

hest to cease from preaching. When Christ's will and Cæsar's will come into collision there is for the Christian no alternative but to obey Christ, let the consequences be what they may.

Here is then the difference between Protestant and Papist. In the case of the former it is the will of Christ that limits civil obedience; in the case of the latter it is the will of an Italian priest. "Thus saith the Lord," settles to the Protestant all controversy; while to the Papist the decision rests on the *decretum est* (i. e. the will) of the Pope.

But this brings us face to face with a very important, and not very well understood question, among Protestants, the question, viz:—"How are we to find out the mind of Christ." Some will tell us that in following conscience we are listening to the voice of Christ, and that conscience therefore is the ultimate umpire when there is a conflict of authorities. There is an element of truth in this. Conscience is God's witness; and he who listens to conscience listens to the voice of God in so far as conscience is clear and capable. But is there no danger of setting up our fallible consciences as infallible guides, in which case men who rebel against the Pope sitting in Rome may bow down to a Pope sitting within their own evil breasts. Well may it be said of conscience as some one said of religion: "O, Conscience, what crimes have been committed in thy name." When the wretched fanatics of Germany rose against all civil authority, in the sixteenth century, it was on the plea their consciences would not allow them to submit to the civil law. It is plain therefore that conscience alone is not a sufficient witness as to Christ's will. Except for man's fall it would be a sufficient witness as to right or wrong, but the fall has depraved the conscience and invalidated the truthfulness of the other faculties that minister to it, so that we must look out for another witness by which to guide and gauge the decision of conscience.

The Bible is the second witness whose testimony is always necessary to regulate the decisions, even of the best informed consciences. It is to the direct, plain will of God as revealed in his Word that the Church since the days of Moses has trusted chiefly for ascertaining the path of duty. It was to the "Law and to the Testimony" our blessed Lord appealed in his conflict with the Prince of Darkness, thrice, in that spiritual combat, quoting its decision as an end of their controversy. It is therefore a generally understood maxim in all Protestant communities that the "Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and manners." Hence, also, we suppose the other maxim, that "The Bible, the Bible alone is the religion (i. e. faith and morals) of Protestants."

But there seems still something a-wanting. We know that the Bible may be misunderstood. From its blessed pages gross heresies have been extracted, and also justification for treason and rebellion. It is not therefore the Bible