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AN ESSAY
CONCERNING
THE DIVINE RIGHT
OF
TITHES.

BY THE
REV. CHARLES LESLIE,
AUTHOR OF "A SHORT AND EASY METHOD WITH THE DEISTS,"
"THE SNAKE IN THE GRASS," ETC.

[Re-printed from the Edition of 1700]



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P R E F A C E.

THE subject of tithes is the great Diana of the Quakers. They have bent their whole force against tithe, as the likeliest means to overthrow the Church. And herein they have many abettors. Upon whose account, I resolved to consider of tithe, in a discourse by itself.

My controversy with the Quakers has led me into subjects of different natures, and engaged me among other parties. As when they began to be convinced concerning the necessity and benefit of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; but stuck upon the administrator to whom they should go for it: to satisfy them in this, forced me directly upon the cause of Episcopacy; this concerned other Dissenters: and received a very angry answer from one who styles himself a Presbyterian. Wherein I could find nothing to

reply to but passion and personal reflections, therefore I let it sleep.

The like fate I may meet with in this, that it will be opposed by others than the Quakers. And indeed it is for the sake of others more than the Quakers that I write it; of others who should have more understanding as not being carried away with that blind enthusiasm which possesses the Quakers; but yet who suffer themselves to swim down the stream of a popular sacrilege.

There is nothing needful to these men but to rouse a little, to open their eyes, and consider; and not to follow a multitude to do evil.

I have not in the following sheets quoted any of the Quaker Books, or repeated their poor arguments, which they only picked up and down the highway, the common objections that were then running about, and you will meet with everywhere; they are all answered, though not named, in what follows.

But it is very observable, to what an excess of fury and madness against all the institutions of God that spirit of delusion which possessed the Quakers did hurry them. Even to account this part of the worship of God, the offering of his tithe, to be a renouncing of Christ, a denial of his having come in the flesh, and a mark of Anti-Christ. As you may see in *The Snake in the Grass*, Sect. xix., and there sufficiently answered;

together with their other designs they had in their opposition to tithes, on purpose to ruin and destroy the clergy.

Therefore leaving these men, I turn to more considerable adversaries. And first I name Milton, only for his name, lest the party should say, that I had not considered his performance against tithes; which has more wit, but little more argument than the Quakers.

His fancy was too predominant for his judgment. His talent lay so much in satire that he hated reasoning. Or rather, he got not leave to make use of it, while he wrote for hire against his own opinion. Which appears by what he wrote unbribed (which Mr. Toland has not reprinted) contrary to what he afterwards had a pension to set up. He sacrificed a noble genius to the vices of the age. He has thrown away some of his railery against tithes, and the Church then under foot. Which tickled little Toland to that degree, that though he has reprinted that precious piece against tithe, called *Considerations touching the Likeliest Means to remove Hirelings, &c.*, among the rest of Milton's shame, yet he has thrust platches of it into that life he wrote of Milton, the most considerable (we must suppose) that he could find to be worth this repetition, as "A pulpit divine—a Lollard indeed over his elbow-cushion;" "and his sheep sit—as the sheep in their pews at Smithfield,"—and such like contemptible witticisms, unworthy an author of any name: and

shew Mr. Toland's judgment in picking out these, to adorn his life, lest the reader might have overlooked such delicious strokes in the perusal of his works!

But to men of sense, it seems rather like playing of booty, to please those fools and knaves who hired him to write against hirelings.

Nothing else could have made him submit to set down (what he must know to be false, unless we have a very mean opinion of his knowledge) the cry of the ignorant Quakers, that we made use of the Popish arguments against tithes, (which Mr. Toland likewise reprints in the quotations he repeats in his life,) whereas all that have any skill in these matters do know, that the Popish writers were the first and great corrupters of the doctrine of tithe (as is told pp. 94, 95;) and that the opposers, and not the defenders of tithe, have borrowed their arguments. But Mr. Milton knew what would please; he regarded not the truth, but the hire.

And knowing this, he was resolved to cry—"Whore!" first. Therefore he charged the clergy with the name of hirelings. Which if it be meant of those who take any thing for their preaching, it flies directly in the face of our blessed Saviour, who uses the same word concerning preachers, saying, that the labourer is worthy of his hire, (Luke x. 7.) But if it be meant (as it can bear no other meaning) that they are the culpable

hirelings who value the hire more than the work : that is to be known only by Him who knows the heart ; and can be guest at by us only from the consequences.

And for St. Paul's preaching gratis to the Corinthians and Thessalonians, which is urged by the Quakers and Milton, it makes against them ; for the Apostle asserts his right to have been burthensome as the apostles of Christ (1 Thess. ii. 6 ;) and says, "I have robbed other Churches taking wages of them, to do you service," (2 Cor. xi. 8.) And he gives the reason, (verse 12,) to cut off occasion from them that desire occasion—"such are false apostles," &c., who had raised a great schism in the Church of Corinth, alleging that the Apostles sought their own gain by their preaching ; and endeavoured to make disciples to themselves rather than to Christ. For which cause, he says, he was glad that he had baptised so few in Corinth, (whence the Quakers argue against baptism too,) "lest," says he, "any should say, that I had baptised in mine own name," (1 Cor. i. 15.) And asks them, (verse 13,) "Were ye baptised in the name of Paul?" For the same reason he would take no wages from the Church at Corinth, to stop the mouths of these schismatical apostles ; and says, "he boasts in it," (2 Cor. xi. 10.) But where had been the cause of boasting, if he had only refused to exact what was none of his due ? He stands upon

it to be his due : and says, " So hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel," (1 Cor. ix. 14.) " But," says he, " I have used none of these things," that is, amongst you ; and therein he glories. He says, " Though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me ; yea, woe is unto to me if I preach not the Gospel." But there was no necessity laid upon him to abate of his right, which Christ had given to all his ministers, of taking wages or a maintenance from the people to whom they preach. And he, abating of that, for prudential considerations, at that time, is far from a precedent to all other times and places. For the same Apostle tells us, that the other Apostles did not so, and that he did otherwise, at other times and places.

If these Quakers and others who rail at hirelings would imitate the Apostle's example herein, and take nothing themselves for their preaching, while they (as the Apostle) assert the right of others to it, they might have some pretence.

But when we see George Fox, from a poor journeyman to a shoemaker in Manchester, from his leathern-breeches, and going on foot, and often bare-foot, mount, by his preaching-trade, on horseback, with his man carrying his cloak before him, to act the gentle-

man, and leave L.1000 behind him for printing of his books, which cry out against hirelings! and say, "Freely ye have received, freely give!" and when we see a man of Milton's wit chime in with such a herd, and help on the cry against hirelings! we find how easy it is for folly and knavery to meet, and that they are near of kin, though they bear different aspects.

Therefore, since Milton has put himself upon a level with the Quakers in this, I will let them go together; and take as little notice of his buffoonry, as of their dulness against tithes.

There is nothing worth quoting in his lampoon against the hirelings: but what there is of argument in it is fully considered in what follows.

But there is another who has gone about his business more like a workman, and attacked tithes with great subtilty and learning, it is the famous Mr. Selden, in what he calls *The History of Tithes*. And pretends that it is nothing else but a plain history, without any design against the divine right, or any other settlement of tithes. But then he carries on his mine under ground, and gives such accounts of them as would effectually overthrow them.

Therefore I have considered this book of Mr. Selden's with more care, as supposing it to contain the utmost that can be said or insinuated against the divine right of tithes.

Whether I have done him justice, or not, let the reader judge.

I have one thing more to advertise in this place. By what is said, p. 102, it may be thought as if I were of opinion, that Ananias and Sapphira had neither vowed nor promised the price of their lands. Though there is a caution put against this (if observed,) in the wording of it, as it is said, they had not formally vowed, or promised. Nor is that averred neither, but as follows, for ought appears, *i. e.*, in the text, where it is not so expressly said, but I think it is implied. For it is plain by their answers, that they sold their lands under the pretence of giving the whole price, as others did. How formally they had before promised or vowed this, is not said in the text. Nor was there need of it, for supposing, as I do in the place above quoted, that they had only resolved it in the thoughts of their own mind, it was sacrilege, after that, to subtract from what was so designed, and, by that, dedicated to God, though none knew it but God and themselves.

Therefore I took this way to obviate the cavils that might be raised concerning the formality of their vow or dedication of this money; which we are required to shew and produce out of the text. Nothing less will serve some men, upon some points! though they will be very loath to be tied to it themselves.

For example, that the sin for which Belshazzar was so suddenly and miraculously punished, was excess in drinking, of which there is not one word in the text. But the sin of sacrilege is there plainly set down, viz., his profaning the holy vessels of the Temple. Yet in the *Assembly's Annotations* (Anno 1646,) upon Dan. v. 2, they could find no sacrilege in this.

No, nor in the sin of Achan, (Josh. vi. 17, 18, 19. and chap. vii.) This was put upon covetousness, though the text says plainly, that it was for taking of what was accursed, that is, devoted and consecrated to God, and therefore accursed to any whosoever should invade it.

Neither could they find any sacrilege in the sin of Ananias; only covetousness there too, and vanity, lying, or anything but sacrilege.

These two instances, of Achan in the beginning of the Jewish Church, and of Ananias in the beginning of the Christian, are set in the front, that all might take notice of God's high indignation against this sin of sacrilege.

And it is to be noticed, too, how close men that are resolved, can shut their eyes!

There is not only no sacrilege in these instances! but there is not now any such sin as sacrilege! or some men are not capable of committing it! A poor rogue may be whipt for stealing a cushion or an hour-

glass out of a Church, rather for example's sake, than that there is any great matter in it, besides the humour of pilfering, which, in time, may lead them into our houses! But there are others, who can seize upon Churches, and convert them to common use; and yet, none dare call it sacrilege, or any fault at all. For it is none, if it be not sacrilege. And I would gladly be informed, what that sin of sacrilege is, if this be not it?

I can see no remedy, but that we must even drop this sin, as to some particular persons, times, and places. And the more sins we drop, we leave the less behind! And so may come to be good in time!

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INTRODUCTION.

ST. Clemens Romanus, writing to the Corinthians about the schism which had unhappily broken out in their Church, spent most of his Epistle to them in guarding them against the sins of pride and contention, as the Apostle Paul had done in both his Epistles to them ; knowing that these were the roots whence their schism grew, and all schisms do grow. And that if they could once return from their pride, into the frame of a meek and truly humble spirit, their schism would soon wither and decay. This is the most effectual method to strike at the root of a disease ; without this there can be no thorough cure.

This is the method I have chose, in the subject I have undertaken : to make my entrance with some considerations concerning that trust and dependence which we ought to have in God ; the want of which is the root of all covetousness, which is therefore called idolatry, because it transfers our trust from God to Mammon. And covetousness is so the root of sacrilege, that, as no man would rob God for nought ; so can none return from his sacrilege, till he is cured of that covetousness which caused it : and covetousness cannot be cured, while we are possessed with that distrust of God, which naturally leads to covetousness, and is the cause of it. And while we remain in that frame, no arguments can prevail, or charms have power over such an adder as is deaf to everything but gain.

Therefore I have begun at the root. And let no reader think this subject of trust in God (because it is so common) unworthy of his consideration ; for none upon earth have it as they ought to have : and we are to encrease in it ; and that must be by often meditation upon it, which, by the grace of God, (without which we can do nothing,) is the most effectual means to strengthen ourselves in it. However, it is necessary to the business I am now upon. And to offend those, as little as may be, who may think it a needless preparative, I have been very short upon it ; and afforded them rather hints and heads of meditation, than a discourse suited to the import of the subject.

SECTION I.

Of Trust in God.

When God created man, he instituted a worship which he commanded man to pay to him, as his Creator ; not that he wanted anything from man, but for the happiness of man : because the supreme happiness of man does consist in the knowledge and enjoyment of God. And the greatest misery man can fall into, is to forsake God, and seek for happiness anywhere else : because, so, he must seek it where it is not to be found.

The great worship of God, is our trust and dependence upon him as the sovereign Disposer of all things in heaven and on earth.

But this must be expressed, not only with our lips, but in our actions.

And if we did really believe it, we would be as ready to trust to it, where life or estate were concerned, as in the smallest matters.

But because many may think they have it, when they have it not : and that this trust and absolute dependence upon God, is apt, in our weak minds, to decay and die, unless it be stirred up, and kept alive by frequent instances, and fresh experiments of God's power and protection over us : for want of

which, (and by the looseness of our lives,) men are brought to look only, or chiefly, to second causes, and to trust in them : therefore God, in his all-wise dispensations, has required from us continual proofs of our dependence upon him, even as to our subsistence, and the very necessaries of our life.

I. Thus He commanded Abram to quit his country and his father's house, all his relations and acquaintance, and to travel into a strange country, where "He gave him none inheritance, no not so much as to set his foot on," (Acts vii. 5,) but to depend wholly upon his Providence to support him. And so he lived, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, as strangers and pilgrims upon the earth, (Heb. xi. 13.)

II. He led the children of Israel through a waste and barren wilderness, where, for forty years together, he fed them with manna from heaven, and brought water out of the flinty rock, "That he might make them know that man doth not live by bread only, (by the means of second or natural causes,) but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live, (Deut. viii. 3,) *i. e.* God can support by what means and methods he pleases ; and second means have no virtue but what they receive from him. Not only no virtue as to their qualities and operations, but even as to their quantity and increase : thus they who, out of covetousness, or distrust of God, gathered more manna than was commanded them, yet found no-

thing over : and they who, not out of presumption, gathered less, had no lack, (Exod. xvi. 18.)

And to keep their dependence continually upon God, no more manna was given than for one day at once ; and command was given to gather no more than the proportion allotted for one day, which was the full of an omer : and that none of it should be left until the next day. And when some, out of good husbandry, as they thought, kept of it till the next day, it did not profit them, for it bred worms, and stank. So will our endeavours profit us, if God withdraws his blessing.

The like absolute dependence did Christ require in his Apostles, when he commanded them to provide neither gold nor silver for their journey, (Matt. x. 9.) And has instructed us, as the Israelites in their daily manna, to pray for no more at once than the bread of one day : Give us this day our daily bread ; or for our bread day by day ; and to trust God for the morrow.

III. When the Israelites were settled in Canaan, (besides His many extraordinary and miraculous protections over them,) he established, in their stated economy, several immediate dependencies upon him, without any trust to natural causes : and that not for once or twice, as if only for a trial, but to continue daily and yearly, to signify their absolute and eternal dependence upon him, and him only.

I. Thus three times every year all the men in

the whole nation were commanded to leave all their frontiers unguarded, and to come up to Jerusalem to attend the solemn feasts there, (Exod. xxiv. 23, 24.) Here the objection rises naturally, that they being often, almost always in war with their neighbour nations, and these nations knowing the times of these their feasts, when all their country was left destitute of men, except Jerusalem, whither they all went, their enemies should watch these times, and make inroads upon the country, which no men were left to defend.

But, for a security from this, God commands them to depend wholly upon his promise, (verse 24, above quoted,) in these words, “Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God, thrice in the year.” Here God not only promises that none shall invade their land, but that no man should so much as desire it, at those times, though all the rest of the year they were at open wars with them.

And pursuant to this promise, it is miraculously observable in their Histories, that they were never invaded, in any of these times, while they performed this command.

II. Take another instance. Every seventh year was to be a Sabbath; they were neither to plow nor sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself. (Levit. xxv. 5, 11.) And the objection is put, verse 20, “And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold we shall not sow, nor gather

in our encrease." And the answer is given in the next verses, "Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years; and ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit, until the ninth year; until her fruits come in, ye shall eat of the old store."

And to this they were to trust their very lives, they were to starve if it failed.

But if they should trust entirely to these promises of God, then God assures them of his blessing for it, (verses 18, 19,) both to protect their land from their enemies, and to feed them to the full in it: "Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety: And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety."

But, on the other hand, if they would not trust absolutely to God, then God threatens them that the second causes shall not help them, wherein they trusted; but that he can command all the courses of nature, and to their punishment, if they disobey, as well as to their benefit, if they trust in God.

If they should refuse or neglect to keep the Sabbatical year, then God threatens them that he would banish them out of the land, and that the land should enjoy her Sabbaths, that is, rest from being plowed or sowed, when they were out of it, since they durst not trust so far in God, as to let

her have that rest he commanded, while they were in it. Thus God spake to them:—"Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths: as long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest; because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it," (Levit. xxvi. 34, 35.) And again, verse 43, "The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her Sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes."

Now it is very observable how exactly this threatening (or prophecy) was fulfilled upon the Jews.

They had neglected to observe the Sabbatical year for 490 years, in which time there are 70 Sabbatical or seventh years; and the captivity in Babylon was, by God, determined to that exact number of 70 years, on purpose to fulfil this his threatening; as it is written, to fulfil the word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, (by whom God had after threatened the same,) until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath, to fulfil three-score and ten years, (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.)

III. Another great instance of their dependence upon God, was, their years of jubilee and release.

(1.) In the year of jubilee, which was every fiftieth year, all sales of lands were determined, and the land reverted to the seller. And the reason is given, "the land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, (says God,) for ye are strangers and sojourners with me," (Levit. xxv. 23.)

We are but tenants at will, and are to look upon nothing, in this world, as our inheritance: God only is the proprietor, and hath given us but an usufructuary tenure, to live upon his land, but not to think it our own.

(2.) But the year of release was yet a greater trial of their dependence upon God. This was every seventh year: and in this year all personal debts were discharged; and all the Hebrew bond-men were set at liberty. Not only set at liberty, but, it is commanded, "and when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him.—And, it shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee, for the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest," (Deut. xv. 13.)

The like reason is given for the release of debts, which is required, verses 1, 2. "At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release; and this is the manner of the release:—Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour, shall release

it, he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother, because it is called the Lord's release." Now, from reading of this law, the thought naturally arises, that it would be ill borrowing of money the sixth year. But that is obviated, verse 9, &c., where it is again commanded in these words, "Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, the seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee: thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto, for the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I *command thee, saying, thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the land." And, verse 8, "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth."

3. And no use was to be taken for any money so lent, nor any pledge taken for it; or if taken, to be restored before the going down of the sun.

"If the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge; in any case, thou shalt deliver him the pledge again, when the sun goeth down," (Deut. xxiv. 12, 13.)

“If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him ; yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with thee : take thou no usury of him, or encrease. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, or lend him thy victuals for encrease,” (Levit. xxv. 35, &c.)

And the sanction given to this law, is, (verse 36,) “Fear thy God.” They were to trust absolutely in God, in his blessing upon their labours ; and therefore to fear lest they should, through any act of covetousness, argue the least distrust in him, or to think that such acts of high charity and trust in God, and his blessing upon their obedience to his commands, would not yield them greater encrease than their usury, or any human methods that could be devised.

IV. As God required our absolute dependence upon him, as to necessaries of life and protection from our enemies, in the instances before told, so, to shew further, that it was not our own endeavours to which we owed our preservation, he reserved to himself great portions of our time, to be abstracted from all worldly business, and employed wholly in his immediate service and worship. 1. The stated hours of prayer, three times every day, (Dan. vi. 10 ; Psal. lv. 17.) The more devout extended it to seven times a-day, (Psal. cxix. 164.) Then there was a morning and evening sacrifice every day. 2. The weekly Sabbath, or every seventh

day. 3. The feast of weeks, after seven weeks, or Sabbaths, (Levit. xxiii. 15; Deut. xvi. 9.) 4. The feast of every seventh month, which lasted for seven days together, (Levit. xxiii. 34, 36.) 5. Every seventh year, (before spoke of.) 6. The jubilee, after seven of the Sabbatical years, *i. e.*, after forty-nine years. Here we have a Sabbath of seven hours, days, weeks, months, years, and of seven times seven years. All these multiplications of Sabbaths.

And besides all these, there were many other feasts, (Levit. xxiii.,) both anniversary and occasional, which I stay not to enumerate, because I hasten to my designed scope, that of Tithes.

As God required a weekly seventh part of our time, besides many other monthly and yearly feasts and fasts; so has he, for the same reason, (to teach us to trust and depend upon him for all that we have or expect,) required from us (as will be shewn) a constant tenth part of our substance, as a yearly tribute; besides many other offerings, sacrifices, charities to the poor, and occasional expenses, which he did oblige us to in his service, for a constant and daily exercise of our faith in him; without which it would decay, and at last die, as a body without daily food.

It is said, that the just do live by faith, (Rom. i. 17.) And that they grow from faith to faith. Which supposes a daily increase, and daily nourishment.

Men cannot live long upon one meal, though never

so plentiful. And a man is not said to live upon a dainty, which he but seldom tastes. What a man lives upon, is his daily food. And the just could not be said to live by faith, if they exerted only now and then some one heroical act of faith; as Abraham's sacrificing his son, and the like.

Nay, they could not shew such extraordinary strength of faith, upon some particular occasions, if they did not daily feed upon it, and improve it. Such gigantic faith grows not all at once: and the spiritual, as well as bodily activity, is not improved without constant exercise: that is it which makes perfect, in thoughts as well as actions, in faith, in love, in every thing. A giant refreshed with wine, shews miracles of strength: but one draught of wine gave him not that strength, only stirred it up. So, upon some great emergencies, our faith is stirred up, like Samson, to rouse itself.

But we must learn to fight, before we come to the battle. If we have not a habit of faith, we can never exert great acts: and habits cannot be acquired without often repeated acts. To this end were tithes and Sabbaths instituted, to use us to frequent and daily acts of faith: and till we are well used to these, we can never rise to higher. Therefore we see how necessary it is to us, to improve these small acts of our faith and trust in God: for without greater, we shall hardly arrive at heaven.

And, for this reason, all this that I have said, by way of introduction, has not been unnecessary, nor foreign to the subject in hand; for when I consider

that the chief argument against tithes is thinking them too much to give to God, and proceeds from a diffidence in him, and a trusting to second means for our wealth and prosperity, it was necessary to prepare the way, by shewing how great a dependence God has all along required from us, upon himself; and that our wealth and health, and all, even worldly prosperity, is more to be attained by our observance of his commands, than by our own endeavours or craft: for that it is only his blessing which maketh encrease, and giveth success to whatever second means. All which was wonderfully exemplified to us, in the insensible multiplication of a few loaves and fishes, by the blessing of our Saviour, to feed many thousands. And it is such a blessing of God upon our honest endeavours, which gives us increase; and that in every thing, in all and every circumstance of our lives, though we perceive it not, but think foolishly, that all is the effect of our own industry and wit: and we sacrifice to our net, (as the Prophet speaks, Habbak. i. 16,) to those second means, by which our portion is fat, and our meat plenteous.

And this disease and blindness is so rooted in mankind, that there is nothing in the world so hard to overcome, though nothing be so necessary.

I say, whoever considers this, will think that this preparative was not without cause, and will excuse me to enforce this yet somewhat further, but very briefly.

SECTION II.

Judgments upon Distrust.

I will, therefore, only add a few instances of God's judgments upon our distrust of Him, in those things which he has commanded us.

1. He grievously punished the Israelities murmuring for want of water, even when they were ready to perish for thirst in a waste wilderness, where, without a miracle, there was none to be had. And their several other provocations in distrusting his power, though in their greatest extremities, of which there is an admirable recapitulation in Psal. lxxviii., where, verse 41, the height of their sin is summed up in limiting the Holy One of Israel—stinting his power—as if any thing were too hard for him, and not trusting wholly and absolutely to it, in all and every case, wherein he has commanded it, how desperate and impossible soever it should appear.

And this sin is brought down to us, and this very example proposed to us, (1 Cor. x. 10;) and all these passages of the Israelites shewn to belong to us, and to have happened unto them, for examples to us; “and that they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come,” verse 11.

2. Now this sin, of which I speak, was a fearful-

ness and mistrust in the power or promises of God ; of which you may read the full account in Numb. ch. xiii. and xiv. Ten of the twelve spies, who were sent to search out the land of Canaan, were discouraged because of the mighty giants which they saw there, and the strength of their high-walled towns. And upon their report the people also lost their courage, and were afraid to go up against them, which so provoked the Lord, that he struck these ten spies dead upon the spot, and pronounced so heavy a curse upon the whole congregation, that he kept them thirty-nine years after in the wilderness till all that whole generation were dead, (except only the two courageous and believing spies,) and their children he brought into the land. Nay, he had destroyed them children and all, and raised of Moses a greater nation than they, had not Moses strongly interceded for them. And it is observable that Moses fasted and prayed as long (that is, forty days) to atone for this sin, as for the idolatry of the golden-calf, (Deut. ix. 25,) to shew that this sin of distrust in God, is as heinous as that of idolatry itself ; and, no doubt, is the reason that covetousness is called idolatry, (Ephes. v. 5 ; Colos. iii. 5 ;) for the covetous man is he that trusts in his riches ; and trust being the highest act of worship, consequently we make that our God wherein we trust.

SECTION III.

Of Trust in Riches.

1. How hard is it not to trust in riches! and it is very easily known when we do so: for while we have that wherein we trust, our heart is at rest, and we fear not; but when we want that wherein our trust is, we faint, and are discouraged. Now, who is not discouraged, and fears want, when he has no money? And whose heart is not lifted up, and thinks himself secure, when he has money enough? Who is not apt to sing the rich man's requiem, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry?" (Luke xii. 19.) This made our Saviour pronounce it as impossible for those who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God, as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, (Mark x. 24.) Indeed, it is impossible for any who trust in their riches, and look from them for peace, health, and happiness, so much as to understand, or have the least notion of the kingdom, that is, the power and government of God over all things; because that whoever had a just and true apprehension of the sovereign power of the Almighty, must see that all second causes were so absolutely in his hands,

as that they had no force or virtue at all but what he gave them ; and, therefore, that there was no trust or dependence at all upon any of them, or all together ; but upon their high and irresistible Disposer alone. Alone : for if they receive all their virtue from Him, it is his power alone, not his and their's together ; and he will not give his glory to another, (Isa. xlii. 8.) He must have all our heart, or none ; therefore, he said, “ Ye cannot serve God and Mammon,” (Matt. vi. 24.) He is a jealous God, and will admit of no rivals.

2. But this is for our good, not that he wants our poor service ; for if we bring anything else to rival him in our hearts, it is our own misery ; and if we place our love and dependence upon anything else than God, we are sure to be disappointed, because nothing else can afford any satisfaction, not only against his will, but there is nothing that has any desirable or profitable quality, but what it received from God, not only at first when he made it, but every minute that he conserves it ; without which it would immediately fall into its first nothing. So that not only he who seeks to be happy against God's will, in a direct manner, by sinning presumptuously, and, as it were, entering the lists against him, plundering, and stealing, and killing to get riches, is greatly mistaken when he thinks that the riches which he has so acquired, and wherein he takes delight, have in themselves any

virtue or beauty: but God gives it them, and gives them to him for his greater punishment, and the greatest of all judgments, to give us leave to stray from God, and set up our rest in what must fail us and leave us miserable for ever. I say this is not only the case of those open and professed sinners before spoken of, who provoke God to his face; but likewise of "all the covetous, whom God abhorreth," (Psal x. 3.) Of all who trust in their riches, and depend not absolutely and solely upon God for their daily bread, for all the necessaries and comforts of life, and for everything else, as well in relation to this world as that which is to come.

Of all the principalities in hell, there is none like Mammon, who dare rival God to his face; there is none who has rebelled with that success; and made such havock of the souls of men.

Therefore God has, from the beginning, guarded us with the greatest caution against this devil. He has commanded him to be sacrificed upon his altar, and made that a part of the worship of God.

SECTION IV.

That some part of our substance is due to God, as an act of worship.

1. We are not only to worship God with our lips, and give him praises with our tongue, (Prov. iii. 9,) which is but an inferior and contemplative worship; but he has required that we should pay him an active honour, that is, worship him with our substance, (Eccles. xxxv. 8.)

This is a necessary part of that glory which we must give to God; and as much preferable to verbal praises as deeds are more than words. The Psalmist describes this plainly, (Psal. xcvi. 8,) "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name," or, "the glory of his name," as our margin reads it. What is that glory? The next words show it; "Bring an offering and come into his courts," (Exod. xxiii. 15; xxxiv. 20; Deut. xvi. 16, 17.)

Hence that command is so oft repeated, that none should appear empty before the Lord.

When we approach to worship God, we must sacrifice more or less of our Mammon before him; to show that we depend upon God for our whole subsistence, and that Mammon is not that God:

but we offer him up as a sacrifice to another God, to a greater than he. "I will not offer unto the Lord my God," said David, "of that which doth cost me nothing," (2 Sam. xxiv. 24.)

But I will not labour this point farther, because I suppose that I shall have none to oppose me.

For all Christians do grant, that some part of our substance is due to God. Nay, this is a notion wherein all mankind do agree, and have done at all times since the beginning of the world. No nation was ever so barbarous, that did not sacrifice to some god or other. And though the outward typical bloody sacrifices have ceased among Christians, since Christ, the true and only propitiatory sacrifice, offered his own blood for us upon the cross; yet, I hope there is not any Christian to be found, who thinks that we are therefore released from the command of honouring the Lord with our substance, and disposing of some part of our money, though not in beasts for sacrifices, yet in the service of God, which never did consist wholly in the sacrifice of beasts. There are, and ever were, other parts of his worship, and from which we are not released: for, as Irenæus proves, (*Advers. Hæres.*, Lib. iv. c. 34,) there are offerings and sacrifices under the Gospel, as well as under the Law; that the command is not abolished; only the species of some are changed.

It being, therefore, granted, that some part of our substance is due to God, let us proceed to in-

quire what that part is; or whether God has left us wholly at loose, to give what part we please, and in what manner we think fit.

2. This being a part of God's worship, it cannot be paid after our fancies, but as God has appointed it.

To give alms to a poor man is an act of charity, and commanded by God; but it is not a direct act of worship or devotion. Every good act we do, whether of mercy or justice, or any other morality, is, and may be construed consequentially to be a worship of God, as being done in obedience to his command: and thus every act of our life may be counted an act of worship, because, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do," we are commanded to "do all to the glory of God," (1 Cor. x. 31.) But all these acts have ever been distinguished from the acts of direct worship, which are to be regulated strictly according to the positive command of God in Scripture; from which we must not depart, either to the right hand or to the left, (Deut. v. 32;) neither to add to it, or diminish from it, (Deut. xii. 32.)

But in general actions of morality, we are left to the general guidance of our own reason, according to the general directions of the Scripture, and the ordinary assistances of the Holy Spirit; and to the performance of which, general promises are annexed.

But in the more direct acts of worship, which

all are commanded by Revelation, we are limited precisely to what is so revealed; and there are particular and peculiar promises annexed to the performance, and a more than ordinary assistance and participation of the Holy Spirit of God.

Therefore, what part of our substance God has reserved as a part of his worship, is not to be reckoned among bare acts of charity; but must be offered in such manner and method as he has commanded.

This being premised, we will now see whether any determinate quantum of our estates has been reserved by God, as sacred to himself.

SECTION V.

Of the determinate number of a Tenth under the Law.

The cabalists make many mysteries in this number. It is the completion of all single numbers, and the first number of increase, by which all nations do multiply; and, therefore, there seems to be even some natural aptitude in this number, beyond that of any other, which forces all mankind, without concerting, to multiply by it. And being thus, in many respects, the most perfect of numbers;

the first and last of numbers, comprehending all single numbers, and multiplying them *in infinitum*; it seems the most fit and proper number wherein to pay our tribute to God, who is the First and the Last, and multiplies all we have unto us; by this acknowledging that all we enjoy, and all our increase is his, and comes from him.

There are cabalisms upon this number; as to the Decalogue, comprehending all duty; and the ten candlesticks in the Temple, (1 Kings vii. 49,) representing the ten severities and mercies (as they reckon them) of God; and the Holy Seed is called a tenth, (Isa. vi. 13.) They tell us that there is a mythology, not only in the quantum or number of the tithe, but in the manner of its payment; viz. The people were to pay the tenth to the Levites; and the Levites the tenth of their tenth to the high-priest. They say that the people do represent the corporeal part of man; the Levites the animal; and the high-priest the spiritual, which is the highest: and that as the people fed the Levites, by paying their tithe to them, and the Levites, in the same manner, fed the high-priest, so, in man, the corporeal part feeds the animal, and the animal feeds the spiritual. But I leave these allusions; and whatever truth there may be in them, yet I lay no stress of my present argument upon them. I inquire not now after tithes, upon account of the reasons, either natural or cabalistical, for the fitness of that number above any

other. But I desire to follow matter of fact, and see what God has appointed; for if that can be found out, it determines our obedience, more positively and certainly than a thousand conjectures or contrivances of our own.

Let me only observe, that ten being the utmost number, it is the least proportion that could be reserved; for nine would be a greater proportion of our goods, and eight a greater than that, &c.

But now to follow the clew of matter of fact, by which I intend to determine this cause of tithe; it is, in the first place, very evident, that a tenth part of all increase was reserved, as such, under the Law; and that it was to be offered to the priests; not only as a maintenance to them, but as an offering unto the Lord, in the same nature as other offerings and sacrifices: "The tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave-offering unto the Lord, (Numb. xviii. 24.) "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord," (Levit. xxvii. 30.) "Thither shall ye bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave-offerings of your hands, and your vows, and your free-will offerings, and the firstlings of your herds, and of your flocks," (Deut. xii. 6.)

Here the tithes are reckoned in the same rank with the sacrifices and other offerings and vows,

as holy unto the Lord : as they are again, (Deut. xxvi. 13,) where they are called, “ the hallowed things.” And hence the subtraction of tithes is called a robbing of God ; and that equally with the subtracting of the other offerings of the Lord. “ Will a man rob God ? Yet ye have robbed me : but ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee ? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse ; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation,” (Mal. iii. 8, 9.)

SECTION VI.

*A Tenth required before the Law ; shewn in Abram
and Jacob.*

But now it remains to be known, whether this was a particular institution only to the Jews, under the law ? or whether it had a more ancient rise ? and how ancient ?

That it was before the Law, it is evident from the example of Abram, who paid tithes to Melchisedec ; (Gen. xiv. 20,) and of Jacob, who vowed his tithes to God, (chap. xxviii. 22.)

I. But there are objections against these two instances :—1. As to Melchisedec, it is said, that the tenth part which Abram gave to Melchisedec, was

not anything that was due to Melchisedec, nor given to him under the notion of tithe, nor to him as he was a priest, but that it was only a voluntary boon, or gratuity, which Abram gave to him ; and that it might have been an eighth, a ninth, a twelfth, a fifteenth, or any other part Abram had pleased.

Ans. All this pretence is overthrown by what is said in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where, verse 4, the Apostle argues the greatness of Melchisedec above Abram, from Abram's paying of tithes to him. Now consider, (saith the text,) how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abram gave the tenth of the spoils. But if it had been only a gratuity or free gift from Abram, it would have argued the greatness of Abram above Melchisedec ; for the giver is greater than the receiver.

But when anything is paid as a tribute, or a rent due, it argues the greatness of the receiver above that of the payer. And therefore, unless Abram paid his tithe to Melchisedec as a tribute due to him, the Apostle's argument is so far from being conclusive, that it operates quite contrary to that inference which the Apostle made from it, and proves the greatness of Abram above Melchisedec ; whereas the Apostle in this verse, and verse 7, puts it without all contradiction, that Abram was the less, and Melchisedec the greater and the better.

And this was not a personal comparison betwixt

them ; but the preference given to Melchisedec was in respect of his character, because he was a priest, whose office it was to bless, in the name of the Lord. Thence St. Paul argues, “That without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.”

Again, verse 9, the Apostle argues the preference of the Melchisedecal priesthood before that of Levi, because Levi, in his father Abram, paid tithes to Melchisedec.

Here, 1st, it is established, that those who receive tithes, are greater, and of higher dignity, than those who pay the tithes to them.

2. It is hence made manifest, that the tithe which Abram paid to Melchisedec, was paid in the true notion of tithe, as tithe, and a tribute which was due to Melchisedec, as he was priest of the Most High God. For if it had not been paid as tithe, how could Levi have been said to have paid tithes in Abram ?

And the word is observable, verse 6, δεδεκατοκε, that is, Melchisedec tithed Abram ; *i. e.*, put him under tithe, or exacted it from him, as his due. The Vulgar translates it, *decimas sumpsit ab Abram*, he took tithes from Abram.

3. And because it was part of the priest’s office to receive the Lord’s tithe, a receiver of tithe and a priest are terms synonymous. Thus, in this same chapter, Heb. vii, it is said, verse 8, here men that die receive tithe, (that is, under the law, the priests were mortal, and therefore there was a necessity of

their succeeding one another;) but there, (that is, in the case of Christ, typified by Melchisedec) he (*i. e.* Christ) receiveth them (tithes) of whom it is witnessed that he liveth, *i. e.* liveth for ever, and so is not to be succeeded by any other high-priest. And he ever liveth to receive our tithe for ever, that is, for ever to be our High-Priest; for a priest, and a receiver of tithe, are here made to be the same. He (Christ) receiveth them (the tithes); that is, in the language of this text, he is our Priest.

And in repeating the same thing over again, verse 23, the word priests is put for those who are called receivers of tithe in the 8th verse; for, speaking of the mortality of the high-priests of the tribe of Levi, it is expressed thus in the 8th verse, here men that die receive tithes: and, verse 23, it is thus worded, they were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death. And then when, in the comparison, the eternity of the priesthood of Christ is set forth, it is said, verse 24, because he continueth ever, he hath an unchangeable priesthood: which is expressed, verse 8, by saying, that he ever liveth to receive tithes: which is the same as being a priest, as the text runs, but there he (Christ) receiveth them, (tithes) of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

So that as a sacrificer and a priest are the same, because none have a right to sacrifice but the priests, a receiver of tithes is as synonymous to a

priest, for the same reason, because none other but the priests only, have any right or title to receive the tithes of God : for, as before-said, tithes are part of the offerings to God, part of his worship, and therefore to be paid, as such, into the hands of his priests only, as all other of his offerings and sacrifices were.

This shews the folly of those who would have these tithes paid to Melchisedec as king, and not as priest ; because he is called King of Salem, as well as Priest of the Most High God.

Ans. 1. The argument of the Apostle, (Heb. vii.,) runs wholly upon his priesthood, and drawing a parallel betwixt his priesthood and that of Aaron. And shews that our Saviour was a priest of his order, which was a superior priesthood to the Levitical. He does not say that Christ was a King, but a Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

And how did Levi, in Abram, pay tithes to the King of Salem ? Did this make all the posterity of Abram, the whole nation of the Jews, subjects, or tributaries to a foreign king ? And why is it said that Levi paid tithes, more than any other of the posterity of Abram ?

It is plain, that a comparison was here made betwixt the two priesthoods, that of Melchisedec, and that of Levi. And Levi's paying tithes to Melchisedec, is brought as an argument that the priesthood of Melchisedec was superior ; for, without all contradiction, says the Apostle, the less is blessed of

the better. And thence infers, that Melchisedec was greater than Abram, whom he blessed, which could not be, if he blessed him only as king, that is, wished well to him, or prayed for him ; for that an inferior may do to his superior ; but to bless in the name of God, and by virtue of his office, belongs to priests, and not to kings. And of such blessing the Apostle here speaks, and argues from it ; which is no argument, nor sense, if it be not thus understood.

It is true, that originally the priesthood was joined with the regal power, and kings were priests, as Melchisedec here. And we have many later instances in other nations, of the same. Whence arose that mistake in some, that tithes were paid to kings, as kings, not considering that this was a tribute paid to them as priests. And if kings have preserved a tenth to themselves, out of lands they gave to their subjects, as any other landlord may do ; or if kings exacted a tenth, by way of tax, or such a tax was given to them ; yet this is not the tithe of God, concerning which we now speak ; for that, being a sacrifice, was to be given only into the hands of the priests, it being part of our worship of God. And such was the tithe paid by Abram to Melchisedec ; for how did he owe him that tribute as King of Salem ? or how was that an expression of Abram's thankfulness to God, for the great victory he then obtained ? which paying the tithe of the spoils to God, by

the hands of his priest, was: and the blessing of God, pronounced by the mouth of his priest, was his acceptance of it, and assurance of his favour to Abram.

II. Mr. Selden endeavours to enervate this example of Abram, by criticising upon the word ἀκροθίνια, verse 4, which is translated spoils. And thence would infer, that Abram gave to Melchisedec only the tithe of the spoils which he had taken.—(*History of Tithes*, c. 1, n. 1.)

Ans. If this criticism were just, it proves nothing but that spoils taken in war are tithable, as well as any profits gained by our labours, in peace.

For the reason will hold stronger for the tithing of the increase of our fields, and other fruits of peace; and they were more generally paid, and more expressly reserved, than the tithes of the spoils of war. Though the tithe of spoils were paid, and acknowledged as due to God, even by the heathens themselves, as shall be shewn in its place.

Therefore this criticism of Mr. Selden's, instead of an objection, does more strongly enforce the obligation of tithes, and extends them farther than if the word ἀκροθίνια were suffered to mean, what it truly does, the first-fruits, the choicest and best parts. It signifies literally the tops of heaps; which being generally the best and choicest part of the heaps, were taken for the first-fruits, or tenths due to God, of whatever sort, and not only

the tenth of spoils. For Suidas tells us, that it means the tenth of the product of the field, and of merchandize, as well as of spoils. The etymology, or common acceptation of the word in the Greek authors, having no relation at all to spoils, but much rather to the gathering in of the harvest, where the sheaves and corn are put in heaps, and the tithe taken from the top, or best of the heaps : or (as Suidas gives another etymology of the word) to the heaps of merchants' goods upon the sea-shore, when they are imported, out of which the tithe was taken, as of the product of the fields. But in no acceptation of the word ἀκροθίνια, has it any sort of relation to spoils, more than to any other tithable thing ; nor indeed so much : it is applied to spoils only in a secondary and borrowed sense ; but, in the primary and most usual acceptation of the word, it is understood of tithes. But of spoils, Mr. Selden confesses, that elsewhere (than in this text) it rarely occurs in this sense.

Nor can it be restrained only to the tithe of spoils in this chapter, (Heb. vii. ;) for it is said, verse 2, that Abram gave to Melchisedec a tenth part, ἀπὸ πάντων, of all ; and this is before any mention was made of the tithe of the spoils, only in the general description of Melchisedec and Abram. That of the spoils comes in afterwards as a particular instance, verse 4, and cannot, by any necessity of construction, limit the ἀπὸ πάντων, of all things, in the 2d verse, of which it is said that

Abram gave the tithe to Melchisedec. Though, if it did, it would (as before has been said) only prove that tithes were due out of spoils; but not that they were not due out of other things. And the universal custom of paying tithes out of other things, as well among the Gentiles as the Jews, (which will be shewn,) is sufficiently convincing, that nothing which can be inferred from the text above-quoted, can limit the payment of tithes only to that of spoils taken in war.

Mr. Selden himself confesses, that ἀκροθίνια signifieth also first-fruits, or the chiefest parts, sacred to the gods among the Gentiles, says he, and ἐκ τῶν ἀκροθίνιων hath, in that sense, been turned here by *de præcipuis*, in the Vulgar. Thus he.

Here is a great authority which he does not answer. That the payment of tithes, mentioned in this text, cannot be limited to that of spoils only: for, in the Vulgar, there is no mention at all made of spoils; but the word ἀκροθίνια, which the English renders spoils, is more literally translated *de præcipuis*, *i. e.*, of the chief, or principal. In which sense the text runs thus:—That Abram gave to Melchisedec the tithe of the chief and principal things, or out of the chief and principal parts. And Mr. Selden confesses, that the Greek word ἀκροθίνια, does very well bear this interpretation. Only he makes this objection against the sense of the text, as rendered by the Vulgar:—“Can it be thought,” says he, “that he gave tithes of the best

parts only? How stands that with giving tithes of all?" Very well; *i. e.*, by giving tithes of all, out of the best parts, which was the custom: and it was thought a neglect of God to pay his tithe out of the worst parts, and not out of the very best. And Mr. Selden owns, that the Syriac and Arabic translations of Heb. vii. 2, are expressly so; *i. e.*, that Abram gave Melchisedec the tithe, not only of the spoils, but of all that he had. And that this was the ordinary gloss of Solomon Jarchi, upon these words in Gen. xiv. 20. Against all which he opposes; that Josephus, and the *Targum* of Jonathan Ben-Uziel, say, that Abram gave to Melchisedec the tithe of the spoils.

But this is no contradiction to the other; for if he gave him tithes of all that he had, he gave the tithe of the spoils likewise.

III. Mr. Selden (cap. 1, n. 3,) squints an objection against Abram and Jacob's paying tithe, as supposing them to be priests. He supposes Melchisedec to have been Shem, and consequently an elder, and a superior priest to Abram. But perhaps he thought it inconsistent for one priest to pay tithe to another priest, though of a superior order: and hence would not have it thought that Abram paid tithe, though he gave a tenth part; *i. e.*, that he did not give it under the notion of tithe, or a tribute due to Melchisedec as his superior.

But the superiority of Melchisedec above Abram

is largely argued, (Heb. vii.) And under the law, the Levites were to pay a tenth of their tithe to the high-priest, (Numb. xviii. 26.) And if, in this sense, Abram (upon Mr. Selden's supposition) paid tithe to Melchisedec, then δεκάτην των ἀκροθίνων (Heb. vii. 4,) is literally the tenth of the tithe; for ἀκροθίνια, as before observed, signifies tithe: and so rarely does it signify spoils, that except in this text, (if it be so meant there,) Mr. Selden can find but one instance, amongst the Greek authors, where it is taken for spoils; at least, this must be granted, that spoils is but a strained and very unusual signification of the word. And Abram, supposing him a priest, paying tithe to Melchisedec, argues the superiority of the priesthood of Melchisedec; after which order of priesthood, and not after the order either of Abraham or Aaron, our Lord Christ was consecrated. And this will infer all that the Apostle argues, from Abram's payment of tithes to Melchisedec, (Heb. vii.,) as much as if Abram were then a layman.

And he might then be a layman, though he were a priest afterwards: for he was then only Abram; it was before the covenant God made with him, and the alteration thereupon, of his name into Abraham, (Gen. xvii.,) whereby he was constituted the father of the many nations of the faithful to come. But these things concern not our present inquiry; therefore let us proceed.

IV. The second instance above-mentioned for

tithes, is that of Jacob, (Gen. xxviii. 22 ;) against which it is objected, that this was only a vow.

Ans. It was a vow ; but not, therefore, only a vow. Men often, and most commonly vow that which is their duty to do, without respect to the vow : as, to vow to serve God more faithfully than we have done before. Thus, in this same vow of Jacob's, he vows that the Lord shall be his God. Will any say that the Lord was not his God before ?

And, indeed, this of dedicating the tithe to God, was no more than a further declaration that the Lord was his God : because offering of tithe was a part of the worship of God. And, therefore, Jacob did by this declare that the Lord only should be his God, because he would offer his tithe only unto him.

It was the custom of the nations among the heathen, to offer their tithes to the god whom they adored : and, therefore, some offered their tithes to one, and some to another of their false gods. But Jacob here vows to the only true God, that he only shall be his God ; and that he will offer his tithes to none other God, but to him alone.

For to whom we dedicate the tithe, we acknowledge to have received the other nine parts from him ; of which the offering of the tenth is a solemn acknowledgment.

And the vowing or dedicating them, though due

before, was customary with the Jews, as well as the heathen; for so it is commanded, (Eccles. xxxv. 9,) "Dedicate thy tithes with gladness." And none will say, that they were not due among the Jews, even before their dedication of them.

SECTION VII.

That the Gentiles did pay Tithes to their Gods.

I. The great opposer of tithes, the learned Mr. Selden, cannot deny this: but in his *History of Tithes*, cap. 3, he endeavours to lessen this as much as he can, by offering some of his conjectures:—1. That they were paid only by particular vows. 2. Not by any law enjoining them. 3. Not generally. 4. Not yearly. 5. Only to some particular god; as, among the Romans, to Hercules, &c. 6. Only of some particular things, not of all our increase of every sort.

In every one of which particulars, he has been sufficiently confuted by several learned answers which have been made to that book of his. Dr. Comber, last of all, has collected these, and added to them; and put that matter, I think, past a reply.

But I intend not to trouble the reader with a re-

petition of any of these : because what Mr. Selden himself allows, is abundantly sufficient to my present purpose. And, indeed, to confute himself in every one of these heads, to which I have reduced all his pretences whereby he endeavours to invalidate the practice of the Gentiles from being a testimony to the divine right of tithes.

For however they paid their tithe, 1. Whether of every thing, or of some sorts of their increase? 2. Whether to one or to more of their gods? 3. Whether annually or occasionally? 4. Whether generally, or only the devouter sort? 5. Whether thereunto required by their municipal laws or not? Or, 6. Whether with or without a particular vow? Yet this remains uncontroverted upon either side of these questions, that the notion of tithes, as being due unto some god or other, was received among the Gentiles, and that time out of mind; which is all the use I have at present to make of this custom or tradition of the Gentiles. And of which I will show the force in summing up the evidence.

In the meantime let me enlarge so far as to show the reader how far Selden himself does yield the cause in all these captious questions which he puts in prejudice to the divine right of tithes.

II. But, first, I must obviate a mistake which may arise from the use of the word ἀπαρχαί, first-fruits. For though, in the Levitical sense of the word, it is distinguished from the tithes, because

there were particular first-fruits distinct from the tithe, reserved in the Levitical law, yet in the profane writings, first-fruits and tenths are generally understood to mean the same thing: because, as Mr. Selden confesses, (cap. 3, n. 3,) the first-fruits were paid in the proportion of a tenth part. And the tenths were paid out of the first-fruits, or choicest of the whole. Whence these terms of first-fruits and tithes became synonymous.

And though not always, yet often they are taken to mean the same thing, even in the Sacred Writings. And the reason is this, there were two sorts of first-fruits under the law; of which the one was the tenth, and the other was not. The first sort we find, Levit. xxiii. 9, &c., where it is commanded, that at the reaping of their fields, they should bring a sheaf or handful of the first of the harvest unto the priest, to be offered before the Lord; and before this was done, they were prohibited so much as to taste even of the green ears, verse 14.

These are called the first of the first-fruits, (Exod. xxxiv. 26.) But when the full harvest was brought in, then the tenth part of the whole was taken out of the first or choicest parts. And before this tenth was offered, it was not lawful for the owner to convert any of the nine parts to his own use. And therefore these tenths were the first-fruits of the harvest; first offered to God before any of the remainder could be disposed of,

and which likewise consisted of the first or principal parts of the harvest. Thus the tenths were always first-fruits, but the first-fruits were not always tenths, though this second sort of first-fruits were always tenths. The *præmessum* or *præmetium* of the Romans before harvest, and their *flori-festum* after harvest, both dedicated to Ceres, do resemble these two sorts of first-fruits.

But the first of the first-fruits were not paid out of all those things which were tithable; and, in those cases, the word first-fruits did express only the tenth. Thus the tenth of the tenth which the Levites were to pay to the high-priest, is called by the name of first-fruits; and the meaning of that name is explained in the Vulgar translation of Num. xviii. 26. *Primitias offerte Domino, id est, decimam partem*: i. e., offer to the Lord your first-fruits, that is, the tenth part. And this tenth is called first-fruits in the Greek, ἀπαρχαί, verse 29, 30, in both which last verses our English renders it the best, and likewise the Vulgar, *optima et electa*. And the LXX mean the same by ἀπαρχαί first-fruits; for they being commanded to be given of the very best: hence the word first-fruits became likewise a term for the best and choicest things.

And that the heathen had the same notion of tithes and first-fruits being the same, Mr. Selden does not conceal, but gives authority for it, and shews that their offerings to their gods were called δεκατηφόροι ἀπαρχαί, that is, first-fruits in tenths.

(*History of Tithes*, c. 3. n. 3.) A multitude of authorities for this might be given; but it will not be denied; and I hasten.

III. This being thus settled, I proceed to shew how far Mr. Selden has allowed the general notion of the Gentiles, (and not only of particular men or some nations,) that the tithe was due unto their gods.

In his *History of Tithes*, c. 3., he confesses it to be the custom of the Gentiles to offer the tithe to their gods. And gives several instances for example, of the Arabians and Phœnicians in Asia, among whom Melchisedec was both a king and a priest; the Carthaginians and Egyptians in Africa; and the Grecians and Romans in Europe. And (ch. 10. n. 1.) he brings it as far west as England, and shews it to have been the custom here, even amongst those who had not yet received Christianity: as of king Cedwalla, about the year 686, before he was a Christian, and others.

Pliny, in his *Natural History*, l. 12. c. 14., witnesses of the Arabians, who paid tithe to their god Sabis. And (c. 19.) of the Ethiopians, who paid their tithe to their god Assabinus. And this they observed so strictly, that it was not lawful for the merchants to buy or sell any of their goods, till the priests had first taken out the tenth for their gods.

Plutarch, in the *Life of Camillus*, tells not only how religiously the Romans observed the payment of their tithes to their gods; but likewise that the

same regard was had to them among the Liparians. For when, after Camillus's conquest of the city of Veies, the Augurs had made report that the gods were greatly offended, (though for what they knew not,) which they found by the marks and observations they made of their sacrifices. And Camillus having informed the Senate, that in the sacking of Veies the soldiers had taken the spoil, without giving the tenth to the gods: and whereas the soldiers had, most of them, spent or disposed of what they had taken, the Senate ordered every man to give in upon oath, what he had got of the booty, and to pay a tenth of it, or the value, if it was spent, to the gods. And besides this, a cup of gold of eight talents, to be sent to the temple of Apollo at Delphos, as a trespass-offering. Towards which the women brought in their jewels and gold of their own free will so readily, that the Senate, in honour to them, gave them a privilege, which before had been denied them, of having orations in their praise made at their funerals; which formerly had been allowed only to great and eminent men.

And they appointed three of the first quality in Rome to carry this present, with the tithes, in a triumphant manner, to Delphos.

In the way, they were taken, and made prize by the Liparians. But when brought to their city, and the governor understanding that so great a booty was tithes due to the gods, he not only re-

stored it all, and sent them away with it, but gave them a convoy of his own ships to secure them in their voyage, though he was then at war with them.

The Greeks had the same notion of the Divine Right of Tithes. Which Xenophon tells us, and gives a remarkable instance of it (*De Exped. Cyr.* l. 5.,) that the Grecian army whom he conducted in that memorable retreat, after the death of Cyrus, reserved a tenth of the money they got upon their march, by the sale of captives, (notwithstanding their great distress,) to be offered to Apollo and Diana. But Xenophon reserved the tithe of his share, to be offered at Delphi and Ephesus. With this he built a temple to Diana, and bought lands wherewith to endow it; of which he paid the tithe to her. And near the temple set up a pillar, with this inscription, GROUND SACRED TO DIANA. WHOSOEVER POSSESSETH IT, LET HIM PAY THE TITHE OF HIS YEARLY INCREASE: AND OUT OF THE REMAINDER MAINTAIN THE TEMPLE. IF HE NEGLECT THIS, THE GODDESS WILL REQUIRE IT.

Many more instances might be brought out of the Greek and Latin stories. But there is no need. For Mr. Selden owns it, not only as to these, but the Gentiles in general, as before quoted, cap. 1, n. 1, where he says, that "the first-fruits and chiefest parts were sacred to the gods among the Gentiles." See what has been said, (n. 2.) of first-fruits

and tenths being the same. And that their offerings to their gods were called δεκατηφόροι ἀπαρχαί, first-fruits in tenths; which shows that the usual quantum of their offerings was a tenth, otherwise their offerings could not have got the name of that proportion more than of any other. But Mr. Selden does acknowledge this in the place above quoted, c. 3, n. 3, that the offerings were so called, because “they were either the tenth, or given as in lieu of so much.” Therefore the tenth was the quantum which they thought was due to the gods. Mr. Selden, in his Review of ch. 3, “But for the Gentiles,” says he, “it is true, they were very devout in giving of their yearly increase to the honour of their deities, according to the Attic Law, Θεοῦς κάρποις ἀγάλλειν, that is, “TO HONOUR THE GODS WITH THEIR FRUITS,” which is almost literally (Prov. iii. 9,) “Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase.” That these first-fruits were tenths, is said already. And this shows that it was a principle of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews.

Selden's Objections.—1. *That Tithes were only by Arbitrary Vows.*

IV. Mr. Selden would lessen the authority of this, by giving instances where several among the Gentiles did dedicate their tithe to their gods by a particular vow. And would infer from thence, that tithes were no otherwise thought due to the gods by the Gentiles than as particular persons had obliged

themselves by vow, which would oblige them to any other proportion if they had vowed it.

But, 1. How came the tenth to be the common and received proportion which was vowed to the gods? And how came that so universal a tradition among the so far distant nations of the Gentiles? But of this I will make further use hereafter.

2. It always was and is customary to vow those things chiefly to which we are antecedently obliged. See before, Sect. VI. n. 4, p. 50.

3. Mr. Selden himself gives many instances, which cannot be restrained only to the case of vows. Nor can what I have above quoted out of him be limited to vows, or meant of them, with any sort of pretence, as that the first-fruits were sacred to the gods among the Gentiles. And the Attic Law to honour God with our fruits. But vows are voluntary, and not imposed by law. He quotes out of Herodotus (*History of Tithes*, c. 3, n. 3), an instance which shows the opinion of the Gentiles of the sacredness of tithes, which was so great as to restrain the soldiers of Cyrus, in the heat of victory, from flying upon the spoil of the Lydians; only for being told, that the tithe of the city must necessarily be first paid to Jupiter. How necessarily, if only by vow? Did the soldiers vow it in the heat of battle? He tells, (*ibid.* n. 1,) that the oracle directed the Pelasgi to give the tenth of their gain out of sea-merchandize to Apollo. This was

not upon the obligation of a vow. And (n. 3,) that there was an inscription at Delphi.—“Ὀφρα θεῷ δεκάτην ἀκροθίνια τε κρεμάσαιμεν,—“That we should hang up our tithes and first-fruits to God.” This was not to oblige men to vow their tithes; for vows are free. And in the same place he tells, that the offerings to Apollo were called tithes, because they were the tenth, or in lieu of the tenth. Now all offerings are not by vow: and, therefore, if tithes had only been by vow, they could not have included other offerings, which were not by vow: when I say not by vow, I do not mean, that the tithes might not be vowed; for that was customary, as has been said, but that the original obligation did not arise from the vow; which was only meant as a farther tie to what was our duty before. Thus he mentions (n. 2), Cæsius, a merchant, who vowed his tenths every year.

Omnibus hic annis, votorum more suorum.

And this was, because they were due every year. Of which more hereafter. N. 3, he shows that Juno had the tithe of all goods confiscate among the Athenians, which therefore were called ἐπιδέκατον. And that she gave to Priapus, a genius of war, the tithe of the spoils that Mars should gain in his victories. Was this a vow from Juno? And were goods confiscate vows? Diodorus Seculus (*Hist.*, Lib. v.,) tells, that the Carthaginians being in great straits, did believe that that judgment had fallen

upon them, for having neglected for sometime to pay the tithe of all their profits to Hercules, as they had used to do. Now, if tithes were only voluntary, and only by vow, how came a temporary forbearance of them to be thought so great a sin? For we are not bound to vow at all, much less always. *Porphyr. de Abstin. Lib. 2, sect. 8, p. 56,* tells from Hesiod, how the gods destroyed an irreligious people called Thoës, because they did not pay their first-fruits as they ought. Now to suppose that they vowed it, and did not pay it, is arbitrary and groundless: and, therefore, it remains evident, that they thought the tithe due to their gods antecedent to any vow.

Mr. Selden, in the chapter before quoted, (n. 5,) relates an Arabian law, “wherein every merchant was bound to give the tenth of his frankincense to their god Sabis; which his priests received; neither might any sale be made of it, till that was paid.” Thus he. And it cannot be said that this was only by vow. The like is to be said of the Attic Law, which Mr. Selden likewise mentions, and I have before quoted, *Θεοῦς κάρποις ἀγάλλειν.* But I have over-proved this point. And what I have said will, in effect, satisfy the 2d of the objections which I have collected out of Mr. Selden against tithes. Which is,

2d Obj.—*That Tithes were not paid by any law among the Gentiles.*

V. That tithes were only voluntary among the Gentiles, but not enjoined by any law.

1. I have just now mentioned some laws which Mr. Selden himself has produced, enjoining of tithes, and that with such a penalty as that the owner had not liberty to sell or dispose of any of his goods till the tithe was first taken out of them for the gods. And when the tithe was paid, then the remainder was thought sanctified to the use of the owner; but till then, it was esteemed the greatest profanation and impiety to touch anything of it; the whole being reputed as sacred to the gods, till, by the offering of the tenth, the rest were released to the use of the owners. And this notion was so general as to occasion that proverbial description of a wicked person, *ἀδύρα ἐσθίειν*, *i. e.*, to eat of that which had not been sanctified by the gods, having had their part first taken out of it.

2. But supposing there had been no municipal laws enjoining of tithes, the argument will come the stronger to my purpose; which is, to shew this to have been a received tradition among the Gentiles. From whom they had it, is to be inquired afterwards. But if they thought the tithes so sacred to the gods, that they made conscience of paying them, without the compulsion of any tem-

poral law, this shews the notion which they had of tithes to be from an higher original than any municipal laws ; and that they thought them to be due, *jure divino*.

3d Obj.—*That Tithes were not paid generally.*

VI. The third objection is, that though tithes were paid, and that very frequently, which Mr. Selden cannot deny, yet he would have you believe that they were not paid universally ; and so would bring the notion of them no higher than the custom of this or that particular town or people.

And truly, if from the neglect of paying them, an argument can be brought against the use of them, it will lie as severely against the Jews and Christians, as against the heathen. For the Jews had so far neglected the payment of their tithe, that not only some particular persons, or a few of them, but the whole nation was cursed for it, (Mal. iii. 9.) And amongst those who call themselves Christians, there are many, too many, who have lost the whole notion of them, as any due or tribute to God ; and therefore seize on them, and think them disposable by human laws as any other goods or chattels.

Insomuch that there remains greater footsteps of the divine right of tithes among the Gentiles, than is to be found at this day in many parts of Christendom.

But how universal would Mr. Selden have the tradition of tithes among the Gentiles? He has owned it (as shewn above) in the Grecians and Romans, (each of whom were once almost the whole of the then known world,) in the Carthaginians and Phœnicians before them; among the Egyptians, Arabians, Ethiopians, and Gentiles of Britain, the remotest and most barbarous part esteemed of the world then. How much farther would he have had this tradition carried?

But though it was in all these nations of the world, yet he would have it, that it was but with a few in these nations. And from this only reason, that I can imagine, that you should suppose, notwithstanding there are many authorities in history of the general custom and laws for tithes, yet that they were paid by no more than those who happened to be named in history for payment of their tithe, though that be told only occasionally to illustrate other occurrences, as if I should make an argument that none ever paid tithe in England, no, nor rent, whose names are not in history for paying of such rent or tithe.

How, otherwise, can Mr. Selden get off even from that degree of universality, which himself is forced to allow, while he endeavours to lessen it all he can? It was so customary, that he confesses, the tithes of Hercules, among the Romans, was a proverb to express vast riches; then they were not a few who offered tithe to him, (*Hist. of Tithes,*

c. 3, n. 1.) And among the Grecians, Apollo was called *δικατηφόρος*, *i. e.*, crowned with tithes, because of the great quantities of tithes which were offered unto him, (*Hist. of Tithes*, c. 3, n. 3.) And there were public inscriptions at Delphi, sacred to him, commanding or exhorting to bring their tithes thither, *i. e.*, rather than to another god. For they were at liberty to offer to what god they pleased.

Nay, this custom was so very general, that to tithe, *δεκατεῦσαι*, was used to mean the consecrating of anything to God. And, for the same reason among the Romans, the best and choicest parts were called *edecumata*, and *decumanum* meant the greatest and fairest; as *fluctus decumanus*, *scuta decumana*, *decima unda*, &c., because the tithes were paid of the best and choicest parts.—*Ibid.* n. 1.

But Mr. Selden cannot deny the custom (N. 1,) where, after giving particular instances, he says, “Thus in Italy the custom was to pay and vow tithes to their deities, and continued in use till the latter times of the Empire.” And (N. 4,) “that the Grecians used to tithe their spoils of war to the gods.” “*Ἔθος ἦν ἑλληνικὸν δεκατος τῶν περιγυνομένων τοῖς θεοῖς καθιεροῦν.* It was a Greek custom to consecrate the tithe of their abundance or increase to the gods. And, *mos erat Herculi decimam profanari*, among the Romans. It was the custom to dedicate tithes to Hercules.

Mr. Selden having told all this, gives such an answer as could not have been expected from him.

“It was a custom,” says he, “some time.” This is such a jest as they call a bull. If it was but some time, it was not a custom; for it is only the often doing of a thing that makes it a custom. But that may be a custom to a few men, which is not so to many men. And was it Mr. Selden’s meaning, that it was only a custom with a few men? No: he yields in the same place, “that many men did so, the examples before taken out of story make that plain.” So that this is gained undeniably, that it was a custom; and that of many men, in many nations of the Gentiles. Which will be sufficient to the purpose for which I have produced it. Therefore I proceed no further in it at this time; but refer the reader, who desires a more thorough disquisition of this point, to the answers before-mentioned, to Mr. Selden’s History of Tithes, where he will find authorities abundant and undoubted of the universality of this custom among the Gentiles. But Mr. Selden himself having afforded sufficient for the use I have to make of it; I choose to insist upon the concessions of this great enemy of tithes, that no reader may have any suspense as to the authorities produced. And now I proceed to the fourth objection.

4th Obj.—*That Tithes were not paid yearly.*

VII. Mr. Selden, finding he could not resist, though he gainsaid the universal practice of the

Gentiles in offering their tithe to their gods, seeks to weaken this authority, by insinuating upon his readers that they were not paid yearly, only now and then, as people pleased to fancy.—(c. 3. n. 1.)

But he gives no reason or authority for this. For indeed there was none to be given. Nor can I imagine what (besides prejudice,) could have prompted him to say this, (for I cannot think he did believe it,) unless it be that several are found who have vowed tenths to the gods upon particular emergencies, the gaining of a victory—a prosperous return to merchants by sea—or the like.

But this proves no more against annual tithe, than a tenant's making a present to his landlord, over and above his yearly rent, in acknowledgment for some particular favour done him, is a proof that he paid no yearly rent.

Or, as before has been said, a man may vow the tenth which he owes, as well as a second or a third tenth which is merely voluntary.

But what reason could Mr. Selden have given, or any on his behalf, why tithes should be due one year, and not another?

The notion which all the world ever had of tithes, was, as a tribute or acknowledgment to God, for what he had bestowed upon us; and to procure his further blessings upon us. I know no other notion that any man can have in offering of his tithes to God.

But this reason holds as well for one year as another. And to say that this was only to be for one year, is foolishly precarious.

Besides, Mr. Selden himself does abundantly confute this rash assertion of his own, in what I have before quoted out of his review of the 3d chapter, where he says, that the Gentiles were very devout in giving of their yearly increase to the honour of their deities, and that their *Thalysia*, which was their feast immediately after harvest, in honour of Ceres, and their *Haloa*, about the same time, which was the like devotion to her and to Bacchus, and their several *Dionysia*, did spend no small part of their yearly fruits of corn and wine; besides other feasts of less note, which were to the same purpose. Thus Mr. Selden, confessing these feasts to have been yearly. The same must be understood of what he says (c. i. n. i.) of his History, that the first-fruits were sacred to the gods among the Gentiles; that is, the first-fruits of every year: and not only of one year, that would be ridiculous. Ibid. c. iii. n. i., he quotes an ancient inscription to Fortune, made by Taurinus in honour of his father Cæsius, who paid his tithes to the goddess Fortune; speaking of which, he says, *omnibus hic annis; i. e.*, that he paid his tithes to her every year. And (n. 3.) he tells, out of Herodotus, that the inhabitants of Siphnus gave yearly tithes of their mines to Apollo: and from Callimachus, that yearly tithe was brought to Delos for the same god. Multi-

tudes of the like instances may be brought. But let these, of Mr. Selden's own bringing, now suffice.

5th Obj.—*That Tithes were only paid to some particular gods.*

VIII. Mr. Selden offers another blow, as he thought it, against the divine right of tithes, by alleging, which he does very groundlessly, that tithes were not paid, as due to the gods, among the Gentiles, because they were not offered to the gods in general, but only to some particular god. As he makes the tithe of the Romans to be almost wholly paid to Hercules, by whom, he says, they understood Mars.

But this pretence, or innuendo, has as little truth as it has consequence in it. For the question is not, to which of the gods the Gentiles did pay their tithe? but whether they paid it to any of them? And if they paid it to any, or all of their gods, it shews their opinion that tithes, as sacrifices, were due to the gods: for all did not sacrifice to the same god, nor always to the gods in general; but most commonly to some particular god to whom they devoted themselves; and the same is to be said of offering their tithes. The Romans might dedicate them most frequently to the god of war, and the Greeks to Apollo, the god of learning; but this was not exclusive of the other gods, as if none of them had any right to tithes, but only Hercules

or Apollo. On the contrary, Mr. Selden himself confesses, (c. 3, n. 1,) that the Romans and their next neighbours did not tithe only to Hercules, but sometimes also to other deities; of which he there gives several instances, as of the Pelasgi that transplanted themselves into Italy, who sent their tithe to Apollo at Delphi; of Camillus, who likewise gave the tenth of his spoils to Apollo; of Posthumius, who spent forty talents of the tithe of his spoils, after his victory against the Latins, upon sacrifices and prayers, in honour of the gods; and with what remained, built a temple to Ceres, Bacchus, and Proserpina. At other times also, on the general worship of the gods, such a tithe was spent, says Mr. Selden; and (n. 4) he owns again, that tithes were sometimes generally given to the gods, without any particular design, among the Grecians as well as the Romans; and quotes several examples, which, for brevity, I omit, thinking this point sufficiently proved, that tithes were not only offered to Hercules or Apollo, but to other gods, and to the gods in general. And so I pass to the sixth and last objection.

6th Obj.—*That Tithe was not paid of all things.*

IX. The last effort against the practice of the Gentiles, in offering tithes to their gods, is what Mr. Selden often insists on; and that is, that tithes were not paid out of all things, but only of some parti-

cular things, according to the custom of particular places. By this means, if he could not hinder tithes from being *jure divino*, he would curtail them in quantity as much as he could; and by bringing in the dispute which things were tithable, might open a door to untithe everything; at least, render it very precarious.

But if the end of offering tithes to God can be no other (as has been said) than a due acknowledgment for the past increase which God has given to our labours, in whatever vocation, and to implore the continuance of his blessing upon our after-labours: this reason must reach to all things which we have received from God, or expect to receive from him. Solomon determines it of all things, (Prov. iii 9,) “Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase;” all increase of whatever sort. And the same was the notion of the Gentiles, even as confessed by Mr. Selden. He tells us (c. 3, n. 1), that they tithed their estates, their substance, *τὰς οὐσίας*, which is, everything that they had—(n. 3)—all their estates. Which general words include all the particulars that can be named; and it is impossible to name them all. Yet let us see what particulars Mr. Selden has occasionally named in this same chapter. He names, n. 1, the tenth of fruits, of money got by sales, and of spoils of war; of such things as made accession to their estates; of sea-merchandize;—n. 3, of mines, merchandize,

and all goods confiscated;—n. 4, the tenth of what the cooks in Athens killed for meat;—n. 5, of frankincense;—and lastly, the instance he gives, n. 3, of that conscientious whore Rhodopis, who sent to Delphi as many spits, for use in sacrifice, as the tithe of that gain which she made of her body came to. This shews the notion they had of all increase paying tithe. And, therefore, Mr. Selden had no cause to be so unreasonably angry, as he was, (n. 2,) with Paulus Diaconus, for that saying which he has transmitted to us of Festus's, viz., *decima quæque veteres diis suis offerebant; i. e.*, that the ancients did offer all sorts of tithes, or tithes of all sorts of things, to their gods. As to the vindication of Paulus Diaconus, I refer to the learned answers before-mentioned, and what I have hereafter quoted out of Dr. Spencer. But as to this saying of Festus, it is no more than what Mr. Selden has given instances of in this same chapter; and which, if he had considered, he would have refrained, at least concealed, his violent concern against that authority of Festus, for paying tithe of all things, as to cry out—no such matter. Some did, and only sometimes, and of some things, and most usually to some gods only. All of which particulars have been considered already.

Let me only add, and close up this head with an authority out of Dr. Spencer, who abused a great deal of learning to justify an unhappy nostrum of his own, viz., That the institutions of the law of

God were derived from the same customs prior among the Gentiles. That there were such customs as of sacrifices, tithes, &c., among the Gentiles prior to the Law of Moses, is granted: but their original was not from the Gentiles, (as Dr. Spencer very grossly mistakes it.) The Gentiles had retained, and withal corrupted the primitive institutions of sacrifices, of tithes, &c., which were given by God to Adam and the patriarchs before the flood. These were revived in the Law of Moses; but not therefore borrowed from the Gentiles, from whose customs the Jews were commanded to abstain.

But God would not forsake his own institutions because the Gentiles did retain them; though they abused them to the worship of false gods. But to think that sacrifices, which were ordained as types of the sacrifice of Christ, had their original from the Gentiles, and that God, in compliance with their idolatry, did institute sacrifices under the Law, and gave Christ himself to be sacrificed, (which some of great name have lately asserted, perhaps misled by this wild notion of Spencer's,) this is to overthrow the whole foundation of our religion, giving it no higher a rise than the imaginations of wicked men; and instead of the devil's aping of God in his institutions, this, by a blasphemous inversion, makes God to ape the devil, and borrow from him the whole economy of his worship and religion. But this is a subject I have

treated of elsewhere; only thus much I thought necessary in this place, because Dr. Spencer is not to be quoted without a caution, lest we might seem to approve his errors, while we make use of his learning. He has effectually proved (though to the evil end before mentioned) that tithes were universally paid among the Gentiles, even before the Law of Moses; and vindicates the above quotation out of Festus.

That the ancients did offer the tithes of all to their gods, *i. e.*, all of them—of all things—to all their gods,—and always, or in the ordinary course of their religion. And that R. Montacute had sufficiently vindicated this testimony of Festus from the cavils of Scaliger.

Festi testimonium, decima quæque veteres, diis suis offerebant. His enim aperte docet πάντα, πάντα, πᾶσι, πάντοτε. Antiquos omnes, eorum omnia, diis omnibus, et omnino, vel ordinaria religione decimasse. Huic testimonio tutius innita mur, quod R. Montacutius illud a Scaligeri convitiis tam docte vindicaverit, et famæ fideiq; suæ pristinæ restituerit.—(*Diatrib. cont. Seld. c. 3, p. 412, 413, &c.*)

To which Spencer adds this of Montacute, viz., “ That some have been found in history who did not sacrifice: but none, in all the annals of time, who did not pay tithes. Nor was this strange, since

Positivis hisce, negativum unum authoris illius (*ib. p. 454 et 574*) adjungam testimonium. Nonnulli ἄθυτοι, qui non sacrificarunt, in historiarum exemplis inveniuntur; nulli vero per omnium temporum annales, ἀδεκάτευτοι reperiuntur.

tithes were as frequent among the heathens, as altars, first-fruits, vows, oblations or idols."

Nec mirum, cum decimæ non minus frequentes apud ethnicos, quam altaria, primitiæ, vota, oblationes, et simulacra fuerint.—*Spencer de Leg. Heb. Lib. 3, Dissert. i., p. 620.*

SECTION VIII.

The Original of Tithes.

1. It is now time to see how far upwards we can trace the practice of tithes; that, if possible, we may find its beginning. There is no account how it began among the Gentiles. It was time out of mind with them; as ancient as any thing which their histories contained. The Attic Law, before-mentioned, for paying of tithes, is said (as Mr. Selden tells us, *Review*, cap. 3,) to have come from Triptolemus, and he was cotemporary with Moses.

But this cannot be the original of tithes; for we find them long before. And "it is not unlikely," says Mr. Selden, c. 3, n. 5, "but that the ancient and most known examples of Abraham gave the first ground both to them (the Phœnicians in Asia, and from them to the Carthagenians in Africa,) and

to the Europeans, so, sometimes to dispose of the tenth of their spoils of war to holy uses." Whether this tenth was only of spoils of war, or whether only paid sometimes, has been spoke to. But we are now following the tract of this universal custom of tithes, to see if we can come to the beginning of it.

Melchisedec is the first of whom express mention is made that he received tithes. He is the first, likewise, whom we read of called by the name of priest. Yet none doubts but that there were priests before. As little can we doubt but tithes were paid before. For his tithing of Abram is not mentioned as the introduction of any new custom; which, if it had been then new, would have been told, else who had known what it meant? But, on the contrary, the Apostle argues, (Heb. vii.,) as we have seen, that this tithe was paid as a tribute due to Melchisedec, as he was "priest of the Most High God:" and thence infers the greatness of Melchisedec above Abram. And this shows undeniably, that the notion of tithes, as due to the priests, was known before that time: for otherwise Abram could not have paid them under that notion; which St. Paul says he did.

This Melchisedec, Mr. Selden supposes (cap. 1, n. 2,) to have been Shem, the eldest son of Noah. So that we must pass the Flood to search for an higher original of tithes. And of this dark time we have no history remaining but that only of Ge-

nesis. And that is very brief, and touches but upon few things; being chiefly designed to deduce the genealogy of Israel from the beginning of the world.

Yet, even in that short summary, we have no obscure light given us as to tithes, with some other of the after Judaical rites. As, the difference of clean and unclean beasts and fowls, (Gen. vii. 2.) That the clean were only to be offered in sacrifice, (cap. viii. 20.) That the fat of the sacrifice was particularly to be offered; and the firstlings to be the sacrifice, (Gen. iv. 4.)

Some Rabbies pretend, that the whole Mosaical Law was before the Flood, and only revived under Moses. That I will not undertake. But we cannot deny a great part, as the sacrifices, &c. And some as arbitrary as any in the Levitical law, as that of clean and unclean beasts, &c.

2. But now, as to that of tithes. We find, in the first place, the general notion of honouring the Lord with our substance, *i. e.*, offering to him some part of our increase, (Gen. iv. 3, 4.) And secondly, that there was a determinate part, appears from the LXX's translation of Gen. iv. 7. *Οὐκ εἰὰν ὀρθῶς προσενέγκῃς, ὀρθῶς καὶ μὴ διέλῃς, ἡμαρτεες; ἡσύχασον, i. e.*, if thou hast offered aright, but hast not divided aright, hast thou not sinned? hold thy peace.

The authority of this translation is supported by its being so frequently quoted in the New Testa-

ment; even where it seems to add to the Hebrew text. As in that most remarkable prophecy of our Saviour, (Ps. xl. 6,) "A body hast thou prepared me:" which is not now found in the Hebrew. And this is put instead of that expression in the Hebrew, "mine ears hast thou bored." Which is not mentioned; but the other, according to the LXX. is quoted, Heb. x. 5.

Some prefer the LXX. translation before the present Hebrew text, which they say has suffered some detriment in the several captivities and persecutions of the Jews: but, that the LXX. translation was made out of the Hebrew while it was pure and uncorrupted. I will not desire to press this so far, only let the LXX. translation stand as, at least, the best comment now extant of the Old Testament. And this cannot be denied to it, it being generally quoted, not only by the Apostles, but the Fathers of the first 400 years. And as to this present text, (Gen. iv. 7,) it is quoted literally as I have set it down, according to the LXX., in *St. Clem. Rom. Ep. ad Corinth.*, n. 4., in *Irenæus adv. Hæres.* l. 4. c. 34, and in others of those primitive Fathers. Tertullian (*advers. Judæos*, n. 2,) says, that God rejected the sacrifice of Cain, because *quod offerebat, non recte dividebat: i. e.* he did not divide aright that which he offered. And this is more intelligible than our translation, which gives no account of the reason why God rejected the offering of Cain; but the

LXX. does, and the primitive Fathers, who followed it, viz., that Cain did not divide aright, that is, he did not offer the full quantum which he ought. And the Council of Hispalis, (Anno. 590,) enjoining the payment of tithes, applies this of Cain, and says, that whoever does not pay his tithes, *prædo Dei est, et fur, et latro; et maledicta quæ intulit Dominus (τῶ,) Cain non recte dividenti congeruntur; i. e.,* he is a thief, and a robber of God; and the curses which God inflicted upon Cain for not dividing aright, are laid up in store for him—*qui non omnia decimaverit*—who does not pay tithe of all things. This shews that the sin of Cain was in not offering the full quantum of his fruits; and that that quantum was a tenth. And the Apostle seems to give the same account of Cain's sin, (Heb. xi. 4.) where he says, that Abel did offer *πλείονα θυσίαν*, a larger sacrifice: *plurimam victimam*, as the Vulgar renders it. And Grotius (*in loc.*) says, that the sense of this text, according to the LXX. was, that Cain did not offer of the best, or else that he gave a less proportion than the tenth. "Which," says he, "from the most ancient ages, was the portion due to God. And that the footsteps of it are everywhere to be found in the Greek and Latin Histories." *Aut certe minus decimâ. Quæ ab antiquissimis seculis Dei portio. (Gen. xiv. 20., xxviii. 22.) passim.—Vestigia etiam manent in Græcis Latinisque Historiis.*

Mr. Selden (c. 1. n. 3.) would have Cain's sin to lie only as to the quality of his sacrifice, in not offering of the best; but not at all as to the quantity, as if there had been any *quota pars*, or certain quantity noted; and that Cain had given less. But this is wholly precarious; he offers not so much as any pretence that should limit this sin of Cain's to the quality only, without any respect to the quantity of his offering. Whereas, on the contrary, the quantity is chiefly, nay only, noted in this text. For not dividing aright, which is the sin charged upon Cain, respects only the quantity. The quality is not to be divided. And if there was no *quota pars*, no certain quantity required, then could not Cain have been charged with offering less. For where there is no law, there is no transgression.

3. Now then it remains that there was a *quota pars*, and that it was enjoined. Let us next enquire, who it was that enjoined it. And that must be either Adam, or God immediately. For there were none other superior to Cain. There may be a third way supposed; and that is, that Cain did vow such a quantum, and that he did not offer so much as he had vowed. But this is *gratis dictum*; and if he had vowed a tenth part by chance, at that time, next time it might have been an eleventh, twelfth, fifteenth, or any other part, and the notion of a tenth part, as due to God, could never, from thence, have descended to all

ages and nations, as we see it has done. It had been the same, if Adam had enjoined a tenth, only out of his own head, by chance; and to oblige only for that time. That could never have been the foundation of so universal a practice. But if Adam did enjoin it as a law, to continue for ever among all his posterities, it will have a very great obligation, beyond that of the Rechabites. And, in the next place, it cannot be imagined that Adam should make such a standing and universal law, without directions from God. For such we must suppose all the laws which Adam gave to be.

4. But chiefly considering, that this was a part of the worship of God: and God has always prescribed the methods of his own worship; and left it not to our wild imaginations, to invent what means and ways of worship we thought fit: which would be as various and foolish as every man's fancy, and wholly unworthy the Majesty of God; who has tied us up, that we should go neither to the right hand nor to the left, neither add nor diminish in matters of worship, but adhere solely to what he has commanded. The contrary of which, that is, making our own imaginations the rule and standard of our worship, is properly superstition; which God declares that he hates. And though these declarations are in the Scriptures, yet the reason of them is eternal, and binding from the beginning, before the Scriptures were wrote.

5. And we cannot imagine but that God gave

Adam directions concerning his own worship. Shall we say that sacrificing was a pure invention of Adam's, or of Cain or Abel's?

What reason can any man give, why killing of a beast should be thought a giving it to God, or a worship of God? Why burning of it? Why the fat, which we find noted in Abel's sacrifice? And why a firstling? But there is more than this. Sacrifices were appointed as types of Christ, our true Passover, who is sacrificed for us. And Adam could have no knowledge of Christ, but by Revelation, which was given to him, (Gen. iii. 15.) And therefore, without a Revelation, he could not have invented sacrifices to represent and exhibit the death of Christ to come. Or if he had invented it, yet he could not have appointed it, as an act of worship, without express command of God. For all acts of worship are means of grace, whereby God does convey his grace to us; and has obliged himself, by his promise, so to do, when there is not a failing on our part. Now God cannot be obliged but by himself: and therefore if any man take upon him to appoint any worship of God, he does thereby pretend to limit God; and appoint him means whereby he shall be obliged to convey his graces, upon such terms and conditions as we please to chalk out for him. And this is an high blasphemy.

6. Some foolishly apply this to indifferent ceremonies appointed by the Church in the worship of

God: which are nothing else but observing that order and decency in the service of God which the Apostle has commanded; but no part of the worship itself. Circumstances of time, place, habit, gesture, &c., are inseparable from public worship. And the determination of these, by a lawful authority, we call ceremonies: which have no other virtue but the command of such authority. Nor are they appointed as any means of grace at all, whereby any grace, either ghostly or bodily, is conveyed to us. If the wearing of a surplice, for example, using the sign of the cross, or any other ceremony, were appointed to heal diseases, allay storms, save from fire, help women in labour, chase away devils, or to convey any virtue to soul or body; then would such ceremonies become utterly unlawful; because they were appointed as means of grace, to convey such graces to us; which it is not in the power of man to appoint.

7. This small digression I thought necessary, in this place, to obviate the foregoing objection which might be made against what I have said of its not being in the power of man to invent or appoint the worship of God; and this does sufficiently shew, that sacrifices were neither of Adam's invention nor of his appointment, otherwise than as he had received commandment for it from God, and delivered the same to his children, (*Hist. Schol. in Gen. xxvi.*) As Peter Comestor says, that Adam, by the Spirit, did teach his sons to offer tithes and

first-fruits to God. And Hugo de St. Victore says, that God taught Adam how to worship him, and that Adam taught his sons to give tithes and first-fruits, (*Annot. in Gen. c. iv.*)

This is farther evident, in that it is said, (Heb. xi. 4,) that Abel offered by faith. Now faith has only relation to God and to his commands. To obey the command of a parent or magistrate is not called faith. And if we think to please God by a worship of our own invention, and have faith or trust in him, that he will accept it; this is presumption in us. It is superstition, and hateful to God; and which the Scripture would never call faith in God. Therefore since Abel did offer in faith, it is a necessary consequence that the thing was commanded of God.

Now the offering of fruits was a sacrifice and worship of God, as well as the sacrificing of beasts. And as God did, at the beginning, appoint the firstlings and the fat of beasts for sacrifice, so did he appoint a determinate quantity of the fruits, else Cain had not been condemned for not dividing aright.

And, as that institution of the firstlings, and the fat of clean and unclean beasts, and fowl, &c., were re-commanded under Moses, so was that of tithes.

8. Concerning which, let me give this farther argument from other instances which are allowed. It is allowed that sacrifices, and priesthood, and marriage, were instituted at first by God; and that

they descended, by immemorial tradition, from Adam to the heathen nations, who knew not of Adam, nor the beginning of the world, nor how these institutions began. But it was concluded, and that by a sure rule, that those institutions which were universally received, and whose beginning was not known, must certainly be from the beginning.

Now tithe, as well as any of these before-named, was universally received among the Gentiles; and its beginning was not known more than any of the rest: and therefore tithe must have been from the beginning as well as any of the other.

Consider, I beseech you, how otherwise tithes could have come to have been so universally received. Suppose all the world to be agreed that some part of all our substance was due to God, but that no determinate part was appointed, but every man left in that to his own fancy or inclination? How should all the world hit upon the same number of a tenth, more than a fifth, fifteenth, or any other number? nations far distant from one another, who knew not of one another, nor held any correspondence?

Take three men off the street, and bid them think of a number; it is ten thousand to one that they do not all three think of the same number. How inconceivable then is it, and next to an utter impossibility, that so many millions of people should all, by mere accident, stumble upon the very same

number? and that they should think this number to be sacred, so as none ought to offer a less quantity, without committing a great sin? that none should know the beginning of this custom? that no history should mention it? These are things so unaccountable, that it is not left in any man's power, who will consider of it, to believe that tithes were any human invention; or that the notion of it could have spread itself so universally through the world, if it had not descended from our first parent; and so flowed from the fountain through the many divided streams.

Mr. Selden (cap. 3, n. 5) would have it, that the Gentiles learned this custom from the Jews, (*De Legib. Hebr.*, before quoted;) and Dr. Spencer, that the Jews had it from the Gentiles. But neither of these are the truth. The Jews were a very contemptible people in the eyes of the Gentiles, and abhorred of them. And, therefore, it is nowise likely that the Gentiles would learn from them: especially such an expensive worship, as would cost them the yearly tenth of all that they possessed. And on the other hand, the Jews were strictly forbidden to learn the customs of the Gentiles; they thought the Gentiles so impure as that it was not lawful to marry, no nor to eat with them: and, therefore, it is as improbable that the Jews should part with the tenth of all their yearly increase, because the Gentiles did so.

Again. If some neighbouring Gentiles had

learned it from the Jews, how should it have spread to other far distant nations? How should it have been received amongst them all at the same time? How would not the beginning of it be known, in any nation? Nor from whence they had it? But to come to matter of fact. If, as Mr. Selden did suppose, the Jews had the notion of tithes only from the Levitical Law, and that the Gentiles after this learned it of them: let us consider that the Law was given to the Jews, after they came out of Egypt; so that the Egyptians nor any other could have learned it from them, while they stayed there. It was given them in the wilderness, where for forty years they conversed with no other nation, and where Moses died. Now Triptolemus, king of Attica, before-mentioned, who made the Attic Law, Θεοὺς κάρποις ἀγάλλειν,—“to honour the gods with their fruits,” which, as Porphyry repeats it, was, “That all the inhabitants of Attica should worship the gods, according to their estates, with first-fruits and offerings of wine every year,” (*Porphy. de Abstin. Lib. iv. sec. ult. p. 179*;) and ἀπαρχὰς ποιεῖσθαι, which is Porphyry’s expression for offering of their fruits to the gods, and was his phrase for paying of tithe; as was usual with all others, in those times, both sacred and profane writers, (see n. 2 of this sect. :) I say, this Triptolemus was cotemporary with Moses; and, for the reasons before told, could not have learned the notion of tithes from him, or the Jews in his time: and yet

Triptolemus is not said to have been the first who brought the notion of tithes among the Gentiles ; only that he made laws for it in his own country, which supposes the thing to be known before.

But Mr. Selden would screw it in another way, and (as I before quoted, his c. 3, n. 5) makes the example of Abram to have given the first ground to the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, and Europeans, for paying of tithes. How was it the example of Abram that taught Melchisedec what tithes meant, who tithed him, or put him under that tribute ? and Melchisedec was a king and a priest among the Phœnicians ; and, no doubt, received tithe from them, as well as from Abram : and did the Phœnicians then first learn it from Abram's once paying it to Melchisedec ? Is it not more probable that they should learn it from Melchisedec than from Abram, who was a stranger to them ? These are hard shifts which ingenious men are put to, to defend a bad cause. But if one of these must learn it from the other, it is more probable that Abram might learn it from Melchisedec, than Melchisedec from Abram : for Melchisedec was much the elder man ; and both a king and a priest. But the truth is, neither of them did learn it from the other ; both knew it and learned it from their fathers. And that instance of Abram's paying tithe to Melchisedec the priest, was told only occasionally, not as the original of tithes or of priesthood, more than his paying current money with the merchant

to Ephron (Gen. xxiii. 16) was the original of money or merchandise, because we never read of money or of merchants before. And as certainly as his paying of money current with the merchant supposes that there was money and merchants before, and that it was usual to pay money; so certainly, and from the same reason, does Abram's paying tithes to a priest suppose that there were priests before; and that it was usual to pay tithes to them. And there is as much ground to suppose that the Gentiles learned the use of money from Abram's paying money to Ephron, as that they learned the use of tithes from his paying tithes to Melchisedec.

How should all the far distant nations of the earth know, and take such notice of this single act of Abram's, who was but a traveller and sojourner in Canaan, so as to make it their pattern and example? How should they have this notion all at once? Would not some footsteps or account of it remain in history, how it was received from one nation to another? If that of Abram was the original of tithes, would not their beginning be found in some nation or other? What wild and unaccountable imaginations are these?

But the truth is, the Gentiles neither learned the notion of tithes from Abram or the Jews; nor the Jews from the Gentiles; more than the notions of sacrifices, of priesthood, of marriage, which were received from the beginning of the world; and de-

duced through the after generations as well of Jews as Gentiles.

Tithes must be as ancient as sacrifices; for tithes were a sacrifice. They were the quantum of the sacrifice, and they must be as ancient as priesthood; for they were given by God, as a maintenance to his priests, and always so understood. To sacrifice was the office of the priest; and the tithe was his reward. So that these being relatives, must be of equal standing.

Having thus shown the original of tithes to have been from God, at the creation; and to have descended from that time to this, through all ages and generations of men: I will now proceed to answer some objections which have been made against them.

SECTION IX.

Objection.—*That Tithes are not commanded in the Gospel.*

I. This objection proceeds from a mistake of the nature of the Gospel, as if it did abrogate the whole Law; and that nothing of the Law were of force, but what is anew commanded in the Gospel. Whereas the Gospel was not meant to overturn

any thing in the Law ; but to confirm it to the least iota, (Matt. v. 17, 18 ;) by fulfilling all the types of Christ ; which, as shadows, vanish of course, when the substance is come ; and the ceremonies which were ordained to accompany these types were, with the types, fulfilled, that is, ended. And fulfilling is the perfection, not the destruction of any thing. That is the highest perfection to attain to the end for which it is ordained ; and that is the fulfilling of it. There was another part of the Law, which respected the particular nation of the Jews, as to their political government and economy, which is called their judicial law. And this varied even in the nation of the Jews, according to their different times and circumstances ; as it must be in all nations. And this does not, or ever did oblige any other nation, otherwise than as the justice and equity of that municipal law of the Jews (being given by God himself) is the best pattern that can be followed in other nations where their circumstances will allow of it.

But all the rest of the Levitical law, except the typical, the ceremonial, and the judicial, were confirmed by Christ, and needed no new injunction. Now it is evident, that tithes were no part either of the typical or ceremonial law. They were no type of Christ : for Christ is called by the name of his types. " Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," (1 Cor. v. 7 ;) but Christ is nowhere called our tithe. Tithe had another end and tendency, which

was an acknowledgment and homage due to God as the author of all the good we received in this world; and that it was his blessing alone which gave success and increase to our labours. This respected God as our Creator and Preserver; but had no signification as to the incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; and therefore was no type of him; and therefore was not fulfilled or ended in him. The reason of it is eternal; and must last, while God feeds man upon the earth; and has been ever since God created man upon the earth. It was long before the Law, and therefore, not taking its rise from the Law, could not be abrogated in the Law. It is true, it was a part of the Law, as being anew enjoined in the Law; and so was a municipal or judicial law among the Jews; but it does not, therefore, cease to oblige other nations, as other parts of their judicial law may cease, because, *1st*, The justice and equity of it is nothing peculiar to the Jews, but equal to all people and nations whom God does preserve and feed. But *2dly*, Other nations were in possession of it long before the Law of Moses; and after, not from the Law of Moses, but from its original and universal obligation; and therefore the abrogation of the Law of Moses, had it been every word abrogated, could not have dissolved the obligation of tithes.

But tithes belonging to no part of it, that ceased upon the coming of Christ, consequently is still confirmed, unless it can be shewn that Christ has

discharged it. Christ did not anew institute the Decalogue, but left it of force, because not altered by him; and so it is of tithes.

II. But Christ has not only, by his not forbidding, confirmed tithes, but has given express approbation of them, (Matt. xxiii. 23;) where he says, "These things" (*i. e.*, the paying tithe of the smallest things, as of mint, anise, and cummin) "ye ought to have done." And in his parable of the Pharisee and the publican, (Luke xviii. 12,) he reckons paying tithe of all that we possess, as an act of worship and devotion to God; which sure he would not have done, if it had been then abrogated. But if you say that this was spoke to the Pharisees, not to his disciples, Origen, who put this objection, gives an answer. That he would not have commanded that to the Pharisees, which he would not have his disciples to fulfil much more abundantly; for, "except your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," &c., (*Hom. II. in Numer.*) "How, therefore," says Origen, "does my righteousness exceed their's, if they dare not taste of the fruits of the earth till they have first offered the first-fruits to the priests, and tithes to the Levites. And I, doing none of these things, mispend of the fruits of the earth to my own use, without acquainting priest or Levite, or letting the altar partake of any part of them?" "And this we have said," continues he, "to shew, that the command for first-fruits of

fruits and cattle, ought to stand even according to the letter.”

Let me add the Apostle's argument, (Heb. vii. 8.) where he says, that under the Law, men that die received tithes; but opposing to this the Melchisedec priesthood, which was but a type of Christ's, he says, that he receiveth them (tithes) of whom it is witnessed that he liveth, *i. e.*, liveth for ever, not as the Levitical priests, who were mortal, and therefore succeeded one another. Now Melchisedec, if he was Shem, was mortal, and died, as well as the Levitical priests; and therefore this was spoken only of Christ. And the Apostle says, that he receiveth tithes, for it can be meant of none other. And if Christ receiveth tithes, then he has not abrogated them. Then he has confirmed them; not only negatively, by not forbidding them, under the Gospel; but positively, by approving of the payment of them, and himself now in heaven, ever living, to receive them.

Again hear St. Paul, (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.) “Do ye not know that they who minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? And they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.”

OF THE GOSPEL. What is that? The Apostle makes the comparison, as of the altar in the Temple, that is, of the tithes and other offerings which

were offered upon the altar; and therefore are said to belong to the altar, as being due to the altar, to be offered there: so that as the altar in the Temple had a large revenue; and the priests did partake with it, did live of it: even so hath the Lord ordained—What? That the Evangelical priests should live of the Gospel. What revenue then has the Gospel to maintain them? A revenue surely like that of the Temple. Else it is not even so, as the Apostle makes the comparison. Some would have the Gospel merely eleemosynary: nothing due; but all free-will offerings. Then I am sure it was not even so as the Temple; for there were free-will offerings, it is true, but that was not all. There were tithes, and other offerings as of obligation. Else there had been no certainty or settled maintenance. Now if the Gospel has nothing as of right, which it can claim, how is it even so as the Temple? If the priests of the Temple were sure of a tenth, and the priests of the Gospel, not of a hundred, or a thousandth part, or of any part at all, how were they provided even so as the priests of the Temple?

But what was it that the Lord ordained? That every man should pay what he pleased? That they might do, and that they would do, without any order or law made for it? Was there ever such a law made, that every man should do just what he pleased, and no more? Would not such

a law be good for just nothing? that is to say, it would be no law; for law is a requiring and enjoining something, a refraining of liberty, and putting men under an obligation, who were free before, as to that which the law commands: and therefore, that which lays no restraint or obligation, but leaves every man perfectly at his own liberty, is no law: and consequently, if every man were left to his liberty, what he pleased to give to the Gospel, then Christ here ordained just nothing: it was no ordinance or law at all. And there was no manner of comparison betwixt the Gospel and the altar, which the Apostle does compare together. The Lord ordained tithes to the altar, and nothing to the Gospel. What comparison then betwixt the Gospel and the altar? The same as betwixt tithes and nothing! And how then did the Lord ordain a maintenance for the ministers of the Gospel, even so as for the ministers of the altar?

There is no coherence, no argument, no comparison, nor good sense, can be made out of this text, unless the Lord had ordained, that, as the tithes were paid to the priests of the Temple, they should be likewise paid to the priests of the Gospel. And then the comparison lies full and round, and the Apostle's argument is strong and cogent: which otherwise is precarious, and inconsequential. Therefore I think that from this very text, it may, nay that it must be concluded, that the Lord has

ordained tithes under the Gospel, as well as under the Law. And I will shew hereafter, that this text was thus understood in the first ages of the Church.

But why would not St. Paul downright name tithes, and so put the matter out of dispute? I answer; there was then no dispute at all concerning the divine right of tithes. All the dispute that then could be, was only to whom they should be paid? whether to the priests of the Temple or the Gospel? The priests of the Temple were then in possession of them, and would have raised a much more severe persecution against the Gospel, if its priests had pretended to them. And therefore it was great prudence in the Apostles not to name tithes, not to add oil to the flames of that persecution, which was like to be too strong for the ordinary sort of Christians, and overcame some of them. Yet would not the Apostles lose their right; which St. Paul, in this chapter, not only asserts, but argues for it, though he would not then make use of it, for reasons which he there declares.

SECTION X.

Objection.—*That no Tithes were paid in the days of the Apostles, and first Ages of Christianity.*

I. First, I deny the supposition ! that no tithes were then paid. For though a tenth was ordained, yet it might be exceeded, and men might give a greater proportion, if they thought fit : and God did accept of what more men gave, as a mark of more extraordinary devotion and zeal to his service. And, therefore, they who gave more, gave the tenth.

Now, in the days of the Apostles, the Christians gave not only a tenth, but their zeal was so exceeding, as to sell lands, houses, &c., and give all that they had in the world, and lay it down at the Apostles' feet. And this was not a sudden heat of devotion, and soon over, it lasted many years. We find it in Justin Martyr, 160 years after Christ. *Νῦν καὶ ἃ ἔχομεν εἰς κοινὸν φερόντες καὶ πάντι δεομένῳ κοινωνοῦντες.*—*Apoloq.* 2, p. 61. “And now,” says he, “we bring all that we have into common, and communicate it to every one that wants.”—(*Advers. Hæres.* Lib. iv. c. 34.) And after him Irenæus, Anno. Chr. 180, tells that the Jews consecrated a tenth, but the Christians gave “all that they had to God's service ; and would give not less than the

Jews, because they had a better hope." And after him, Tertullian, Anno 200, says, (*Apol. c. 39,*) "That all things were common among the Christians, but their wives."

Now, while this great zeal and liberality lasted, what reason was there to press men to give a tenth, who gave a great deal more? Mr. Selden confesses, (c. 4, n. 1, p. 36,) "So liberal," says he, "in the beginning of Christianity, was the devotion of believers, that their bounty to the Evangelical priesthood far exceeded what the tenth could have been." And p. 39, "The liberality formerly used had been such, that in respect thereof, tenths were a small part." And, *Review*, c. 4, p. 462, he says, "It had been little to the purpose, indeed, to have had tithes of annual increase paid, while that most bountiful devotion of good Christians continued in frequent offerings, both of lands and goods, to such large value. And, (c. 4, n. 2, p. 40,) he continues, this vast liberality of the Christians, in their offerings, to the days of St. Chrysostom, who lived at the end of the fourth century, where he tells how much the clergy were envied for their riches; "which," says he, "grew only out of such Christian devotion to the priesthood." He magnifies the great oblations made at Rome, "however Cyprian," says he, "might before have cause to complain in Africa." Yet the oblations were not mean in Africa; which we may gather from the relation of St. Cyprian himself; who tells, (*Epist. 160, p. 96, Ed. Oxon.,*)

that out of the oblations of the Christians of Carthage, where he was bishop, he contributed, at one time, a hundred thousand sestertiums towards the relief of some Christian captives. But, to say no more of the greatness of the devotions of those times, I have only this use to make of it, as to my present purpose, that the Christians then giving more than a tenth, had been reason sufficient, if there had not been one word in any of the Fathers of those times concerning tithes. For how could they require tithes, when tithes were paid, and a great deal more?

But because there should be no sort of argument wanting in this cause, we have frequent testimonies, even of the Fathers of these first ages, for tithes being due under the Gospel, as well as under the Law; and that the commands in the Law for tithes do still oblige us. I will mention but a few.

St. Irenæus, disciple to St. Polycarp, who was disciple to St. John the Apostle, says, (*Advers. Hæres. Lib. iv. c. 34.*) “That we ought to offer to God the first-fruits of his creatures, as Moses said, ‘You shall not appear empty before the Lord.’” It has been said before, that first-fruits and tenths are used promiscuously. But Irenæus shews, that he means tenths, in the same place, by making this comparison betwixt the offerings of the Jews and the Christians, that the Jews offered a tenth, but the Christians gave all that they had. And, (*Ibid.*

c. 27,) he shows how Christ did heighten the commands of the Law. As for adultery, to forbid lust; for murder, to forbid anger. And he adds this instance to the other, that, instead of tithes Christ commanded to sell all, and give to the poor; "and this," says he, "is not a dissolving of the Law, but enlarging it." By which argumentation, tithes are no more dissolved under the Gospel than the sixth and the seventh commands. Of the same opinion was Origen, who flourished about twenty years after Irenæus. "To whom," says he, "we give our first-fruits, to the same we send up our prayers." Ὡ καὶ τὰς ἀπαρχὰς ἀποδίδωμεν, τούτῳ καὶ τὰς οὐχὰς ἀναπέμπομεν.—*Contr. Cels. Lib. viii.* p. 400. By first-fruits he means tenths, as appears by his 16th Homily upon Genesis, where he says, that the number ten, is regarded in the New Testament, as well as the Old. And says, that because Christ is the author of all, therefore tithes are offered to the priests. He is large upon this subject, (*Hom. II. in Numb.*) as translated by St. Jerome (for we want the Greek.) Much of which Mr. Selden quotes, (c. 4, pp. 40 and 41,) and, particularly Origen applies the text before debated, (1 Cor. ix. 13,) to the priests having tithes under the Gospel, and says, that tithes are due now as well as then, *etiam secundum Literam*, according to the very letter of the Law: which, in this case, is still obligatory, and to Christians as well as Jews. He reckons them as having no remem-

brance of God, as not believing that God gave the fruits of the earth, who do not honour him with them, by giving part of them to the priests. And, as I before quoted this same Homily, he likewise cites our Saviour's command to the Pharisees, telling them, that they ought to pay tithe of mint, anise, cummin, &c. ; and shews how this is more strictly obligatory upon Christians ; and concludes with proving, that the very letter of the Law must stand for the payment of the first-fruits of fruits and cattle. *Hæc diximus asserentes mandatum de primitiis frugum vel pecorum debere etiam secundum literam stare.* And all that Mr. Selden has to say against this clear testimony is, that though Origen does mention tithes in the premises, yet that in the conclusion before quoted, he only names first-fruits, (*History of Tithes*, c. 4, n. 3, p. 41.) He makes Origen a very bad reasoner by this. But there is no ground for it ; because, (as before often said,) by the word first-fruits, tithes were frequently meant. And in this same place Origen uses both these terms : where he tells, that the Pharisees durst not taste of the fruits of the earth, *priusquam primitias sacerdotibus offerant, et Levitis decimæ separentur, i. e.* “ before they offered first-fruits to the priests, and the tithes were separated for the Levites.” Where, as he uses the words priests and Levites, so the words first-fruits and tithes promiscuously. For the tithes were to be paid to the priests, who, it is true, were likewise

Levites, that was a general word, like the clergy among us, to comprehend all the orders of the Church; but the tithes were not paid to the Levites, as they were a distinct order from the priests. Nor were the first-fruits paid more particularly to the priests than the tenths were. Both first-fruits and tenths were offerings to the Lord, (as before has been shewn,) and all the offerings and sacrifices were offered only by the priests, and not by the Levites. Yet Origen here uses these words indifferently, as likewise the words first-fruits and tenths. And to show, (contrary to Mr. Selden's pretence,) that he meant to bring them both, in their distinct senses, into his conclusion, he draws his consequence, not from one but both of them, speaking in the plural number, *Et ego nihil horum faciens—i. e.*, Neither offering my first-fruits nor tenths. These words immediately follow those above quoted, where he shews how strictly the Scribes and Pharisees paid their first-fruits and tenths: and, then, speaking in the person of a profane and careless Christian, he says, *Ego nihil horum*—do neither of these; this comprehends both first-fruits and tenths, to cut off Mr. Selden's vain distinction; and Origen condemns such a Christian as much worse than the Scribes and Pharisees. And his inferring from hence, that the *mandatum de premitiis*, the law for first-fruits, ought to stand, cannot exclude the tenths, which he expressly mentioned: but shews plainly that by this he meant the tenths.

As St. Chrysostom, by the same word of first-fruits expresses the tithes which Abram gave to Melchisedec, calling them τὰς ἀπαρχὰς τῶν αὐτῷ πεποιημένων, *i. e.*, “the first-fruits of his labours.”—(In *Hebr. Homily xii.* tom. 4, p. 497.) And Clemens Alexandrinus, who was Origen’s master, used both these words in the same sense, and taught the very same thing as Origen, *viz.* That the Law of Moses concerning tithes was still obligatory and of force among Christians: as being a moral duty, and a part of God’s worship. Αἱ δεκαταὶ τῶν καρπῶν, καὶ τῶν θρεμμάτων, εὐσεβεῖν τε εἰς τὸ Θεῶν—ἐδίδασκεν ἐκ τούτων γὰρ οἶμαι τῶν ἀπαρχῶν, καὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς διετρέφοντο.—*Strom. Lib. ii.* p. 397. *Edit. Lutetiae.* 1692. He says, that Moses’s Law did teach piety and worship towards God, “by giving him the tithes of our fruit and cattle—and of these first-fruits,” says he, “the priests were maintained.”

Here first-fruits and tithes mean the same thing. And so it is in the Apostolical Canons, where (*Can. 38*) it is ordered how the ἀπαρχαὶ, the first-fruits or tithes, should be disposed; which is a full demonstration that they were then paid.

I will close my proof of those first ages with the great St. Cyprian, who flourished, A. D. 240. He, reproving the cooling of the charity of some, and how far they had fallen short of the primitive zeal, says, (*De Unit. Eccles.*, n. 23,) “*Domos tunc et fundos venundabant, at nunc e patrimonio nec decimas damus;*” *i. e.*, “They then sold lands and

houses, but now we do not so much as pay the tithes of our estates ;” thereby reproaching the covetous and distrustful of his days, who paid not their bare due, that is, the tithe ; whereas formerly they gave much more than was due—more than the tithe—they gave all. Thus far we have seen the doctrine of the Church as to tithes, for 240 years after Christ, which is all the time disputed : for in the after ages, when a greater and more universal neglect of tithes had crept in, the Fathers are voluminous upon the subject, and councils express in requiring them, under pain of excommunication, as being due to God from the beginning. And the Apostolical Canons above quoted, were the Canon Law that was in those times.

So that we have not only the testimony of private Fathers ; but the law that then was for the payment of tithes, before the extraordinary oblations of more than a tenth did cease in the Church ; though they had then no need to insist upon the tithe, because they received a much greater proportion. Mr. Selden, as before quoted, owns that these extraordinary oblations were still continued for the first four hundred years. And if I should take in all the Fathers about this time, I should be forced to repeat whole sermons vindicating the divine right of tithes. None will deny but that they were full and express for tithes at that time, and afterwards. Only the first Fathers were not so large, because they did not treat expressly upon this sub-

ject, only *obiter*, and by the bye, having no occasion for it, while the zeal of Christians was not willing to be stinted to the bare due of a tenth, but gave much more. So that it were not strange, if we had heard nothing at all from them of it. But, by good Providence, they have left sufficient to convince those willing to be deceived, in after ages, who through covetousness and distrust of God, did forbear to pay their tithe. Till, by a long custom of sinning, men began to lose the sense of their sin; who yet durst not plead for the lawfulness of it. As the Jews, the whole nation of whom subtracted their tithe, and were cursed of God for it, (Mal. iii. 9;) yet none can think that this was a sin of ignorance in them, that they disputed or forgot the positive commands of the Law for tithe; but they were not willing, and so had forgot to practise it; which was the case of those careless and diffident Christians who at first only grudged to pay their tithes; then forebore it; and at last forgot it: but began not till the later most corrupt times, to dispute against it.

II. When the Papacy had grown great upon the ruins of Episcopacy: and the Bishop of Rome appropriated the style of Apostolical to his See alone, assuming to himself the supremacy over all other bishops: and sought to swallow up all their authority, and centre it in the plenitude of his power; and that, for this end, it was necessary to usurp the revenues, as well as authority of his colleagues;

whereby he might be enabled to maintain the vast swarms of regulars, whom he had set up, and exempted from the jurisdiction of their respective bishops, to depend wholly upon himself: and by this he unmeasurably broke the Episcopal authority: for the seculars only were left under that small remainder of the Episcopal power, which the Pope had left, as a *fiocco*, to those bishops whom he had subjugated. But he cherished the regulars as his life-guard. And, like a conqueror, he seized upon the estates of those whom he had overcome, as justly forfeited; and bestowed them upon those who fought on his side. The tithes of the Church, which all belonged to the bishops and their secular clergy, the Pope took upon him to alienate, and let in the regulars as sharers with them. And thus he founded monasteries and abbays innumerable; and endowed them with the tithes of the neighbouring parishes; to the lessening of the bishops' jurisdiction; impoverishing the secular clergy, who depended upon them; and plentifully maintaining what numbers he pleased of the regulars, who were implicitly at his command.

And to countenance and make way for these horrid sacrileges and usurpations, the Popish canonists were first corrupted: who, forgetting the first and chief end of tithes, which was as a worship and tribute due to God; and insisting only upon the secondary consideration, that of being a maintenance to the clergy; they, though they owned

tithes to be *jure divino*, yet gave the Pope power, as sovereign disposer of the revenues of the Church, to alienate, commute, and appropriate them as he thought fit.

But this was a dangerous tenure : for while tithes were owned to be *jure divino*, the Pope's alienations might be disputed. Therefore the schoolmen, who were generally monks, made a new scheme about the year 1230, and said, that the divine and moral law extended only to a competency for the clergy ; but as to the particular quantity of a tenth, that this was only of ecclesiastical institution.

But there is no stop in the art of encroachment ; for, having brought down tithes so low, the begging friars after this got up, and they made tithes to be perfectly arbitrary, at the will and pleasure of the giver, and not due to the secular priests ; but that they were nothing else than mere alms, and consequently might be given to any religious beggar. This was a shameless preaching only for their own bellies, and to rob their enemies, the secular clergy.

But to conclude. The Popes, as faithful treasurers of the Church, have, in several ages, taken upon them to sell the tithes of the Church to laymen—to the best bidder ; and have infeodated the tithes all over Italy to the secular princes ; inso-much that I was told, by an understanding gentleman, and a Roman Catholic, who lived many years in Rome, that there is not an inch of tithe now paid

to the Church in all Italy ; all is sold to the laity, or appropriated to the monks. And the like, though not in so great a degree, is done in France, Spain, and other Popish countries.

SECTION XI.

Tithes dedicated by particular Vows in England.

The general obligation of tithes being established, there needed no particular application as to England. But I find that we have here added the sacred sanction of vows to that general obligation under which we were bound with all the rest of the world ; and the like may be done, and I suppose has been, in most Christian countries ; yet let me shew it as to ourselves.

1. Tithes have been established by all the authority, both ecclesiastical and civil, that this nation could afford ; and dedicated to God by express vows of kings and parliaments, with the most solemn imprecations and curses, upon themselves and their posterities, who should retract, or take back any part of the tithes so dedicated. This is so well known, and so many Acts of Parliament confirm-

ing it, that I need but name it. Yet, for the satisfaction of those who are not so well versed herein, I will set down a few of the most ancient records, which Mr. Selden himself has afforded us, that they may be liable to the less exception, (c. 8, n. 2, p. 199, he recites the 17th chapter of the Great Council of Calcuth, A. D. 786,) where he says, "*Convenerunt omnes principes regionis, tam ecclesiastici quam seculares.*" All the great men of the nation, as well ecclesiastical as temporal, were convened. So that this was a full Parliament, according to the constitution of those days. And (p. 203) he supposes it extending through the whole kingdom. And as to the truth of the matter of fact, he quotes several authors wherein it is printed; and says, (p. 202,) "Neither can it be suspected by any circumstance in the subscriptions, which being so many, might have by chance soon got among them a character of falsehood, had it not been genuine.

This chapter of it which he quotes, is (*de decimis dandis, sicut in lege scriptum est,*) concerning the payment of tithes, according as it is written in the Law. And they infer, as the ancient Fathers before quoted, that the command in the Law of Moses for the payment of tithes was still in force, and obligatory upon Christians; and quote Mal. iii. 10, &c., for it. And it is recited in the said chapter, how the King Elswald, the dukes, lords, senators, and the people, did all, with one consent, (*devove-*

runt,) bind themselves, by a solemn vow, to pay the tithe to God.

2. Mr. Selden (p. 208, 209) sets down a charter of King Ethelwolf, A. D. 854, wherein he grants *decimam partem terrarum per regnum nostrum*; “the tithe of all the lands in his kingdom to the Church.” And it concludes thus,—*Qui autem au- gere voluerit nostram donationem, augeat omnipotens Deus dies ejus prosperos; si quis vero minuere vel mutare presumpserit, noscat se ante Tribunal Christi redditurum rationem, nisi prius satisfactione emenda- verit; i. e.,* “He that shall add to what I have given, the Lord add to him prosperous days; but if any shall presume to lessen or change it, let him know, that he shall give an account of it before the Tribunal of Christ, unless he first repent, and make satisfaction.” This, Mr. Selden says, he had out of the Cotton Library, where it is in MS. among the Chartularies of the Abbey of Abingdon. The charter expresses, that the king made this grant by the advice and consent of the bishops, earls, and all the great men. And Mr. Selden says, p. 208, “That this was a constitution by the parliamentary consent of that time.”

3. But in the year following, A. D. 855, King Ethelwolf did renew this grant, in a more solemn manner. Dedicating and vowing the tithe of all the lands in England, *in sempiterno graphio, in cruce Christi*; as it is expressed, and was the manner, at that time, of the most solemn vow: and

tendered the charter, by him signed, upon his knees, offering it up, and laying it upon the great altar of St. Peter's Church in Winchester, the bishops receiving it from him on God's part. And this was done, not only with the consent of both Lords and Commons, of whom an infinite number was present ; but all the bishops, abbots, earls, and nobles, did subscribe it ; with the greatest applause of the people. And it was sent and published in every parish church throughout the kingdom.

4. This Ethelwolf was the first hereditary monarch of the English Saxons, who held the whole nation under his subjection, in peace, and without contradiction : and consequently he was the first who could effectually make a law to oblige the whole nation.

And this law and vow of his, and of the whole nation, by their consent given, as aforesaid, was confirmed and renewed by almost every king and parliament that succeeded, in the reigns of Alfred, Edward, Athelstan, Edmund, Edgar, Ethelred, Canutus, and Edward the Confessor, before the Conquest : and from William the Conqueror, down all the way to Henry VIII., in many parliaments ; with solemn curses and imprecations upon themselves or posterities who should detract any of the tithes so vowed and granted ; and such curses and excommunications were pronounced in the most solemn and dreadful manner, by the bishops, with burning tapers in their hands, in presence of King,

Lords, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, and all consenting and confirming the same, in name of themselves and their posterities. And, as it is expressed in the Act of Parliament made in the reign of King Edmund, A. D. 940. Wherein all the people are charged, upon their Christianity, to pay their tithes; and those who neglect it, are declared accursed, *i. e.*, excommunicated: and they were esteemed as men who had renounced their Christianity, and not to deserve the name of Christians. And these grants and vows are confirmed by *Magna Charta*, and all the rest of our laws, both before and after it.—(*Spelm. Concil.* tom. i. p. 420; *Hist. Jorval.* Col. 858.)

5. Now it is a received maxim in the civil law, as well as a dictate of reason, that *votum transit in hæredes*, a vow does descend and oblige our heirs. And in the law of Justinian, which he received from Ulpian, it is particularly applied to this of tithes. “*Si forte, qui decimam vovit, decesserit ante sepositionem, hæres ipsius, hæreditario nomine, decimæ obstrictus est. Voti enim obligationem ad hæredem transire constat.*”—(*f. f. lib. de Policit. l. 2. Quis. § 2.*) *i. e.*, if any that had vowed tithes, should die before they were paid, his heir is obliged to pay them; because it is a known rule, that the obligation of a vow does descend to the heirs. How much more, then, if any not only voweth, but actually executeth his vow, and has already given the tithes which he vowed out of his own

possession to those to whom his vow did oblige him to give them; how much more is his heir obliged in this case, not to recall or take back such tithes out of their possession, to whom they were so vowed and given?

If a man cannot annul or make void his own vow, without a manifest mocking of God, how can he recall or disannul the vow of another?

If a man's grant of his own estate, when duly executed, cannot be recalled, though to the prejudice or ruin of his family; and though it was a wrong in him, and very unjust to make such a grant; shall not his grant of restitution stand, whereby he only gives back, what he had unjustly taken from another? What he had robbed from God, of his tithes and offerings? Must there be a writ of inquiry to examine into the justice and equity of the original grant, and to recall it, because it was too much? Shall we think that too much, which God has reserved as holy unto himself, and for which he has promised to bless us, in all that we set our hand unto? Is not he able to make us amends, and increase our store an hundred-fold? Is not he able to punish our distrust of him, and take away our nine parts, who grudge to give him the tenth? Is not this a snare of the devil to throw us out of God's favour, and make us forfeit his protection? Is it not a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows, to make inquiry? (Prov. xx. 25.) If it is not lawful to make in-

quiry, to grudge, or snip from what I have vowed, though it be of things which I was not obliged to vow, or to give away: how much more unlawful is it, to make inquiry after I have vowed that which was God's due before I vowed; and which I was obliged to pay, though I had not vowed it at all?

If Ananias and Sapphira were stricken dead upon the place, for keeping back but part of the price which they had not formally vowed, no nor promised, for ought appears; but only thought of, or resolved in their minds to give; even of their own, and which could not have been exacted from them; shall they escape who keep back, not a part, but the whole of those tithes, which God had reserved, like the forbidden fruit, not to be touched by us, ever since the creation of man upon the earth: and which had been moreover so often and so solemnly VOWED, with the most dreadful imprecations both temporal and eternal upon all those who should refuse or neglect to pay them? If the dissembling of Ananias and Sapphira was construed a lying, not to men, but to the Holy Ghost: how is it not a lying both to men, and to the Holy Ghost, (Acts v. 4.) to defeat the grants of our forefathers; to disannul their vows; and rob God of what they had vowed to him; and which was his due before; and is still due from us, though neither they nor we had ever vowed them? There is a greater complication of daring and provoking sins

in this matter than perhaps is to be found in any other instance, now in practice amongst us. And which we ought not to forget in the list of those sins, for which God is now visibly punishing of these nations. We have refused him his tenth; and he has taken our nine parts from us, and scarcely left a tenth in the nation of what but a few years ago we did possess. And his hand is stretched out still—

6. Mr. Selden, though he bent his whole strength against the divine right of tithes, yet when he came to consider the solemn dedication of them, with vows to God, he yields, upon this score, that they were unalienable and irrevocable. I will set down some of his words, in his Review, (p. 486,) “And let him that detains them, (the tithes, says he,) and believes them not to be *jure divino*, think of the ancient dedications of them made to holy uses. And however they were abused to superstition, as the other large endowments of the Church, before the Reformation; yet follows it not, without farther consideration, that therefore, although so dedicated, they might be profaned to common uses, or lay-hands. Consult herein with divines. But I doubt not but that every good man wishes, that at our dissolution of monasteries, both the lands and impropriated tithes and churches possessed by them (that is things sacred to the service of God, although abused by such as had them) had been bestowed rather for the advance-

ment of the Church to a better maintenance of the labouring and deserving ministry, to the fostering of good arts, relief of the poor, and other such good uses as might retain in them, for the benefit of the Church or commonwealth, a character of the wishes of those who first with devotion dedicated them, (as in some other countries upon the Reformation, was religiously done,)—(*Christoph. Pinder: De Boni Ecclesis, in ducat. Wittenberg, p. 94, &c.*) than conferred with such a prodigal dispensation, as it happened, on those who stood ready to devour what was sanctified; and have (in no small number) since found inheritances thence derived to them but as Sejanus's horse, or the gold of Toulouse."

7. This observation of Selden's has been more particularly insisted upon by Sir Henry Spelman, in his *History of Sacrilege*; and his son, Clem. Spelman, in his preface to his father's book, *De non Temerand. Eccl.*, who has given many, and remarkable instances, of the ruin and destruction of those families who shared most of the church lands and tithes, in the beginning of our Reformation, and before from William the Conqueror: especially it was taken notice of that the heirs of such families were taken off untimely; or that they had no heirs; and their estates and honours went into other families. This was chiefly remarkable in Henry VIII. himself, all of whose children died childless, and left his crown to another family and

nation. And whereas the addition of the church lands and treasure, which were annexed to the crown, were thought so inexhaustible, that Henry VIII. promised to his Parliament, that if they would settle them upon the crown, he would free the nation for ever from taxes and subsidies ; would maintain forty earls, sixty barons, 300 knights, and 40,000 soldiers, and that they should always be so maintained upon the expense of the crown.—(*How's Preface to Stow's Annals; Coke's Jurisdiction of Courts*, f. 44.) Yet when these church-lands, and tithes impropriated, were accordingly granted to the crown, together with the plunder of all the church-plate, and jewels offered at their shrines, which were inestimable, all that the king had promised in lieu of them was forgot ; and the nation never paid such heavy taxes as since that time. Instead of being eased from taxes, as they expected, and was promised ; from that day taxes seemed to be entailed upon them, and ever to increase. They have already (as above observed) brought us to a tenth, who have seized upon the tenth of God ; and unless we repent—And as for the crown, that vast accession of sacrilegious wealth and lands, ate out themselves, and all the crown lands with them ; insomuch that, at this day, several private gentlemen in England, enjoy more to their own estates than all the lands which are left to the crown do now yield. And Henry VIII. himself, who thought never to be poor, lived to see that incredible mass

of wealth, which he had robbed from the Churches, all melt away like ice before the sun, and his own vast treasure with it, insomuch that he was at last reduced to coin base money.

The fate of the great Duke of Somerset is very observable. He was uncle to King Edward VI., and Protector of England; he built Somerset-House with the stones of a church reformed to ruin; and was the great patron and promoter of impropriations. He was taken in the same net he had laid for others—an Act of Parliament he had procured for his own safety, and to crush his enemies—by which he was trapped himself, and lost his head for so poor a crime as felony: and, which is more extraordinary, had not the power or presence of mind to demand the benefit of his clergy, which could not have been refused him. “As if,” says an historian, “God would not suffer him, who had robbed his Church, to be saved by his clergy.”

Many are too rash in determining the judgments of God to be sent for this or that. And the excess of this, especially of late times, even to superstition, among those who cried out most against it, and were most superstitious, but knew it not, has run others to the contrary extreme of irreligion, to think God wholly unconcerned in the affairs of the world; and that no notice at all is to be taken of any events, which they suppose to happen casually, and to have no relation to either the good or evil

that we do. This is to deny all providence in God, which is Atheism ; for it destroys the very notion of a God, which cannot be without his providence supposed, and an universal influence and inspection over all things.

And though it is hard to make an argument, and conclude positively for what particular sin such a judgment was sent—and we often mistake in this, and make applications according to humour or interest—yet sometimes judgments are so very legible, that we may read our sin in our punishment. And God frequently in Scripture reproves the hardness of their hearts, who shut their eyes against the observation of this signal part of his providence, “Who regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands,” (Isa. v. 12.) “They have belied the Lord, and said, It is not He, neither shall evil come upon us,” (Jer. v. 12.) It is called a belying of God, to think that the evils which come upon us are not sent from him : “for,” says he, “I make peace, and create evil ; I the Lord do all these things,” (Isa. xlv. 7.) And, “Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it ?” (Amos iii. 6.) “The wicked blaspheme God, while they do say in their heart, Tush, thou God carest not for it, he hideth away his face, and he will never see it. Surely thou hast seen it, for thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong—that thou mayest take the matter into thine own hand,” (Psal. x. 12, 14, 15.)

And the Jews are reprehended by our Saviour, for “not discerning the signs of the times,” (Matt. xvi. 3.) It is called a knowing of God, to observe the course of his judgments and his mercies; for how otherwise can we know him upon earth? “He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him: was not this to know me, saith the Lord?” (Jer. xxii. 16.)

And the consequence is, that not to take notice of these things, is not to know God; it is to belie him, to blaspheme him, as in the texts before quoted; and many more that could be produced to the same purpose.

Now to apply this to our present purpose, I do not pretend to draw an argument from the many instances of God’s remarkable judgments upon both their persons and families who had robbed his Church, as if those judgments must of necessity have been inflicted purely and solely for this sin. But if this be a sin, and of so deep a dye, as it must be if it be any sin at all; for it can be no other than sacrilege: and if that be the most open and notorious known sin of these persons, and likewise, that these judgments are observed to follow the lands, houses, and tithes impropriated, though often bought and sold and changing of owners: not in every case, for if God should punish wickedness in all, the world must soon be destroyed; and he does often suffer the wicked to prosper. It is one of the sharpest scourges he uses to chastise a

sinful nation ; and having done his work, to burn the rod : but when we see judgments to follow such a sin, for the most part, and in such repeated and remarkable instances as Sir Henry Spelman gives us in his *History of Sacrilege*, and many more of the same sort, which we can gather elsewhere ; and some that our own experience can furnish us withal : in such cases, it is far from superstition to take notice of the hand of God in them ; and not to do it, is that stupidity and blasphemy before reprehended ; it is a hardening ourselves against all the methods of Divine Providence—a denial of it—and living without God in the world.

Who can, for example, avoid the observation of the New-Forest in Hampshire, devouring so many of William the Conqueror's sons by strange deaths, he having destroyed twenty-six Parish Churches to make room for his deer there, as you may see in Spelman's *History of Sacrilege*, p. 119, 120 ; or what is observed in the preface to his *De non Temerand. Eccl.*, p. 42. That within twenty years after Henry VIII.'s seizing the revenues of the Church by the advice and assistance of his nobility, and dividing her patrimony among them chiefly, more of them and their children were attainted and died by the sword of justice, than from the Conquest to that time, which was about 500 years.

Sir Henry Spelman's *Hist. Sacril.*, c. vii. computes, that “ the great increase of lands and wealth that came to the king by the dissolution,

was quadruple to the crown-lands ;” and takes notice, (pp. 226, 227,) how the crown-lands were dwindling away. Most of them being then gone, (when he wrote, in the reign of Charles I.,) and only fee-farm rents reserved out of the greatest part of them, viz. L.40,000 a-year out of the crown-lands, and L.60,000 out of the church-lands. And observes, as a continuance of the judgment upon them, that an infraction was then begun to be made upon the very fee-farm rents themselves, and that some of them had been alienated. But if he had lived another reign, he would have seen them every one sold: and the crown reduced to live from hand to mouth, upon the mere benevolence of those whose care it is to keep it always so depending, and upon its good behaviour.

So much has the Crown gained by the access of sacrilegious wealth, as from imperial dignity, and a propriety paramount in all the lands of England, to become an honourable beggar for its daily bread!

I know not how far this has sunk with those who are concerned: or whether another curse may not be added, that is, never to consider, but go on.

However, Sir H. Spelman has told us of several gentlemen in England, who out of a due sense of the sin of this sacrilege, have freely given up, and restored to the Church, as far as the laws would permit them, all their impropriate tithes, which had descended to them from their ancestors: that in-

stead of them and the curses which attended them, they might entail the blessing of God upon the rest of their estates, and upon their posterities. The sense of this sunk so deep with the great Earl of Strafford, that foreseeing a new sacrilegious deluge of usurpation upon the Church then coming on, (Anno 1640,) he made it his dying injunction to his son, under peril of his curse, and of the curse of God, never to meddle with any church-lands, or what had been once dedicated to God. This legacy he sent him from the scaffold, where men are past dissembling or courting of favour; though this could have been no recommendation to him at that time.

And how light soever some men make of the sin of sacrilege while they gain by it, yet when they come to die, they may have the same sense of it which that noble lord then so religiously expressed. But there being no repentance accepted by God without restitution, as far as in our power, I pray God they may think of it, while it is in their power to make that restitution which alone can witness the sincerity of their repentance.

8. There can no pretence be made for the lawfulness of impropriations, when those very acts of Parliament which took them from the Church, and gave them to laymen, do acknowledge that they are God's dues and his right. That they are due to God and holy Church, as in 27 *Hen. VIII.*, c. 20. Nay, they were always so acknowledged, and no

otherwise, insomuch that there was no law or precedent for a layman to sue for tithes; it was utterly heterogeneous and abhorrent: for which reason, when tithes were given to laymen, they were forced to have a particular Act of Parliament, (32 *Hen. VIII.*, c. 7,) to enable laymen to sue for tithe; which before they could not do. In which very act tithe is named as being due to Almighty God. And next to act of parliament, the great oracle of our law, Sir Edward Coke is to be heard, who, in the Bishop of Winchester's case, plainly asserts, that *Dismes sont choses spiritual, et due de jure divino, i. e.*, "That tithes are spiritual things, and due of divine right." And if so, how can acts of parliament alter them? can they take away God's right? This is plainly pleading guilty against themselves; and leaves all those self-condemned, who have nothing but these acts of parliament to plead in arrest of judgment for the sacrilege of their impropriations at the day of doom.

9. In the next place, can an act of parliament dispense with vows made to God, or alter things dedicated to his service? Did the oath which Joseph took of the children of Israel, (Gen. 1. 25; Exod. xiii. 19,) bind their posterities, so many ages after, and that about a matter of no greater consequence than the removing of his bones? and shall not the repeated vows of our ancestors bind us to give God his honour due unto

his name, the worship of our tithes, which he from the beginning has reserved as sacred unto himself! Did that oath bind, which the princes of the congregation swore to the Gibeonites? (Josh. ix. 15,) and shall not the vows and oaths of so many of our kings and parliaments bind us?

Did that oath bind which the Gibeonites obtained through fraud and deceit? and shall not ours bind, which were voluntary and honest? Did God dispense so far with his own command of making no covenant with the Canaanites, in favour of the Israelites' oath, though taken unawares? and will he give up that part of his worship which he hath made standing and perpetual, the offering of our tithes, in favour of our breach of a lawful and religious oath to perform this? Did God punish the Israelites with three years' famine, (2 Sam. xxi.,) for Saul's attempting to break this oath, four hundred and fifty years after it was made? (Acts xiii. 20,) and is our crime forgotten, who, little more than an hundred and fifty years ago, have dissolved the oaths of our ancestors? Did God punish this sin of Saul's upon the Israelites after he was dead? and may not we be punished though Henry VIII. be dead? Were the people punished who did not consent to Saul's act? and shall they escape, who joined with and assisted Henry VIII., shared the spoil with him, and keep it unto this day?

Did God refuse to answer, till Jonathan's igno-

rant and unwilling breach of Saul's rash and hurtful oath was purged? (1 Sam. xiv. 37,) and will he answer our prayers till we are purged from our wilful and obstinate breach of the lawful and laudable vows of our progenitors? Did Saul's oath bind, without the consent of the people, and though Jonathan knew it not? and shall not ours bind, made with the consent of the people, and which we all very well know?

Was Zedekiah so severely cursed, (Ezek. xvii. 16,) for despising the oath of God, which the King of Babylon forced him to swear, though it was, "That the kingdom might be base, and that it might not lift itself up?" (verse 14,) and shall we be upholden who have "wilfully despised the oath of the Lord our God," to pay him his tithes, which, if we trust his promise, would make us great, and blessed, and a delightsome land? (Mal. iii. 10, 11, 12.)

SECTION XII.

The Benefit of Paying our Tithe.

I. Our services add nothing to God: therefore it is our good which he seeks in all his institutions of religion. It is our good—our greatest good,

that our whole trust should be in the Lord, always and upon all occasions : because he cannot fail us, and every thing else will : and, therefore, we must be miserable, if we place our trust in any thing else than God ; and our greatest happiness must consist in a full and absolute dependence upon him. Now this trust and dependence is produced more by our deeds than our words : more by practising of it than by speaking of it, and praising it : and the payment of our tithe is a practice of it, a trusting in God, that he will not only accept it, and give us spiritual blessings for it ; but even that we shall gain by it, as to this world, and grow the richer for it. For it is his blessing only that giveth increase as to the fruits of the field, so to the labours of our hands, to all our endeavours, in whatever vocation : and he has promised not only spiritual but even temporal blessings, and increase of our store, if we will trust him so far as duly and cheerfully, without grudging or despondency, to pay our tithes to him. “ Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it : and I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground ; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts : and all nations shall call

you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts," (Mal. iii. 10.) The same blessing is promised, (Prov. iii. 16,) "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." And thus it was understood by the Jews in after generations; as you find it expressed almost in the same words as these of Solomon, "Give the Lord his honour with a good eye, and diminish not the first-fruits of thine hands: in all thy gifts show a cheerful countenance, and dedicate thy tithes with gladness: give unto the Most High according as he hath enriched thee, and as thou hast gotten, give with a cheerful eye: for the Lord recompenseth, and will give thee seven times as much," (Eccl. xxv. 8, 9, 10, 11.) Therefore it is our own advantage that we pay tithe. The Lord bids us prove him herein, try him, trust in him, and see how abundant he will be in his blessings to us, and whether he will not return to us tenfold for the tenth we give to him. But if we dare not trust God so far as to make this small experiment, when he provokes us to it, and grudge to give him the tenth, who gave us all, it is but just with him to take that from us wherein we trusted, and not to leave us a tenth; but to take the whole from those who durst not trust him and all his promises with a tenth.

Whereas, on the other hand, those who do truly

and sincerely believe and trust in God, and in what he has promised, will show it in deeds as well as in words; will pay him his tithe religiously, and with a good heart. And when he finds God performing his promise, and rewarding his faith in doubling of his stores, this increases his faith and trust in God. It is practice makes perfect, and it confirms our faith as to the future promises of heaven, when we find that God does make good his promises to us here. These are inestimable benefits, even the confirming of our faith, without which we shall never come to heaven.

And I will be bold to say, that whoever dare not trust God's promise, as to his tithe, (supposing him convinced of it,) does not really believe it, nor trust to it, as to heaven; however he may flatter himself or impose upon others. For he that will not trust God in a little, how will he in a great deal? If not for a penny, how can he for heaven?

Therefore we see how justly covetousness is called idolatry. A covetous man cannot trust in God; nor can he that trusts sincerely in God ever be covetous. It is impossible; for these are direct opposites. This is the reason that God has commanded we should worship him not only with our minds, or with our tongues, but with our substance. This puts our faith in practice; and practice confirms and enlarges it. And it is the least proportion of our substance which he has required, that is the tenth. Something that may shew our trust

and dependence upon him. The more zealous gave more according to their faith, (Luke xviii. 22.) Christ commanded the rich young nobleman to sell all; and the first Christians gave all, (Acts iv. 34.) All, at the beginning, gave more than a tenth, else were they esteemed worse than the Jews, who gave that proportion, as I have before shewn out of Irenæus, &c. Now, then, the payment of our tithe being, of itself, productive of so great virtue and strength in our minds, to teach us, and inure us how to trust in God; and having likewise the promise of so great temporal blessings, is not to be looked upon as a tax or imposition upon us; but as a high privilege, and a pledge by which God has obliged himself to provide for us; and to return us ten times as much, even in this world, besides the end of our faith, which is heaven. Hence our tithe is called, “the bread of our soul.” And God threatens it as an heavy judgment, that we shall not be permitted to pay our tithe to him. “They shall not offer wine-offerings to the Lord—their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the Lord.” By this they forfeited all the benefits and all the promises which were annexed to the payment of their tithe. How much more then have we forfeited, who, when we are not only permitted but invited to partake of this benefit, turn the deaf ear, and refuse to restore what we have sacrilegiously robbed out of the house of God.

SECTION XIII.

Remarkable Judgments for not Paying of our Tithe.

Tithes being proved to be a part of God's worship, and a blessing to attend the payment of them; the consequence is implied, that a curse must be due to the non-payment of them, it being a contempt of God, and a neglect of his worship. As payment of tribute is an acknowledgment of his being king to whom we think it due; and the denial of tribute is a denial of his being king. So tithe being the tribute which God hath reserved to himself, to deny that to him, is denying him to be our God. And though we acknowledge him with our mouths, yet that will no more be accepted than an earthly king would think him to be a good subject, who only called him king, and gave him the knee or the hat, but yet denied him his tribute and more substantial honour.

I. The heathens paid their worship, and consequently their tithe, as being part of it, to false gods; and thought that judgments did attend their neglect of it.

And judgments might attend it. For though their worship was not pleasing to God, as to the manner of it, it being idolatrous; yet it being ultimately referred to, and intended for the Su-

preme Being, whom they ignorantly worshipped, (Acts xvii. 23,) it was consequently a dishonour meant to him, when they profaned what they thought sacred to him; and might justly be punished by God, as arguing a pravity in their wills, though they followed an erroneous judgment.

Thus it became sin to Jeroboam, and his house, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth, (1 Kings, xiii. 33, 34,) that he made priests of the lowest of the people, though it were to his idol calves that he had set up. For the worship being referred ultimately to God, whom he meant to worship by those calves; the dishonour did consequently redound to God, to have the meanest of the people set up for his priests.

And Jeroboam must sin herein more wilfully than the heathen, because he had more knowledge than they, that this manner of worship was forbidden by God.

Which the heathens not knowing, their worship was less guilty; and consequently might be the more noticed by God; so as to punish their prevarications in it, according to what they intended, though not according to the thing itself.

For this reason Joseph did not buy the lands of the priests in Egypt, (Gen. xlvii. 22,) because they were given to a religious though idolatrous use.

And though God ordered idols to be burned,

and their priests sometimes to be slain: yet we find not that ever he permitted any of their dedicated things to be taken as a prey, or turned to common use; but to be burnt and destroyed.

For these reasons, the heathens may be allowed among the instances of God's judgments upon sacrilege, particularly that branch of it, which is our present subject, the subtraction of tithe. However, it confirms their opinion concerning the divine right of tithes: for otherwise they could not have thought that the divine vengeance fell upon them for their subtraction of their tithe.

But because I lay the least stress upon these instances from the heathen, I will only name a few, that I might not wholly omit them.

1. It is told before, in the story of Camillus, how the Romans apprehended the displeasure of the gods, and what reparation they made for the soldiers not giving the tenth of the booty they got in the sacking of Veies.

2. Hesiod (as before-mentioned) tells of the people Thoes, who were accounted wicked and atheistical, because they paid not their tithes to the gods: and that they were utterly destroyed by the gods, for that reason.

3. Diodor. Sic. tells likewise (*Hist.* 1. 5.) of the Carthaginians, who constantly paid their tithe to Hercules: but when they were grown rich, they neglected it, till being reduced to great straits in their wars, they attributed these judgments to have

come upon them for that neglect; and, in their distress, they returned to the payment of their tithes as formerly.

4. Pausan. Hist. Græc. says, that the Siphnians, who used to pay the yearly tithe of their mines, lost them, by the justice of the gods, for having omitted that payment.

5. And, to name no more, Dionis. Halicar. l. 1. shews how the Pelasgi in Umbria were punished with a barren year, for not paying of their tithe; and that, upon their afresh vowing the tithe of all their profits to the gods, that judgment was removed.

This is sufficient, at least, to shew the notion of the heathen in this point.

II. But it is more authentic to see how God punished this neglect of tithe among the Jews. And we find this to have borne a great part in the most remarkable judgments that befell them. 1. The Captivity of the ten tribes was in the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. And we find by the Reformation which Hezekiah made after that, as well in Israel as Judah, (2 Chron. xxxi.,) that the payment of their tithes had been greatly neglected, the restoring of the tithe being a main branch of that Reformation. And therefore there is no doubt but that the neglect of paying their tithe had a main weight, as in the excision of the ten tribes, so in the captivity of Judah, which soon after followed.

This farther appears in the Reformation of Nehemiah, after the Captivity. Wherein they promised amendment of those things which they had formerly neglected; and for which neglect that Captivity was sent upon them. They particularly remember the neglect of the Sabbatical year, and the year of release, (before-mentioned,) and promise the future observance of them, (Neh. x. 31.) And after, to the end of that chapter, there is large mention, and renewed promises as to the due and exact payment of their tithes; which makes it plain, that as the Sabbatical year and the year of release, so the tithes had been neglected; and that for such neglect they had been punished with that long Captivity. And as the land had rest for 70 years together, to fulfil so many Sabbatical years as they had neglected, (which is shewn before, § i. p. 7.) So were they deprived of the whole profits of the land, who had neglected to pay the Lord his tenth part.

III. But after their return from the Captivity, they fell again into a new neglect of paying their tithe; for which a heavier curse fell upon them than before. A vile prostitution of their priesthood, and greater corruption in doctrine and manners than ever formerly, as appears in the history of the Maccabees, and afterwards to the time of our blessed Saviour, when they were totally subjected to the Romans; at whose pleasure their

taken from the clergy? Do the people then pay no more tithe? That would be an ease indeed! but they are still paid. Only with this difference, that the impropriator, generally through England, sets his tithes a shilling or eighteenpence in the acre dearer than the incumbent.

5. Would it then be an unreasonable proposal, to put all the poor in the nation upon the church-lands and tithes, which maintained them before? and let the clergy bear their share for as much of them as are left in their hands.

6. If the impropriators will not be pleased with this, then let them have a valuable consideration given them for these lands and tithes, by a tax raised for that purpose; and return the poor to the clergy, together with their lands and tithes.

7. And that the tax may not be thought too grievous, let it be only three years of the present poor-rates through England. And if that will not do, the clergy shall purchase the rest themselves. Three years purchase is a very good bargain to get off a rent-charge which is perpetual; and more probability of its increasing than growing less.

What man in England would not willingly give three years of his poor-rate at once, to be freed from it for ever? And for the poorer sort, who may not be able; or if any be not willing; then let them have the same time to pay it in as now.

Let the clergy have three years of the poor-rates,

payable in three years—and a value put at which the impropiators shall be obliged to sell—and after that the clergy shall be obliged to maintain the poor as formerly. And this will cost no more than to double the poor-rates for three years, and so be rid of them for ever.

8. But if those who have swallowed the patrimony of the Church will neither eat nor let eat, will neither maintain the poor themselves, nor let others do it who are willing, let them reflect—let the nation consider it—all who have any sense of God or religion left—that since they have robbed God, the Church, and the poor, by seizing upon their patrimony, the poor are increased to that prodigious rate upon them, that they are forced to pay now yearly for their maintenance more than all their sacrilege amounts to. So little have they gained at God's hand, by their invading of what was dedicated to his service! And he will still prove stronger than they; and may increase the poor till they swallow up the rich who have devoured them; besides many other ways his judgments have to meet with us. We have paid the price of all our impropriations and arrears within these ten years past, and are paying on still.

9. I must, besides, tell our impropiators, that in truth, in reason, and in law too, as well of God as man, they have taken these lands and tithes of the Church, *cum onere*, with that charge that was put upon them by the donors of the lands, and by

God upon the tithes; that is, of maintaining and providing for the poor. A lessee can forfeit no more than his lease—he cannot alter the tenure; and whoever comes into that lease, comes under all the covenants of the lease. Therefore the improPRIATORS stand chargeable, even in law, to keep up that hospitality, the amberies, and infirmaries for the poor, the sick, and the stranger, that the clergy were obliged to do while they had their possessions, and in some sort performed; at least so far as to keep the poor from being any tax upon the nation.

And at the beginning of the Reformation, when the laity were first put in possession of these lands and tithes, they understood it so to be; and were content to take them with all that followed them, (anything to get them,) and did for a while make a shew of keeping up the former hospitality, &c., better than the clergy had done,—that being the pretence why they took them from the clergy. But when the fish was caught, they soon laid aside the net.

10. There was another, and a greater burden, put upon these lands, &c., which is, the cure of souls. And that too they undertook. The King turned the supreme ordinary of the Church, and the Lord Cromwell, as his vicegerent in ecclesiastical matters, sat upon the bishops' bench in the House of Lords, and took place of the Archbishop of Canterbury, as the more spiritual person of the

two, and above him in the Church economy; and the mean impropiators came in place of the forfeited rectors, and presented their vicars as they did. But the superior cure was in the rectors, and is transferred to the impropiators, who now stand doubly accountable; *first*, For invading the priests office; and *secondly*, For discharging it as they do; selling their advowsons at market, and looking upon them as mere lay-fees; taking bonds of resignation, and other ways and means that are made to accord with lawyers' simony. Which I am afraid will not be pleadable at the day of judgment, nor satisfy a disturbed conscience upon our death-bed; besides the scandalous allowances made by many impropiators to their vicars.

Whether the proposal I have made, or any other to the like purpose, will take effect, I know not; but I think it is evident, that it would be to the apparent advantage of the nation (upon account) about a million a year; besides many other benefits greater than that. As,

I. The blessing of God. If that is to be reckoned upon in these days. For if sacrilege be a sin, and if these things before spoke of be sacrilege: then if there be a God, or truth in the Holy Scriptures, there lies a heavy curse upon this nation; which cannot be removed without restitution of what we have robbed from God.

II. It would, in a few years, lessen the number of the poor; they would grow less and less; for by

putting them to work, as the clergy did, they would be able to support their families, and not multiply beggars upon us without end. And the clergy would find work for them. There are yet churches to be built, or kept in repair; schools and other public works to be done. It is now a national charge to rebuild one church; and has taken so many years, that Paul's Work is become a proverb. There would not, have needed any tax for this, more than for the first building of it, if the clergy had their own; who built most of all the churches in the kingdom with less noise.

III. It would improve trade, by so many being bound apprentices, as the clergy did, when they had their revenues; and so dispose of the vagrants and loose-livers (who for necessity take to the highway,) into profitable employments, useful for the commonwealth.

IV. It would improve learning. (But that may be an objection with some.) Many a noble genius is lost for want of education. Which would then be much more liberal; as it was when the Church enjoyed her possessions. And learning was in the dark ages, preserved almost only among the clergy, when the bent and inclination of other men ran little that way, except such as were influenced, and many educated by the clergy.

V. Let me add, that it would be more for the advantage of the crown, and consequently of the kingdom. It is well known, that these lands paid

more, in all public taxes, while they were in the hands of the Church, than they have done since, And the Convocations always taxed themselves much more in proportion than the laity. They paid tenths oftener than the laity paid fifteenths. Which made Charles V. say of Henry VIII., when he seized the lands of the Church, that he had killed the pullet which laid the golden egg.

VI. Money is the blood of the kingdom, and the circulation of it diffuses life and vigour to every part. Now, if according to what has been said in this essay, there were a perpetual circulation of the tenths of the kingdom, from the people to the priests; from the priests to the bishops, and back again from the bishops to the poor; I submit it to consideration, whether this would not prove a greater advantage to the nation, than any that our State projectors have yet found out? God requires nothing but for our good, and his folly is wiser than men.

Let me lastly obviate a prejudice I foresee may be taken against my proposal: for prejudices must be answered as well as arguments, and often sway men more.

It may be thought by some who have no goodwill to the Church or religion, that this would make the clergy too great and rich. And they bear no thought with more indignation than this. They had rather the nation should perish, than be saved by the Church. It is not to gratify such

men as these, but to satisfy others, and guard them against their clamours, that I offer the following considerations.

I. That the number of our clergy is too few. They are not able to attend such vast charges as they ought; especially in London and other great towns, where it is impossible for some ministers, if they should do nothing else, to visit all the families, much less every particular person who is under their cure, and the like, in many country parishes. This is one great cause of the increase of Dissenters amongst us of all sorts.

Then our bishopricks are too large. And the bishop's inspection would be much more effectual, if he had no more priests under him than he could be personally acquainted with, both as to their learning and conversation.

But these defects cannot, as things now stand, be amended, while there are, as I am informed, above 2000 parishes in England not worth above twenty pounds a year, and many not worth ten. This makes pluralities necessary, and reduces the poor clergy to such contempt, as to render their labours wholly ineffectual, unless to those very few who can distinguish their character from their circumstances. And withal betrays them unavoidably to such ignorance, having neither time to study, nor money to buy a book, unless a Dutch system; nor opportunity for good conversation; that nothing less than the power of miracles, as the

Apostles had, can reconcile respect to them, or authority to their doctrine.

Then the bishoprics are so stript, that except five or six, there must be the greatest husbandry in the world to make our bishops live in any sort proportionable to their character, besides leaving their children to the parish when they die.

But if the Church were restored to her right, then might there be twenty times as many clergy as we have; and their cures brought within a manageable compass. Which would keep them from the danger of being overgrown with wealth.

Besides that, if the poor were laid upon the clergy, as we have been speaking, it would take some years before they would have much to spare; before the number of the poor would be so lessened, by the methods before-mentioned, as to allow them to augment the number of the clergy.

There were in the small kingdom of Israel, at one time, 38,000 Levites above the age of 30, (1 Chron. xxiii. 3.) England would require many more to perform their function as they ought, to the profit of the people. And all the patrimony that ever the Church had in England would not overdo it, to be divided among so many as would be needful of the clergy, and for maintaining the poor besides; together with the building and repairs of churches, schools, colleges, libraries, and many other charges profitable to the nation.

Add another consideration. If there were such

a number of the clergy, there would be more provision for many of our sons, whom we cannot now dispose of, at least, not so well. And there would not be danger of weakening the strength or wealth of the nation as in Spain, by so many idle monks, as live upon the labours of others, and contribute nothing to the support of the government. That objection cannot lie against secular clergy, and where there are none other. None that are locked up from the world, and must be maintained only to think. None but who are labourers in the harvest, and, therefore, worthy of their hire. And whose hire goes not into a bed of sand, like what is given to the regulars, and never returns: but it circulates like any other money of the nation, and does as much good.

And our clergy are, or may be, as useful as any others in parliament, in council, and other great affairs of the nation. And those of lower rank, as justices of the peace, and other offices for the distribution of justice.

It is a monkish humour (though some know it not) to think that the clergy oughtnot to intermeddle in secular affairs, or live out of cells. Those who converse in the world, and mind their cures, are in the road, certainly, of doing most good. These are therefore called the secular clergy, because they live in the world, and use human conversation. But those who run themselves into holes, as if, forsooth, their sanctity could not bear

the common air : and put themselves under rules and models of their own devising, do therefore give themselves the name of regulars ; and would be angels before their time. But men are born into the world to serve their generation. And they who make too much haste out of it, either by taking away their own lives, (as some have done out of conscience,) or by making them useless to the world in retirement, are guilty of the same sin, in different degrees.

And the example of Elijah, who was persecuted into a wilderness to save his life, is a very impertinent precedent for them : for he was so far from choosing it, that he thought it an affliction beyond death ; and wished to die, (1 Kings xix. 4.)

As little will the case of 'John the Baptist avail them. For his being in the wilderness was in order to his shewing or coming publicly abroad unto Israel. And they who retire for a time in order to that end, are far from their predicament, who put themselves under vows of abstraction for their whole lives.

They may as well urge the example of our Saviour, who was forty days in the wilderness. But it is happy that they have not the least umbrage in the favour of monkery through the whole life of our blessed Lord. He came eating and drinking, and conversing with publicans and sinners.

As little is there to countenance it in the Acts

of the Apostles. They, as their Master, went about doing good.

The first Christian monks were made so, not of choice, but necessity : they fled in the heat of persecution to wildernesses and solitary places ; where, by custom, they contracted a liking of the lonely, that is, the monastic life : which, as it is natural, they praised for the pleasure of its safety, and freedom of thought. For this they could not find any where else, when nothing but racks and gibbets was to be seen for Christians, out of the confines of their retirement.

And others, when this necessity was over, out of a superstitious weakness, would imitate this manner of living, and set it up for a constant, and the most perfect rule of life ; which should all men imitate, the world must perish in a moment. Men may, with as much reason run themselves into jails, in imitation of the Christian imprisonments, as into woods and privacies, to act their flights and abscondings. It looks very like what we call children's play. But it comes to too sad earnest when it is set up for a principle.

Thus, because the Apostle, (1 Cor. vii. 26,) gave advice (for himself calls it no more, he said it was no commandment of the Lord) in the case of the present distress, the grievous persecution that then lay upon the Christians, that it was good, *i. e.*, convenient, and more for their ease and safety not to

marry at that time : and because many, for the same reason, did follow this advice, which even natural reason would suggest to any man ; for who would choose to marry, either under sentence of death, or when he was flying for his life ? From this, no ground at all, some have run into what the same Apostle does positively call a doctrine of the devil, (1 Tim. iv. 1, 3,) “ Forbidding to marry.” Counting that a defilement which God ordained and blessed in Paradise. And though they have made it a sacrament, yet think it so unworthy of a priest, that he shall incur deprivation for it : whereas a slight penance shall satisfy for his fornication or adultery. Thus, “ Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men ;” and setting them up higher, and more sacred than the commandments of God ; who has permitted every man to marry, (1 Cor. vii. 2 ;) and has made it honourable in all, (Heb. xiii. 4.) And the reason given, (1 Cor. vii. 9,) “ Better to marry than burn,” does include all ; and is a general rule which obliges all.

And, therefore, to prohibit any order or degree of men, without exception, from marriage, is in express contradiction to this rule, and a doctrine of devils. Unless we can be positively assured, (which is impossible without a miracle,) that they have all the gift of continency to that degree as not to burn. But, on the contrary, we have infallible assurance that they do burn. They own this to be the great-

est reason of their mortifications. And they impose penances for their whoredoms and adulteries, though not so great as for their marriage. The examples of their incontinency are manifold and notorious, which yet cures not their burning. It mixes itself with their devotion : for there are no such anatomies of lust to be found among the most openly debauched, as have proceeded from the heated imaginations of some of the cælibat causuists upon chastity. Where, having the beloved sin before their eyes, upon an honourable account, that is, to condemn it : they uncover it, as the judges did Susannah ; and fill themselves with its beauty.

How different is the style of the aged, or the married pens upon that subject ! Which shews how far the remedies of God's providing are preferable to those of our devising ; especially when our's will run counter to his ; and that we cry down his, to establish our own !

The fury of the first persecutions, from a temporary and prudent forbearance of marriage, run many into an excess in praise of celibacy, which was counted a curse and a reproach among the most pious of former ages ; but the enjoining of it, as it is contrary to the frame of the world, so to the commands of God. And placing a greater sanctity in it, than in the state of marriage, is of pernicious consequence, as is seen among those where this principle is set up.

But this is a digression ; though not wholly fo-

reign to our business : for such a number of priests as England would require, according to the rules before spoke of, and to be excluded from all civil offices of profit to the commonwealth, and likewise prohibited from marriage, would be an unsupportable detriment to the community and public good. Therefore though these reasons might have been urged for dissolving the regulars, in the beginning of the Reformation, yet they can have no place against the restoring of our secular clergy to what these regulars, as well as others, had robbed from them.

As to the point of marriage we need say no more of it : for it is not grudged to our clergy by any but the Romanists. But there are many prejudiced against their being admitted to any share in the civil administration. They pretend that it is, at least, an impediment to the office of their calling—which they would have wholly abstracted from the world—and to respect only heavenly things ; and that they should be useless in all other respects.

This, as I said, is a spice of the monkish superstition : for I would pray these men to consider, whether the practice be not as necessary to a clergyman, as the preaching of good doctrine ? And wherein he can shew his practice more, or so beneficially, as in assisting to the making of good laws, and preventing of wickedness from being established by law ? In directing the councils of

princes to honourable, just, and pious resolutions? and checking the profane and debauched who are apt to creep in there, especially into the councils of young princes, who are inclined to be most swayed by those who administer to their pleasures? It is not thought unbecoming the gravity of a bishop to be tutor to a young prince; but rather a thing desirable for the public good, to bring him up in the fear of God, and instil virtuous and honourable principles into him. And is it not as necessary, as beneficial, that he should stand by him, when he comes to the exercise of these principles, in the administration of his government; and when he must encounter with many temptations, and is most liable to be circumvented by wicked and designing men? The young King Joash, did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, all the days of Jehoiadah the priest, who had brought him up from a child, (2 Chron. xxiii. 2.) But after his death, the king fell into the hands of the princes, (verse 17,) who corrupted him, and brought wrath upon him from the Lord, and upon the whole kingdom, whom he and they likewise corrupted into idolatry. He also grew tyrannical in his government, and most ungrateful, killing Zechariah, the son of Jehoiadah, who had saved his life, and set him upon his throne, that had been usurped from him.

God himself made the priests the chief judges, even in secular affairs, under the Law, (Deut. xvii.

8, &c.) And does not the reason hold the same under the Gospel? viz., That they are supposed, and ought to be most conscientious in the discharge of this duty; and consequently, that it is best for the people that the clergy should have the discharge of it. Does not the Apostle argue from the same topic, (1 Cor. vi. ;) and think it fit, that the Church should judge of secular matters?

But Christ said "Who made me a judge?" (Luke xii. 14,) that is, in secular matters. And, "My kingdom is not of this world," (John xviii. 36 :) it is true. The office of judge, in secular matters, was then in the hands of the civil magistrate, which Christ came not to disturb or alter; or to set up a temporal kingdom. He gave no civil authority at all to his Church: but he nowhere debarred her from it, if given by the secular power. And the judging which St. Paul speaks of, (1 Cor. vi.,) is plainly that of voluntary arbitration among themselves; and not encroaching, in the least, upon the office of the civil magistrate.

But this shews, that it is nowise unfit for clergymen to concern themselves in civil affairs; else it would be as unlawful for them to be arbitrators as judges. For it takes up their time, and engages them in secular thoughts, different from their studies. Yet no man makes it an objection, but thinks it very becoming the office of a clergyman to be a peace-maker, and reconcile differences amongst his flock or neighbourhood: which is im-

possible for him to do, without understanding something of worldly business. And might he not do this with more advantage, if he were clothed with the civil authority? I have seen the experience of it, and the country very sensible of the benefit of a clergyman in the commission of the peace; where they had that dispatch, and justice, and protection, which they bemoaned the want of, when he was removed from them. Sure, no relation of landlord and tenant, or neighbourhood, can create a concern and tenderness, equal to that of a pastor to his flock. And if he be a good man, and understanding, no man can be a fitter magistrate among them. And thereby more recommend himself, as to his spiritual office, when they see, and taste, and feel his justice, prudence, beneficence, and charity, as well as hear him discourse of it from the pulpit. When he can contribute and vote, and act for the support of the poor, and be their remembrancer and advocate every assizes and sessions, as well as recommend it in a sermon. When he can brow-beat the audacious and profane; and if not convert them, yet keep them within the bounds of decency, that their infection spread not among his flock. When a debauchee dare not swear two or three rappers in his face: burlesque the Holy Scriptures: or speak some obscene, beastly stuff, to put a jest upon the parson, without meeting with what he deserves, the correction of the stocks. This, in a heathen country, was part of their persecution, and

they must bear it. But in a Christian nation, sure it cannot be misbecoming the character of a clergyman, that he be enabled to preserve religion and morality from the insults and outrage of these sons of Belial, without being forced to sue for it where he may be more laughed at, and see what is sacred turned to ridicule.

What witchcraft is it that has raised in us this contempt, jealousy, and disdain against the clergy ! Are they not our sons, brothers, and relations, like other men ? Do we not expend money for their education, to fit them for that profession ? And do we then grudge them the comfort of it, to live like other men ? If we bind a son, to any the meanest trade, we wish his thriving. Are the clergy then more vicious than other men ? I think we cannot with justice say so. But a small blot in a clergyman is more scandalous (as it ought to be) than much more in another man. And this shews them to be generally of stricter lives than other men. Whereas, many liberties which would give no offence at all in another, would be very ill taken in a clergyman. They do not all live up to the sacredness of their character, (nor ever did.) But we have put them under several disabilities, which have been spoke of, therefore we ought to bear the more with them. And let all the prudent means that can be contrived for their reformation be set on foot—they cannot be too good.

But, however, as to the subject in hand, I think

it would be no inconvenience for the public, if there were provisions for several thousands of our children (more than there are) among the clergy. And this, being joined with other great advantages before-mentioned, which would accrue to the whole nation, by restoring the ancient patrimony of the Church, ought to be no small encouragement towards it.

I have now done with my politics, wherein I have no talent, and return to make a short conclusion from all that has been said.

CONCLUSION

If it be a truth that we ought to honour the Lord with our substance: if that be part of his worship, of the honour due unto his name: if the determinate quantum of a tenth part, has been the received notion and practice of the whole earth, ever since the beginning, as far as we have any account of times: if God has promised great blessings, as well temporal as eternal, to our performance of this part of religious worship, the due payment of our tithe to him: and threatened the ne-

glect thereof with severe judgments, even to curse whole nations, accounting it as a robbing of himself: and if we have seen this made good in the heathen nations, as well as amongst Jews and Christians: and visited many years after it was committed, in following generations, to shew that he forgets not this sin, though he may bear long with it.

If there be anything sacred in vows, made in the most solemn manner, by kings, parliaments, and people, with the dreadfulest imprecations and curses upon themselves and posterities who should alienate, or take back to common use, what they had dedicated to God and his Church. If it be the rule of our law, and determined now every day in Westminster Hall, that what is once mortified to the service of God can never revert to the donor: and that if the particular uses for which he did mortify such lands, money, &c., be superstitious or unlawful, the use is to be amended, and the thing devoted turned to some other holy use, like the censers of Korah; but can never revert to the donor, or his heirs, because the grant is to God and his Church; and must so remain, and cannot be desecrated, or returned to common use. Nay, though the use should become impracticable, as in the late case of Mr. Snell, who gave a mortification for four Scots exhibitioners in Baliol College in Oxford, for the propagation of Episcopacy in Scotland; which being now abolish-

ed there by act of parliament, that use is, for the present, become impracticable; and his heirs, who sued for this here in Chancery, offered to give sufficient security, that, whenever the use should become practicable, the mortification should be applied to it; but the Court would not suffer that. There must be no compounding or jesting with God; what is once mortified to his service must not revert. And the exhibitioners are now maintained upon it in Baliol College, though the use for which Mr. Snell did design it is at present impracticable.

But if the thing mortified, vowed, or devoted, be not anything of our own, but that which God has antecedently hallowed and reserved to himself, as the tithes, and consequently wherein we never had any property, then the breach of such vows, made only in affirmation, and for the performance of what was our duty before, and though we had not added the farther sanction of an oath to God, I say, the breach of such vows have an additional and great aggravation; as to substract our tithes (which are commanded) would be more heinous than not to make a free-will offering; though when it is offered, it is hallowed as well as the other.

And when we say to God, Hallowed be thy name, if we must mean all that is hallowed to his name, as well things as words, that all such be paid to him, then whenever we repeat the Lord's Prayer, we do again hallow all our dedicated things to

God. It is a fresh vow, at least an acknowledgment and recognition of all our former vows ; and not only of our own, but of what has been vowed and dedicated by others, especially if we are their successors ; for then the obligation descends upon us, and we are answerable for the performance.

All I have to add is, that wherein soever we find we have done amiss, we should not defer to return and amend ; and put not off from day to day. Abraham rose early to sacrifice his only son whom he loved. There must be a zeal to execute the commands of God, even when most adverse to flesh and blood, to shew the preference we give to God above all other things whatsoever. Without this, we shall never be able to overcome the strong temptations of the world. And when they cannot persuade us, they will retard and hinder us, and make us go heavily about our work ; and then they seldom fail to stop us altogether, and finally to disappoint us. For the longer we delay, after we are convinced, we are every day less apt to disengage ourselves from the world : our trust in God grows weaker, when we dare not venture upon it ; and, by the same degrees, our trust in the world grows stronger. And the longer it continues so, we grow weaker and weaker ; and our faith dwindles into less than a grain of mustard-seed. Whereas if we would put on a noble and Christian courage, and but try the experiment, then if we found it answer beyond our expectations, it would in-

crease our faith ; and we should rise from strength to strength, and find comforts beyond expression ; not only that peace of mind which the world cannot give, but it would be the surest means to attain even the riches of this world ; to prevail with God to bless and increase our store, as he has promised ; and bid us prove him herewith, if he will not perform it, (Mal. iii. 10.)

And if a modern example will be any encouragement, he that writes this does assure the reader, that he knows, now at this present, where tithes are, and have been for some time punctually paid, according to the rules before set down. And the effects have been wonderful, more than an hundred-fold, and in manner extremely remarkable and surprising.

GLORY BE TO GOD.

17th July 1699.

A F O R M
OF
P R A Y E R A N D T H A N K S G I V I N G
UPON THE
OFFERING OUR TITHE TO THE PRIEST.

A Gentile ready to perish was my father, (Deut. xxvi. 5,) a wild olive tree, growing out of the paradise of God, the pale of his Church, (Rom. xi. 17.) But he sent forth his Son, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and hath shined even unto us. And I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto his glorious Gospel, which the Lord swore unto our fathers to give us, (Deut. xxvi. 3.)

And moreover that he hath been with me, and kept me in the way that I have gone; and has given me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, (Gen. xxviii. 20.) And now behold, I have brought the first-fruits, (Deut. xxvi. 10,) all the tithes of my increase, (verse 12;) I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, neither have I taken away ought thereof, (verse 13;) but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, (verse 14,) to honour the Lord with my substance, and with the first-fruits of all mine increase, (Prov. iii.

16;) I have not transgressed his commandments, to appear empty before the Lord, (Deut. xvi. 16;) neither will I offer unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing, (2 Sam. xxiv. 24.) And, O Lord, that it may please thee graciously to accept this offering at my hands, and to make it well-pleasing in thy sight, O Lord Jesus Christ, the Priest who ever liveth to receive tithe, and to make intercession for us, (Heb. vii. 8,) receive this our tribute, our bounden duty and service, O thou bishop of our souls, in thy goodness, (1 Pet. ii. 25 :) and make it acceptable to thy Father and our Father; to thy God, and our God, (John xx. 17.) O Thou, who art able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by thee, (Heb. vii. 25;) and to succour them that are tempted, in that thou thyself wast tempted, (chap. ii. 18.) O Thou merciful and faithful High-Priest, in things pertaining to God, O do thou make powerful intercession for the sins of the people, (verse 17,) who have robbed God in his tithes and offerings, (Mal. iii. 8.) O thou who didst open the eyes of the blind, open the eyes of this people, and smite, Lord, their hearts, that they may see and consider their horrid sacrilege, and repent, and return; and that thou mayest pardon all that is past, all their neglect of paying their tithe hitherto; all mine, O God, who smite upon my breast this day, and, turning myself, I mourn for this great offence; and bless thy name, with the utmost powers of my soul, that

thou hast graciously and wonderfully had mercy on me, and now, though late, hast shewn to me thy glory and thy truth. O preserve and bless me in it; and bring more and more into it, even this whole people, (Hos. ix. 4;) that this their bread for their soul may never hereafter cease to come into the house of the Lord; that there may be meat in thine house, (Mal. iii. 10;) and that thou mayest open the windows of heaven, and pour us out a blessing, till there shall not be room enough to receive it, (verse 11,) that thou mayest rebuke the destroyer for our sakes, that he may not destroy the fruits of our ground, nor our corn cast her fruit before the time, in the field, (verse 12;) that all nations may call us blessed, that we may be a delightsome land unto the Lord of Hosts.

“ Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us,” (Deut. xxvi. 15.) Bless thy holy Catholic Church, and every land and country where she dwells, (this, in an especial manner, O Lord, our God,) her governors, the bishops, with the inferior priests and deacons; and all thy faithful committed to their charge; their kings, their princes, and temporal government. Make them faithful nourishers to thy Church, (Isa. xix. 23;) and to bow down their ear to her instruction, and submit themselves to her discipline;

that thy worship may be set up amongst us in its purity and fulness; that thou mayest delight to bless us, and to do us good at our latter end, (Deut. viii. 16.)

And now, O Lord and my God, let me return unto thee for a blessing upon myself, a most miserable and wretched sinner, who am less than the least of all the mercies which thou dost daily renew unto me, and for my——and——whom thou hast graciously given unto thy servant. And all my family, friends, relations, benefactors, and well-wishers. Feed us, O Lord, with food convenient for us: and of all that thou givest us, grant that we may surely give the tenth unto thee, (Gen. xxviii. 22,) that the Lord may be our God, (verse 21;) and may bless the fruit of our body, and the fruit of our ground, the fruit of our cattle, and the increase of our kine, and the flocks of our sheep, that the Lord may command a blessing upon us, in our store-houses, and in all that we set our hand unto, (Deut. xxviii. 4, &c.,) when we come in, and when we go out. That we may be blessed in our basket, and blessed in our store; blessed in the city, and blessed in the field: that the Lord may open unto us his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto our land in his season, and to bless all the work of our hand; and that we may lend unto many, but not borrow: that the Lord may make us the head and not the tail; and

to be above only, and not to be beneath, when we shall hearken unto the commandments of the Lord our God.

“And therefore, we do now honour, and hallow, and worship thy holy name, in rendering our bounden tribute and service, thy tenth of all our increase; which we offer with thankful and joyful hearts: adoring thy goodness, and praising thy mercy in giving us all that we have.

“Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven, and in the earth, is thine: thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Now, therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what are we, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee: for we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding,” (1 Chron. xxix. 10, &c.)

“O Lord our God, all that we have cometh of thine hand, and all is thine own,” (verse 16.) “I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness,” (verse 17.) As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart, I have willingly offered the tenth unto thee. And pray God

that I may yet see, with joy, all thy people offer the same willingly unto thee. And, O Lord God, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people. Lord, prepare their heart, and let thine ear hearken thereto, (Psal. x. 17.)

“Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles,”
(Psal. xxv. 22.)

Our Father, &c.

A BLESSING TO BE PRONOUNCED BY THE
PRIEST.

Blessed be thou of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, (Gen. xiv. 19, 20.) And blessed be the Most High God, who hath given thee a heart to fear before him, and to fulfil his law. “And the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him,” (1 Sam. i. 17,) through Jesus Christ, who died for thee. To whom be glory, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

FINIS.







