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# R E M A R K S <sup>✓</sup>

Upon the late

Dr. WARD'S DISSERTATIONS

Upon several Passages of the

## Sacred Scriptures.

Wherein are shewn, beside other things,

That St. John computed the hours of the day, after the Jewish manner: Who are the Greeks. John xii. Who the Grecians. Acts vi. The design of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. That there was but one sort of Jewish Profelytes: Wherein lay the fault of St. Peter, and how St. Paul may be vindicated.

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By NATHANIEL LARDNER. D. D.

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L O N D O N :

Sold by J. BUCKLAND at the Buck, and W. FENNER at the Angel and Bible, in Pater Noster Rowe, and J. WAUGH in Lombard Street.

M. DCC. LXII.

## ERRATUM.

At p. 136. l. 8. from the bottom, for answerable,  
r. unanswerable.





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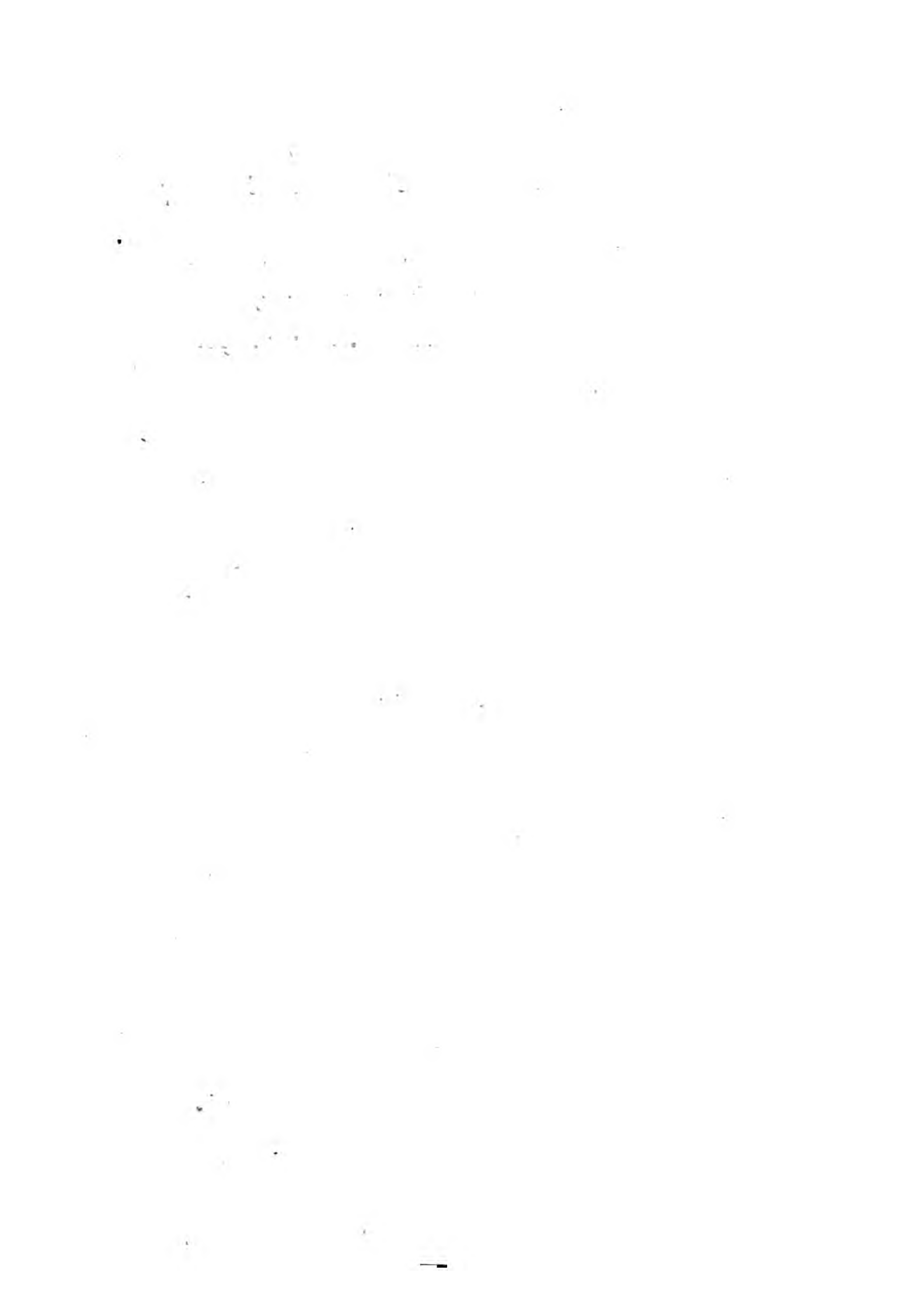


## C O N T E N T S.

*pression, You see how large a  
letter I have written unto you,  
with my own hand? Gal. vi. 1. p. 190.*



C H A P.





## INTRODUCTION.



R. Ward's intimate acquaintance with antiquity, and his uncommon skill in all parts of literature, are well known. His sincere piety and respect for the sacred scriptures were as conspicuous. And his Dissertations, though postumous, have been well received by the public. Nevertheless among many curious criticisms, and just observations, there are some things, which appear to deserve farther consideration. I hope therefore, that my making remarks upon some places, where I hesitate, will not be reckoned inconsistent with the respect, which I long<sup>d</sup> had, and still have for the learned and pious author.

And I may take this opportunity to enlarge upon some articles, beyond what the design of making remarks would require.

B

C H A P.

## C H A P. I.

**P**AGE 73. Diss. xxi. *The Case of the Demoniac, who resided among the tombs on the coast of Gadara.*

As my remarks are to be made in the order of the Dissertations, I begin with this. Upon which I have received some observations in a letter from my much esteemed friend, Mr. THOMAS MOLE, which I shall here transcribe.

“ I have read the Dissertations of Dr. Ward. Among which I find one upon the case of the Demoniac, who resided among the tombs on the coast of Gadara.”

“ This affair of the possessions is an embarrassment, which one would be glad fairly to get rid of. The interpretation, which represents them as mad, or otherwise grievously diseased, seems to be the only method effectually to remove it. A great deal has been writ to shew the probability of this explanation, and principally by yourself. Our late friend seems to have been very tenacious of the other sense, and treats them as real possessions. He justly observes the impropriety

priety of calling *devils* what in the Evangelists is called *demons*. But does not, I think, so fairly, as one would desire, argue in support of their being possessions."

"The man, he says, p. 75. is here described, as wholly unconvertible, so fierce that no one dared come near him. This must have been at times only. For it is said Math. v. 4. that he had been often bound with fetters, and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces. So that it is going farther than the text allows, to say of him, that none dared to come near him, during all the time, since he was first seized: as he evidently, I think, means. For he adds immediatly: *He had lived a long time in that condition.*"

"When it is added by St. Math. ver. 4. *neither could any man tame him*, it seems to me, that there had been many trials of cure undertaken, and various methods used for that purpose, though without success, especially, if he was a man of any note in that (a) city. For *ἐκ πόλεως*, *out of the city*, in St.

B 2

Luke;

(a) Especially, if he was a man of note in that city.] That appears to me a curious thought, and a valuable hint: which may lead

Luke, must, I think, refer to the place of his habitation, while he was sane, rather than when thus disordered, and from which he

lead us to consider, whether there are not in this historie some things, which may induce us to suppose, that the Demoniac, to whom St. Mark and St. Luke confine their narration, was a man of some substance. And I think, there are several such things. In St. Mark, v. 19. our Lord says: *Go home to thy friends.* Ἔπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου, πρὸς τοὺς σούς. Literally, *go to thy house, to thy own people*, meaning familie, or friends. In Luke viii. 39. *return to thy own house.* Ἐπέστρεψε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου. Care had been taken of him, and there had been, as is manifest, divers attempts made to cure his disorder, or to relieve, and restrain him under it. And when the multitude from the city, and from the countrey round about, came to Jesus, they saw the man *sitting, and clothed.* Clothing therefore had been brought to him, and, probably, from his own house, in the adjacent city, and from his familie. They knew where he was, though he had escaped from them. And upon the first intelligence concerning what had happened, they recollected the distresse he must be in, for want of clothing. They therefore immediatly sent him apparel. And that they were his own garments, which he had been used to wear, when composed, or at least such, in which he could make a decent appearance, may be collected from his request to *be with Jesus*, and accompany him. This circumstance may be one reason, why St. Mark and St. Luke, give an account of this one Demoniac only, though there were two, as St. Matthew says. Finally, his being a person of good condition in the city where he dwelt, might render him better qualified to speak of this great work. Any man, however mean, deserved to be attended to, when he spoke of a miracle, wrought upon himself, of which divers others were witnesses: but a man of substance, and a reputable inhabitant of the place, might do it to better advantage.

Ch. I. *in the New Testament.* 5

he came, when he met Jesus. And the word, *δαμάζω*, here used, and in St. James iii. 7. of *taming wild beasts*, and the *tongues of men*, seems not improperly to express the cure of madnesse, and perhaps more properly than the dispossession of demons. It might deserve our inquiry, whether it is never so used by the ancients in treating of maniacal cases."

"It appears farther probable to me, that this man had his madnesse by fits, or at certain seasons, with intervals of sanity between them: and that when his fits were observed to be coming on, he was bound by his friends, (with whom he might possibly have lived in those intervals,) to prevent his doing harm to himself, or others, and have him more under command. Does not St. Luke say, or mean this? viii. 29. *For oftentimes, πολλοῖς χρόνοις, it had caught him, and he was kept φυλασσόμενος, bound with chains and fetters. And he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.* St. Mark says, he had been *often bound, πολλάκις.* St. Matthew viii. 28. ascribes to him this exceeding fiercenesse only, when coming out of the tombs to them."

“ Hence I would farther observe, that we are under no necessity of allowing what we find asserted, *that he had lived a long time in this condition : and therefore was neither capable, nor had any opportunity of knowing any thing concerning Christ, or his character.* For though he had been ever so long a time disordered : if there had been any intervals, (and the longer had been the time, it is likely there had been the more :) might he not in some one or other of those intervals, have acquired some knowledge of the character, and even of the person of Christ ? And hence, in his fits, especially, when Christ appeared in his sight, discourse and behave to him as he did : only allowing for what his disorder made him mingle therewith.”

“ What is farther said p. 76. concerning *the inhabitants of the neighboring town, that they do not seem to have known more of Christ, than this man,* is with me alike void of probability. For Christ had been teaching the doctrine of the kingdom, and working miracles a considerable time, and had taken up his residence at Capernaum : in which, and in the neighborhood thereof, he lived a good while. Is it credible, that all this  
could



Ch. I. *in the New Testament.* 7

could have been, and St. Matthew iv. 24. (as is by our late friend observed p. 78.) *had said before, that his fame went throughout all Syria?* And yet the people of this town, not above perhaps 7 or 8 miles distant, and to which a boat might pass in a night's time from Capernaum, had never heard and knew nothing of him? What! spread over all Syria, and never reached a place within a few miles of him? I allow, it is a general expression, and must admit of limitation. But I can see no other ground for excepting this place, than the serving an hypothesis."

"Nor does the instance adduced p. 79. from Mark i. 21. &c. prove any thing, as I think, to the purpose, for which it is brought. For though that was something earlier in the ministry of Christ, than this, and he might be then less known; yet he had been long enough known there for that person to have heard of him. For Mark i. 15. he had begun to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, *the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye, and believe the gospel:* And walking by the sea of Galilee, he had called first Simon and Andrew, and afterwards James, and John his brother. ver. 16. . . . 20. and I suppose,

had wrought some miracles. It is not impossible, but the person who was cured in the synagogue of Capernaum, being left at his liberty, and allowed to enter there, might have heard of what Christ had done in his way thither : and heard, or heard of what he had preached after he came thither. And in St. Luke iv. 31. . . . 37. it should seem, that this person was cured, not upon Christ's first coming to Capernaum. Which enlargeth the time, that this man had to come to the knowledge of him."

" There is no necessity therefore to suppose, that these persons could have no knowledge of Christ, and that it must not be they, but the devils only in them, who knew him."

" The arguing p. 82. from the mention made of *casting out devils*, after raising the dead, in the commission given by Christ to his disciples Matt. x. 8. when he sent them forth, is, I think, of no force. For there may be no necessity of supposing the expression to rise higher than the other, from it's being placed after it. As appears from other texts. Luke ix. 1. 2. *Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.*

*eases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And Matt. x. 1. And when he had called unto him the twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sicknesse, and all manner of disease. See also Matt. iv. 24. It may likewise be observed, that, if the expression of casting out devils be supposed to refer to real possessions ; it is not an expression of greater power, than that of raising the dead. Nor does the fact carry in it a greater degree of evidence and conviction : because there is not equal evidence to be had that a person is really possessed, as there is of a person's being really dead. And therefore it may be as well placed after the raising the dead, if it be interpreted of persons mad, as if it be understood of persons possessed."*

*" May not the term σωφρονεῖντα Mark v. 15. Luke viii. 35. in his right mind, by which this person is represented after his cure, as it is used both by sacred and profane writers in opposition to madnesse, afford some countenance to this interpretation ? "*

*So far my good friend.*

One of my arguments against real possessions (*b*) was taken "from the manner, in which the persons, said to have *unclean spirits*, speak of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"For such persons did often bear an honorable testimonie to our Lord. So Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 41. But it is incredible, that Satan, or any other evil spirits, under his influence and direction, should freely and chearfully bear witness to our Lord, as the Christ."

"Indeed, this appears to me a very forcible argument. I have been sometimes apt to think, that this consideration has been overlooked by learned and pious men, who have so readily admitted real possessions."

So I said. But Dr. Ward is not at all moved by that consideration. He even thinks the testimonie of demons to our Lord, to have been of some value, and of use, especially for encouraging the disciples.

Diff. p. 81. "And as to the case of these demoniacs among the Gergesens, there seems to have been the greatest propriety at that time, not only for his permitting the devils to confes him to be *the son of God*, but likewise

(*b*) *The Case of the Demoniacs, mentioned in the N. T. p. 79, 80.*

wife to *worship* him. For it does not appear, that any other persons were then present, but Christ himself, and his disciples, except the demoniacs. And this was not long before he sent forth his disciples both to preach, and also *to heal the sick, . . . to raise the dead, and cast out devils.* Mat. x. 7. 8. Therefore what could be more proper, or give them higher encouragement to hope for success in their work, than to see the devils thus subject to their master, and paying homage to him."

But, *first*, it is not at all likely, that our Lord should accept the testimonie of demons in private, if he did not receive it in public. How he checked, and disallowed the confessions of persons under these disorders, may be seen Mark i. 23. . . 26. and Luke iv. 33. . . 35. Dr. W. supposeth that there was *great propriety in permitting such confessions*, when few were present. But I am not able to discern that propriety.

*Secondly*, there were others then present with our Lord, beside the disciples, and the demoniacs. For St. Matthew says viii. 28. *And when he was come to the other side into the countrey of the Gergesens, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs,*

*tombs, exceeding fierce. St. Mark v. 1. 2. And they came over unto the other side of the sea. . . And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. Luke viii. 27. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and wore no cloths.*

The place of the present abode of these demoniacs was on the sea-coast. When they saw our Saviour and the disciples come on shore, they immediately came toward them. Nor can there be any doubt made, that the sailors also, in whose ship our Saviour and his disciples had arrived, came ashore with them, or presently after. The appearance of such objects could not but excite their curiosity. Moreover, in the voyage from the other side there had happened a great storm, which our Lord composed by his word. And the men of the ship, as well as the disciples,  *marvelled greatly, or were exceedingly surpris'd, saying: What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!* Matt. viii. 27. Nor were these men now first acquainted with our Lord. Before this they had heard him preach, and may have seen some other  
miracles

miracles done by him. Besides, as we are assured by St. Mark, upon our Lord's saying in the evening, *Let us pass over to the other side*, he not only set out himself in the ship, where he had been preaching: but *there were also several other little ships*, filled, it is likely with men, who had attended on his discourses in the day-time. These knew, he was going to *the other side* of the lake: and would be there, as soon as he, or before. In short, our Lord was now, as it were, in the height of his ministrie. And we know from the Evangelists, that before this time, he was followed with uncommon zeal by multitudes wherever he went, even into desert places. As is shewn Mark i. 45. and Luke iv. 42. 43. So that before this man, or these men, worshiped our Lord, or acknowledged him to be the Son of God, many people must have been gathered together.

P. 75. For proving, that this unhappy person was not barely distracted, our author says: " Besides, it is plain, that he could not be apprised of his coming at that time, for the ship sailed over from the other side, in the night. And so soon as Christ came  
ashore,

ashore, and the man saw him at a distance, he ran to him, and worshiped him."

But there is not sufficient precision in that proposition. Two things are joyned together, which ought to be separated. When our Lord, and his disciples, (let me now add,) and other people, landed, he came toward them. And from the respect shewn to our Lord by the disciples, and by all the companie, he discerned him to be the principal person. But he did not worship our Lord, nor confess him to be the Christ, untill after some discourse. As appears from the historie.

Matt. viii. 28. 29. already cited. *And when he was come to the other side, into the countrey of the Gergesens, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce. . . And, behold, they cried out, saying : What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God ?*

But let us compare the other Evangelists. Mark v. 2. *And when he was come out of the ship, immediatly there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. . . . ver. 6. . . 8. And when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran, and worshiped him. And cried with a loud voice, and said : What have I to do with thee,*



*thee, Jesus, thou Son of God. I adjure thee, that thou torment me not. For he had said unto him: Come out of him thou unclean spirit.*

And Luke viii. 26. . . 29. *And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time. . . . When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said: What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God Most High. I beseech thee, torment me not. For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him.*

According to all the Evangelists therefore, this demoniac, or these two demoniacs, acknowledged Jesus to *be the Son of God*. But from St. Mark and St. Luke it appears, that this was not done, untill after our Lord had some discourse with him. From that discourse, and from the general intelligence, which he had before received concerning Jesus, in the intervals of his disorder, he was enabled, and disposed, to speak of him, as he did.

St. Mark alone expressly says, that the man, of whom he speaks, *worshiped* Christ. But the same thing is said by St. Luke in another phrase, *he fell down before him*. And  
it

it is implied in what is attested by all the Evangelists, that he acknowledged Jesus to be *the Son of God*. So, in the historie of the man born blind, whom our Lord had healed. John ix. 35. . . 38. *Jesus heard, that they had cast him out. And when he had found him, he said : Dost thou believe on the Son of God ? He answered, and said : Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him ? And Jesus said unto him : Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said : Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him.* So likewise, after our Lord's ascension. Matt. xxviii. 17. *And when they saw him, they worshiped him.*

I have no intention to add any new arguments concerning the case of the demoniacs, mentioned in the New Testament. I relye upon those, which were formerly alleged. And let every one judge, as he sees best. But I would take this opportunity to propose some observations upon the historie of the cure of the two unhappy men in the countrey of the Gadarens, which have not been yet mentioned.

In

In accounting for the losse of the swine several things are said at p. 101. and 102. The distraction, under which, the man called Legion, had labored, was very grievous. He was a hideous form, and his action was very violent. When he had conceived the thought of gratifying the evil spirits, by which he imagined himself to be possessed, with the destruction of the swine, he would without much difficulty drive them off the precipice. If some few of them were put in motion, the whole herd would follow.

I would now say more distinctly, that the losse of the swine was occasioned by a fright. When our blessed Lord said, *Go*, as in *St. Matthew*: or *he gave them leave*, or *he suffered them*, as in the other Evangelists: I think, that one, or both the demoniacs went hastily toward the swine. And by some noise, or action, a few of them were affrighted. Which fright was immediatly communicated to the rest, whereupon the whole herd went off with great violence. And the way being steep, and leading to the lake, they all perished in the water. This is easie to be apprehended.

There are very few, who have not been witnesses to something like this in the horse: who takes fright at very slight things, one knows not what sometimes: though at other times, from manifest causes. Whenever it happens, he runs away, with great violence, to his own perdition, and the great hazard, and oftentimes the great detriment of (c) others. And, if there are several together, the whole set, or team, becomes ungovernable. This is certain, and well known to almost every body.

I have also observed in our fields near London, where have been many horses grazing, if one is frightened, all the rest are alarmed. The same is seen in our fields, where are large herds of horned cattle. If one is disturbed by the barking of a dog, or the sport of idle boys, or any other odd occurrence;

(c) "On Monday [May 7.] as J . . . H . . Esq; was coming to town from his house at Carshalton in Surry, in his post-chaise, the horses took fright, just by Newington Church, and ran with such violence against a waggon, passing through the turn-pike, that one of the horses was killed on the spot, and the other so much bruised, that he died in an hour afterwards, and the chaise was almost torn to pieces. But happily the Gentleman received no hurt, and the driver was but slightly bruised."

*The General Evening-Post. Thursday, May 10, 1759.*

rence ; all the rest, to the utmost bounds of the enclosure, are alarmed, and put in motion. The same is likewise well known of flocks of sheep, and flocks of geese, and sparrows. If one of the flock takes fright, all the rest hasten away in the same direction. I believe this to be true of all animals, that are gregarious : as were these swine, a large herd, feeding by each other. If one or two of them took fright, and tended toward the lake ; all the rest, without exception, would go off the same way, with the utmost precipitation.

By all the three Evangelists we are assured, that after the losse of the swine, and the cure of the demoniacs, the Gadarens besought our Lord, *that he would depart out of their coasts.* This I have twice, that is, at p. 19. and 32. ascribed to the carnal temper of these people : *that being apprehensive of suffering in their worldly interests, instead of entreating Jesus to stay with them, a while at least, they joyned together with much unanimity, in beseeching him to depart out of their coasts.*

Nor do I now say, that a sensual temper of mind had no influence on them, for producing that request. Nevertheless, per-

haps, that alone was not the whole cause. I therefore would add, as follows.

It is observable from divers instances in the old Testament, that special and extraordinary manifestations of the Divine Presence were generally awful and affecting to the men, to whom they were made, though the message was gracious. I refer not only to Ex. xx. 19. But also to ch. xxxiv. 30. and Judg. vi. 22. and xiii. 22. See likewise Ex. xxxiii. 20.

There are like instances in the New Testament. How comfortable the tidings! *Luke ii. 8 . . . 15.* Yet it is said of the shepherds ver. 9. *and they were sore afraid.* And *Luke v. 8 . . . 10.* *when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus knees, saying: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, o Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes, which they had taken. And so were also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee . . . And Jesus said unto Simon: Fear not, henceforth thou shalt catch men.* Upon another occasion. *Mark iv. 41.* *And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another: What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him!* Compare *Luke viii. 25.* And on the mount. *Matt.*

xvii. 6, 7. *And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.* Compare Mark ix. 6. and Luke ix. 34.

Let us now observe what is said of the Gadarens. Mar. v. 15. *And they* (meaning the people of the neighboring town and countrey) *come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind. And they were afraid.* To the like purpose exactly in Luke viii. 35. And at ver. 37. it is said: *Then the whole multitude of the countrey of the Gadarens round about besought him to depart from them. For they were taken with great fear.*

If Peter desired our Lord *to depart from him, because he was a sinful man.* If he, and the rest, were at other times so astonished that they knew not what to say, nor what to think of themselves: though all the great works, which they had seen performed by him, were healing and beneficial: well might the people of this countrey be struck with awe at the sight of the man called Legion, *sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind.* For it was a work of Divine Power, and a token of the Divine Presence. And,

very probably, they thought themselves unqualified for the residence of so great and holy a person among them.

At their request our Lord departed, and took ship, and returned to the place, whence he had come: well knowing, that many there were in earnest expectation of him.

But though our Lord himself staid no longer with the Gadarens, he left there the man, whom he had cured. *He prayed, that he might be with him. However Jesus suffered him not. But saith unto him: Go home to thy friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord hath done for thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis, how great things Jesus had done for him. And all men did marvel.* And it is not an unreasonable, nor an improbable supposition, that some of that countrey did afterwards come over into Galilee, or Judea, to see Jesus, that they might receive benefit from his great wisdom, or great power.

*Case of the Demoniacs. p. 100. l. 9. . . 12.* Hospitals for the relief and cure of such as labor under this, and other grievous distempers, may be said to be a Christian institution.

There



Ch. I. *in the New Testament.* 23

There should have been, in the margin, a reference to the Bishop of Oxford, now Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, his sermon preached before the Governours of the London Hospital, in the year 1754. p. 8 . . . II.



## C H A P. II.

**P**AGE 106. Diff. xxviii. *Who those Greeks were, who desired to see Jesus? And whether they were admitted? John xii. 20, 21.*

Dr. Ward well observes at p. 107. "The greater part of Syria was in our Saviour's time called *Greece* by the Jews. Hence, when he was in the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and a woman besought him to cast the evil spirit out of her daughter, she is called *a Greek, a syrophenician by nation*. Mark vii. 26. And these *Greeks*, who were desirous to see Jesus, were, probably, of the same nation, and known to Philip, who is here said to have been *of Bethsaida of Galilee*."

The same observation is in Grotius (a) upon this text. And I had occasion some while ago, in considering another text, to say ;

(a) Videntur autem hi Gentiles fuisse Syrophenices. Nam alibi notavimus, Marci vii. 26. *Ελληνίδα* vocari, quae aliis est Syrophenista. Et his ob vicinitatem facilius notitia cum Galilaeis Bethsaidensibus, quod illi forte in partes Tyri et Sidonis excurrerant. *Grot. ad Job. xii. 20.*

say: "It (b) was common with all authors about that time, to call the people, who inhabited the cities of Asia, and Syria, *Greeks.*"

Our author says, p. 107. "They seem to have been proselytes, as they are reckoned among those, *who came up to Jerusalem to worship at the feasts.*"

Which expression is ambiguous. For, as many learned men, of our time, say, there were two sorts of proselytes, some called *proselytes of the gate*, others *proselytes of righteousness*; Dr. W . . . may mean the former, as do Whitby, and Hammond. I know nothing of that sort of half-proselytes. I think, (c) there were not any such men in any part of the world, in the times of our Saviour and his Apostles.

That these men were not proselytes, or men circumcised after the manner of the Jews, appears to me very probable. For all proselytes were entitled to the same religious privileges with native Jews, or the descendants of Abraham and Jacob. Such there-

(b) See the Supplement to the Credibility, &c. Vol. 2. p. 66. in the notes.

(c) See the same Supplement. Vol. 3. p. 129. . . 150.

therefore, as it seems, might have had free access to Christ at the temple. The modestie of these persons may make us think of the centurion, who, when he entreated our Lord to heal his sick servant, that was dear to him, and our Lord was going toward his house with some *Elders of the Jews*, who also joyned in the same request; he sent friends unto him, saying, not only, that he was not worthie that *Jesus* should enter under his roof: but likewise, that neither thought he himself worthie to come unto him: Luke vii. 1 . . . 8. Moreover Philip himself seems to have hesitated about the propriety of the request of these persons. For he also consulted Andrew, before he made the proposal to our Lord. So is the historie. *And there were certain Greeks among them, who came up to worship at the feast. The same came to Philip, who was of Bethsaida in Galilee, and desired him, saying: Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh, and telleth Andrew. And again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus.*

Their request, to see *Jesus*, I imagine, implied a desire to have access to his person, and to have some conversation with him. Which request, I think, was granted.

Sup-

Supposing these men to have been uncircumcised Gentils, it was a favour, and a condescension, according to the Jewish maxims. But the woman, who was of the same countrey, and is also called a *Greek*, came near to our Lord, and spoke to him several times, and he to her, and at length very comfortably, and healed her daughter. Matt. xv. 21. . . 28. Mark vii. If our Lord yielded so far to the importunity of that woman, why might he not also grant the request of these Greeks, though Gentils. It is manifest, that she was no better. For our Lord said to her: *Let the children first be filled. It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and cast it unto the dogs.*

The sequel of the historie confirms this supposition. In the hearing of these persons, or soon after they were gone, our Lord made use of these expressions. ver. 23. *And Jesus answered them, saying: The hour is come, that the son of man shall be glorified,* that is, by the faith of the Gentils, though many of the Jewish people rejected him. And afterwards, as ver. 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* The coming of these persons therefore was very acceptable to our Lord.

And

And he thereupon pleaseth himself with the prospect of the speedie and extensive progresse of his doctrine. So after the profession made by the forementioned centurion, of faith in our Lord's power, to heal his servant at a distance, *he said to them that followed: I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel. And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,* and what there follows. Matt. viii. 10 . . 12.

That the *Greeks* here spoken of were Gentils, was the opinion of the ancient writers of the Church, as (*d*) Epiphanius, (*e*) Chrysostom, (*f*) Theophylact, (*g*) Theodore of Mopsuestia, (*b*) Jerome, and others: who never were perplexed with the notion of two sorts of profelytes, which has gained so much credit among learned Christians of late times.

And we are likewise assured by Josephus, that (*i*) Gentils, or such as were aliens, were  
wont

(*d*) *Haer.* 30. num. xxvii.

(*e*) *In Job. hom.* 66. al. 65. n. 3. p. 390. Tom. 8.

(*f*) *In loc.*

(*g*) *Apud Cotelerii Caten. Patr. in Jo.* p. 309.

(*b*) *Ad Rufin.* T. 2. p. 217. al. ep. 131.

(*i*) ἀλλ' ἔδει τοῖς ἀλλοφύλοις, ὅσοι κατὰ θεησκίαν παρήσαν.  
*De B. J. l. 6. cap. ix. 3.*

*Who were the Greeks. John xii. 29*

wont to come to Jerusalem, to worship there at the time of the Jewish festivals. Though uncircumcised men might not eat the pass-over, nor offer sacrifices at the temple, they might pray there. And when our Lord cleansed the temple, and drove the buyers and sellers, with their merchandise, from the outer court, he reminded them that it was written, *that God's house should be called an house of prayer for all people.* Is. lvi. 7. Matt. xxi. 13. Mark xi. 17. Luke xix. 46.



C H A P.

C H A P. III.

PAGE 125. Dis. xxxii. *How to reconcile St. John's account concerning the time of our Saviour's crucifixion with that of the three other evangelists.*

St John writes ch. xix. 13, 14. *When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat in the judgment-seat. . . And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour. And he saith unto the Jews: Behold your King.* St. Mark says: xv. 25. *And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.*

For reconciling these accounts our learned author says, p. 127, 128. "And about six in the morning Pilate brought him forth to the Jews, and said: *Behold your King.* This is the time which John refers to, and calls the *sixth hour*, that is, of the *civil day*. The three following hours were employed in preparing for his crucifixion, and that of the two robbers, and carrying them to the place without the city. At the conclusion of those three hours he was crucified. Which Mark calls the *third hour*, that is, of the

the



the natural day. And by the same reckoning must be understood the *sixth hour*, at which the darkness commenced: and also the *ninth hour*, when, he expired: as related by all the Evangelists, except John: who has used the Roman way of reckoning in some other places also. as ch. i. 39. iv. 6. and xx. 19. And it is not improbable, that he writing so late might choose that way of reckoning the hours of the day, which was customary among the Romans: as the others had followed that, which was practised by the Jews."

To me it seems, that St. John reckons the hours of the day, as the other Evangelists do, according to the custom of the Jews. Nor do I comprehend, how any historian could write intelligibly of transactions in Judea, without observing the Jewish custom, unless he gives particular notice of it.

In the historie of the nobleman of Capernaum, who came to Jesus, *beseeking him to come down, and heal his son*, it is said. John iv. 51, 52. *And as he was going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying: Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them, the hour, when he began to amend. And they said unto him: Yesterday, about the seventh hour,*

32 *That St. John computed the hours of the day hour, the fever left him.* These persons must be supposed to speak according to the ordinarie custom of the countrey, in which they lived. And by the *seventh hour* must be meant about one of the clock afternoon, according to our computation.

And in ch. xi. 9. Our Saviour himself says, very agreeably to the Jewish manner: *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* But I do not insist upon this, as decisive, because the Romans, and others, might express themselves in the like manner, meaning the natural day.

John iv. 5. 6. *Then cometh Jesus unto a city, called Sychar . . . Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey sat thus on the well. And it was about the sixth hour:* that is, says Whitby, 'about noon.' So it is generally (a) understood, and very rightly, as I apprehend.

So says (b) Cyril of Alexandria, not very far below the begining of the fifth centurie,

(a) Vid. supr. cap. i. 39. Caussam scitis ostendit, quia et multum itineris fecerat, et jam erat meridies. *Grot. in ver. 6.*

Quia, inquit, lassus erat de via, et instabat meridies, maximus videlicet diei aestus. *Bez. in loc.*

(b) Ευαφόρως ἐπὶ τῇ πηγῇ καταλύοντα δεικνύει τὸν Ἰησοῦν. Ἡλίος γὰρ ἀκραιολάττην ἀπὸ μέσων ἀΨίδων τοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τῆν

Ch. III. *after the Jewish manner.* 33

turie, in his comment upon this text. Whom I transcribe in the margin. And in like manner Isaac, surnamed the Great, who flourished about the middle of the same centurie. Among his works Dr. Asseman reckons five Sermons concerning the Samaritan woman. The first of which begins in this (c) manner. “ At the sixth hour, when the day was “ grown hot, our Saviour came to the “ well.”

I think, this must be right. For I do not see, how those ancient writers, who lived not very remote from Judea, could be mistaken.

Josephus dwelt at Rome, and wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem. Nevertheless he also computes the hours in the same way. Giving an account of an assemblée at Taricheas in Galilee, in a proseucha, or oratorie, he says: “ There (d) certainly would have been a great disturbance, if the assemblée

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had

τὴν ἀκτῖνα καταχέοντος, καὶ ἀκράτοις τὰ σώματα καταπλέγοντος βολαῖς, τὸ μὲν ἔτι πρόσω βεδίξεν ἐκ ἀζήμιον. κ. λ. Cyr. H. in Joan. T. 4. p. 179.

(c) Primus sic incipit. Horâ sextâ, quum dies incaluisse, venit ad puteum Dominus. *Ap. Assen. Bib. Or. T. i. p. 232. p. 79.*

(d) Καὶ πάντως ἂν εἰς εἰς εἰς ἐχώρησαν, εἰ μὴ τὴν σύνοδου διέλυσεν ἐπελθῶσα ἕκτη ὥρα, καθ' ἣν τοῖς σάββατον ἀριστοποιεῖσθαι νόμιμον ἐστὶν ὑμῖν. *Jos. Vit. §. 54. p. 26.*

34 *That St. John computed the hours of the day had not been dissolved by the approach of the sixth hour, at which time we are wont to go to dinner on the sabbaths.*” And he assures us, “ That (e) the priests at the temple were employed in killing paschal lambs from the ninth hour to the eleventh.”

John i. 35 . . . 39. *Again, the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples. And looking upon Jesus, as he walked, he saith: Behold the lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak. And they followed Jesus. . . And they said to him: Rabbi, where dwellest thou? He saith unto them: Come, and see. They came, and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day. For it was about the tenth hour. Or, as is said, in the margin of some of our Bibles, “ two hours before night.”* Which explication is very reasonable, and obvious. The connexion leads us to think, that the day was declining, when these disciples went to the house, where Jesus dwelt. Nor is there any consideration, that should induce us to think of our ten in the forenoon. For inquisitive, attentive, and well-disposed men, as these were, might learn a great deal in the space of  
of

(e) . . . καθ' ἣν θύσει μὲν ἀπὸ ἐνάτης ὥρας μέχρι ἐνδεκάτης.  
*De B. J. l. 6. ix. 3.*

of two hours conversation with so excellent a master as they now applied to.

There still remains one text more to be considered. John xx. 19. *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them: Peace be unto you.*

As our author here particularly refers to Dr. Benson, I must observe what he says: "We (*f*) have yet a more evident proof, that St. John followed the *Roman* method of reckoning the hours of the day. For speaking of that very day, on which our blessed Lord arose from the dead, he first mentions his appearing to Mary Magdalen. And then intimates, that he appeared to other of his disciples, that same day. But his words are very remarkable. *The same day, when it was evening, being the first day of the week:* and the disciples had bolted the doors for fear of the Jews: *Then came Jesus, and stood in the midst of them. &c.* Now, no Jew would have used that language. No! When *the evening was come*, they would

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have

(*f*) See the *History of the first planting the Christian Religion*. 2d. ed. App. n. iv. p. 52. 53.

36 *That St. John computed the hours of the day*  
 have called it *the second day of the week*. St.  
 John therefore, in this place, hath, in effect;  
 (though not in express words,) told his  
 attentive readers, that he has followed the  
*Roman* computation of the hours of the  
 day. For, according to that, it was still  
 the first day of the week, and the same  
 day, on which our Lord arose: notwith-  
 standing the sun was set, and the *evening*  
*come*. And the Jews would, unquestionably,  
 have reckoned it *the second day of the week*."

This whole argument, as every one sees,  
 depends upon the supposition, that this ap-  
 pearance of our Lord to his disciples was  
 after sun-set, and perhaps late in the night:  
 as (g) Grotius, and some others have thought.  
 But other learned men are rather of opinion,  
 that (b) our Lord now shewed himself to  
 his disciples by day-light. Nor is it said,  
 that the doors had been shut by the disci-  
 ples, because it was night, but *for fear of*  
*the Jews*.

This

(g) Jam multâ nocte. *Grat. in Jo. xx. 19.*

(b) Existente vesperâ, et quidem satis ferâ, januis clausis.  
 Quod licet a plerisque consideretur, ut signum provectae noctis,  
 nobis tamen minime ita videtur. Circumstantiis enim omni-  
 bus rite perpensis, videtur concludendum esse, quod adhuc  
 ante sextam vespertinam haec apparitio discipulis contigerit.  
*Lampe in Job. loc. T. 3. p. 685. Et confer. Wolf. in loc.*

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This appearance of our Lord was not made, until after the return of the two, that had been at Emmaus. And it will be of great use to us to attend to that historie, as it stands in St. Luke's Gospel, ch. xxiv. 13 . . . 36.

*And behold, two of them went that same day to a village, called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all those things, which had happened. Whilst they communed together, and reasoned, Jesus drew near, and went with them. . . . And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they were going. And he made, as though he would have gone farther. But they constrained him, saying: Abide with us. For it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them: [or, as he was fitting down to table with them:] he took bread, and blessed it, and brake unto them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him. And he vanished out of their sight. that is, he retired, and went away. And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them. . . . And they told*

38 *That St. John computed the hours of the day what things were done in the way, and how he was known unto them in breaking of bread. . . And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them: Peace be unto you.*

When they entreated Jesus to *abide with them*, they said: *It is toward evening, and the day is far spent, or has already begun to decline.* ὅτι πρὸς ἑσπέραν ἔστι, καὶ κέκλικεν ἡμέρα. It was past noon, and might be near our three afternoon. As they were sitting down to eat, looking more directly at Jesus, than they had yet done, they knew him. Our Lord thereupon retired, and they hastened to the disciples. Emmaus was about a two hours walk from Jerusalem. They might get thither more than an hour before sun-set. Soon after our Lord came in. He might have been there before them. But he was willing, that the disciples, and they that were with them, should be prepared for his appearing among them by the testimonie of these two, added to the testimonies of Peter, and the women, who had already seen him.

All this may be confirmed by the historie of the miracle of the five loaves and five thousand. Matt. xiv. 15. *And when it was evening*



*evening, his disciples came unto him, saying: This is a desert place, and the time is now past.* Mark vi. 35. *And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said: This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed.* Says Mr. Macknight (i) in his instructive and edifying account of this miracle, "the five thousand men, beside women and children, were all fed with such expedition, that though the thing was not so much as proposed to the disciples, till about three, all was over by five of the clock in the afternoon."

I have endeavored to shew, that St. John followed the Jewish computation of the hours of the day. I am not now concerned to reconcile him with the other Evangelists. Solutions of this difficulty may be found in (k) editors, and commentators. Some think, that St. John's original number was *the third hour*, as in St. Mark: and that his number has been since altered. Others propose different solutions. But so far as I am able to judge, a solution, depending

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upon

(i) See his *Harmonie of the Gospels.* Sect. 60. p. 173.

(k) Vid. Mill. et Wetsen. Bengel. in *Cris. et Gnomon.* ad Jo. xix. 20. Vid. et Grot. et Wolf. et Lampe in loc. et Bez. ad Marc xv. 29. *Basnag. ann.* 33. n. vii.

40 *That St. John computed the hours, &c.*

upon the supposition, that St. John followed the Roman computation of the hours of the day, is not likely to be right.

The learned men, with whom I have been arguing, think, that St. John wrote his Gospel very late, not before the year of our Lord 97. a little before his own death. But that is said without ground. It is more probable, that (1) St. John wrote his Gospel, before the destruction of Jerusalem, about the year of Christ 68: though not till after the other three Evangelists, and after having read their Gospels, as all the ancients testify. However, if he had writ after the destruction of Jerusalem; it could not but be very proper to observe the Jewish computation in speaking of things done among the Jews, in their own countrey, and before that event.

(1) See the Supplement to the Credib. Vol. i. ch. 9. §. ix. and x. p. 391. &c.

C H A P.

## C H A P. IV.

PAGE 141. Diff. xxxv. *The manner of embalming dead bodies among the Jews, and particularly that of our Saviour.*

Here it is said, p. 149, 150. "The other Evangelists indeed take notice, that the women afterwards carried spices to the sepulchre. For, as Joseph and Nicodemus doubtless embalmed the body privately, after it was carried from the cross; the women, as they were not present, might know nothing of it. And considering the shortness of the time, they might imagine, that nothing had been done: and therefore were willing to do what they could themselves."

This is said by our learned author, for removing a difficulty, arising from what is said by St. John, and the other Evangelists. St. John says ch. xix. 38 . . 40. not only, that *Joseph of Arimathea*, who is also mentioned by (a) the other Evangelists, *besought Pilate, that he might take the body of Jesus, and that Pilate gave him leave:* but adds,  
*There*

(a) *Matt. xxvii. 57 . . 60. Mark xv. 42 . . 45. Luke xxiii. 50 . . 53.*

*There came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrhe and aloes, about an hundred pound weight: including, as I imagine, the bandages, as well as the spices. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen cloths, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury, meaning such persons, as were of eminence and distinction.*

Nevertheless St. Mark says xvi. 1. 2. *And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre, at the rising of the sun. See also Luke xxiii. 55. 56. and xxiv. 1. 2.*

As our Lord's female friends prepared spices, and brought them to the sepulchre; our Author concludes, that they *knew nothing* of what had been done by Joseph and Nicodemus.

But it is manifest from all the Evangelists, that the women, who attended our Lord's crucifixion, attended also his interment. St. John himself says, ch. xix. 25. *Now there stood by the crosse of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of*

Ch. IV. *in which our Lord was embalmed.* 43  
of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. And St.  
Matthew ch. xxvii. 53 . . . 61. *And many  
women were there, beholding afar off . . . A-  
mong whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary,  
the mother of James and Joses, and the mo-  
ther of Zebedee's children . . . Joseph of Arima-  
thea . . . went to Pilate, and begged the body  
of Jesus . . . And when Joseph had taken the  
body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and  
laid it in his own new tomb, which he had  
hewn out in the rock. And he rolled a great  
stone to the sepulchre, and departed. And  
there was Mary Magdalen, and the other  
Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.*  
And St. Mark expressly says. xv. 47. *And  
Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of  
Joses, beheld where he was laid.* See likewise  
ch. xvi. 1 . . . 3. From which two Evan-  
gelists, and also from Luke xxiv. 1. 2. it ap-  
pears, that the women knew every thing  
concerning our Saviour's interment, to the  
placing of the stone at the door of the se-  
pulchre. But they knew nothing of the  
watch, or guard of soldiers, set there after-  
wards, as related Matt. xxvii. 62 . . . 66.  
And St. Luke says, xxiii. 52 . . . 56. *that  
Joseph having begged the body of Jesus, took  
it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it*  
in

*in a sepulchre that was hewen in stone, wherein never man was laid. . . . And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how the body was laid.* Or, as in Dr. Clarke's paraphrase. "And the women of Galilee, who had stood at a distance, seeing the crucifixion, followed the body of their Lord, when it was taken away, and observed where Joseph laid it."

To imagine therefore, that these women knew nothing of what had been done by Joseph and Nicodemus, is to suppose them extremely negligent about an object, that engaged all their attention. I am not for obviating, or removing difficulties, by denying any parts of a historie, that are manifest. Nor do I recollect one Commentator, who has been of opinion, that these good women were unacquainted with the embalming of our Lord's body, so far as it had been done, before he was laid in the sepulchre.

We may conceive of the case in this manner. When Pilate, at the request of the Jews, had given leave, *that the legs of the two malefactors might be broken, for hastening their death, and that they might be taken away:* and when, at the request  
of

Ch. IV. *in which our Lord was embalmed.* 45

of Joseph of Arimathea, Pilate had also given leave *for taking away the body of Jesus*; the crucifixion was over, and the croud would disperse. And the women, who before had stood at some distance, would come nearer. They must have been exceedingly solicitous about the disposal of the body of their beloved Lord, as no preparations had been made for his burial. And the coming of Joseph and Nicodemus, with their attendants, bringing a fine linen cloth, and rollers or bandages, and myrrine and aloes, must have afforded them much satisfaction. When the body was taken down from the crosse, they would follow those, who carried it away. Nor would they lose sight of the body, or at least of those who took care of it. They were not now agents, but spectators, or standers-by. But they would be as near to those, who were employed in embalming the body, or in swathing it with rollers, as they could be, without interrupting them. And it may be well supposed, that Joseph and Nicodemus, and their attendants, whether their own servants, or perfumers and apothecaries, would be civil to them, and not be at all offended at the respect, which they shewed to Jesus.

Where

Where the precious body was washed from the bloud of the wounds, and embalmed, and wrapped up in the rollers, may not be easie for us to say: whether in a shed, or lodge of the garden, or in the sepulchre itself, or before the door, at the entrance of it. But this last seems to me as likely, as any. Wherever it was done, the women were near the place, and saw, or at least knew, what was done. *They sat over against the sepulchre, and saw where, and how the body was laid:* and that a great stone was rolled at the door of it.

After which they went away. And when the Sabbath was over, they bought spices, and came with them to the sepulchre early on the first day of the week. The reason of their so doing is differently assigned by learned commentators.

Grotius (*b*) and Beza (*c*) were of opinion, that our Lord's body was not anointed, or embalmed:

(*b*) *Cum aromatibus.*] Non unxerunt, ob temporis angustias, sed aromata apposuerunt, uncturi primo commodo tempore. *Grot. in Jo. xix. 40.*

(*c*) Non est tamen pollinctum Christi cadaver, mulieribus alioqui non accessuris post alterum diem ad illud ungendum. Sed tumultuarie fuit, propter instantem, et quasi jam praesentem parasceven, in illo monumento proximo civitati positum, cum aromatibus a Nicodemo allatis, dilatâ in alterum a sepulto diem integrâ funeris pollincturâ. *Bez. in loc.*



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embalmed: that is, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, did not make use of the *spices*, but laid them by in the sepulchre, intending to come again to compleat the embalming. Lampe (*d*) does not approve of that account. Nevertheless he is obliged to own, that (*e*) what was now performed, was done in haste. As Lucas Brugensis is not in many hands, I shall transcribe a part of what he says, for shewing what these good women aimed at by their kind (*f*) offices. And I shall refer to Theophylact (*g*), who speaks to the like purpose.

What

(*d*) *Leviora sane sunt, quibus persuadere vult, Dominici corporis unctionem quidem susceptam esse, sed non datam executioni. Lampe in Jo. T. 3. p. 644.*

(*e*) *Prius nullius est momenti, quia raptim et festinanter Jesum esse unctum, facile concedimus. Id. ib.*

(*f*) *Emerunt a pharmacopolis aromata, vi exsiccandi et fragrantiam addendi praedita . . . ut ungerent Jesum mortuum. . . . Neque vero ignorabant, corpus Jesu a Nicodemo non parce unctum fuisse, centum inquam libris myrrhae et aloes, quae praesentes adfuerant, cum ungeretur, quamquam forte suis oculis non viderant. Sed habebat consuetudo, ut carissima capita, et quae plurimi fierent cadavera, non semel tantum ungerentur, sed saepius, pluribusque continuis diebus, donec exsiccato, et absorpto vi aromatum omni reliquo humore, immo tabefactâ carne arida, et quasi aenea reddita, diu fervari possent integra, et immunia a putrefactione. &c. Vid. Gen. L. 23. Luc. Brug. in Marc. xvi.*

(*g*) *Theoph. in Marc. xvi. 1.*

What these women intended to do, we cannot say particularly. Nor can it be reasonably expected, that we should be able to determine: because it cannot be supposed, that any now are fully acquainted with the various methods of embalming among the Jews, or the whole proceſſe of their embalming. But that there was somewhat wanting, somewhat left to be done by respectfull and affectionate friends, may be argued from the ſhortneſſe of time, and great haſte, in which our Lord was embalmed, and buried: and likewise from the concurring concern of ſeveral women, who may be juſtly ſuppoſed to have been as attentive, and as diſcreet, and underſtanding, as any of their ſex. And it has ſeemed to me, that our Lord foreſaw, that, for want of opportunity, there would happen a defect in that reſpect, which might otherwiſe have been ſhewn him at his death.

Of the woman, that anointed Jeſus at Bethanie with precious ointment, he ſaid to thoſe who were uneaſie at the expenſe. Matt. xxvi. 12. *For in that ſhe has poured this ointment upon my body, ſhe did it for my burial.* πρὸς τὸ ἔνταφιάσαι με. Mark xiv. 8. *She has done what ſhe could. She is come beforehand,*

Ch. IV. *in which our Lord was embalmed.* 49

*to anoint my body to the burial.* εἰς τὸν ἐν-  
ταφιασμόν. John xii.7. *Let her alone. Against  
the day of my burying has she kept this.* εἰς  
τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς ἐνταφιασμῶς μου.

But learned interpreters say, that (*b*) the original word, made use of by all the Evangelists, does not so properly denote *burial*, as the preparations made for burial, and particularly, the costly preparations made for persons of distinction.

The meaning therefore is: *In that she has poured this ointment upon my body, she has done it, as it were, for my embalming, or to embalm me.* And this part of our Lord's apologie for that pious woman may be paraphrased in this manner, as indeed it

E was

(*b*) *Ad funerandum me*: πρὸς τὸ ἐνταφιάσαι με. Vulg. et Erasmus, *ad me sepeliendum*, male. Nam aliud est θάπτειν, quam ἐνταφιάζειν: ut Latinis sepelire est sepulchro condere: funerare vero pollincire, cadaver sepulchro mandandum prius curare. &c. Bez. *ad Matt. xxvi. 12.*

... Habet me jam quasi pro mortuo, atque officium illud solemne modico tantum tempore antevertit. Hunc sensum apertissime significat Marcus voce προέλαβε. Hic τὸ ἐνταφιάσαι, pollincire, interpretandum est per ἔλλειψιν voculae, ὥστε, tanquam: *fecit quasi ad me pollinciendum.* Quam voculam prudenter hic, ut et in hac apud Marcum historia, addidit Syrus interpres. Et Johanni ἡμέρα ἐνταφιασμῶς est dies quasi pollincturae. Grot. *in Matt. xxvi. 12.*

50      *Of the Manner, &c.*      Ch. IV.

was (i) formerly : “ You may consider this anointing as an embalming of me. And it may so happen, that neither she, nor any others, shall have an opportunity to lay out all the rich spices and ointments upon me, when dead, which they may be disposed to make use of.”

(i) See the *second volume of Sermons upon various Subjects.*  
p. 312. 313.



CHAP.

## C H A P. V.

PAGE 155. Diff. xxxvii. *Whom are we to understand by the Grecians and Hebrews, mentioned. Acts vi. 1.*

It will be worth the while to put down here the words of the text at length. *And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.*

I am of opinion, that by *Hebrews* are meant native Jews, descendents of Abraham and Israel, and that by *Grecians* are meant proselytes to the Jewish religion. This I shall endeavor to make out by an induction of particulars, and by numerous quotations from the Old Testament.

*Ebrew, or Hebrew.* It is a very honorable, and the most ancient denomination of the Jewish people. Abraham himself is called *a Hebrew, or the Hebrew.* Gen. xiv. 13. as is Joseph in Egypt. Gen. xxxix. 14. 17. xli. 12. The Hebrews are mentioned more than once in his historie. Gen. xl. 15. and xliii. 32. In particular, the coun-

they inhabited by Jacob and his familie, whence Joseph was brought, is called *the land of the Hebrews*. Gen. xl. 15. God himself, when he sent Moses to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, took upon himself this title and character, *the Lord God of the Hebrews*. Ex. iii. 18. Which character is often mentioned in the accounts of Moses's appearances before Pharaoh. Ex. v. 3. vii. 16. ix. 1. x. 3.

I do not now inquire into the origin of this name, though the disquisition might be curious. I had rather, for the sake of brevity, refer to (a) others. Whatever was the origin of the name, it was early known, and seems to have been peculiar to Abraham and his descendents, by Isaac and Jacob, when Moses was sent to conduct the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt. And *the Lord God of the Hebrews*, and *the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, are used as equivalent. Ex. iii. 6. 15. 16. 18. iv. 5.

It was a common denomination of the children of Israel, when they dwelt in  
Egypt :

(a) *Vid. Bochart. Geo. S. P. i. l. 2. c. 14. Scalig. Not. in Graeca Eusebii. p. 410. Voss. de Orig. Idol. l. 3. c. 44. p. 356. Br. Walton Proleg. iii. Huet. Dem. Ev. Prop. iv. cap. 13. Jo. Cleric. Comp. in Gen. x. 21. xiv. 13. et Disserta. de Ling. Hebr.*

Ch. V. *and Hebrews.* Acts vi. 1. 53

Egypt: And the King of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives . . . And he said: *When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, if it be a son, ye shall kill him . . . And the midwives said unto Pharaoh . . . because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women.* Ex. i. 15. 16. 19.

When Pharaoh's daughter found Moses, she said: *This is one of the Hebrews children.* Then said his sister unto Pharaoh's daughter: *shall I go, and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women?* Ex. ii. 6. 7. Afterwards, when Moses was grown, he went out unto his brethren, and espied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren . . . And when he went out the second day, behold two men of the Hebrews strove together. ver. 11 . . . 13.

Hebrew, or Hebrews, is often used in the first book of Samuel, as equivalent to Israelites, or the people of Israel. 1 Sam. iv. 6. 9. xiii. 3. and elsewhere.

When the mariners in the ship said to Jonah. i. 8. 9. *What is thy occupation? and whence camest thou? What is thy countrey? and of what people art thou?* He said unto them: *I am an Hebrew. And I fear the Lord*

*God of heaven, which made the sea and the dry land.*

This denomination is seldom found in the later books of the Old Testament. However, it is in Jeremiah. ch. xxxiv. The place is remarkable, and will be of use to us in the present inquiry. *This is the word, that came unto Jeremiab from the Lord . . . . That every man should let his man-servant, and every man his maid-servant, being a Hebrew or Hebrewesse, go free : that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother . . . Then they obeyed, and let them go. Afterwards they caused them to return, and brought them into subjection for servants, and for handmaids . . . Therefore the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiab, saying : Thus saith the God of Israel : I made a covenant with your fathers, saying : At the end of seven years, let ye go every man his brother, an Hebrew, which has been sold unto thee. . . .*

Let us therefore observe the laws, which are here referred to. Ex. xxi. 2. *If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve thee : and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.* Deut. xv. 12. *If thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years ; then in the*



*the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. Lev. xxv. 44. . . 46. Both thy bond-men, and thy bond-maids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen, [or the nations,] that are round about thee. Of them shall ye buy bond-men, and bond-maids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they beget in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them for an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession. They shall be your bond-men forever. But over your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule one over another with rigour.*

*By strangers, sojourning among them, I understand profelytes, men circumcised after the manner of the Mosaic law. We here therefore see the great difference between the children of Israel, or native Jews and strangers, or profelytes. And in speaking of this matter, for preventing ambiguity, the words *Hebrew* and *Hebrewesse* are used by Jeremiah, as certainly denoting the descendants of Abraham and the other Patriarchs.*

*In the laws, just transcribed from the books of Moses, there are clearly mentioned three*

forts of persons: *Hebrews*, or *children of Israel*, that is, native Jews: then *strangers, sojourning among them*, or *profelytes*: lastly, *beatbens*, that is, the nations, or gentils. The Prophet demands liberty after six years servitude for the first only, not for any of the others. The law of Moses did not empower him to do more. And the command of God, by the Prophet, certainly, is agreeable to his own laws, first delivered by the hand of Moses.

I shall just observe, as we go along, that Josephus says of himself, he (*b*) was a Hebrew by birth. And Eusebius says of Moses, that (*c*) he was a great Divine, and a Hebrew of Hebrews. He also observes the antiquity of this name, and says, that (*d*) Joseph was a Hebrew of Hebrews, but there were yet no Jews. Which is very true. For the people of Israel were not called Jews, till (*e*) about the time of the Babylonish captivity. After that, a man of any nation,  
who

(*b*) . . . γένει ἑβραῖος. *De B. J. l. i. pr. 1.*

(*c*) Ὁ τοιούτων μέγας θεόλογος Μωσῆς, ἑβραῖος ἀπὸ ἑβραίων, εἰ καὶ τις ἄλλος. κ. λ. *Pr Ev. l. 7. c. 7. p. 305.*

(*d*) Πλὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἕτος ἑβραῖος ἐξ ἑβραίων, ἐχί δὲ Ἰσραήλιος, ὅτι μὴδὲ ἦν πω τὰ Ἰσραήλιων. *Ib. cap. 8. p. 312.*

(*e*) Josephus dates the origin of this name after their return from the Babylonish captivity. *Ant. l. 11. v. 7.*

who embraced the religion of the Jews, and was circumcised after the manner of Moses, became a Jew. But he never could be a Hebrew, that denomination being peculiar to the descendents of the ancient Patriarchs.

There are three places, in the New Testament, where this title is found. One is that of the text under consideration. Another is 2 Cor. xi. 22. *Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I.* The third is Philip. iii. 5. *Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews.* He was circumcised the eighth day. Which is a proof, he was born of parents, who were themselves Jews, and punctually obeyed the law of Moses. However this might have been, and he have been no more than the child of a proselyte. He therefore proceeds, and says, he was of *the stock of Israel*, or the seed of Jacob: and particularly, *of the tribe of Benjamin*, an honoured tribe, upon divers accounts: particularly, as Benjamin was one of the sons of Jacob by Rachel, his wife, as she (*f*) is stiled in the

(*f*) *The Sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin.*  
Gen. xlv. 19.

the catalogue of Jacob's familie, which went into Egypt: but especially, as this tribe had, in a great measure, preserved itself from idolatrie. *An Hebrew of the Hebrews*, or rather, *an Hebrew of Hebrews*: meaning, that he was himself a Hebrew, and descended from Hebrews.

As Paul was a *Hebrew*, though born out of Judea, at Tarsus in Cilicia, where the Greek tongue was used, we are fully assured, that by *the Grecians*, cannot be meant Jews, who used the Greek language.

From all these texts therefore, now alleged from the Old and New Testament, it appears, that the denomination, or character, of Hebrew, is the privilege of birth, not of choice, or acquisition, or accidental circumstance. All descendents of Abraham the Hebrew, by Isaac and Jacob, wherever they are born, and whatever language they use, are Hebrews. Nor can any other men be Hebrews, but only they who are descended from Abraham.

This, then, is the first consideration, tending to determine, who these *Grecians* were. To whom we now proceed.

*Grecians*, or *Hellenists*, as in the original. The word *Grecians* occurs thrice in our English

English version of the New Testament: here, and ch. ix. 29. and xi. 20. But it is well known to the learned, that in the second of these places the Alexandrian mfs. has *Greeks*. Which also is the reading in the third text, not only in the Alexandrian manuscript, but likewise, in the Latin Vulgate, and several other versions. Whatever are the readings, it is apparent, that the same persons are not intended in the third and last text, as in the two former.

Various (g) have been the sentiments of learned men concerning the *Grecians*, mentioned here, and in ch. ix. 29. The most prevailing opinions are these two. Some hereby understand Jews born out of Judea, who spake Greek, and used the Greek version of the Old Testament in their synagogues. The other opinion is, that these Grecians were proselytes, or men of other nations, who had embraced the Jewish religion.

That the former are not here intended, has been, as I apprehend, sufficiently shewn already. I therefore go on to support farther  
the

(g) Seven different opinions have been taken notice of by some learned writers. *Vid. Fabr. Bib. Gr. l. 4. c. vi. T. 3. p. 226. et Lux Evangelii. Cap. iv. p. 59. 60. et Wolf-Curæ ad Act. vi. 1.*

the opinion, that these Grecians were profelytes.

Which, I think, may be argued from the neglect, they had met with. *There arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected, παρεθεωρήντο, were overlooked, passed by, omitted (b), in the daily ministration.* There was no regard had to them. There were no allowances, or distributions made to them.

This may have been owing to two reasons, because they were few in number, and because they were despised. There may be some reason to think, it was chiefly owing to this last.

The Jews of this time knew very well how to pay respect to profelytes of distinction, as they did to Helena, Queen of the Adiabenes, and her Son Izates. But for the most part native Jews, descendents of Abraham and the Patriarchs, must have been preferred to profelytes. I cannot conceive any reason, why any Jews should have been neglected, barely because they were born out of Judea, and used the Greek language. But profelytes might be overlooked, because

(b). Πανεθεωρήντο.] *despicerentur, id est, negligenterentur, et contemnerentur.* *Joach, Camer. in loc.*

because they were reckoned much inferior to Israelites. Profelytes were (i) admitted to eat the passover, and to communion with Israelites in all religious privileges. But they were far from enjoying equal civil privileges with the children of Israel. This must be apparent from what was before alleged from the xxxiv. chapter of Jeremiah, and parrallel places.

I beg leave to take notice of some other things relating to them from the Old Testament. When the Gibeonites had beguiled Joshua, and the Elders, and their deceit was known, *all the congregation murmured against the princes.* However, as they had *made a league with them, to let them live, and the princes of the congregation had sworn to them,* they would not falsify their oath. They gave them their lives, but took from them their lands, and made them slaves, or little better. As it is said Josh. ix. 26. 27. *Joshua delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. And he made them bewers of wood, and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the Lord.*

And

(i) See Ex. xii. 48. 49. Numb. ix. 14. and other places.

And we are told, *that Saul sought to slay them, or endeavored to extirpate them, in his zeal for children of Israel and Judah.* 2 Sam. xxi. 2. Which shews, that they were not beloved, and that this zeal of Saul was popular. But it was resented in the time of David.

This sort of men were employed in the laborious works for building the temple. 1 Chr. xxii. 2. *And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel. And he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God. And* 2 Chr. ii. 17. 18. *And Solomon (k) numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering, wherewith David his father had numbered them. And they were found an hundred and fifty thousand, and three thousand, and six hundred. And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountains, and three thousand and six hundred overseers, to set the people to work.*

The

(k) Καὶ συνήγαγε Σαλωμὸν πάντας τοὺς ἀνδρας τοὺς προσηλύτους, τοὺς ἐν γῆ Ἰσραὴλ. κ. λ. LXX.

Numeravit igitur Salomon omnes viros profelytos, qui erant in terra Israel. Hieron.



The *overseers* I suppose to have been Israelites, the rest strangers, or profelytes: as they are called in the Greek version of the Seventy, and in St. Jerome's Latin version. Many of these strangers may have been remains of the Gibeonites. But I presume, there were others besides.

*Netthinims* are mentioned 1 Chr. ix. 2. *Now the first inhabitants that dwelt in their possessions, in their cities, were the Israelites, the Priests, the Levites, and the Netthinims.* They, and *Solomon's servants*, are often mentioned in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. In the Catalogue of the people that returned from Babylon it is said, Ezr. ii. 58. *All the Netthinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, were three hundred, ninety and two.* So also Neh. vii. 60. And Neh. viii. 20. *Also the Netthinims, whom David and the Princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty.*

These *Nethinims* had been given to the Levites, to serve them. Afterwards Solomon appointed more for the like service. These must have been strangers, or profelytes. It is not to be thought, that David, or Solomon,  
or

or any King of Israel, with the Elders, had power to give Israelites to the service of the Levites. As some Jews said to our Lord: *We be Abraham's seed, and never were in bondage to any man.* John viii. 3. No, they were free-born, and high-born, in comparison of other men: though they were little concerned for the freedom, of which our Lord was speaking. Says Patrick upon 2 Chr. ix. 2. "Ezra gives a good account of the Nethinims ch. viii. 20. Where he informs us, they were *given* by David to the Levites, (which is the original of their name :) as the Levites were given by God to help the Priests. And therefore in all places they are mentioned with holy persons."

I do not know, whether these men may be called inferior clergie. They seem rather to have been servants to them. But however mean their original, or low and laborious their employment, may have been; the people of Israel were indebted to them for their zeal for the house of God. Many of them readily returned from Babylon to Judea, and performed their part for upholding the worship of God at his temple.

As all the land of Canaan was given to the twelve tribes, the children of Israel, and  
many

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many of the regulations in the law of Moses were in their favour; it was foreseen, that strangers, who joyned themselves to them, and came to sojourn among them, would lye under some disadvantages. God therefore, who wisely made those appointments of the law of Moses, regarding the descendants of Jacob, in his great goodnesse, made provisions likewise for strangers, that they might not be abused.

The people of Israel, to whom the laws of Moses were delivered, are charged in this manner. Ex. xxii. 20. *Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him. For ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.* Comp. Lev. xix. 33. 34. And Ex. xxiii. 12. *Six days shalt thou do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thy ox, and thy asse, may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed:* See there ver. 9. Lev. xix. 9. 10. *And when ye reap the barvest of your land... thou shalt not gather the gleanings of thy barvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard. Thou shalt leave them for the poor, and the stranger. I am the Lord your God.* See also Lev. xxv. 5. 6. and 38. And Deut. xvi. 13. 14. *Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days,*

F

after

*after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine. And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow that are in thy gates. And again, very particularly, Deut. xxvi. 11 . . . 13. And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing, which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thy house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you. When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thy increase . . . and hast given it unto the Levite, and the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled. Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God: I have brought away the hallowed things out of my house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, according to thy commandment. These instances of kindnesse are strongly enforced, Deut. x. 17 . . . 19.*

I shall add a text or two, somewhat different, though still to the like purpose. Deut. xii. 12. *And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your men-servants, and your maid-*

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*maid-servants, and the Levite that is within your gates. Forasmuch as he has no part, nor inheritance with you. And ver. 18. Thou must eat them before the Lord thy God, in the place, which the Lord thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates. See also Deut. x. 9.*

By *stranger, and stranger within thy gates, and the stranger that sojourneth with thee, or in thy land*, I always understand profelytes, men circumcised according to the law of Moses: or, as they are now often called, *profelytes of the covenant, or of righteousness*. If the Levites are said to have no inheritance, and are stiled, *Levites within thy gates*, as they are in some texts just cited, though there were allotted to them cities, with their suburbs, out of the inheritance of the other tribes, as is manifest from Numb. xxxv. 1 .. 8. and Josh. xiv. 1 .. 5. all strangers, though circumcised, and admitted to full communion in all religious ordinances, may well be called *sojourners, and the stranger within thy gates*.

Once more. As God, in his laws, delivered to the children of Israel, was not un-

mindfull of the stranger: So likewise does David remember them in his devotions. Pf. cxv. 9 . . . 13. *O Israel, trust thou in the Lord. O house of Israel, trust thou in the Lord. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord. The Lord will bless the house of Israel. He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great. cxviii. 2 . . . 4. Let Israel now say, that his mercie endureth forever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercie endureth forever. Let them that fear the Lord say, that his mercie endureth for ever. Pf. cxxxv. 19. 20. Bless the Lord, o house of Israel. Bless the Lord, o house of Aaron. Bless the Lord, o house of Levi. Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.*

These men, who *fear the Lord*, mentioned after all the divisions of the people of Israel, I suppose to have been strangers, or profelytes. Hereby we are led to understand St. Paul's addresse in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia. Acts xiii. 16. *Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. And ver. 26. Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. Here, by them that feared God,*  
must

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must be meant profelytes. For that none were present, but such as were Jews, either by birth or religion, appears from ver. 42. and what there follows.

Profelytes are mentioned among the hearers of St. Peter's first sermon, preached at Jerusalem, after our Lord's ascension. Acts ii. 10. I suppose, profelytes to be meant by *Greecians* here, ch. vi. 1. and ix. 29.

Who they were, we cannot say exactly. But there might be many such men in Judea, and in other countreys all over the world, where the Jewish people resided. Some of them may have been descendents of such as had joyned themselves to the people of Israel in former times: and others may have been new converts to the Jewish Religion.

I have imagined, that profelytes now living in Judea, who were poor, may have been chiefly, or for the most part, servants of the Roman Governours, or of their officers: who having come into Judea with their masters, were converted to the Jewish Religion: and, when their masters returned home, got leave to stay behind. Having renounced Gentilism, they could not expect very agreeable treatment from their

friends and relatives at home. And though they had not the prospect of any considerable advantage in Judea, yet they might hope for civilities among those, whose religion they had embraced. Besides, new converts have a great deal of zeal. Some of them might conceive a particular affection for the land of Israel, and the city of Jerusalem, where was the temple.

Beside these servants of Roman officers, who had resided in Judea, probably, there were others, who had served Jews out of Judea: who, having for some reasons left their masters, chose to come, and seek subsistence in Judea, not being willing to serve heathens.

There might be also divers other persons of different stations, who being converted to Judaism, preferred Jerusalem to all other places.

*Nicolas*, chosen to be one of the Seven, a proselyte of Antioch, now at Jerusalem, was, very probably, a man of good substance. And it is observable, that *Helena*, Queen of the Adiabenes, not long after her conversion went to (1) Jerusalem. And she must have often visited that city, or resided there very much.

(1) *Jes. Ant. l. 20. ii. 6.*



much. For she was there, when her son Izates (*m*) died. And several of the brothers and sons of Izates (*n*) were shut in at the last siege of Jerusalem.

That therefore is my third and last argument, that these Grecians were profelytes: forasmuch as upon their complaints a profelyte was chosen to be one of the Seven, to preside in the daily ministrations, even Nicolas of Antioch. The rest, I presume, were Hebrews, that is, Jews by birth, descendents of the Patriarchs. Some of which may have been born in Judea, others of them out of it, but were now at Jerusalem.

It is no sufficient reason to believe, that any of the rest were profelytes, or that all thy rest were Jews, who were born in other countreys, because their names are Greek. For several of our Saviour's disciples had Greek names, though they were all men of Galilee: as Philip, and Andrew, and Thomas called Didymus, and Simon, called also Cephas, and Peter, by which last name, he was generally called, and best known.

F 4

That

(*m*) *Ib.* iii. 3.

(*n*) *De B. J.* l. 6. vi. 4.

That *Stephen* was a Jew by birth, is highly probable from the whole of his speech before the Council, and particularly from the beginning of it. Acts vii. 2. *Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken. The God of glorie appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia.*

*Philip*, the second of the Seven, was a person of great eminence, who first preached the gospel in Samaria, and wrought there many miracles. Acts viii. 1 . . 5. Who also converted the Chamberlain, and Treasurer of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. There cannot be any reason to make a doubt, whether Philip, so eminent an Evangelist, of an order next in authority and dignity to Christ's Apostles, was of the seed of Israel. It would be altogether absurd to suppose, that one so early employed in such signal services for promoting the gospel, was only a proselyte.

When the Eunuch had been baptized, *the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more. But Philip was found at Azotes. And passing through, he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.* ver. 39. 40. There he  
seems

seems to have settled. For there he was, when St. Paul came to Jerusalem in the year 58. as we learn from Acts xxi. 8 . . . 10. *And the next day we came to Cesarea. And we entred into the house of Philip, the Evangelist, which was one of the Seven, and abode there.*

Stephen suffered martyrdom, soon after he was chosen. Philip likewise, as we perceive, not long after removed from Jerusalem. Indeed, the Seven seem to have been appointed upon occasion of a particular emergency. However, the other five, or some of them, may have stayed at Jerusalem, and may have continued to officiate in the service, to which they had been appointed. And moreover, others may have been chosen in the room of Stephen, who died, and of Philip, who removed.

Dr. Whitby upon Acts vi. 1. objects against our opinion from ch. ix. 29. where it is said, *that Paul disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.* "Which, as he argues, shews, they must be Jews by birth, and not only strangers of other nations come hither. For how dared they to kill a Jew among the Jews, without bringing him to their tribunals?"

Which

Which is an argument of no moment. For I presume, that neither had a Jew by birth a right to assassinate a man without any trial. And, generally, such things must have been disliked. But a proselyte might attempt it, as well as another. And considering, how unpopular a person Paul now was, the killing him might be passed by, and overlooked, or even approved of, by whomsoever it was done. Proselytes were as likely, as any men, to be bigoted in their sentiments, and to practise violence against those who differed from them. What sort of men most of the proselytes of that time were, may be concluded from what our Lord said to the Pharisees without reserve. Matt. xxiii. 15. But there were some of a better temper, who believed in Jesus after his resurrection, and joyned themselves to his Apostles, when the profession of his name must have exposed them to difficulties.

To me it seems, that there is great propriety in St. Luke's stile, calling the Jews, who were of the seed of Israel, *Hebrews*, and proselytes, *Hellenists*, Grecians, or, perhaps *Heidenes*, Greeks, from their origin. For I have sometimes been much inclined to think, that to be the true reading, in this text, as well

well as in the rest. And Dr. Ward says p. 155. "That the word *Ἑλληνισαί*, *Hellenists*, is used only by St. Luke in this book, and is not perhaps to be found in any other writer so ancient." Indeed, I believe, it is not to be found in Josephus. And the uncommonness of the word may cause a suspicion, that it is the invention of some Christian: though it is ancient. For, in this text, it is in the Alexandrian manuscript. And the word may be seen in (o) Chrysostom.

Any, who are pleased to consider all that was before said, concerning the word *Hebrew*, are able to judge, whether there is not some special propriety in St. Luke's style, according to this interpretation. A *Hebrew*, denoting a Jew by ancient descent, must be fitly opposed to *Greecians*, or *Greeks*, thereby understanding proselytes, who were Jews by religion only, and not by birth.

The opinion, for which I argue, has been espoused by many learned men, as (p) Beza, (q) Basnage, and (r) Pearson. Which last has

(o) In *AE. Ap. hom. 14. p. 111. Tom. 9.*

(p) In *AE. 1.*

(q) *Ann. 35. p. vii.*

(r) Hic autem Ἑλληνισαί ὀpponuntur Ἑβραίοις. . . Neque enim Hebraei, neque Judaei erant, hoc est, genere: non Hebraei

has asserted it with great strength, and neatness, in a few words. Insomuch, that it may be thought somewhat strange, that this opinion has not been generally received, without farther dispute. I have enlarged, being desirous to establish and illustrate it, to the best of my power.

Hebraei ex Hebraeis . . . Sed Judaei tantum religione, id est, Profelyti. Hi igitur Profelyti, cum antequam circumciderentur, *Ελληνες*, sive Gentiles fuerint, etsi jam religione facti Judaei, et totius legis impletionem in se suscipientes, tamen a Judaeis seu Hebraeis, stirpe et genere ab Abrahamo deducto superbientibus, inferiori loco habebantur. Unde neglectus viduarum, et ex eo neglectu murmur, seu *γογγυσμός τῶν Ἑλληνιστῶν*. *Pearson Lect. 3. in Act. Apost. cum. v.*



## C H A P. VI.

**P**AGE 159. Diff. xxxviii. *The term, Holy Ghost, in the New Testament, denotes both a person, and a power.*

P. 159. "That it often denotes a power, cannot be questioned, as where the Apostles, and other Christians at that time, are said to be filled with the Holy Ghost. But that it signifies also a person, seems evident from the following passages among others."

That dissertation concludes in this manner. p. 161. "We meet with *χάρισμα Θεῶ*, *the gift of God*. Rom. vi. 23. and *χάρισμα Χριστοῦ*, *the gift of Christ*. 2 Tim. i. 6. according to some copies: though others have it *Θεῶ*, *the gift of God*, as it is in our version. And agreeably to all analogy *χαρίσματα Ἁγίου Πνεύματος* must signify *the gifts of the Holy Spirit*, in a personal sense: since that word is never used otherwise, but of persons in the New Testament, where the donor is mentioned."

But for this last our Author refers not to any text, as he does for the two former: because, I suppose, he found not any such  
text

78      *Of the term, The Holy Ghost.* Ch. V.  
text in the New Testament. Nor do I know  
of any.

This observation therefore is unsupported by  
proper authority, and is what one would not  
have expected in so accurate a writer, as Dr.  
Ward. I think, we ought here to recollect,  
that these Dissertations are postumous.

But I have no intention to enter into an ar-  
gument upon this subject. There (a) was an  
anonymous tract published not long ago,  
where it is treated more distinctly, to which I  
refer.

(a) See the first Postscript to a Letter, writ in 1730. sold by Noon,  
and others.



CHAP.





## C H A P. VII.

**P**AGE 174. Diff. xlii. *To whom the Apostolic Decree Acts xv. was directed. And whether it was perpetual.*

As this chapter will be of considerable length, I shall divide it into the following sections.

I. An Introduction.

II. The Noachic Precepts, with observations upon them.

III. To whom the Apostolic Decree was directed: and that there was but one sort of Jewish Profelytes.

IV. General Observations, shewing the occasion, and design of the Apostolic Decree.

V. The several articles of the Decree explained.

VI. Observations, in the manner of Corollaries.

I. Before I make any remarks upon this article, I would observe, that a good while ago, in the chapter (*a*) of St. Cyprian, I carefully considered the various readings of this

*Intro-  
duction.*

(*a*) *Credibility. P. 2. ch. 44. §. iv. Vol. 4. p. 778. . . 810.*

of this Decree, as it stands in the book of the Acts of the Apostles. ch. xv. 20. 29. and xxi. 25. The result of which was, that the readings in our present copies of it, in the New Testament, are right. It was a long discussion. But I do not repent the labour of it. It has formerly, and does still afford satisfaction.

Says our learned Author, p. 174. "The decree is directed τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐξ ἐθνῶν, that is, as seems most probable, to all the Heathen converts in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, who were not proselytes of the gate, before they embraced Christianity. For the Jewish proselytes were always obliged to regard the things therein mentioned, as they were all contained in the precepts given to Noah. And therefore we do not find in Acts x. that Peter laid any such injunctions upon Cornelius, and his company."

Dr. Ward, as seems to me, useth those words, *proselytes of the gate, and Jewish proselytes*, very improperly. But of that more hereafter.

It may be proper to observe here, that the Author of *Miscellanea Sacra* has advanced,

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vanced an opinion, not known before, that (b) the decree of the Council of Jerusalem was directed to such converts to Christianity only, as were *profelytes of the gate*, and were, before their conversion to Christianity, obliged to observe the several regulations contained in this decree. Which opinion has been embraced by several.

Dr. Ward does not differ much from them. He thinks, that (c) such things, as were before required of *profelytes of the gate*, were, in the decree, enjoined upon all converts to Christianity in the countreys above mentioned. But, he says, there was no need of giving such injunctions to Cornelius, he having before observed the like things, as a *profelyte of the gate*, living in Judea.

Upon this scheme I now make no remarks. I put down these things here at present, only by way of explication of our Author's sentiment.

II. Dr. W . . . in the words just cited speaks of *the precepts given to Noah*. And at p. 177. says, " That the several things  
G. contained

*The No-  
ahic  
Precepts.*

(b) See *Miscell. Sacra. Essay iv.* However, see also Hammond upon Acts xv. 29.

(c) See Hammond, as before referred to.

82 *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. Ch. VII.*

contained in the Apostolic Decree, are all included in the Noachic Precepts:"

I therefore shall now shew, what are called the seven precepts of Noah, or the sons of Noah, taking my account from *Ainsworth*, where I believe they are rightly represented. Which is more than can be said of some others, who talk much of them.

Says that exact and diligent writer, in his Annotations upon Gen. ix. 4. *But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.* "The Hebrew Doctors make this the seventh commandment given to the sons of Noah, which all nations were bound to keep, as there had been six from Adam's time. The first against idolatrie, the worship of stars, images, &c: the second against blaspheming the name of God: the third against shedding of blood: the fourth against unjust carnal copulations, whereof they make six sorts: 1. with a man's own mother. 2. or with a father's wife. 3. or with his neighbour's wife. 4. or with his sister by the mother's side. 5. or with mankind. 6. or with beasts. The fifth precept was against rapine, or robbérie. The sixth to have judgement, or punishment

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ment for malefactors. And unto Noah was added the seventh, which is here mentioned. Which they understand to forbid the eating of any member, or of the flesh, of a beast, taken from it alive. Whosoever in the world transgressed any of these seven commandments wilfully, the Jews held, he was to be killed with the sword. But the Heathen, who would yield to obey these seven precepts, though they received not circumcision, nor observed the other ordinances given afterwards to Israel, they were suffered to dwell as strangers among the Israelites, and to dwell in their land."

Upon all which I beg leave to make the several following observations.

*First.* Fornication is not mentioned among the several kinds of unjust carnal copulation. This omission has been observed by (b) Grotius. The reason of it, I do not stay to inquire.

*Secondly.* Every thing, here mentioned, is of a moral nature, even the seventh precept, as well as the rest. For it condemns cruelty. It is not, to *forbear eating bloud,* but to eat the *member, or the flesh of a beast*

G 2 taken

(b) Inter praecepta Adamo et Noae data Judaei non ponunt interdictum scortandi. *Grot. in Act. xv. 20.*

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*taken from it alive.* Which is great cruelty,  
and even barbarity.

*Thirdly.* This whole article, as seems to me, is a Jewish way of representing the law of nature, by which all men are obliged. For *sons of Adam, and sons of Noah*, comprehend the whole world. By the law of nature all are obliged. Jews and Christians, who are under a particular law of revelation, are not exempted from this law, and it's several obligations : but are as much subject to it, as other men.

*Fourthly.* As this scheme is the scheme of Jewish Masters only, it need not to be received without examination. Rabbinical and Thalmudical writers may be of use. But they are not infallible. Indeed, I had rather learn Jewish antiquities from the Scriptures, and such other Jewish writers, as lived before our Saviour's coming, or were contemporarie with Christ and his Apostles, than from later Jewish authors.

*Fifthly,* These precepts deliver a wrong interpretation of Gen. ix. 4. the command given to Noah, relating to food. They represent it *to forbid the eating of any member, or of any flesh, of a beast taken from it alive.* Which is a wrong account, as must be  
apparent

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apparent to all. The words are: *But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.* Or, as in Lev. xvii. 14. *Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh. For the life of all flesh is the blood thereof.* And see Deut. xii. 23. And this law, as delivered to Noah, was understood by Josephus (c) to forbid the eating of blood. Which must induce us to believe, that this is a false, and late interpretation: and that this whole scheme of Noachical precepts is a modern thing. Several learned men have argued in the like manner.

*Sixthly.* If the Jewish Doctors say, (as undoubtedly many Christian Commentators now do:) that any people, who obeyed

G 3

these

(c) *Excepto quod carnem cum sanguine non comedetis.*] Hebraei recentiores, et, ut credo, Christianorum odio, sentiunt vetari hic esum membri rapti de animali vivo . . . At certe vetustiores Hebraeorum non ita interpretatos satis docet Josephus, qui ait, *χωρίς αἵματος ἐν τύτῳ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ ψυχή.* Quem sensum iidem prope verbis hic expressit Rabbi Sardias, et quidem sequuntur non ignobiles Hebraeorum magistri. *Grot. ad Gen. ix. 4.*

. . . Ita interpretatur et Josephus. Ant. l. i. cap. 3.

. . . At posteriores Rabbini inter praecepta Noacho data, quae ad totum genus humanum pertinere ab iis putantur, hoc recentent, sensumque esse volunt, *membrum animalis viventis non esse comedendum* . . . Sed haec posterioris aevi commenta exigui sunt ad expositionem horum librorum, usus. *Cleric. in Gen. ix. 4.*

these seven precepts, though they received not circumcision, might dwell among the Israelites, and sojourn in their land; I presume, they are mistaken.

This I argue, 1. From the sixth of these precepts, to *have judgement, or punishment for malefactors*. Or, in other words, magistracie, for restraining excesses, inconsistent with the peace of society, and for punishing delinquents. How can any learned Christians suppose, that uncircumcised Gentils were required, or allowed to have magistracie in the land of Israel? Nay, it cannot be supposed, that proselytes, or men circumcised after the law of Moses, living in the land of Israel, had magistrates of their own. Whilst the Jewish people were sui juris, their own masters, all civil privileges, in their countrey, were appropriated to the descendents of Jacob. The case was quite different afterwards, when they were subject to the Romans, and especially, when they were reduced to the state of a Roman province: as they were after the removal of Archelaus, not many years after our Saviour's nativity.

Indeed, God was the Lawgiver, and the King of the Jewish people. He  
governed



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governed them after the death of Moses, first by Judges, then by Kings, of his own appointment : who were to govern the people committed to their charge, according to the laws, which himself had delivered by the hand of Moses.

2. It seems to me, to be probable, that according to the law of Moses, no uncircumcised men could reside, or be stated inhabitants in the land of Israel. Or, as I expressed it some while (*d*) ago. "It seems to me, that none but profelytes, or circumcised men, had the privilege of a settled abode, or residence there, that is, to sojourn in the land. However, I think, there must have been an exception for travellers passing through the countrey, even though they were idolaters, and also for some, whose traffick was needfull, and therefore allowed. As Patrick says upon Deut. xiv. 21. There were some, called *Nocherim*, which we translate *aliens* : who were mere Gentils, and not suffered to have an habitation among them, but only to come and go in their traffick among them."

I shall now argue this point more distinctly from divers considerations.

In the first place, I argue it from the law of circumcision, as delivered to Abraham. For, as our Saviour himself said to the Jews of his time, *circumcision is not of Moses, but of the fathers.* John vii. 22. The original law is in Gen. xvii. 11 . . . 14. *And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. And it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and thee. And he that is eight days old, shall be circumcised among you. Every man-child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money, must needs be circumcised. And my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant: And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people. He has broken my covenant.* Afterwards ver. 23. *And Abraham took Ishmael, his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house: and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin, in the self-same day, as God had commanded him.* And see what follows to the end of ver. 27.

That is the law, which God gave to Abraham, and Moses afterwards delivered  
to

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to the Children of Israel, when they were multiplied, and were become a nation.

And the institution of the passover is to this purpose. Ex. xii. 43. 44. *This is the ordinance of the passover. There shall no stranger eat thereof. In the Hebr. Every son of the stranger shall not eat thereof. Gr. πᾶς ἀλλογενής. But every man's servant that is bought with money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. And ver. 48. When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised. And then let him come near, and keep it.*

Such laws must have made circumcision very general in that countrey.

When the oppression, which the Jewish people had labored under, in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, was abated, and Mattathias had come out of his retirement (e) and had got a number of men about him; it is said 1 Macc. ii. 45. 46. *Then Mattathias, and his friends, went round about, and pulled down the altars. And what children soever they found within the coast of Israel uncircumcised, those they circumcised*

(e) See Prideaux Conn. year before Christ. 165. vol. 2. p. 182.

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*circumcised valiantly*: that is, resolutely, strenuously, without scruple, being persuaded, that they had a right so to do.

Hyrceanus having conquered the Idumeans, in (f) the year before Christ, 129. as (g) Josephus says, "he permitted them to remain in the countrey, if they consented to be circumcised, and to observe the Jewish laws: which they engaged to do, rather than leave their countrey. And from that time they became Jews."

Afterwards, in (b) the year before Christ, 106. "Aristobulus, as we also learn from (i) Josephus, having subdued the Itureans, added a large part of their countrey to Judea, and obliged the inhabitants, if they would stay in that countrey, to be circumcised, and to live according to the laws of the Jews."

I suppose, that this was done, because those countreys were reckoned to be part of the land, which God had given to the Children of Israel.

*Seventhly*, What has been just said under the foregoing particular, must needs render  
it

(f) *Prid. as before p. 307.*

(g) *Antiq. l. 13. c. ix. §. 1.*

(b) *Prid. p. 370.*

(i) *Antiq. l. 13. cap. xi. 3.*

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it probable, that by *the stranger, the stranger within thy gates, the stranger that sojourneth with thee*, so often mentioned in the law of Moses, and other books of the Old Testament, are meant profelytes, men circumcised after the law of Moses.

Nevertheless I shall here farther add some other proof, which may be reckoned more particular and positive. The argument, which I now aim at, is this. The same religious ordinances are given to the children of Israel, and to the strangers sojourning among them, and under the same penalties.

Lev. xvii. 8 . . . 10. *And thou shalt say unto them: Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering, or a sacrifice: and bringeth it not to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the Lord, even that man shall be cut off from among his people. And whatever man there shall be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of bloud, I will even set my face against that soul that eateth bloud, and will cut him off from among his people. ver. 13. And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel,*

*or*

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*or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth, and catcheth any beast, or fowl, that may be eaten, he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. 15. 16. And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether he be one of your own countrey, or a stranger, he shall both wash his cloths, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean untill the even. Then shall he be clean. But if he wash not himself, nor bathe his flesh, then he shall bear his iniquity.*

I might add other texts. But these appear to be sufficient. These prohibitions are delivered equally to the children of Israel, and to strangers that sojourned with them. And the penalty of transgression is that of being *cut off from his people*. Therefore this sojourning stranger was one, who had joyned himself to the house of Israel, or the Jewish people, by circumcision. Otherwise he could not have been cut off from them. I do not now quote any more places at length. But I would refer to Numb. xv. 13 . . . 16. and 25 . . . 31.

*Eighthly.* If observing the above-mentioned precepts of the Sons of Noah qualified men to reside in the land of Israel :

I pre-

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I presume, it must have been lawfull for Jews to converse with them: and that they might do so, without contracting any legal impurity.

Nevertheless St. Peter was shy of conversing with Cornelius of Cesarea. When he came to his house, he told him, and his companie, *they knew, how it was an unlawfull thing, for a man that is a Jew, to keep companie, or come unto one of another nation.* Acts x. 28. And when St. Peter was come back to Jerusaleme, *they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying: Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.* ch. xi. 2. 3.

Of that centurion it is said, *that he feared God, with all his house, that he gave much alms to the people, and that he prayed to God always.* Cornelius therefore was not a transgressor of any of the precepts of the sons of Noah. He was not an idolater, nor a blasphemer, nor unjust and rapacious: nor did he indulge himself in the practise of abominable filthinesse. And yet, we see, from authentic evidence, that it was *not lawfull* for a Jew to converse with him. Indeed, he lived at Cesarea, a part of the land of Israel. But so did many idolaters, at  
that

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that time, under the Romans. It was not then in the power of the Jews to exclude any men, who were admitted by their masters.

Once more, *ninthly*, the seven precepts of Noah, or the sons of Noah, can afford no help for explaining the regulations of the Council at Jerusalem. For there is no resemblance between them. Nor have they any relation to each other. The Noachic Precepts are all of the moral kind, as was shewn just now : those of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem are, all of them, things indifferent, as will be shewn hereafter.

And, if the seven precepts of Noah are an invention of modern Jews : as some learned men of the best understanding (*k*) have

(*k*) I desire the reader to look back to p. 85. note. (*c.*) I add here the judgements of others.

Mihi dubiae sublestaeque fidei videtur quicquid Judaei de his Noachidarum praeceptis, eorumque antiquitate et origine tradant . . . Nam si Adamo in paradiso, vel Noachi filiis fuerunt mandata ; cur de iis in sacris literis, et Josephi scriptis, est silentium ? *D. Salom. Deyling. Observation. Sacrar. P. secund. Sc. Obser. 38. §. ix. p. 465. Sc.*

. . . *peregrinus tuus, qui in portis tuis.] LXX. Int. ὁ προσύλυτος ὁ παροικῶν ἐν σοί.* Notum quidem est, quid Rabbini de profelytis sentiant, quidve olim ab Hebraeis veteribus ex iis postulatum fuisse, existiment. Sed cum multa aut prorsus fingunt,



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have argued : it is great pity, that so much regard has been shewn to them by Christians, who profess a zeal for truth, and are desirous to know the right interpretation of the Scriptures. Though they are pompously called precepts of Adam and Noah, as if they had been delivered to the first man that lived on this earth, and to him who escaped the deluge, from whom all who have since lived on this earth are descended : they are, in this system and collection, a modern invention, and were unknown to Christ's Apostles. We might as well attempt to explain the Scriptures by the decrees of the Council of Trent, or the synod of Dort, as the Apostolic Decree by these seven precepts.

III. I have spoke my mind concerning the Noachic precepts. I should now proceed to consider the first question, proposed by our Author at the head of this Dissertation. *To whom the Apostolic Decree was directed.*

*That there was but one Sort of Jewish Profelytes.*

But

gunt, aut ex sui aevi moribus judicent, tutum non est iis omnia credere. *Cleric. in Ex. xx. 10.*

“ And indeed the modern Rabbins are of small authority in all such matters of remote antiquity” *Whiston note (f) upon Josephus, of the Jewish War. B. 6. ch. v. 3.*

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But this question I have answered (1) formerly. It was directed to all Gentil converts whatever. The letter is inscribed Acts xv. 23. *to the brethren, which are of the Gentils in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia.* To them the Epistle was inscribed, to them it was sent, and to them it was delivered by the messengers, who carried it from Jerusalem. And afterwards. Acts xvi. 1.. 4. *When Paul and Silas left Antioch, they came to Derbe, and Lystra . . . And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep, that were ordained by the Apostles and Elders, which were at Jerusalem.* And that the Decree was designed for all Gentils, appears from the words of St. James, who proposed it. ver. 19. *Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentils are turned to God.* And long after this, when St. Paul was come again to Jerusalem, the same James, the residing Apostle in that city, says to him. xxi. 25. *As touching the Gentils, which believe, we have written, and concluded.*

And from the begining all Christians every where, for a good while, supposed themselves to be bound by them, and did  
observe

(1) See the Supplement. vol. 3. p. 145 . . . 148.

Ch.VII. *The Apostolic Decree. Acts xv.* 97 ]

observe them, as we know from many ancient authors still extant. But since the fourth centurie, they have been little regarded by those Christians, who (*m*) used the Latin tongue.

Moreover, I did formerly (*n*) allege a passage of Mr. Hallett, arguing very clearly, and strongly to the like purpose.

I did likewise at that time argue, that (*o*) there never were, in ancient times, among the Jews, two sorts of profelytes: and that all those men, who, in the Old Testament, are called *profelytes*, or *strangers*, or *strangers within thy gates*, were men circumcised. I have here added more arguments to the same purpose in the observations upon the Noachic precepts.

I must therefore entreat those learned men, who say, the regulations of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem were sent to uncircumcised Gentils, whom they call *profelytes of the gate*, to give some better proof, that there were such men, than they have yet done. Otherwise, I must still think

H their

(*m*) See the chapter of St. Cyprian, before referred to, vol. 4. p. 793.

(*n*) *The Supplement.* vol. 3. p. 146.

(*o*) *The same.* p. 130. &c.

their scheme chimerical, and without foundation.

They are the more obliged to do this, because upon many other occasions, they bring in those half-profelytes, in their explications of the Scriptures.

To call any uncircumcised men *Jewish Profelytes*, as our learned author does here, though such men are never called profelytes in the New Testament: nor, as I think, in the Old: is unwarrantable, and unbecoming men, who profess to be inquirers after truth ††.

An *uncircumcised profelyte* appears to me to be as truly an impropriety, and contradiction, as an *uncircumcised Jew*. For a profelyte is a Jew by religion, though not by birth.

I am arguing with my late learned friend whose Dissertations are before me. But I ought to be understood to argue with all  
others,

†† Dr. Ward is not alone in this way of speaking. Dr. Hammond's paraphrase of Acts x. 2. in Le Clerc's Latin version is thus: Hic Cornelius erat Judaicae religionis Profelytus . . . licet circumcised non esset. I do not see, how any men of judgement and candour can approve of this. For a paraphrast ought not to add to the original. See by all means Dr. Doddridge's note (b) upon that text.

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others, who have adopted the same sentiment.

It is not to be expected, that I should repeat here what I said (*p*) formerly. But, if I could contribute any thing farther toward clearing up this point, I should willingly add a few more observations.

I then (*q*) said. "I did not believe, that the notion of two sorts of Jewish profelytes can be found in any Christian writer, before the fourteenth centurie, or later."

I shall now add. I cannot at present say certainly, which is the most ancient Commentator, in whom I have met with it: whether Cardinal Cajetan, or Alphonfus Toftatus, or another. For I cannot now refer to the place. I either made no written extract, or have lost it. But I well remember to have read in some Commentator about their times, this observation. *Some say, there were two sorts of Jewish profelytes. But it is a mistake. There was but one.* That is proof, that the notion of two sorts of profelytes was then embraced by some.

But though I cannot now say, where I met with that observation; I have by me

H 2

divers

(*p*) See the third volume of the Supplement. p. 129. . . . 150.

(*q*) P. 136.

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divers extracts made from Alphonfus Toftatus, who (r) flourished in the fifteenth centurie, and died in the year 1454. From which extracts it appears, that himself acknowledged but one sort of Jewish profelytes, and that by *strangers within their gates, and sojourners*, he understood men circumcised, who had embraced the Jewish religion.

Upon Exodus ch. xii. he says, “ A (s) native is he, who was born in the Hebrew religion, having a Hebrew father. A sojourner is one, who comes from Gentilism into the Jewish religion.”

Upon Exodus xx. explaining the fourth commandment, he says, “ That (\*) by *stranger within thy gates* are meant converts from Gentilism to Judaism. They also must observe the sabbath. They dwell within thy gates,

(r) See *Du Pin, and Morery.*

(s) Indigena dicitur, qui in Habraeorum ritu natus est, quia patrem Hebraeum habebat. Colonus dicitur, qui ad colendum verum Deum transit ad ritum Judaicum veniens de Gentilitate. *In Ex. cap. xii. Qu. lviii. T. 2. p. 160. E. Colon. Agrip. 1613.*

(\*) *Advena, qui est intra portas tuas.*] Id est, etiam observabunt diem Sabbati advenae de Gentilitate conversi ad Judaismum. Et isti sunt intra portas tuas, id est, intra portas civitatum tuarum. *In Ex. xx. Qu. xiv.*

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gates, that is, within the gates of thy cities.”

Upon Matt. xxiii. 15. he says. “Profelyte (†) denotes a man converted to Judaism. The Jewish people consisted of two parts. Some were Jews by ancient descent, and were called children of Israel: others were converted from among the nations to Judaism. And these were called by three names, sojourners, strangers, and profelytes. Those two divisions are very common in the books of Moses: *the children of Israel, and the strangers that sojourn among you*: particularly in the seventeenth chapter of Leviticus: that is, such as were Jews by birth, or such as were converted to Judaism. So also Ezek.

H 3

xiv.

(†) Dicendum est, quod profelytus denotat hominem conversum ad Judaismum. Judaei autem distinguebantur in duo, quia quidam ex origine prima erant Judaei, et isti vocabantur filii Israel. Alii erant conversi de Gentibus ad Judaismum. Et isti vocabantur tribus nominibus, sc. advena, peregrini, et profelyti. Et ista duo nomina sunt multum usitata in libris Moyfi: sc. homo de filiis Israel, et de advenis, qui peregrinantur inter vos. Lev. xvii. id est, five fit de Judaeis ex genere, five de illis qui conversi fuerunt ad Judaismum. Ezech. xiv. Homo de domo Israel, et de profelytis, quicumque advena fuerit in Israel, si alienatus fuerit a me, et posuerit idola sua in corde suo. Ex quo apparet, quod erat jam conversus ad Deum, qui profelytus est, quia alias non potuit a Deo alienari. &c. *In Matt. cap. xxiii. Qu. 87. p. 325.*

xiv. 1. *Every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart. It is evident, that by the stranger is meant a profelyte, who had been converted to God. Otherwise he could not be separated from him."*

I have transcribed but a small part of his notes upon Matt. xxiii. 15. Which are large, and well deserve to be read by such as have opportunity. So far as I am able to judge, he always speaks agreeably to the true tenour of the Mosaic Law, and is altogether unbiassed by modern Rabbinical interpretations.

I cannot say, whether Erasmus was acquainted with the notion of two sorts of profelytes, or not. He speaks very judiciously in his comment upon Matt. xxiii. 15. Where he says: "Profelyte (*t*) is a Greek word, equivalent to stranger. For so the Hebrews called those, whom they received from other nations into communion with them."

Philip

(*t*) Profelytus Graeca vox est, προσήλυτος, nobis *advena*. Sic enim dicebatur Hebraeis, quem ex aliena natione in suae legis confortium receperant. *Erasm.*



Philip Melancthon also was a learned man. He was born in 1497. and died in 1560. I think, we may be positive, that he knew nothing of any profelytes, but such as were circumcised, and thereby obliged to observe all the ritual ordinances of the law of Moses. His comment upon Matt. xxiii. 15. is very observable. And I shall transcribe (t) it.

“ Here you may learn, that God had a church at all times, even among the Gentils. And in the times of the kingdom of Israel and Judah there were three states of men, who were members of the church.

H 4

The

(t) Hic discatis, quod Deus omni tempore sibi colligit ecclesiam, etiam ex gentibus. Ac tempore regni Israel et Juda, erant tres status hominum, qui erant membra ecclesiae.

Primus status erat semen Abrahae. Hic oportuit circumcidi, et servare ceremonias juxta legem Mosi.

Secundus status erat profelytorum, id est, advenarum, qui non erant nati ex femine Abrahae, sed tamen volebant esse pars hujus populi, et volebant circumcidi. Hi, quia volebant circumcidi, debebant etiam servare alias ceremonias, ut Urias.

Tertius status erat, qui in Actis vocantur, viri religiosi, id est, Ethnici, ut Nahaman Syrus, Nabocodonosor, Cyrus, Cornelius, et alii multi. Qui discebant promissiones de venturo Messia, et doctrinam de vero Deo, et de bonis operibus, juxta Decalogum. Et tamen nec circumcisi erant, nec servabant ceremonias Mosaicas. *Melancthon. in Matt. T. 3. p. 545. Witteb. 1563.*

The first state were the seed of Abraham. Those were to be circumcised, and to keep the ceremonies according to the law of Moses.

The second state was that of the Proselytes, that is, strangers, who were not of the seed of Abraham, but yet were willing to be a part of that people, and were willing to be circumcised. These, because they were willing to be circumcised, were bound to observe all the other ceremonies. Of this number was Urias.

The third state are such as in the Acts are called religious men, that is, Heathens, as Naaman the Syrian, Nabuchodonosor, Cyrus, Cornelius, and many others, who learned the promises concerning the coming of the Messiah, and the doctrine concerning the true God, and concerning good works, agreeably to the decalogue. These were not circumcised, nor did they observe the Mosaic ceremonies."

So writes Melancthon, and, as I think, according to the sense of all Christian writers of the first twelve centuries, and later.

I shall not proceed any lower in the inquiry; when that opinion, which now prevails

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vails so much, had it's first rise among Christians.

But I shall proceed in my argument.

The word, profelyte, occurs four times in the books of the New Testament (*u*). Matt. xxiii. 15. Acts ii. 10. vi. 5. and xiii. 43. I suppose it to be universally allowed by learned men, that in the first three texts by profelyte is intended a man circumcised after the manner of Moses. Nor do I know, that there is any doubt about the fourth and last text. And the place was so understood by (*x*) ancient Christian writers. And among the moderns Grotius is very clear, that (*y*) hereby are intended profelytes, or  
as

(*u*) The note of Lucas Brugensis upon Matt. xxiii. 15. is so neat, and pertinent, that I shall put it down here. *Profelytum.*] Graeca vox est, Latine sonans *advenam*, quem Hebraei efferrunt *Ger.* qua significant eum, quem ex aliena natione in suae legis consortium adduxerint: qui a Gentilitate ad Judaismum adductus est, non natione Judaeus, sed adoptione factus, ac in Legis Mosâicae foedera acceptus: quasi dicas adventitium ad religionem, quod opponitur Judaeo nato. *Luc. Brug.*

(*x*) *Secuti sunt multi Judaeorum, et colentium advenarum.*] . . . Significat eos, qui naturâ gentiles erant, sed religione Judaei, quos Graeci profelytos vocant. *Bed. in loc. Vid. et Oecum. in loc. p. 115. 116.*

(*y*) *Colentium advenarum.*] Non Graecorum, sed eorum, qui legi Mosi se subdiderant, advenae justitiae. *Grot. in Act. xiii. 43.*

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as he calls them, after the now prevailing custom, and to prevent mistake, profelytes of righteousness.

However, as this text is somewhat particular, I shall consider it distinctly. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews, and religious profelytes, followed Paul and Barnabas, who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. τῶν σεβομένων προσηλύτων. I know, that by σεβόμενοι, in this place, Dr. Ward did not understand a religious distinction or denomination, but a personal character. Oecumenius speaks to the like purpose. He says, "These (x) persons were so called, because they were sincere and fervent in their religion." It is used in the same sense by Josephus, when he says, that (a) Alexandra, widow of Alexander Jannaeus, was a religious woman, or religious toward God.

Afterwards Oecumenius seems to give another interpretation, saying; " Or other-

(x) Σεβομένους ἐνταῦθα τε καὶ προῖον τὰς περὶ τὸ δικεῖον σέβας θερμὸς καὶ διαπύρος καὶ ζηλωτὴς τῶν ἄλλων μάλλον καλεῖ. *Oecum. in Act. Ap. p. 115.*

(a) . . . σεβομένη περὶ τὸ θεῖον. *De B. J. 1. 1. v. 2.* And see *the Credibility. Sc. P. i. p. 357. 3d. ed.*

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(b) otherwise, he calls the profelytes *worshippers*, properly. He addresseth himself to them before, saying, *Men of Israel, and ye that fear God.* [Comp. ver. 16. and 26.] calling the profelytes *men that feared God*. Thus he gives to the former, the honour of their birth, calling them *men of Israel*. And though he could not say that of the other, he makes them equal for their religion." The place is somewhat obscure. But I think, he intends to say, that St. Luke, by calling those men *worshippers*, makes them equal to the Israelites, in point of religion, because the word *worshiper* does properly denote one who is profelyted to the Jewish religion: whereas *fearing God* might be ascribed to other men, who were not so united to the Jewish people.

There is one place in Josephus, where this word is used, which appears to be very remarkable. It is in his account of the plundering the temple at Jerusalem, by  
Crassus,

(b) . . . ἡ σεβομένης ἰδίως προσηλύτης καλεῖ. Καὶ δημηγορῶν ἔμπροσθεν, καὶ λέγων, Ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλῖται, καὶ οἱ ἐν ὑμῖν φοβούμενοι τὸν Θεόν, φοβούμενος τὸν Θεὸν τὰς προσηλύτους ἐκάλεσεν, τὰς μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν γένων σεμνύων, καὶ Ἰσραηλῖτας ἐξονομάζων, τὰς δὲ, ὅτι μὴ τῷτο ἔειχεν εἰπεῖν, ἀπὸ θρησκείας ἰσάζων. *Ib.* p. 116.

Craffus, in the year before Christ, 54.  
 “Nor ought it to be thought strange, says  
 (c) Josephus, that there should be such riches  
 in our temple, when all the Jews and wor-  
 shipers of God from every part of the world,  
 from Europe and Asia, had been sending  
 presents thither for several ages.”

By *worshipers* in this place, I think, must  
 be meant profelytes. And *worshipers* here is  
 a sort of technical word, like that of profe-  
 lytes, denoting men that had joyned them-  
 selves to the Jewish people, and were, by  
 religion, though not by birth, Jews. I do  
 not deny, that some men, who were not  
 profelytes, but downright heathens, and  
 idolaters, did sometimes, of their own ac-  
 cord, and freely, send presents to the Jewish  
 temple. But here Josephus says, that *all*  
*worshipers, as well as Jews*, sent presents  
 to the temple. We are thereby led to un-  
 derstand profelytes, who were as much  
 obliged to pay respect to the temple, as  
 Jews by descent.

This word is found several times in the  
 Acts, and, as seems to me, in it's proper  
 sense. I shall consider all those texts.

Acts

(c) . . . πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμενὴν Ἰουδαίων, καὶ σεβο-  
 μένων τοῦ Θεοῦ. *Ant. l. 14. vii. 2.*

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Acts xiii. 50. *But the (d) Jews stirred up the devout, [rather, the worshiping] and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.*

These, might be called, not improperly, proselytes: though never initiated by any particular rite. Later Jews may say, that (e) women were initiated by baptism. But there is no ground for it in the law of Moses. I think, that women were first so honoured, and distinguished under the gospel-dispensation. Therefore St. Paul says, that *there is neither male, nor female . . . For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal. iii. 28.* And we are assured, that when the people of Samaria believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised both men and women. Acts viii. 12. And Lydia and her household were baptised. Acts xvi. 15.

I pay no regard to what the later Jewish Rabbins say of the method of initiating proselytes,

(d) Ὅτι δὲ Ἰσραῆλιται παρώτρυναν τὰς σεβομένας γυναῖκας, καὶ τὰς εὐχήμενας, καὶ τὰς πρῶτους τῆς πόλεως.

(e) *The Rabbinical accounts of initiating proselytes may be seen in Reland. Antiq. Hebr. P. 2. cap. 7. p. 246. and Moses Maimonid. Tract. de Proselytis. Cap. i. p. 113. 114. ex. ed. H. Prid. Oxon. 1679.*

felytes, by circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice. Who have made void not only the moral, (with which our Lord often chargeth them, as Matt. xv. 1 . . 9. Mark vii. 1 . . 13. and other places,) but also the ritual part of the law of God. Indeed, they had corrupted the Mosaic ritual, by numberless additions, before the coming of our Saviour. As appears from the text of St. Mark, just referred to. Nor have they ceased to do the like since.

I think, as before said, that women were first baptized under the evangelical dispensation. I am also of opinion, that our Blessed Lord's fore-runner first made use of baptism, as an initiating ordinance. And therefore he was called *the Baptist*. Ὁ Βαπτιστής Matt. iii. 1. and in many other places. Nor am I singular in this opinion.

Josephus (*f*) who makes so long a storie about circumcising Izates, does not say, that Helena, his mother, was initiated by any external rite: though she likewise embraced the Jewish Religion.

The

(*f*) *Antiq. l. 20. cap. ij.*



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The *worshiping women*, above-mentioned, whom (g) Grotius calls profelytes, were unquestionably, reckoned to be of the Jewish religion. Josephus, speaking of affairs in the year of Christ, 66. says, "The (h) men of Damascus formed a design to make away with all the Jews of that place. But they concealed their design from their wives, who, excepting a few only, were all devoted to the Jewish Religion."

Acts xvi. 13. 14. At Philippi in Macedonia. *And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made. [or, where an oratorie was appointed to be.] And we sat down, and spake unto the women, which resorted thither. And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us. σεβομένη τὸν Θεόν.*

Acts xvii. 1 . . . 4. *And they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul, as his manner was, went*  
*in*

(g) *Τὰς σεβομένας γυναῖκας, mulieres religiosas.] Profelytas. Nam erant et profelyti in ea urbe, ut audivimus supra. ver. 43. Grot. in loc.*

(h) *ἀπάσας πλὴν ὀλίγων ὑπηγμένας τῇ Ἰουδαϊκῇ θρησκείᾳ. De B. J. l. 2. xx. 2. And see the Credibility. Sc. P. i. cb. iii. p. 253.*

*in unto them. And three Sabbath days, successively, reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. And some of them, that is, of the Jews, who were so by birth, or Israelites, believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas: and of the devout, worshiping, Greeks, a great multitude, and of the chief women, not a few. τῶν τε σεβομένων ἐλλήνων πολὺ πλῆθος.*

These *worshiping Greeks* must have been profelytes. For they frequented the synagogue, and were admitted there without scruple. They were among the ordinarie, stated attendents on the worship there.

It is true, when at Antioch, in Pisidia, it is said, Acts xiii. 42. 44. *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentils besought, that these words might be preached unto them the next Sabbath . . . And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city to hear the word of God.*

But this was an extraordinarie case. And under *almost the whole city* must be comprehended many heathens and idolaters of the place. And from this very context it appears, that none, beside Jews and profelytes, frequented the synagogue. For it is here said, *when the Jews were gone out . . . the Gentils besought that these words might be preached*

Ch. VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 113*

*preached to them.* Therefore they were not present at St. Paul's first discourse. It was owing to some general rumour only, that their curiosity had been raised.

St. Luke, in the place just cited from Acts xvii. at the beginning, does not mention St. Paul's preaching at Theffalonica, to any, beside *Jews, and worshiping Greeks.* Nevertheless the Apostle, in his first epistle to the Theffalonians, ch. i. 9. writes to them, as *having turned to God from idols, to serve the living God.* St. Paul therefore, whilst at Theffalonica, either between the Sabbaths above mentioned, or afterwards, must have preached to, and converted a considerable number of Gentils. And there (*i*) seems good reason to think, that the Apostle and his fellow-labourers stayed longer at Theffalonica, than three weeks. For, whilst he was there, the Philippians *sent once and again to his necessity.* Philip. iv. 16. He also reminds the Theffalonians, that whilst he was with them, he and his companions *labored night and day, that they might not be chargeable to any of them.*

I

Acts

(*i*) See Dr. Benson's *History of the first planting the Christian Religion.* B. 3. ch. v. Sect. v. p. 99.

Acts xvii. 17. At Athens. *Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met him.* Διελέγετο μὲν ἐν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, καὶ τοῖς σεβομένοις. It should have been rendered, *with the Jews, and the Worshipers*, agreeably to the (k) Latin Vulgat, here, and elsewhere, *et colentibus*, not *religiosis*, as in Beza.

These were proselytes. For they frequented the synagogue equally with the Jews. And Paul applied himself equally to them. This, as we learned from the passage of Josephus, before quoted, was the proper distinction and denomination of those, who by proselytism joyned themselves to the people of Israel. They were not of the stock of Israel. But they *worshipped* with them, in synagogues, and at the temple. They payed tribute to the temple, as other Jews did. They might offer sacrifices there, and they kept the passover. In other words, they were in full communion with the People of Israel in religious ordinances. They partook with them in all their religious  
privi-

(k) Disputabat igitur in synagoga cum Judaeis, et colentibus, et in foro, per omnes dies, ad eos qui aderant. *Vers. Lat.*

Ch. VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 115*  
privileges, and joyned with them in all  
their solemnities. They were therefore  
very properly called *Worshippers*.

Acts xviii. 1 . . . 7. *After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth . . . And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timothie were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews, that Jesus was the Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed; he shook his raiment, and said unto them: Your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean. Henceforth I will go unto the Gentils. And he departed thence, and entred into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house joyned hard to the synagogue.*

*Who worshiped God, σεβομένε τον Θεόν. Justus was a profelyte. He was one of those Greeks, whom Paul persuaded, together with the Jews, in the synagogue. And Justus was convinced by what Paul said, and became a Christian. That Paul, whilst in the synagogue, preached to Jews only, that is, to men circumcised, Jews by birth, or by religion, is apparent from the historie. ver. 4. 5. And he reasoned in the synagogue every*

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*Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timothie were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews, that Jesus was the Christ: "That is, upon the coming of those two, his fellow-laborers, he was encouraged: and also animated with the greatest ardour: and once more, and finally, testified to the Jews, that Jesus was the expected, and promised Messiah." But when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed; he shook his raiment, and said unto them: Your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean. Henceforth I will go unto the Gentils.*

Let this suffice for explaining the word *σεβόμενος*, *worshiper*.

I now intend to take notice of some other Greek words, which in our translation are rendred *devout*.

*Acts x. 1. 2. There was a certain man in Cesarea, called Cornelius . . . a devout man, and one that feared God, with all his house. εὐσεβής. It should be rendred pious.*

*Ver. 7. And when the angel, which spake unto Cornelius, was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier, of them that waited upon him continually. στρατιώτην εὐσεβῆ.*

Here

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Here again is the same Greek word, which should be translated *pious*. It denotes not any religious distinction or denomination: but is a personal character. Cornelius is never called a proselyte, nor σεβόμενος, a worshiper. And that he, and his familie, and all the companie at his house, were Gentils, and uncircumcised, is manifest, as from other places, so particularly from ch. xi. 1 . . . 3.

I shall observe likewise upon another Greek word rendred by us *devout*, in some places.

Luke ii. 25. *And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon. And the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. Καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος δίκαιος, καὶ εὐλαβής.* I should be disposed to render it thus: *And he was a righteous, and understanding man.* Simeon was *righteous*, or religious, and also knowing and discreet.

Acts ii. 5. *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς.* The same word again, and to be understood in the like manner: denoting, that there were then at Jerusalem Jews from all parts,

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who were the most eminent men of the nation, and most distinguished for their zeal, their understanding, and their outward circumstance and condition.

Ch. viii. 2. *And devout men carried Stephen to his burial.* Συνεκόμισαν δὲ τὸν Στέφανου ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς. I should like to translate the word in this place discreet. *And discreet men carried forth Stephen, and made great lamentation for him.* Such men were the best fitted for the kind office, here spoken of. Wisdom, or discretion, and circumspection, appear to be included in the verb, as used in Acts xxiii. 10. and Hebr. xi. 7. And observe likewise the noun substantive in Heb. v. 7.

*The Occasion and Design of the Decree.*

IV. The other question concerning the Apostolic Decree, at the head of this Dissertation, is, *Whether it was perpetual.*

I now therefore intend to consider the occasion of it, and then to explain it. Wherein will be contained a sufficient answer to the question, proposed above.

I begin with laying down these several following propositions.

1. This Epistle, or Decree, was designed for the use and direction of all the Gentil converts



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converts to Christianity at that time. This was shewn before. And needs no enlargement here.

2. The several regulations of the Council at Jerusalem relate to things in their own nature indifferent.

1.) The point in controverſie relates to things in their own nature indifferent. Therefore it is likely, that the determination of the question ſhould be of the like kind. The riſe of the controverſie, and all the debates upon the occaſion, lead us to think, that the regulations of the Council ſhould concern things indifferent, ritual, and ceremonial. There never was a queſtion, whether believers from among the Gentils ſhould obey the moral precepts of righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe. But the diſpute was, whether they ſhould be circumciſed, and obſerve the ritual ordinances of the law of Moſes, as the Jews did.

They who have any doubt about this, ſhould do well to attend to the hiſtorie of this Council, and particularly the occaſion of it, at the begining of the fifteenth chapter of the book of the Acts, and throughout. However, I ſhall tranſcribe below the ſentiments of divers learned and judicious

Commentators (1) who speak to the like purpose. To whom, possibly, some others may be added in the proceſſe of this argument.

2.) The Apoſtles and Elders call what they recommend in their Epistle, a burden. *Βάρος.* ver. 28. *It ſeemed good unto the Holy Ghoſt, and to us, to lay upon you no greater, burden, than theſe neceſſarie things.*

Which word may lead us to think, they intend not ſuch things as are in themſelves reaſonable, and always obligatorie.

“ Burden, ſay Beaufobre and Lenfant, in their note upon this place, is the ſame with *yoke*, mentioned ver. 10. Theſe expreſſions ſhew, that the diſcourſe is about ceremonial obſervances, which are conſidered as a yoke and burden, in oppoſition to moral precepts, which

(1) Non cenſet, monendos pios ex Gentibus de iis, quae fatiſ didicerant: Deum colendum, unum verum, non falſos: ei omnem exhibendam reverentiam: abſtinendum a caedibus, a rapinis, injuriis, adulteriis, et inceſtis jure Gentium cognitis: jus cuique reddendum. Sed de iis monet, quae diſputationem recipere videbantur, et quae Judaeos poterant offendere, et impedire, quo minus pii ex Gentibus cum piis Hebraeis in unam eccleſiam coaleſcerent. *Grot. in Act. xv. 20. ſub in.*

Haec ille [Tertullianus] a ſcopo aberrans, cum nulla hic ſit niſi rerum ſuapte naturâ mediarum mentio. *Bez., annot. in Act. xv. 20.*

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which ought not to be reckoned burdensome: since the reason and consciences of men teach them, that they are obligatorie in themselves.”

Rev. ii. 24. 25. . . . *I will put upon you no other burden: βαρος. But that which ye have already, hold fast, till I come.* Where, I think, our exalted Lord refers to this Decree of the Apostles. And he graciously declares, that this burden should not always lye upon his people: but should be taken off from them, when his religion had made greater progresse in the world.

Our Lord inviting men to receive his instructions, as the rule of life, in order to their obtaining everlasting salvation, says, Matt. xi. 30. *My yoke is easie, and my burden [το φορτίον μου] is light.* But he therein intends to say, as I apprehend, that his requirements are not burdensome at all, and that observing them will afford great pleasure and delight.

So St. John says. 1 John v. 3. *And his commandments are not grievous.* They are not grievous, or burdensome, because they are in themselves reasonable, and approve themselves to the judgement and understanding of all men.

As

As the things, recommended in this Epistle, are so distinctly spoken of, as a *burden*; it is likely, they were not then understood to be in themselves reasonable.

3.) Another character of these regulations of the Council is, that they are *necessarie things*. By which I think ought to be understood such things (*m*) as are expedient.

Undoubtedly, moral virtues are of all things the most *necessarie*, according to the general use of the word among us. Both reason and revelation assure us of their absolute necessity. To promote real holiness is the great design of all true religion. Nor is any institution so well suited to make men truly and eminently virtuous and holy, as the Christian. Nevertheless in the language of the New Testament, moral virtues are not usually called *necessarie things*, nor holiness, said to be *of necessity*. I am not aware of more than one text, in which any moral virtue is recommended under that character. It is Rom. xiii. 5. “*Wherefore (n) ye must needs*

(*m*) *Necessaria autem hic intellige ad pacem Ecclesiae, quae tum erat, per tolerantiam infirmorum: non autem necessaria per se, et simpliciter, exceptâ scortatione. Piscator in Act. xv. 28.*

(*n*) *Διὸ ἀνάγκη. κ. λ.*

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*needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also*  
*for conscience sake. In other places the mean-*  
*ing of the word is expedient, fit, proper,*  
*convenient, in certain seasons and circum-*  
*stances. Says St. Paul to the Corinthians.*  
*Therefore (o) I thought it necessarie, to exhort*  
*the brethren to go before unto you, to make up*  
*beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice*  
*before, 2 Cor. ix. 8.*

To the Philippians : *Yet (p) I supposed it*  
*necessarie to send unto you Epaphroditus, my*  
*brother. ii. 25. And, nevertheless to abide*  
*in the flesh (q) is more needfull for you. i. 24.*  
*In the epistle to the Hebrews : It (r) was*  
*therefore necessarie, that the patterns of the*  
*things in the heavens should be purified with*  
*these. ch. ix. 33. St. Luke in the Acts,*  
*Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and*  
*said, It (s) was necessarie, that the word of*  
*God should first have been spoken unto you.*  
*Acts xiii. 46. In all which places, as seems*  
*to me, this expreffion denotes what is expe-*  
*dent,*

(o) Αναγκάιον ἐν ἡγασάμην.

(p) Αναγκάιον δὲ ἡγασάμην . . .

(q) . . . ἀναγκαιότερον δὲ ὑμᾶς

(r) Ἀνάγκη ἐν τὰ μὲν ὑποδείγματα τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἕρανῶις,  
 τούτοις καθαρίζεσθαι.

(s) Ὑμῖν ἦν ἀναγκάιον πρῶτον λαληθῆναι τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ.

dient, highly proper and convenient, considering the circumstances of things and persons. And so the phrase is understood here by some (t) very judicious commentators.

I would however observe, that the (u) original phrase in this place is somewhat particular. And, instead of *these necessarie things*, some (x) rather understand such things as it was *needfull* for the Apostles to impose. But this, as I apprehend, makes little difference: whether these things were such as the circumstances of things obliged the  
 Council

(t) *Necessaires.*] Il s'agit ici d'une necessité relative aux circonstances des temps, des personnes, et de lieux, pour degager les Gentils de toute participation à l' idolatrie, et pour marquer aux Juifs autant d' egards qu' il se pouvoient, sans blesser la liberté Chrétienne. *Lenf. et Beauf. sur Actes xv. 28.*

(u) πλὴν τῶν ἐπιβάλλειν τούτων.

(x) Non imponeremus haec, nisi necesse esset ea imponere. Non dicunt: Imponimus haec necessaria, sed imponimus haec, quae necesse est, scilicet, imponere. *Comment. Praedictus Caspar Streson. in Act. Ap. p. 568. Amst 1658.*

The Latin Vulgate is *haec necessaria*. Beza translates, *praeter necessaria ista*. But in his annotations says. Id est, ad quae nos adigit praesens necessitas, nempe quod aliter non possint Judaei lucriferi, non quod ista per se ad salutem requirerentur. *Bez. in xv. 48.*

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Council to require, or the Gentil Christians to observe.

4.) None of the Christian converts needed to be informed, that they ought to keep themselves from the practise of such things as are immoral, and in their own nature evil, and unreasonable.

Take *things sacrificed to idols* for idolatrie, *bloud* for homicide, and *fornication* for uncleanness, or any sins contrarie to moral purity : and there was not a Gentil convert to the Christian Religion, whether converted by Paul, or Barnabas, or any other Jewish preacher of the gospel, but knew his duty in all those respects. Men may need to be exhorted to the practise of what they know to be their duty, and to be dissuaded from things, which they know to be evil. But men do not need to be informed of what they know already.

5.) If the Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren, present in this Council, had intended to forbid in their Epistle things contrarie to morality ; they would have added divers other things, beside those here mentioned.

They would, in that case, expressly have forbid lying, perjurie, wrath, evil-speaking, theft, robbérie, adulterie, and all uncleanness.

ness. I might add, that if it had been the design of this assemblie, to remind the converts, to whom they write, of their duties and obligations, as Christians; they would have exhorted them, particularly, to persevere in the faith of Christ, and would have recommended to them the duty of bearing the crosse, or of patience and fortitude under afflictions and persecutions for his name sake.

6.) All the several particulars of the Decree must be understood to be of the like kind.

They ought to be all moral, or all indifferent. At least, it appears to me to have a good deal of probability, that the writers of the epistle would not put together things of a different nature, without denoting their difference, or making a distinction between them. That all these things are not moral, or reasonable in themselves, and in their own nature obligatorie upon all men, in all times, is apparent. Therefore none are so.

These several considerations, as seems to me, amount to convincing and satisfactorie proof, that nothing in this Decree is of a moral nature.

V. Here



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V. Here some may say. How then do you understand them? To which I answer, that I am not obliged to explain any of them. Things *necessarie*, or expedient, in some places, at certain seasons, and upon account of the circumstances of things and persons, need not to be understood by all in all times, or by those, who are under no obligation to observe them. It may be supposed, that they, to whom the Epistle was sent, understood it. And it is unquestionable, that if any articles were obscure, or ambiguous; they who delivered the Epistle, were able to explain them. And so long as these regulations were *necessarie*, or expedient, to be kept, and observed; it is likely, that the right sense and design of them were generally understood. But, as that expedience ceased, or abated, the exact meaning of these regulations might be gradually lost, or not distinctly retained by all.

*The Decree explained.*

However, I am not unwilling to shew the probable meaning of these several articles, according to the best of my ability.

The whole Decree consists of four articles. Which, as they are recited three times, are reckoned

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reckoned up in a different order, and in some small variety of expression.

Acts xv. 20. St. James proposeth them in the Council, after this manner: "*That we write unto them, that (y) they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from bloud.* At ver. 29. in the Epistle itself: "*That (z) ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from bloud, and from things strangled, and from fornication.* Afterwards, St. James in his discourse with the Apostle Paul at Jerusalem. xxi. 25. *Save (a) only, that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from bloud, and from strangled, and from fornication.* Which is the same order with that in the Epistle, and shall be followed by me.

1. *Pollutions of idols, or things offered to idols.*

The obvious sense of this regulation is, that Gentil Christians should abstain from eating meats, which had been offered to idols by Heathen people: I mean, in some circumstances. Several things in St. Paul's epistles

(y) τῷ ἀπέχεσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδωλῶν.  
ver. 20.

(z) ἀπέχεσθαι εἰδολοθύτων. ver. 29.

(a) . . . εἰ μὴ φυλάσσεσθαι αὐτὰς τό, τε εἰδολόθου.

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epistles confirm this interpretation, and may enable us to discern the design of this prohibition. As 1 Cor. ch. viii. throughout, and x. 14 . . . 23.

But this regulation is now obsolete, there being no longer any Heathen idols among us. All the idolatrie of ancient Heathenism, once so general, and so much delighted in by princes, and people, is abolished in this part of the world. By the progresse of the gospel God has wonderfully accomplished what he long before said he would perform. Zeph. ii. 11. *The Lord will be terrible unto them. For he will famish all the gods of the earth. And men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the Heathen.*

2. *And from bloud.*

This I take to be a prohibition to drink, or eat the bloud of brute animals, alone, or mixed with other things, raw, or dressed and prepared.

It may be of use to us to observe here some of those places in the Old Testament, where the eating of bloud is prohibited.

Gen. ix. 3. 4. *Every moving thing that liveth, shall be meat for you: even as the green herb, have I given you all things. But flesh, with the life thereof, which is the bloud thereof, shall ye not eat.*

K

Lev.

Lev. xvii. 10 . . . 14. *And whatsoever man there is of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood: I will set my face against that man that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood. And I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls. For it is the blood, that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, no soul of you shall eat blood. Neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood. And whatsoever man there is of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, who hunteth, and catcheth any beast or fowl, that may be eaten: he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust: For it is the life of all flesh. The blood of it is for the life thereof. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh. For the life of all flesh is the blood thereof. Whosoever eateth it, shall be cut of.*

That law in Leviticus, and the like elsewhere, are given to the house of Israel, and likewise to the *strangers* that joined themselves

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selves to them. For no others could offer sacrifices. Nor could any others be *cut off* for transgressing these laws, but such as were of that people. The reason here assigned, that the blood was appointed *to make atonement upon the altar*, can affect none, but Jews, and other men, circumcised after the manner of Moses.

Eating blood cannot be reckoned an immorality. And, if it is not; this prohibition, in the Decree, cannot be binding upon all men in all times: but only at some seasons, when the circumstances of things render the forbearing it expedient.

All wholesome food is lawfull in itself, and under the gospel-dispensation. As St. Paul says, Rom. xiv. 14. 15. *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him, that esteemeth any thing to be unclean to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. And ver. 19. Let us therefore follow after the things, which make for peace, and things, wherewith one may edify another.* See also what there follows, and 1 Cor. viii. 11 . . 13.

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However, I must add, that blood appears to me very unwholsome. Indeed I esteem it filthie, and highly disagreeable. So that, I cannot bear the thought of eating it. If it ever comes to me in food, it is more than I know. And I suppose, it is never brought, neither alone, nor mixed with other things, to the tables of polite people.

There seem to me to be two reasons for this prohibition, even in the law of Moses. One reason is that, above-mentioned, that it was to *make atonement for them*, that is, for offenses against the law. The other reason is thus expressed. *It is the life of all flesh. The blood of it is for the life thereof.* That is, it is the nourishment of the animal, and not fit for your nourishment. And because it was not fit for food, and was useless, and offensive; therefore it was to be *poured out upon the earth, or covered with dust*, that is, buried in the earth. Which order is frequently repeated. So in ver. 13. of the forecited xvii. of Leviticus, and Deut. xii. 16. *Only ye shall not eat the blood. Ye shall pour it upon the earth, as water.* And again ver. 24. and ch. xv. 23.

The prohibition of blood was like the prohibition of fat. Lev. iii. 15 . . . 17.

*And*

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*And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them . . . it shall be take away. And the priest shall burn them upon the altar. It is the food of the offering made by fire, for a sweet savour. All the fat is the Lord's. It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat, nor bloud. And ch. vii. 25. For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, shall be cut off from his people. That is the reason, which is expressed, and for which the penalty is so great. But another reason may be implied, which is, that the fat, cleaving to the kidneys of animals, is not (b) wholesome.*

Those ordinances answered two ends and purposes. They kept the Jewish people separate from other nations, and also promoted their bodily health and vigour. And for all their labour and self-denial, they had a present reward.

K 3

In

(b) And when they killed any of these, or other clean creatures for their food at home, still they were to forbear to eat the fuet: partly out of reverence to God, whose portion it was at the altar: and partly, because it was heavie, and too strong a food, as Maimonides takes it. *Patrick upon Levit. iii. 16.*

In the frequent washings and purifications appointed the Jewish people, I suppose, their health was consulted. As it was likewise in the directions concerning creatures clean and unclean.

Lev. xi. 3. *Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven footed, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.* See also Deut. xiv. 4 . . 8. And it must be allowed, that such beasts, as have both those properties, are preferable for food to others: as the ox, the sheep, the goat, and the deer, of every kind. And though we do eat some animals, which have but one of those properties, as the coney, the hare, the swine; we never eat those, which have neither of those properties: that is, which neither chew the cud, nor divide the hoof. Nor do we use for food any of the birds, or fowls, forbidden in that long list, Lev. xi. 13 . . 20. and Deut. xiv. 12 . . 20.

In ancient times there were among all people two sorts of creatures, clean and unclean. This distinction obtained, and was general, before the flood. *Noah, therefore, was commanded to take with him into the ark of every clean beast by sevens, the male and the female: and of the beasts that are not*  
*clean,*



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*clean, by two, the male and the female. Gen. vii. 1 . . 3.*

This distinction related as much to food, as to sacrifice. For the worshiper, as well as the priest, partook of the altar, excepting in the case of whole-burnt-offerings. Every living creature therefore, which was clean for sacrifice, was also clean for food.

This article was inserted in the Epistle, out of regard to the Jewish believers: that the Gentil converts might not give them offense. As there are now no Jewish believers, to take offense at our eating of blood, we may do as we see good. We may avoid it, if we please, for the sake of health. But are not obliged to forbear it upon a religious account. Which would be no better, than superstition.

3. *And from things strangled*, that is, from the flesh of animals, that have not been fairly killed, so as that the blood might be all drained out of them, whilst warm.

Upon this our learned author says, p. 175. " This is omitted by many of the ancient fathers, and therefore by some esteemed a gloss." But that is said rather too hastily, and without good ground: as may appear by

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what was said (c) formerly. This article is as genuine, and authentic, as the rest. It is in all Greek manuscripts in general, and is quoted by the most ancient writers of the Church. But near the end of the fourth centurie, and afterwards, the Latin Christians paid little regard to those regulations. And for that reason the apostolic Decree is not always quoted exactly by writers in that language.

This regulation, like the preceding, must be understood to have been inserted, that the Gentil converts might not offend the Jewish believers. We, now, are at liberty to act as we see fit. We are under no obligation to forbear *things strangled* upon a religious account.

4. *And from fornication.*

I suppose it to have been already shewn by general, but <sup>un</sup>answerable reasons, that this Epistle is not concerned about things of a moral nature: consequently, what we now generally mean by this word is not here intended: that being an immorality, and in itself unreasonable. But the true meaning is not certain. Nor ought it to be thought strange, that it is not.

Beza's

(c) See *Credibility. P. 2. Vol. iv. p. 783 . . . 798.*

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Beza's interpretation may be seen in his Annotations upon Acts xv. 20. He is clear, that things of a moral nature have no part in these regulations, but only such things as are in themselves indifferent, recommended for peace sake, and out of regard to weak brethren. Therefore this word is not here to be understood in it's common acceptance. He applies it to some things mentioned by St. Paul in the eighth and tenth chapters of the first epistle to the Corinthians, particularly, *sitting at meat in an idol's temple.* 1 Cor. viii. 9.

But I apprehend, that what St. Paul there speaks of must rather relate to the first prohibition in this epistle, *the pollution of idols, or things offered to idols.*

To me it appears probable, that hereby are forbid some alliances with Heathens: which, though not absolutely unlawfull, had better be avoided by Christians, lest they should prove dangerous temptations to apostasie. So the Apostle writes Heb. xii. 16. *Least there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.* I suppose, that both these characters are given of Esau. He was not a lewd profligate or fornicator, in our sense of the  
the

the word : but he married Canaanitish women, which were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah. Gen. xxvi. 34. 35. Which Jacob carefully avoided. ch. xxviii. 6 . . 9. Theodoret (*d*) mentions the interpretation, which I have given of that text. I am indebted to Beaufobre (*e*) for the reference.

I am confirmed in this interpretation by observing the earnestness, with which St. Paul dissuades Christians from marrying with Heathens, though such marriages were not unlawfull. 1 Cor. vii. 39. *The wife is bound by the law, as long as her husband liveth : but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord.* 2 Cor. vi. 14. 15. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion has light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?*

The

(*d*) Μή τις πόρνος, ἢ ἐέβηλος, ὡς ἡσαυ.]. Πορνείαν τῆ ἡσαυ τὴν γαστριμαργίαν ἐκάλεσε . . . Ὅσοι ἂν δὲ τις ἀμάρτοιοι, πορνείαν αὐτῆ καλέσας καὶ τὸν παρόνομον γάμον· ἀλλοφύλου γὰρ γυναικας ἠγάγετο. *Theod. in Hebr. xii. 16. t. 3. p. 456.*

(*e*) See him *Hebr. xii. 16.*

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The Jews were forbid by the law of Moses to marry with idolaters. Deut. vii. 3. 4. And see Malachi ii. 11. Ezra obliged many, who had married such women, to put them away, though they had children by them. ch. ix. and x. Nehemiah severely reproveth such persons, and gives a reason against such marriages, which would be of some weight in the early times of the gospel. ch. xiii. 23 . . . 27. Remarkable are the words of Ex. xxxiv. 15. 16. *Least thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods : and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice : and thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and they make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.*

St. Paul has wisely determined the point : that Christians should not marry with idolaters, as before seen. Nor should a person converted to Christianity dissolve by separation a marriage, contracted, whilst he was an idolater, and before his conversion to Christianity. But, if the unbelieving relative went off, then the Christian would be at liberty. So I understand what he says, 1 Cor. vii. 12.

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vii. 12 . . 16. *If any brother has a wife, that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which has an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him . . . But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother, or a sister, is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.* That is, if the unbelieving relative depart, the marriage must be dissolved. But the believing relative is not to be the first mover in dissolving the contract of marriage. Such things were done under the law. But a more friendly and peaceable behaviour is required of us. *For, as he goes on, what knowest thou, o wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or, how knowest thou, o man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?* that is, by bringing off in time such relatives, respectively, from idolatry to Christianity.

The danger of idolatry might still be great: but not so great under the gospel, as under the law. And the gospel of Christ was less burdensome, and more reasonable, and inviting, than the law of Moses.

Marriages with idolaters were not to be dissolved. But yet should not be contracted.

Though

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Though such a marriage would not be unlawfull, yet it was a point of prudence, and a matter of expedience, to avoid it. This is what I understand by *fornication* in this Epistle. And as there are not now, and have not been for a good while in this part of the world, any Heathen idolaters: this article, like the rest, is become obsolete. And as all the directions, here given, relate to things expedient in the circumstances of those times; it is not to be at all wondered at, that the meaning of several of them is now obscure and doubtfull.

VI. I have now shewn, that this Epistle was designed for the use of all believers from among the Gentils: that the regulations, contained in it, are not of a moral nature, but relate to such things, as are in their own nature indifferent. I have also endeavoured to shew the meaning of each particular.

*Observations, in the Manner of Corollarie*

I am in great danger of being esteemed prolix. Nevertheless, as the subject is before me, I shall go on to put down some other observations, chiefly in the way of corrollaries.

i. This Decree is not to be understood as a precept, or commandment, but as delivering

livering advice and counsel concerning some matters of prudence and expedience, considering the circumstances of things and persons at that time.

When Paul and Barnabas had returned to Antioch from a peregrination in several cities and countreys, where they had preached the gospel, *they gathered the church together, and rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentils. And there they abode long time with the disciples. Acts xiv. 27. 28.*

Whilst they were there, certain men, which came down from Judea, taught the brethren, and said: *Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined, that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders about this question. When they were come to Jerusalem, they were received by the Church, and by the Apostles and Elders: and they declared all that God had done with them: but there had risen up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, who said, that it was needfull*  
to



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to circumcise them, and to command them to  
keep the law of Moses. And the Apostles and  
Elders came together to consider of this matter.  
And when there had been much disputing, Peter  
rose up, and spoke. . . . After that Barnabas  
and Paul were heard, who declared what  
miracles and wonders God had wrought among  
the Gentils by them. After which James  
riseth up, and reasons upon the point. And  
then concludes: *Wherefore my sentence is,*  
*Διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω,* I judge, I determine, *that we*  
*trouble not them, which from among the Gentils*  
*are turned to God: but that we write to them,*  
*ἐπισηῖλαι αὐτοῖς,* that they abstain from pollu-  
tions of idols . . . Then (f) pleased it the Apost-  
les, or it seemed good to the Apostles and  
Elders, with the whole Church, to send  
chosen men of their own companie to An-  
tioch . . . And they wrote letters by them  
after this manner . . . It (g) has seemed good  
unto the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you  
no greater burden, than these necessarie things,  
. . . From which, if ye keep yourselves, ye shall  
do well: "You will do what is acceptable,  
and agreeable, and will be well taken by  
us, and by all the brethren of the circum-  
cision."

(f) τότε ἔδοξε τοῖς ἀποστόλοις.

(g) Ἐδοξε γὰρ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, καὶ ἡμῖν.

cision." So Cornelius says to St. Peter ch. x. 33. *Immediately therefore I sent unto thee. And thou hast well done, that thou hast come.* Philip. iv. 14. *You have well done, that you have communicated with me, in my affliction.* 3. John ver. 6. *Whom, if thou bring forward in their journey, after a godly sort, thou wilt do (b) well.*

Afterwards ch. xvi. 4. It is said of Paul and Barnabas, *that as they went through the cities, (i) they delivered them the decrees to keep, that were ordained, determined by the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem.* The meaning of the Greek word here rendered *decrees* is equivalent to *placita*, resolutions, decisions, upon a question, and particularly, upon that question, which had been brought from Antioch to the Apostles at Jerusalem.

For certain, if we have given a right interpretation of the words, these regulations are not a part of the gospel of Christ, which is everlasting: but wise decisions and determinations, suited to the circumstances of things, in the Christian Church at that time.

## 2. These

(b) *Vid. Grot. in Act. x. 33 et xv. 29.*

(i) Παρεδίδεν αὐτοῖς φυλάσσειν τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων. κ. λ.

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2. These regulations are the result of that wisdom, with which the Apostles of Christ were inspired, for deciding the question, whether Gentil converts should keep the law, and for directing their conduct, in the use of that liberty, which they had a right to, and was now secured to them.

*It has seemed good unto the Holy Ghost, and to us, that is, it has seemed good unto us, (k) under the divine influence and direction, to lay upon you no other burden, than these necessarie things: which we have judged expedient to be observed by you in the present circumstances.*

I say, these regulations are the result of that wisdom, with which the Apostles were inspired upon this occasion. For it does not appear, that any such regulations had obtained before. If they had, some notice would have been taken of it. And the reminding men of it would have tended to reconcile those, to whom these directions were sent, to comply with them, and pay a regard to them. Nor can I discern either in Josephus, or in the books of the Old, or

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the

(k) *Visum est Spiritui Sancto, et nobis.*] Id est, visum est nobis ex extinctu, sive suggestione Spiritus Sancti. ἐν δὲ δὶσω. *Piscator in Act. xv. 28.*

the New Testament, any hints or traces of them, before this Council at Jerufalem.

I may hereafter enlarge farther upon the wisdom, bestowed upon the Apostles for conducting the affairs of the Christian Church. All that I intended to say here, is no more than this: that the four articles in this Decree are not taken from any Noachic precepts, nor from any other Jewish traditions: but were now first thought of, and first proposed, and recommended by the Apostles, upon occasion of the present emergence.

3. The several regulations of this Decree were expedient and useful (as has been already hinted (1) several times,) on one or both these accounts. 1. to prevent offense in the believing Jews, and facilitate civil converse, and religious communion between believing Jews and Gentils. and 2. to secure the Gentil converts themselves, the more effectually, from apostasie, or a return to idolatrie, by keeping them out of the way of some dangerous snares and temptations.

That the former was one ground and reason of these regulations, may be reckoned evident from the historie in the fifteenth chapter

(1) See particularly p. 124. Note (1).

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chapter of the Acts, and from many things in St. Paul's epistles: Where he shews the expedience of forbearing some meats, when there was any hazard of offending a Christian brother. As Rom. xiv. and xv. at the beginning, and 1. Cor. ch. viii. and x. 25 . . 33. That the later was another ground and reason of the counsels here given, may be also argued to be very probable from St. Paul's exhortations to avoid dangerous temptations to idolatrie, which are likewise in the same context. See, particularly, 1. Cor. x. 1 . . 22. and 2. Cor. vi. 13 . . 18.

4. There was a happy agreement in the Council, and the regulations, now determined, were carried with great unanimity. As appears from the historie in the fifteenth chapter of the book of the Acts.

St. Luke intimates, that for a while there was *much disputing*. It is very likely, that they who were for imposing the law upon the Gentils, and now appeared before the Council, labored to maintain their cause, and carry their point. And, possibly, their arguments at first appeared specious and plausible to some others, who were not engaged with them. But, that the resolutions, finally determined, were carried with a ge-

neral consent, is manifest. We have the speech of the Apostle Peter, who openly declares against imposing the law upon the Gentils, as necessarie to salvation. James afterwards speaks to the like purpose, sums up the arguments that had been alleged, and concludes the debates. The Epistle itself is writ in clear and strong terms. And the judgement upon the point is delivered with the joynt authority of all the members of the Council. *Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own companie, to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas: namely, Judas, surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren. And wrote letters by them after this manner. The Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren, send greeting unto the brethren, which are of the Gentils in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia. Then they pass a censure upon those, who had occasioned the disturbance at Antioch, and say: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain, which went out from among us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment. They proceed. It seemed good unto us, being*

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*ing assembled with one accord, to send chosen*  
*men unto you, with our beloved Barnabas*  
*and Paul, men that have hazarded their*  
*lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*  
*We have sent therefore unto you Judas and*  
*Silas, who shall tell you the same things by*  
*mouth. How affectionate and respectfull*  
*is all this! For it has seemed good unto the*  
*Holy Ghost, and to us, that is, to us, under*  
*divine influence and direction, to lay upon*  
*you no greater burden, than these necessarie*  
*things. . . . So when they were dismissed, they*  
*came to Antioch. And when they had ga-*  
*thered the multitude together, they delivered*  
*the Epistle. Which when they had read, they*  
*rejoiced for the consolation. And Judas and*  
*Silas being prophets also themselves, exhorted the*  
*brethren, and confirmed them.*

Every part of this whole affair shews great unanimity, good temper, and admirable candour and discretion. When the messengers from the church at Antioch came to Jerusalem, and proposed the question; *the Apostles and Elders came together, to consider of the matter.* Having carefully weighed it, they all agree in one judgement. And when they send the Decree away, they make the most honorable mention of Bar-

nabas and Paul, who had preached the gospel in Syria, and other parts. With them they send Judas and Silas, who were some of the most eminent men of the church of Jerusalem, *and also prophets themselves*: next in knowledge and understanding, and in spiritual gifts, to Apostles. Who, when they came to Antioch, *gathered together the multitude*, or the whole church, and delivered to them the Epistle: adding also observations of their own, tending to reconcile them to the regulations contained in it. And the Christians at Antioch were well satisfied, and *rejoiced for the consolation*, afforded them, and for the regard that had been shewn to them, in asserting, and securing their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial appointments of the law of Moses.

This harmonic continued. As appears from the discourses of James and the Elders at Jerusalem, when Paul came thither again, several years afterwards. *As touching the Gentils which believe, say they, we have written, and concluded, that they observe no such thing.* Which shews, that this was still the judgement of James himself, and of the Elders, and of the Church at Jerusalem.



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lem. Some exceptions there might be. But the determinations of the Council were what the church at Jerufalem generally agreed to, and heartily approved of. They did not exact of the Gentil believers an entire conformity to the law of Moses, as necessarie to falvation.

Paul readily received these regulations, as prudent counfels, or matters of expedience at that time. And the other Apostles intended no more by them.

Paul and Barnabas, Judas and Silas, are the persons, who by name are charged with the Epistle by the Council. They carry it to Antioch, and deliver it to the church there. And Judas and Silas, moreover, recommend the observation of the things therein ordained: and doubtless with the approbation of Paul, who was then at Antioch, and continued there some time. When he left Antioch, he chose Silas to accompany him. And St. Luke has assured us, that *as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders at Jerufalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and encreased in number daily.* ch. xvi. 4. 5. And, several years after

this, as before observed, when Paul came again to Jerusalem, and the Elders there, with James, remind him of the several articles of the Epistle, they mention them, as things, with which Paul was well satisfied. Nor does he shew any dislike. His accepting of these decisions is also manifest from his epistles, above quoted.

Once more, for shewing the general consent, with which these determinations were made, it ought to be observed, that all the Apostles of Christ, or most of them, were present in the Council of Jerusalem. For, as formerly shewn (*m*) at large, there is good reason to think, that none of the twelve Apostles left Judea, to go and teach either Jews or Gentils in other countreys, untill after the Council. It is likely therefore, that they were all at the Council, where the controversie was fully determined. Which was a great advantage. By that means the manner of receiving Gentils into the Church of God was fixed, and settled, beyond dispute, and beyond opposition. Or, if any opposition should be made afterwards, it could not be successfull, nor very troublesome. And we may be assured, that all the  
Apostles,

(*m*) See the Supplement, ch. 20. Vol. i. p. 132 . . . 143.

Ch.VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 153*

Apostles, and their disciples, would be harmonious, and preach the same doctrine to Jews and Gentils, wheresoever they went.

5. We may hence perceive the wisdom, with which the Apostles of Christ were furnished, for behaving in cases of difficulty, that came before them; so as might be for the peace of the Church, the edification of believers, of every rank and capacity, and the preservation of the purity of the Christian doctrine.

I think, the regulations of the Council at Jerusalem, as just represented, and explained, are a proof of this. The first and principal thing to be regarded by the Apostles of Christ was the preservation of the purity of the doctrine, which they had received from him. The Gentils were by no means to be brought into subjection to the law of Moses, as necessarie to salvation. It behoved the Apostles of Christ to assert their freedom from an obligation to observe the peculiarities of the Mosaic dispensation. This is strongly done by Peter, and the others, in the debates at the Council. And the rights of the Gentils are well secured in the Epistle writ by them.

Never-

Nevertheless some regard was due to the Jewish believers . . . And the Gentils were to be directed to avoid such things, as might be offensive to their brethren of the circumcision: and likewise to decline such things, as might prove dangerous temptations to themselves, and be a means of ensnaring them, and leading them into apostasie.

In a word, one exercise of wise and good men in this world arises from different sentiments, especially, in things of religion. We can evidently discern, that there were some differences of opinion, and some controversies among the followers of Jesus Christ, even in the apostolic age. Some thought, that the observation of the law of Moses was necessary for mens salvation, and were for imposing it, as such, upon the believing Gentils.

Others, of the Jewish believers, thought, that the law was obligatorie upon themselves, and their posterity, as a distinct nation and people, to whom that law had been delivered: whilst they hoped to be justified in the sight of God, and to be eternally saved, by faith in Jesus Christ, and sincere obedience to his precepts. These did not expect, the Gentils should come under the law of Moses,

Moses, as necessarie to salvation. Nevertheless they still had scruples about meats and drinks, and about conversing with them, who observed no such distinctions. Others there were, as it seems, among the Jews, who thought, that the obligation of the law of Moses, as to it's peculiarities, had ceased. And they judged no wholesome meat to be unclean. Which was the opinion of the Gentil believers in general.

Hence there arose an obligation to a different conduct. And these last mentioned, whom we reckon the more knowing, and strong, were to practise prudence, condescension, forbearance, compliance. They were to do what lay in their power, as they had opportunity, to enlarge the minds of men. In the mean time they were *to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. Rom. xv. 1.*

But others, who were rigid, and would impose indifferent things, as necessarie to salvation, were to be blamed, and reprov'd, as they are by this Council. And every one knows, how they were withstood by the Apostle Paul. And all who are attentive in reading the New Testament, may perceive, that the Epistle of the Council at  
Jerusalem

Jerusalem exactly corresponds with the doctrine of Paul in his epistles, and that the temper of both is one and the same.

Some regard was due to the Jewish nation in general, even to the unbelievers among them, whilst they behaved with decency and civility. For a long time they had been favored with many religious privileges, above other men. As is acknowledged in Rom. ix. 4. 5. And it is the Apostle's direction. 1 Cor. x. 32. *Give no offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentils, nor to the Church of God:* by the two former plainly meaning such as were unbelievers. And it is said, Acts xvi. 2. 3. that when Paul determined to have Timothie with him, who was *the son of a woman that was a Jewesse; and believed; he took him, and circumcised him, because of the Jews who were in those quarters. For they all knew, that his father was a Greek.* I think, those Jews were unbelievers. Paul would not offend them. And he might hope to gain some of them. See 1. Cor. ix. 19. 20.

But they were not the men, who occasioned the Council of Jerusalem, or the decisions of it. *The men, who came to Antioch, and taught the brethren there, Except ye be circum-*

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*circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved, were Pharisees who believed. Acts xv. 1. They were men, who went out from the church at Jerusalem. ver. 24.*

These are now reprov'd. But whilst the freedom of the Gentils is asserted from a subjection to the law of Moses, and it's appointments, some things are recommended to them, as expedient for the time. Which might facilitate converse and communion with all the Jewish believers, who were tractable, and would be also usefull for preserving themselves from some temptations to apostasie in those times.

6. We may hence perceive the reason, why those of the Jewish believers, who were for imposing the law upon the Gentils, are so severely reprov'd, and condemn'd by St. Paul.

They were for imposing the law, and it's observances, upon the Gentils, as necessarie to salvation. Which should be always attended to by us, when we read St. Paul's epistles, and observe the tartnesse of his expressions. So says St. Luke very clearly. xv. 1. *Certain men which came down from Judea, taught the brethren: Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot*

*not*

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*not be saved. See also ver. 5. And are not these men tartly reprov'd by the Apostles and Elders in their Epistle. ver. 24? Forasmuch as we have heard, say they, that certain, which went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law.*

And justly does St. Paul say of Peter, and the rest, who separated themselves from the Gentil Christians at Antioch, that *they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel. Gal. ii. 14.* And as justly does he exhort, and argue, *Gal. v. 1...4. Stand fast therefore in the liberty, wherewith Christ has made us free. And be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, esteeming it necessarie to salvation, he is debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law. Ye are fallen from grace. Which now must be all clear. It can need no farther explication.*

7. We may now discern, wherein lay the fault of the Apostle Peter, and others, who  
com-



**Ch. VII. Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 1-59**  
complied too far with the rigid part of the Jewish believers.

The only place of Scripture, where this is mentioned, is Gal. ii. 11 . . . 16. *But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentils. But when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews likewise dissembled with him: insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw, that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all: If thou being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentils, and not as do the Jews; why compellest thou the Gentils, to live, as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentils, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law. For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

The

The fault of Peter lay in this, that his conduct implied the necessity of the Gentils being circumcised, and keeping the ordinances of the Mosaic law, in order to their being saved. *Why (n) compellest thou the Gentils to judaize!* that is, to (o) become Jews, and live, according to the law of Moses, and that, in order to salvation. This was the meaning of his behaviour. The Gentils at Antioch had believed in Jesus Christ, and heartily embraced his doctrine. Nevertheless Peter now behaved toward them, as if they were unworthie of converse, or communion with himself, or other Jewish believers. They were not yet of the church and people of God: but must, if they would be saved, be circumcised, and obey the law of Moses, as the Jewish people did.

This is what Paul blames Peter for. It is apparent from St. Paul's whole argument in this place. It follows next after the words just cited. *We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentils, knowing, that a man is not justified by the works of the law,*

(n) Τι τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰσδαίξειν;

(o) *The Word is explained at large in the Supplement. Vol. 2. p. 164.*

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*law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law. Which plainly shews, that St. Paul is speaking of imposing the law, as necessarie to acceptance with God: or, in other words, that he is speaking of justification, and salvation. And St. Peter says the same thing at the Council, in almost the same words. Acts xv. 10. 11. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers, nor we, were able to bear? For we believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they.*

We see therefore, that Peter was now guilty of dissimulation. He acted contrarie to his own judgement. And did what implied the necessity of the Gentils receiving the law of Moses, in order to salvation. Thus he acted, *fearing them of the circumcision.* I transcribe Augustin below (*p*) who speaks exactly to the same purpose.

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Some

(*p*) Quapropter non ideo Petrum emendavit, quod paternas traditiones observaret: quod si facere vellet, nec mendaciter, nec incongrue faceret. Quamvis enim jam superflua, tamen solita non nocerent. Sed quoniam Gentes cogebat judaizare: quod

Some have been unwilling to think, that the Apostle Peter should have exposed himself to this censure after the Council of Jerusalem: though the order of St. Paul's narration, in the chapter just cited, implies as much. But the difference is not great. Peter's guilt may be aggravated thereby. But whether before, or after that Council, he was now guilty of dissimulation. For he did *eat*, and converse for a while *with the Gentils* at Antioch: and afterwards *separated himself* from them, *fearing them of the circumcision*. And a part of Paul's argument is to this purpose: *If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentils, that is, sometimes, as he had lately done, and probably at some other times likewise, and not as do the Jews; why compellest thou the Gentils to judaize? Or, as Mr Locke:*

“ If thou, being a Jew, takest the liberty sometimes to live after the manner of the Gentils, not keeping to those rules, which  
the

quod nullo modo posset, nisi ea sic ageret, tanquam adhuc etiam post Domini adventum necessaria saluti forent: quod vehementer per apostolatam Pauli veritas dissuasit. Nec apostolus Petrus hoc ignorabat. Sed id faciebat, timens eos qui ex circumcisione erant. Itaque et ipse vere correctus est, et Paulus vera narravit. *Augustin. ad Hieron. ap. Hieron. Ep. 67. T. 4. P. 2. p. 605.*

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the Jews observe ; why dost thou constrain the Gentils to conform themselves to the rites, and manner of living of the Jews ?”

Moreover, we know, that long before the Council of Jerusalem, Peter had been at the house of Cornelius at Cesarea, and received him, and his companie, though Gentils, into the Church by baptism. And, when he returned to Jerusalem, and there were some, *who contended with him, because he had gone to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them* ; he having rehearsed the whole matter to them, they were satisfied, *and glorified God, saying: Then hath God also to the Gentils granted repentance unto life.* Acts x. and xi. 1 . . . 8. Of which St. Peter takes particular notice in his speech at the Council. Acts xv. 7 . . 9.

This action of Peter therefore was hypocrisie, or *dissimulation*, as St. Paul justly calls it, a mean compliance, contrarie to judgement, through fear of the displeasure of unreasonable men. And this was the fault of all the rest, who joyned him in that behaviour. *And the other Jews, says St. Paul, dissembled with him: insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.*

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The Apostle Peter, as is manifest, submitted, and acquiesced. And we may reasonably believe, that he never after shewed the like unsteadiness, but was firm against the like temptation. The same may be well supposed of Barnabas, and most of the other Jews, who were now faithfully and openly reproved by St. Paul.

8. We may now be able to vindicate the conduct of the Apostle Paul in complying, as he did at Jerusalem, with the advice of James, and the Elders there. As related Acts xxi. 17 . . . 30.

I do not know, that we are bound to justify the conduct of any man, not even of an Apostle, in all things. Nay, we cannot but acknowledge, that some of the most eminent of that order failed in some instances. We have just now been observing upon a faulty conduct of Peter. And it is likely, that in the contention between Paul and Barnabas, there was on each side a sharpness not to be justified. Acts xv. 36 . . . 41. Paul might be too much offended with Mark, *who departed from them from Pamphylia.* And he might be too much exasperated at Barnabas, who had dissembled with Peter, when he separated himself

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himself from those, with whom he had before lived familiarly. But Paul was reconciled to both afterwards, and makes honorable mention of them in his epistles. Paul likewise seems to have been too much moved by the indignity offered him by the High-Priest, Ananias. Acts xxiii. 1 . . . 5.

But we cannot willingly allow of many instances of misconduct in Apostles. And we may be disposed, to vindicate any men, so far as we reasonably can, especially men of eminence, and extensive usefulness, whose usual conduct entitles them to esteem and reverence.

And, excepting the instances just mentioned, St. Paul's conduct, so far as we know, was free from censure. Indeed, I think, that his doctrine and his conduct, as a Christian and an Apostle, were always uniform, and harmonious: and that he never practised any compliances, but such, as were agreeable to his avowed principles.

However, it is fit, that we should particularly consider what we find related in Acts xxi. 17 . . . 30.

This relation, as seems to me, is brought in to inform us, how, and in what manner, Paul was apprehended: that we might know

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the occasion of that imprisonment of the Apostle, which was of so long continuance, and was attended with many incidents of importance. And as the Apostle's imprisonment was a necessarie part of his historie, the occasion of it could not be omitted by a faithfull and judicious historian, as St. Luke certainly is.

And there appear so many tokens of candour and good temper, wisdom and discretion, in James and the Elders of the church at Jerusalem, that, as one would think, men of ingenuity should be little disposed to surmise, that any thing was now proposed to Paul, or complied with by him, which was at all dishonorable to him, or derogatorie to the true principles of religion, or to the interests, either of believing Jews, or Gentils.

But it is not to be expected, that all should be contented with such general observations. We will therefore observe every paragraph of this narration.

Ver. 17. *And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren, meaning the church in general, received us gladly.* The presence of Paul was acceptable to them, and in a friendly and affectionate manner they  
con-



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congratulated him upon his safe arrival among them.

Ver. 18. 19. *And the day following Paul went in with us unto James. And all the Elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly, what things God had wrought among the Gentils by his ministrie.*

The original phrase, καθ' ἑν ἕκαστον, imports the exactness, and particularity of the accounts, which Paul gave of his successes in the several cities and countreys, in which he had been, since he was last at Jerusalem. And here we cannot forbear to observe the frankness and openness, and also the humility of the Apostle, in giving so full an account of himself: where he had been, what he had done, and what tokens of divine approbation had been afforded to him, and to his endeavours. This resembles the account, which Paul and Barnabas gave to the church of Antioch, upon their return thither, after they had fulfilled the work, to which they had been appointed in an especial manner. Acts xiv. 26. 27. And compare ch. xiii. 1 . . . 4. The main difference is, that there *they gathered the church together and rehearsed all*

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*that God had done with them.* Here Paul speaks to James and the Elders only of the church at Jerusalem.

Ver. 20. *And when they heard it they glorified the Lord.* A proof of the truly Christian and charitable disposition of the chief men at Jerusalem. They rejoiced, and were thankfull to God for the progresse of the gospel among the Gentil people, as preached to them by Paul.

*And said unto him: Thou seest, brother, how many thousand Jews there are, which believe. And they are all zealous of the law: thinking it still obligatorie upon themselves, and their posterity, who are of the Jewish nation. However, they afterwards add at ver. 25. agreeably to the determination of the Council: As touching the Gentils which believe, we have written, and concluded, that they observe no such thing: that is, that they need not, are under no obligation, to observe the law, or it's customs: but may be justified without observing them. Consequently, neither did the believing Jews expect to be justified by the law. And their zeal for it consisted only in a desire to keep it, as obligatorie upon themselves, to whom it was delivered, as a nation and people,*  
They

Ch.VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 169*

They must generally (for we need not be unwilling to allow of exceptions for some individuals :) have assented to what St. Peter says in the Council, xv. 11. *We believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we Jews shall be saved, even as they, the Gentils. Which is also agreeable to what St. Paul says to St. Peter himself, and as a thing well known, and allowed by such as believed in Christ. Gal. ii. 15. 16. We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentils, knowing, that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ; that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.*

*They are all zealous of the law, in the sense just mentioned. But, possibly, even that was more than was approved of by James, and the Elders, or the most knowing and understanding men in the church at Jerusalem.*

Ver. 21. *And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentils, to forsake the law, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.*

*That*

*That they ought not, that is, that it was unlawful for them so to do. Which was a calummie upon the Apostle. He never said so. He may have said, that they needed not to practise circumcision: or that they were at liberty to quit the observances of the law. As he is understood by some to say, Rom. vii. 1. . . 6. But he never said, that it was unlawfull, or sinfull for the Jews to circumcise their children, and keep the law. And though this had been reported among the Jews at Jerusalem, it is evident, that James and the Elders did not give credit to it. By their manner of speaking they shew, that they were persuaded, and knew it to be a falshood.*

*Ver. 22. 23. 24. What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together. For they will bear, that thou art come. Do therefore this, that we say unto thee. We have four men, which have a vow on them. Them take, and purify thy-self with them, that they may shave their heads, and all may know that these things, whereof they are informed concerning thee, are nothing: but that thou thy-self walkest orderly, or regularly, and keepest the law.*

They recommend something to be done by Paul, as likely to be more satisfying,  
and

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and convincing, than any verbal declaration could be. And he complies. Which shewed, that he did not think it unlawfull for a Jew to observe their customs. And that is all.

However, this compliance of the Apostle must have been very agreeable to them, by whom the proposal was made. And though by the violence of the people of the city, and of others assembled there upon occasion of the feast, he was prevented from *accomplishing the days of the purification*, and performing all the prescribed rites, there can be no question made, but that his design was well taken by the whole church at Jerusalem. He may have received many civilities from them, whilst he was kept in custodie in Judea. And he was better qualified to write to them, at the end of his imprisonment, that excellent epistle, called to the Hebrews: and they, and other Jewish believers elsewhere, may have been better disposed to receive from him that *word of exhortation*, which was so well suited to their circumstances.

Though I have now gone over that historie, perhaps it will not be disagreeable to some, if I add a word or two more by way of remarks upon it.

St.

1.) St. Paul's complying with the proposal made to him by James, and the Elders, did not at all weaken the freedom of the Gentils from the law of Moses. Nor could it be understood by any so to do. This is manifest from the clear and open declaration here made by them, that *as touching the Gentils, which believe, it had been concluded, that they observe no such thing.*

2.) What St. Paul did now, was not contrarie, but agreeable to his own declarations at other times, and to his conduct upon other occasions, and to the directions, which he gave to others.

First, What St. Paul now did was agreeable to his declarations at other times: and therefore, as we may be assured, was conformable to his settled judgement and persuasion, and not an artfull, or hypocritical compliance, proceeding from fear, or calculated to subserve some private and selfish views.

He was a Jew. The rites prescribed by the law of Moses were in their own nature indifferent. He (q) practised them now,  
as

(q) *Factus sum Judaeis tanquam Judaeus, ut Judaeos lucrificerem, . . . compassione misericordiae, non simulatione fallaciae*  
... Nam

Ch. VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 173*

as such, not as things necessarie to his own, or any other mens salvation. This his conduct therefore is agreeable to his declarations at other times. Thus it follows after the words before quoted from the begining of the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Galatians: where he so earnestly diffuades them from taking upon them the yoke of the law, as necessarie to justification and salvation. *For, says he ver. 5. 6. we, through the Spirit, wait for the bope of righteousnesse through faith. For in Christ Jesus, or according to the tenour of the Christian dispensation, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision: but faith, which worketh by love. And afterwards, in the same epistle, vi. 15. 16, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new*

... Nam utique Judaeas erat. Christianus autem factus, non Judaeorum sacramenta reliquerat, quae convenienter ille populus et legitimo tempore quo oportebat, acceperat. Sed ideo suscéperat ea celebranda, quum jam Christi esset discipulus, ut doceret non esse perniciofa his qui vellent, sicut a parentibus per legem acceperant, custodire, etiam quum in Christo credidissent: non tamen in eis jam constituerent spem salutis, quoniam per Dominum Jesum salus ipsa, quae ipsis sacramentis significabatur, advenerat. Ideoque Gentibus, quod inuetus a fide revocarent onere gravi, et non necessario, nullo modo imponenda esse censebat. . . *Aug. ad. Hieron. ap. Hieron. ep. 67. T. 4. p. 605. And see Remarques de Beausobre sur le N.T. T. 1. p. 444. at the end of the second ep. to the Corinthians.*

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*new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and upon the whole Israel of God.* So he writes in an epistle, where he strongly asserts his own integrity, and earnestly exhorts those, to whom he is writing, *to stand fast in the liberty, with which Christ has made us free.* He might therefore very reasonably practise indifferent things, as lawfull, when not insisted upon, as necessarie to salvation.

Farther, the compliance, related in the place, which we are considering, was also agreeable to his avowed conduct upon other occasions.

So 1. Cor. ix. 20 . . . 22. *And unto the Jews became I as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews: to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law: to them that are without law, as without law: . . . that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I, as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*

Here, in the historie under consideration, we have an instance of that compliance and condescension, which in the just cited text from the first to the Corinthians, he openly declares



Ch. VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 175*

declares to have been his frequent practise : and which he esteemed to be his duty, in order to gain and save men of every rank, and denomination. And what was now done by him, was done by the advice and recommendation of men of great candour, and great wisdom and understanding : friends to Paul, who knew him well, favorable to the Gentils, and guardians of the church at Jerusalem.

*This do, say they, that all may know, that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing : that is, that all may be satisfied, that thou dost not teach the Jews which are among the Gentils to forsake Moses : nor say, that it is unlawfull for them to circumcise their children, and to walk after the customs : forasmuch as thou thy-self also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. The meaning is not, that he did always, and constantly keep the law, in all it's appointments : But (r) that sometimes, or often,*  
upon

(r) Ipsum vero Paulum non ad hoc id egisse, quod vel Timotheum circumcidit, vel Cenchreis votum perfolvit, vel Jerosolymis a Jacobo admonitus, cum eis qui voverant, legitima illa celebranda suscepit, ut putari videretur per ea sacramenta  
etiam

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upon many occasions, he did not scruple so doing: and that he did not judge it sinfull, or contrarie to the doctrine of Christ, so to do. For, when Paul said to Peter, Gal. ii. 14. *If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentils, and not as do the Jews*: the meaning, certainly, is not, that Peter always, and in all things, lived after the manner of the Gentils, but only sometimes. Take the words in that sense, which it seems most reasonable to do: And Paul's argument with the Apostle Peter is sufficiently cogent.

And that Paul did sometimes *become to the Jews as a Jew*, he says himself in the place just cited from the first epistle to the Corinthians. And some instances of his so acting are particularly recorded by St. Luke, beside that, of which we are speaking. So, as before observed, *he took, and circumcised Timothie, the son of a Jewesse, because of the Jews in those quarters*. For his father being a Greek by nation, and religion, all supposed, that  
Timothie

etiam Christianam salutem dari: sed ne illa quae prioribus, ut congruebant temporibus, in umbris rerum futurarum Deus fieri iusserat, tanquam idololatriam Gentilium damnare crederetur. &c. *Aug. ad Hieron. ep. 76. ib. p. 631. 632.*

Ch. VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 177*

Timothie was as yet uncircumcised. Acts  
xvi. 1 . . 3.

And afterwards, ch. xviii. 18 . . . 22. at  
Corinth. *Paul tarried there yet a good while.  
And then took his leave of the brethren, and  
sailed thence into Syria, having shorn his head  
in Cenchrea. For he had a vow. And he  
came to Ephesus . . . When they desired him to  
tarry longer time there, he consented not. But  
bid them farewell, saying: I must by all means  
keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem. But  
(s) I will return unto you again, if God will.*

This is an action, much resembling that,  
which was proposed to him by James, and  
the Elders at Jerusalem. And so far as we  
are able to discern, it was performed by him,  
of his own accord, freely, and voluntarily,  
without any compulsion, and without the  
advice, and recommendation of any. And,  
I think, it must be reckoned full proof, that  
he did, upon some occasions, *walk orderly,  
and keep the law.*

Once more, finally, the complying con-  
duct of Paul at Jerusalem was agreeable to

N

the

(s) Of Paul's vow at Cenchrea there is a particular account  
in the first Part of the Credibility, &c. B. i. ch. ix. §. 8. p. 465.  
. . . 474. 3d edition.

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the directions, which he gave to others, upon the like occasions.

We all know, that in his epistles, he oftentimes earnestly exhorts the Gentil Christians, the strong among them in particular, not always to assert to the utmost their Christian liberty: but to forbear it, when there was danger, lest any weaker brethren should be so offended, as to fall. *I know,* says he in his epistle to the Romans, xiv. 14 . . . . 20. *and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, then walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat, and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow the things that make for peace, and things, wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure: but it is evil for that man, who eateth with offense. It is good, neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine,*

*nor*

Ch. VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 179*  
*nor any thing, whereby thy brother stumbleth,*  
*or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou*  
*faith? have it to thyself before God.* See  
likewise what follows at the beginning of the  
next chapter.

Now therefore, at Jerusalem, Paul only put  
in practise the rules and directions, which he  
had given unto others. He was a Jew. And  
he might perform such acts, as were in them-  
selves indifferent, without sin. If he was  
not under the law of Moses, he was under  
the law of charity, by which all Christians  
were bound. And, as in respect to that  
obligation, he had exhorted Gentil believers,  
not unseasonably to assert their liberty, he  
was in like manner obliged to condescend  
himself. Here was such a case. If ever  
there could be such a case, it must be here,  
at Jerusalem. And, if he had not compli-  
ed, as he did, he must have run the hazard  
of offending a great number of the Jewish  
believers, his brethren, so as to cause them  
to fall, and fill their minds with prejudices  
against the dispensation of the gospel. Ac-  
cording to the rules, just seen by us, as  
given to the Romans; he was obliged to act  
now as he did. If he had not, he would  
not have *followed the things that make for*

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*peace, and wherewith one may edify another. If he never practised condescension, compliance, yielding to the infirmities of the weak: how could he propose himself as an example to others: as he does, after a long exhortation at the end of the tenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians? not now to refer to other texts: Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glorie of God. Give no offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentils, nor to the Church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved.*

I hope, I have now vindicated St. Paul. But there still remains one observation more, which may be not improperly mentioned here.

9. From the explication, which has been given of the Apostolic Decree, and from all that has been now largely observed upon it, we may be able to discern the reason, why the Epistle of the Council of Jerusalem is never particularly mentioned by Paul, nor James, nor Peter, nor John, nor Jude, in their epistles.

There was no necessity of so doing, partly, because it may be supposed, that all  
Christians

Ch.VII. *Of the Apostolic Decree. Acts xv. 18*

Christians in general were already acquainted with it: and partly, because the regulations, therein contained, are not, strictly speaking, any part of the Christian Religion, or everlasting gospel, which is to be in force to the end of time: but only prudential rules and directions, suited to the circumstances of the Christian Church at that time. However, I think, there is a reference to it in Rev. ii. 24.

Another reason, why Paul, and other Apostles do not expressly mention that Epistle, or the Decree in it, though they recommend like rules, or deliver cautions very suitable to it, (as St. Paul certainly does, and very often :) may be, that, by virtue of their apostolic commission, they were each one of them qualified to deliver prudential rules and directions.

Which observation may be of use for enabling us to understand some expressions of St. Paul, in the seventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, and perhaps elsewhere. *To the rest speak I, not the Lord.* ver. 12. and, *I have no commandment of the Lord. Yet I give my judgement,* or opinion, *γνώμην,* as one that has obtained mercie to be faithfull. ver. 25. and, *after my judgement,*

or according to my opinion, *κατὰ τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην.* *And I think also, that I have the Spirit of God.* ver. 40. That is, he knew, and thought it could not be reasonably called in question by any Christians, that, beside authority to declare the gospel of Christ, he was also endowed with wisdom and power, to deliver prudential counsels, suited to the state of things. And, when he delivers them, he uses such expressions, as shew, they were not properly a part of the Christian doctrine, but only directions and counsels, adapted to the exigence of things at that time. *I suppose therefore, that this is good for the present distresse.* ver. 26. necessity, or exigence, whilst the profession of the faith is exposed to so many difficulties. *And this I speak for your profit: not that I might cast a snare upon you.* ver. 35. that is, “I speak this with a sincere view to your good: not intending, however, any thing above your ability to perform: of which you must be the best judges, after seriously weighing the case.”



## C H A P. VIII.

**P.** 201. Diff. L. *Whether St. Paul did really blame St. Peter for his conduct, mentioned Gal. ii?*

That St. Peter was *culpable*, is allowed by our Author. Wherein his fault consisted, was shewn (*a*) formerly, and again in (*b*) these Remarks.

P. 202. "The only difficulty seems to be, says our learned Author, with regard to Peter's motive for this conduct, which possibly might be this. He had been charged before at Jerusalem, on account of his eating with uncircumcised Gentils, and vindicated himself to the satisfaction of the assemblie. Acts xi. But he had done that in a more private manner, which rendered him less obnoxious to the zealous Jews."

There is no reason to say, *that was done in a more private manner*. It was very public, as appears from the historie in the x. and xi. chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. No-

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thing

(*a*) In the third volume of the Supplement. p. 163. 164.

(*b*) P. 158. &c.

thing could be done more publicly among Christians at that time. When Peter, by divine direction, went from Joppa to Cornelius at Cefarea, he took with him *six brethren*, who were witnesses to all that was done at the house of Cornelius. There Peter *tarr'd several days*. Before he returned to Jerusalem, *the Apostles and brethren that were in Judea*, by whom must be meant the whole church at Jerusalem, or a large part of it, *heard, that the Gentils also had received the word. And when Peter came to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order to them. His discourse there follows at length. And in the Council St. Peter speaks of this transaction openly, and as a thing well known to all. Acts xv. 7. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them: Men and Brethren, ye know, how that God a good while ago made choice among us, that the Gentils by my mouth should bear the word of the gospel, and believe.*

There is no reason therefore, to insinuate, that this was done *in a more private manner.*

But

But learned men, when engaged in an argument, are too apt to advance some things, to serve a present purpose. Which should be carefully avoided by sincere inquirers after truth.

P. 203. "Afterwards, when Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem about the dispute raised at Antioch concerning the Gentil converts, and Paul took Titus with him; he would not consent, that Titus should be circumcised, though some pretended Jewish converts, who probably crept into the assembly, when that matter was debated, insisted upon it. These seem to have been different persons from the believing Pharisees, who are mentioned as being at that assembly. But, as they are said to have believed, he would not, one would think, have here called them *false brethren*, though they joined likewise in insisting upon the circumcision of Titus."

By the *false brethren*, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spie out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. Gal. ii. 4. Paul means no others, than (c) those who began  
the

(c) "And that, because of false brethren, who came down to Antioch. Acts xv. 1. unawares brought in. Acts xv. 5. infi-

the disturbance at Antioch, of whom it is said, *Acts xv. 1 . . . Certain men came down from Judea, who taught the brethren, and said: Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved: who at ver. 5. are said to be Pharisees that believed.*

Nor can I see, why St. Paul should make any scruple to call them *false brethren*, who are so censured by the Apostles and Elders, and the whole Council at Jerusalem, who say of them: *Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain men, which went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls . . . to whom we gave no such commandment.*

Nor does it appear, that there was any dispute about Titus, in particular, either at Antioch, or at Jerusalem. But Paul, to satisfy the Galatians of his inviolable steadiness upon all occasions, inserts this fact in his narration:

*insinuating themselves into the church at Antioch. ver. 1. Who came in privily to spy out our liberty, from the observance of the Jewish law, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage to it: they pleading for the necessity of circumcising the Gentils, and commanding them to keep the law. Acts xv. 1." Whitby upon Gal. ii. 4. See also Doddridge upon the same place.*

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narration: That he took Titus with him to Jerusalem, and brought him thence again, uncircumcised.

P. 203. 204. " But after this, when Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, Peter coming thither, for some time did eat with the Gentil converts. This conduct of Peter could not but make much noise, and give offence to the convert Jews, who were yet zealous for their law. Which being heard at Jerusalem, might occasion much uneasiness there among that sort of persons. And this might occasion James to send some persons to Antioch, to acquaint Peter with it: Who, to avoid the ill consequences, which he apprehended would follow from thence, might think proper to alter his conduct, and also induce Barnabas, and other Jews, to do the like."

In my opinion, all this is abundantly too conjectural. Many things are here said without ground. Why should Peter's eating with Gentils at Antioch presently *make much noise*? It was doing no more than might be reasonably expected of him, especially after the decisions of the Council at Jerusalem, as Dr. W . . . allows this to have been. p. 202. Nor is there any reason to believe,

believe, that tidings of Peter's eating with Gentils at Antioch had been brought to Jerusalem. Peter, as it seems, staid now but a short time only in that city. And the Jews mentioned Gal. ii. 12. may have come to Antioch upon businesse, or purely to gratify their curiosity. There is no reason at all to bring in James, and make him either a cause, or an occasion of the alteration of Peter's behaviour. *Before that certain came from James.* The meaning of those words is no more than "when certain men came down from Jerusalem, where James was." As (*d*) is allowed by the best interpreters.

Peter was culpable, as is evident. And he was justly and openly reprov'd by Paul. And Peter acquiesced. But we will not acquiesce. And rather than not make out an apologic for him, we attempt to bring in another Apostle to be partner in guilt with him: though the historie affords not any ground or reason for so doing.

Without any curious researches, and groundless conjectures, Peter's alteration of conduct

(*d*) *Quam venirent quidam a Jacobo.*] Id est, ab Hierosolymis, cui ecclesiae tum praesidebat Jacobus. *A Jacobo*, id est, ab eo loco ubi erat Jacobus. &c. *Grot. ad Gal. ii. 12. a Jacobo.*] id est, Hierosolymis, ubi pedem fixoret Jacobus. *Bez. in loc.*

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conduct is easily accounted for from the well known zeal of the Jewish people, in general, and of too many of the Jewish believers. As formerly (e) said: " I imagine, that he now first of all went abroad out of Judea into Gentil countreys. It is probable, that he was desirous to see the Christian people at Antioch. But hitherto he had not been much used to converse with Gentils. And when some zealous Jewish believers came to Antioch from Jerusalem, he was alarmed: recollecting, it is likely, how some at Jerusalem had contended with him after he was come from Cesarea, because *he had eaten with men uncircumcised.* Acts xi. 1 . . . 3. and very well knowing, from long and frequent experience, the prevailing temper of the people of his countrey."

(e) *Supplement. Vol. 3. p. 165.*

( 190 )

C H A P. IX.

**P**. 208. Diff. li. *What is the meaning of Paul's expression. You see how large a letter I have written unto you with my own hand. Gal. vi. 11.*

This question has been considered by many interpreters, and other learned men. I likewise have had occasion to speak to (a) it. And I think, I have said what is sufficient to shew, that our English version is very right.

(a) See the Supplement. Vol. 2. p. 165 . . . 170.

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