

instruct those who are deserving of instruction?—And yet if he display the naked truth before those to whom salvation is a thing of indifference, he is false to him by whom he is sent, and from whom he has received injunction not to cast the pearls of true doctrine before swine and dogs, who would fly in his face with sophisticated arguments, would cover it with the mud of their carnal conceptions, and by their barking, and their disgusting replies would worry to death the preachers of God.” Here you see a second series of motives relating to the dignity of the mysteries. You will find both of them set forth in many ecclesiastical writers, such as Tertullian, Zeno, bishop of Verona &c. They are precisely such as they must have been, on the supposition that the real presence and change of substance were then concealed in secrecy. Their fears and anxieties were such as they must certainly have entertained on this hypothesis: their precautions were those that it requires, and they were influenced by all the motives that it commands.—The identity of apprehensions, dangers and measures denotes the identity of principles and belief. We have then solid grounds for concluding that it was the real presence together with its change of substance, that all the Churches of the world kept shut up in those times so scrupulously in their bosom. This is disclosed to us by the secrecy itself, as well as by the motives of the secrecy, so exactly do they tally with this belief, as you have just seen. I add, for the completion of this moral demonstration, that they tally with this alone; and prove it.

2<sup>d</sup> In fact, what is there I ask, in the Zuinglian opinion requiring to be made so great a secret to pagans and catechumens? According to it, we become united to our Saviour, but only in spirit and by faith: prayers and homage are addressed to Jesus Christ at the right hand of God, but in no-wise upon the altar, from which he is supposed to be as far removed as earth from heaven: they call to mind his death, but without pretending to renew the oblation made by him upon the cross. For this opinion acknowledges neither sacrifice nor victim: it exposes, it is true, and distributes to its followers the bread and wine, but still remaining in effect as our senses perceive them: according to it, every change of substance is a gross error, & adoration an act of idolatry. These ordinary aliments, bread and wine, have here no other excellency than that of having been chosen by Jesus Christ as figures of his body and blood. What fault could the most obstinate Jew or unbeliever find with this? Is it not a common and received custom to leave some pledge of oneself to our friends on quitting them, that thus we may be brought to their recollection during our absence or after death! and is it not a thing quite indifferent whether this or that object be selected to awaken remembrance, warm the heart and fulfil between absent friends this ministry of reciprocal tenderness? It is even plain that our Saviour, when dying for mankind, had nothing better to select and leave them as a memorial and pledge, than the common aliment of all mankind. In all this you will discover nothing revolting to the mind nothing calculated to give a shadow of scandal to men and by consequence nothing that required secrecy.

I know that the ministers have sometimes taken it into their heads to speak of the great wonders of their Eucharist, and of the incomprehensibilities to be found in it without the real presence or any change of substance. But I also know that they affect this language merely to resemble that of antiquity, and to shew that the passages in which the Fathers enlarge upon the difficulty of believing in the mystery, from its opposition to the senses and to human reason, correspond with their doctrine as well as with ours. But in point of fact, Zuinglius and Beza discovered no mystery at all in the Eu-

charist: they prided themselves upon the discovery of the figurative sense, because it removed at once the difficulties and the scandal, and rendered the belief simple and easy to every understanding. No other than this is the judgment formed of it by the Zuinglians of your country, as I have often had occasion to learn from their conversation and writings. “In my judgment, said a writer well known amongst you, nothing has occasioned the loss of that due reverence, which is owing to the sacraments so much, as the making more of them than scripture has done: and representing them as mysteries, when they are plain religious actions. The unintelligible part of a sacrament is what the free-thinkers have chiefly made the object of their ridicule: but had the Eucharist been represented, as I have represented it, it could never have been mentioned by infidels with disrespect, at least it would have given them no occasion of treating it with any.”

Had the primitive Church thought after the fashion of this modern theologian, never would it have had any reason to withhold its altars from the sight of the catechumens and the knowledge of unbelievers. Sheltered from the shafts of ridicule and malice, it might have celebrated its Eucharist with open doors, and have discoursed and written upon it without obscurity of disguise. But how did it act? Precisely the contrary, and during full four centuries it rigorously maintained the discipline of secrecy respecting the mysteries, particularly respecting the one of which we speak. Let your Bishop Pearce, and whatever associates he can reckon in the world, acquaint us, if they can, with a plausible reason, for such conduct. There is none: there can be none, according to their ideas of the Eucharist: their opinion and the discipline of secrecy cannot go together; they are at eternal variance. All mystery being once removed from the sacrament, the primitive Church had no longer any cause for silence and secrecy.

But what am I saying? She would moreover have been urged by the most pressing motives to make a full explanation of it. Atrocious and abominable actions are publicly laid to her charge, and she does not attempt her justification: though this justification would be easily accomplished, by the simple declaration of her belief and practice. And if a candid explanation of this nature were found to be insufficient for the purpose, why did she not throw open her doors and admit her accusers or their emissaries into her assemblies, and celebrate her religious repast in their presence? Nothing could be more natural than this, on the supposition that she adopted the system of the figurative sense, at which the pagans could take no offence. The declaration published by these wit-

\*Bishop Pierce's second letter, written in 1730, to Dr. Waterland. Works. London 1777, vol. II. p. 452. It may also be found in a note of Dr. Sturges, Reflections on Popery, p. 100.

To one who has reflected upon the texts of the New Testament, upon the doctrine of the apostolic and primitive ages; to one who is not a stranger to the testimonies of the holy Fathers, some of which I shall continue to produce to the end of this dissertation, I know nothing more unchristian and more revolting than this system of the anglican prelate. It strips the Eucharist of all the wonders which our Lord had thrown round it, and with which his first, and faithful servants have at all times believed it to be invested: and boasts to have by this manœuvre removed from what are called men of strong minds, but who are more appropriately called men of weak minds, every pretext for irreverent declamation. With the admirable principles of these condoning divines, it only remains for them to draw their pen over all the mysteries of religion, because, in good truth, the proud and of course weak wits of the age, employ by preference their sarcasms and abuse against whatever is mysterious in doctrine.

Add this new example to the examples I have already adduced, of the infinite variations and perpetual discord into which the uncontrolled liberty of dogmatizing leads the members of your Church, and even the very inmates of its sanctuary, as you see by these three personages.

nesses, of what had passed under their own eyes, would immediately have put an end to the calumnies that had gone abroad to the world.

And, observe, it was not the common people alone among whom such ideas were current: they had reached the highest and the most enlightened classes of society. Numbers took up their pen against the christians, and boasted that they had proved these crimes, on the grounds of their clandestine assemblies and the secrecy of their doctrine. What reply would the christian apologists have to make, on the Zuinglian hypothesis? Simply, or nearly this: So far are we from perpetrating the crimes which you lay to our charge, that we take, in our sacred repast, nothing more than a little bread and wine in memory of our divine master; the bread, as the figure of the body which he delivered, and the wine, as the figure of the blood which he shed for us. He himself, on the eve of his passion, instituted this holy and moving ceremony, commanding us to do it after his departure, in remembrance of his death, and also as a sign of union between us and him: we merely obey his commands.” But was this satisfactory and natural reply ever given? Attend and see: “Our accusers, says Justin, themselves commit the crimes of which they accuse us, and they attribute them to their Gods. As for us, as we have no share in them, so we trouble not ourselves about them, having God for the witness of our actions and thoughts.—We entreat you that this apology may be rendered public, after you have replied to it as to you may seem fitting, to the end that others, may know what we are, and we may be delivered from the false suspicions, that expose us to punishment. They know not that we condemn the infamies publicly laid to our charge, and that we therefore renounce the gods who committed such enormities and who require the same from their adorers. If you will grant our request, we shall then lay open our maxims to the world—to convert it, if its conversion be possible.” Observe, he does not say; we will expose our mysteries, we will celebrate before witnesses, we will throw open our doors. This however would have put an end to all calumnies and removed all suspicions. On the Zuinglian hypothesis, it is difficult to imagine what could have prevented Justin from publicly making an offer at once so simple and so natural. “If we always remain concealed, replied Tertullian, how have they discovered what we do! and by whom has it been discovered? Assuredly, not by the accused, for it is the common law of all mysteries to keep them secret. It must then have been by strangers. But whence could these know it, since the sacred initiations admit no strangers and reject the profane?” In vain was their clandestine worship objected to them by the pagans: far from denying or renouncing it, Tertullian takes up its justification, and employs it to demonstrate how futile must be the accusations of those who know nothing of the matter. “Do you really believe it possible,” exclaims Octavius, “that the tender little body of an infant should be destined to fall beneath our blows, and that we should shed the blood of a new born babe, almost before it has received the shape of a human being. Let him believe it, whose cruelty could accomplish such a deed,—as for us, we are not permitted to assist at a homicide, nor even to hear it spoken of: so far, indeed, are we from spilling human blood, that we forbid even the blood of animals at our meals.” The secrecy of the christians is cruelly misrepresented and aspersed; and yet Octavius does no more than shew that they are incapable of committing the imputed crimes, never discovering what it is that they really do. “If our accusers be asked” says Athenagoras, “whether they have seen what they assert of us, they will not have the impudence to say they have.—How can those be accused of killing and eating men, who, as it is well known,