or private man, speaking according to the Word of God, is to be believed and regarded more then the greatest Assembly contradicting the Word: yet we are not easily to think, without evident proof, that one man should be rather in the right then so many; seeing it is easier for one to err then so many, and the promises are more to the publick, then any single persons, so far as they can be known to others: And yet an Assembly of an hundred, or twenty, or ten apparent humble, holy, Judicious men, is likelier to be in the right, and more to be regarded, then an Assembly of a thousand ignorant unlearned wicked Bishops. One clear eye may see further then ten thousand purblind ones, *Act. 6. 5. Act. 3. 34. 1 Thes. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 11. 16. & 14. 33. & 10. 32.*

6. As the properest matter for such General Assemblies to Consult and Agree upon, is General things; as, What Doctrine is sound, and what unsound in General; what persons in General fit for the Churches Communion, and what unfit, &c. so smaller Assemblies that are capable of ordinary personal Communion, and know the persons and circumstances of the cases, are fittest to consult and agree whether such or such particular persons are fit for their own Communion; yea and for their Churches Communion in difficult cases: And also may consult and agree what Doctrines and practises to recommend to their own people, as most agreeable to the Word of God: And thus far these two sorts of Synods may be said to have a power of Judging;

viz. ad hoc, in order to such agreements and practice, *Act. 6. 5, 6. Rom. 15. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 8. 19.*

7. The Possors of particular Worshipping Churches, are the Authorized Guides, Rulers or Teachers of those Churches, and each Member thereof: and must first *discern* in their own minds, and next (if they be many over a Church.) *Agree* among themselves, and then teach the people, what is to be believed and practised, and with whom in General, and in Particular to hold Communion, and whom to avoid, and may charge the people in Christs name to obey their just directions; and when they have done, must themselves execute their own part herein (as by avoiding the Rejected, and not delivering them the Symbols or Sacrament of Communion, &c.) And though they must consult with neighbor Churches for carrying on the work of God in unity, and to the best advantage of the Common cause, yet are they not under the proper Government of them, or any Assemblies (Ecclesiastical,) though obliged in all just things to Agree with them. So that Canons as Canons, I mean the Conclusions of such Assemblies, are but properly Agreements, and not Laws, though by consequence they may be said to oblige, or rather we by another Law obliged to accord and practise them, *Heb. 13. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. Act. 20. 28.*

8. The work of Councils how large so ever, is not to make new Scriptures to be the Rule of our Faith and Life, nor to make new Articles or Doctrines of Faith, nor to frame God a new Worship in whole or in part; But by Consultations and Agreements to strengthen each other, and Direct the people in the faith of Christ, and the maintaining and propagating the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, and doing those duties in the Worship of God, and in Righteousness and Mercy to men, which the Scriptures do impose, and in agreeing upon those Modes and Circumstances of Worship which God hath made necessary *in genere*, and left to occasional humane determination *in specie*: Nor may they under this pretence, either contradict the just determination of the Magistrate concerning such Circumstances, or impose any ensnaring, needless Ceremonies upon the Church; but only order the service of God according to the General Directions of the Scripture, and the Light of Nature,

ture, which by the consideration of the case may help to discern the fittest order. It is therefore a strange assertion of some, that Governours have nothing to do if they may not appoint new Ordinances or Symbolical Ceremonies on the Church, and make new Laws, seeing God hath done the rest already. As if it were nothing to see to the execution of Gods Laws? Or as if this were not the fittest work for such kind of Rulers, whose Rule is only by Ministerial Guidance? Or as if the determination of Necessary Circumstances requisite *ex natura rei*, were not enough for them to do, beside what is written? There being no more necessary to the reducing of the Laws of God into practice: Me thinks meer servants and Embassadors should not be very forward in making Laws, if they understand their office, *1 Sam. 4. 12. Heb. 8. 10, 16. Gal. 3. 15. Deut. 12. 32. Ezek. 2. 7. & 3. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 3. 5. & 4. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Cor. 6. 12.*

9. Those necessary Circumstances in Religious Worship which are of humane determination, and left undetermined by God, are unfit matter for General Councils or remote Assemblies to make standing General Laws of: For 1. the Nature of the things are such as are mutable, and unfit to be fixt, but must be frequently varied as occasions require. 2. The occurring circumstances will be the fittest guide to determine them. 3. They may be meet in one Countrey or Church, which are unmeet in another. 4. Upon such reasons God himself hath left them undetermined: Therefore he left them not to any fixed General determination. 5. The Pastors that are in the place are the fittest Judges of those occasions that must determine them. 6. And it is the office, and in the Commission of those Pastors to be the Guides of their own actions and Congregations. 7. And Councils are not their Lords. So that all this laid together, may tell us that it is rather the work of particular Pastors or Bishops, and of neerest Associations in those cases where Concord is requisite, then of Provincial, or National, or General Councils to determine of such Circumstances. For example: The command of preaching, reading, administering the Sacraments, singing Psalms, &c. do imply that I must have some time and place to do them in: I must use some gesture, vesture, necessary utensils; but it tells not what in particular: I must read some particular Chapter, Psalm, &c. or so much of it: Now common prudence will tell

tell me what to do in these cases my self, or else I am not fit to be a Pastor, or entrusted with so great a work as Gods publick Worship, or the care of souls. Shall a Council now make Laws that all the Ministers in the World, or in this Nation, shall preach only on such a day, and only at such an hour, and in this or that part of the Church, and only on such Texts such days, appointing them a Text for every day; or that they shall use only such words in praying and preaching as is written for them; or shall pray or preach just so long; or shall sing only such a Psalm, in such a tune, using only such cloaths, and such gestures, with an hundred the like? This is to make themselves Masters of the Church, and use their power to the destruction of Ministry, Worship and Church, and not to the Edification of it. The present state of the flock, by sin; or affliction, or the like, may make such a Text fittest for me to preach on, and such a Chapter to be read, or such a Psalm to be sung, when by the Impositions of proud usurpers I am commanded to use the contrary, *viz.* Subjects of Joy, in a time of Humiliation, or of Humiliation in the time of Joy, &c. Many the like inconveniencies might easily be manifest. These unnecessary Impositions are the Engines of Division, *Act. 15. 28. Rom. 14. throughout. Rom. 15. 1, 7. Phil. 3. 15, 16. Mat. 23. 4. & 11. 28. 1 Cor. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 1. 24.*

10. Where some Impositions by Magistrates or Agreements by Ministers in such Circumstances are thought lawful or fit, yet must not the Churches Unity or Peace be laid upon them: So that if through the weakness of Christians they could not perceive the lawfulness of them, but did think they should sin against God if they used them, it is a cruel dividing course for Magistrates here by sore penalties, or Pastors Excommunications to seek to drive them upon that which they think is the way to hell, or the wrath of God, when in the Judgement of the Imposer it is a thing indifferent: The peace of the Church and of Conscience is more worth then a Ceremony, and better kept by gentle recommending such things (if fit,) and a tender rebuke or check to the weak, then by forcing all to that which they neither can nor need to use. But some say, if all may use what way they will, what order shall we have? I answer; therefore make no unnecessary Laws: cast not a foot-ball of contention before them:
These

These presumptuous Impositions are the fire brands of the Church. For example: we had here a Law that Ministers should read only such a peece of a Chapter called an Epistle and Gospel such a day (which yet I would not disobey:) here now arose contention about it: The same Ministers were left at liberty what Text to preach on: and this liberty made no breach in the Church. Ministers were commanded to wear a Surplice, and this raised contention: But what kind of hat, or cap, or shooes, or hose to wear, they were left at liberty, and this made no contention, nor occasioned any undecency. The Lords Supper was to be taken only kneeling: and this raised contention: But they were left at liberty whether to kneel, or stand, or sit at Sermon, or reading, or singing Psalms, and this bred no undecency nor division. They were enjoyned to bow at the name of Jesus in the reading of the Gospel only: And this raised division. But they were left at liberty to bow or not to the Name of God, Christ, Lord, &c. and to the Name Jesus in Sermon, or the Epistle, or the same Gospel read in the whole Chapter: and this bred no division, nor discontent: Lay the Churches peace upon no new humane Impositions, if you would have it hold. Peruse *Rom.* 14. and the other Text last cited, *1 Cor.* 6. 12.

11. The Churches Peace or Unity must not be laid on any bare words of mans devising. It's not a work for Councils or Prelates to form the Christian doctrine in new methods and terms, and then to force others to subscribe or use those very terms: If the same men that refuse this, be willing to subscribe to the whole Scripture, or to a Confession in Scripture terms, you may force him to no more.

Object. But Hereticks will subscribe to Scripture. *Answer.* 1. They must wrest it then, or wrest their Consciences: And by either or both these shifts, they may also subscribe to any of your Confessions. 2. If his Heresie be latent in his mind, you know it not, nor can call him an Heretick, nor doth it hurt the Church: If it be published or preached to others, let civil Governors question him for corporal punishment, and let the Associate Pastors question him to his Reformation or Rejection. You will have a better ground to reject him for delivering falsehood in his own words, then for not subscribing to Truth in your words, when he subscribed the same Truth in Gods Words.

There is no Unity to be expected, if you will so far depart from the Scripture sufficiency, as to make any more for sense or phrase, of absolute necessity to our peace. By *phrase* or *terms*, I mean either the same numerically (as in the Original) or equipollent (as in translations.) And I say not that it's necessary to the unity of the Church, that *every word in Scripture* (Original or Translations) be subscribed to; (for some may doubt of the corruption of a word or Book) But that *no more* is necessary. If all Scripture be not of that degree of Necessity, much less humane additions, *Isa. 8. 20. 1 Tim. 3. 17. 2 Tim. 1. 13. 1 Cor. 9. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 20. Act. 20. 32.*

12. The Churches Unity & Peace must not be laid upon all Divine Truths: as not on lesser darker points, which neither the being nor well-being of Christianity is concerned in so much as to rest upon them, *Phil. 3. 15, 16. Rom. 14. 15, 17, 20. Heb. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. 1 Cor. 7. 19. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11.*

13. We ought to love and esteem as Christians and members of the Catholick Church all those that profess to believe the Essentials of Christianity, and to be sanctified by the Spirit of God, and lead a holy upright life; so they make a credible profession, not evidently contradicted by words or deeds: though these persons may differ from us in many lower points of Doctrine, Worship or Government, *1 Cor. 1. 2. Eph. 6. 24. Gal. 6. 15, 16. Phil. 3. 16. Rom. 15. 1, 2. & 14. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 8. 9.*

14. We ought so to manage the Worship of God in our particular solemn Assemblies, that no sober peaceable Christian may be repulsed or forced from our local Communion, through differences in things of indifferent nature, *Heb. 8. 5. Mat. 15. 9. Rom. 14. 13. & 14. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 3. Joh. 4. 23, 24.*

15. If any Churches differ from us in Ceremonies or smaller things, or if any particular Christians differ, so that they cannot in conscience hold local Communion with us in the same Assemblies for Worship (*E. G.* if we sit at the Lords Supper, and they dare not take it without kneeling: if we sing a version of the Psalms which they scruple to joyn in; If we permit none to joyn that will not conform in disputable things) in such cases, though it be first our duty to do our best to remove all offences, yet if that cannot be done, we may and ought in several Assemblies to take each other for Brethren, and of the same Catholick Church,