

# The Catholic.

Quod semper; quod ubique; quod ab omnibus.

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## SELECTED.

### AMICABLE DISCUSSION.

Continued.

#### ON UNITY.

It would have been easy for me to lengthen these quotations, by adding what has been written upon this subject, during the first five ages by Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Firmilian of Cesarea, Theophilus of Antioch, Lactantius, Eusebius, Ambrose &c and after so many illustrious testimonies, the decisions of the bishops united in a body in the particular councils of Elvira, in 305; of Arles, in 314; of Gaugres, towards 360; of Saragossa, 318; of Carthage, 398; of Turin, 399; of Toledo, 400; of Constantinople, 381; of Ephesus, 431; of Chalcedon, 451. I prefer calling your attention to authorities, which, for being more modern, will not on that account, perhaps appear less strong in your eyes, and no doubt will astonish you the more.

The confession of Augsburg [Art. 7]: "We teach that this one holy Church will exist always. For true unity of the Church, it suffices to agree in the doctrine of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, as St. Paul said, one faith, one baptism, one God, the Father of all."

The Catechism of Geneva (Sunday XVI), teaches that, "No one can obtain the pardon of his sins, unless he be first incorporated in the people of God and persevere in the communion of the body of Christ—Thus therefore there would be nothing but damnation and death for him who is out of the Church.—Yes, without doubt, all those who separate from the communion of the faithful, to form a separate sect, must never expect salvation as long as they remain in that state of separation."

The Helvetic Confession (Art 12,) speaking of the assemblies held by the faithful in all times since the apostles, adds: "All those who despise them and separate from them despise the true religion, and should be urged by the pastors and godly magistrates not to persist obstinately in their separation."

The Gallican Confession (Art. 16): "We believe that no one is permitted to withdraw from the assemblies of worship, but that all ought to maintain the unity of the Church;—and that whoever strays from it, resists the order of God."

The 18th Article of the English convocation, 1562, teaches the same doctrine almost in the same terms.

The Scotch confession (Art. 27): "We firmly

believe that the Church is one.—We utterly detest the blasphemies of those who pretend that all men, by following equity and justice, whatever religion they otherwise profess, shall be saved. For without Christ, there is neither life nor Salvation."

The Belgic confession: "We believe and confess one only Catholic Church.—Whoever forsakes this true Church, manifestly revolts against the ordinance of God."

The Saxon confession (Art. 12): "It is a great consolation for us to know that there are no inheritors of eternal life except in the assembly of the elect, according to that, whom he has predestinated, them has he called."

The Bohemian confession (Art. 8): "We have been taught that all ought to keep the unity of the Church.—; that no one should introduce sects or excite sedition, but that every one should prove himself a true member of the Church in the bond of peace and in unanimity of sentiment." How strange and deplorable was the blindness of these men, not to have known how to apply these principles to the time that preceded the preaching of Luther! What was so true, when they drew up their confessions of faith, was equally so, no doubt, at that time.

Even Calvin teaches "that to forsake the church is to deny Jesus Christ: that we must be greatly upon our guard against so criminal separation.—that a more atrocious crime cannot be imagined, than that of violating by a perfidious sacrilege, the covenant which the only Son of God has deigned to contract with us." Unhappy man! What a sentence has escaped his mouth. He will for ever be his own condemnation.

In 1680, Henchman, bishop of London, wishing to shew the dissenters the necessity of ending their schism, thought he should more effectually accomplish his object, if the Calvinistic ministers from without would join their voices with his: he wrote to M. Claude and to M. de P'Angle, ministers of Charenton, and to M. le Mayne, professor of divinity at Leyden. they all three entered into his views and gave their opinion in writing. De P'Angle sets forth "that all those, who, from hatred to the episcopacy, forsake the established Church, were guilty of a very great crime; for schism (said he) is the most terrible calamity that can befall the Church." Claude exhorts the English dissenters to consider, "whether their system is not in direct contradiction to the spirit of Christianity, which is a spirit of union, of social and fraternal intercourse, and never a spirit of division.—My Lord (continues he,) I have not the least scruple in having recourse to violent remedies against

the procedure of those who form a separate party, avoid the assemblies of the faithful, and withdraw themselves from your authority. Such conduct evidently amounts to a positive schism, a crime detestable in itself and abominable before God and man; those who incur its guilt, either by being its first promoters, or the supporters of it in others, must expect to render a terrible account at the great day of judgment." And yet, neither Claude nor de P'Angle, nor Henchman, had any notion of applying to themselves and their predecessors that well founded threat, they so emphatically held out against the Calvinists of England! !

I have under my eye many more passages in which Melancthon, Peter Martyr, Gerhard, du Plessis, &c. and before them John Huss, teach the same doctrine. I turn them aside, to bring before you some of the most distinguished divines of your own Church. James I. the second supreme governor in spirituals, and his theologian, Cassaubon, in their reply to the Cardinal du Perron, acknowledge in plain terms, "that there is no hope for salvation for those who are separated from the Catholic Church, or from its communion." "Touching the sin of dividing the Church," says Dr. Goodman, "that it is of the deepest dye and greatest guilt, I suppose we shall easily agree; for indeed no body can well doubt of that, who considers what care our Saviour took to prevent it, what pains he took with his apostles that they might be thoroughly instructed and not differ in the delivery of his mind to the world, and with what extraordinary ardour he prayed for them upon this very account. John 17 11. And the Apostles themselves answered their master's care with their own diligence and circumspection. He that observes how industrious they were to resist all beginnings of Schism in every Church, to heal all breaches, and to take away all occasions of division, to unite all hearts and reconcile all minds, How they taught people to detest this distemper as the bane of Christianity, charging them to use the greatest caution against it, to mark and avoid all those men, that inclined that way, as persons of a contagious breath and infectious society. What odious names they give it, as *Carnality, the work of the flesh, and of the Devil*: He, I say, that observes all this, cannot but be apprehensive of the greatness of this sin. But he that shall trace the sense of the Church a little farther, will find the Primitive Christians having it in such detestation, that they thought it equal to the most notorious Idolatry, Murder, and Sacrilege. This writer had deeply studied the sacred volume and had caught the spirit of primitive tradition. Oh that the Parliament of 1558 had made the same