

formed theologians, and in the mouth of the most ordinary laics. Whatever colour and whatever likelihood it may appear to borrow from scripture, you will soon, I trust, judge of it in a different manner, when you have read the following reasons.

1<sup>o</sup> It is a fact that none of the fathers, none of the ecclesiastical writers have ever seen in these words the sense which the Calvinists have discovered in them. It is a fact again that none of those who first broached the doctrine of the figurative presence were led to do so by these words, *Do this for a commemoration of me*. Zuinglius, who must have had them a hundred times under his eyes, and who went every where in search of the figure, was unable to discover it there. He was taught to discover this precious pearl, as he himself calls it, only from the letter of a Dutchman, and to defend it in a way that seemed to him victorious, only by the revelation of a nocturnal phantom. But this figurative sense being once discovered and established, they thought it advisable, in order to give it consistency, to invent a necessary relation between the words of the institution and those immediately following, to regard these latter as the explication of the former, and, by favour of an induction from one to the other, to find the so much desired figure even in the words of Jesus Christ. But what will forever demonstrate that this combination of connection and dependance between these words derives its origin from prepossession and not from the text, is the fact of its remaining so long a time unknown in the world. Indeed it not only escaped the observation of all the christians during a long succession of ages, but even of the innovators themselves, who had the greatest interest in discovering it: they themselves only adopted it, as an afterthought; and it is not by this pretended necessary relation that they arrived at the figure, but from the figurative sense they passed to this new and arbitrary supposition.

2<sup>o</sup> If the words, *do this for a commemoration of me*, are necessarily explanatory of the preceding ones, *this is my body*, and if from the reality they lead us to the figure, we must say that our Saviour wished to imitate the wanton jokes of certain persons who begin by announcing something very extraordinary, and conclude by giving it a most simple and natural turn. This way of acting may not be misplaced in company; for it may, in our conversations, have its point and agreeableness, by the surprise which it occasions at first, and by the pleasure that it afterwards produces by an unexpected explanation, which draws the minds of hearers from a perplexity that till then had held them in suspense. But to impute to our Saviour any thing of this kind approaches to blasphemy. This kind of conversation is totally opposite to the Gospel in general, and above all to that imposing gravity which should characterize the last supper, so near his passion, and so filled with thoughts of death: in fine it is totally inconsistent with the well-known character of the God-man, of whom it is not written that he ever was heard to indulge in a joke, or that he was ever even seen to laugh.

3<sup>o</sup> If the words *this is my body* convey in their

insulated state and of themselves the sense of the reality, and if they are determined to that of the figure merely by the following words, *do this for a commemoration of me*, it follows that these latter are, of absolute necessity, the explanation of the former, and that they must not be separated from one another, for if the latter were suppressed, we should be necessarily obliged to admit the sense of the reality, which, in my present supposition, is that which Jesus Christ wished to exclude by adding: *Do this for a commemoration of me*. It is evident therefore, that, in this hypothesis, it cannot be right, without contradicting the end and design of our Saviour, to relate the first words without the second. And yet St. Matthew and St. Mark, the two first evangelists, and for many years the only ones, passed over the second in silence. They did not deem them necessary: they did not consider them as explanatory of the the preceding ones: and therefore they did not discover between them that connection, that essential dependence, which your friends have since invented.

4<sup>o</sup> To come to the bottom of their argument, I observe that it goes upon the principle that a memorial supposes an absence, and that consequently if Jesus Christ were present in the Eucharist, he would not command that they should there bare him in remembrance. Now this principle, specious as it may appear, I hesitate not to pronounce absolutely false. I know that remembrance is generally applied to things absent: you will nevertheless agree with me that it is not opposed to absence, but to forgetfulness, and that it is very proper that we should be admonished to keep in mind what we might forget. Now there are many things present that we are liable to forget, because their presence is not sensible to us, and does not strike our eyes. Do we not forget God and the guardian angels? do we not forget our souls, &c.? The presence of these objects is most certain, but not being sensible, we are but too apt to forget them, and we have sufficient reasons to recall them to our remembrance. Well: the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is of this kind; real but not sensible. He might therefore very justly say to us, remember me when you take my body: because being invisible to our senses, his body is only present to our faith.

5<sup>o</sup> As for the rest, Sir, I have gone into this detail for no other purpose than to convince you that there is no solidity in these, so often refuted arguments, and that they can be supported on no side, the principle falling together with its consequences. You know however that the figurists of all countries place all their reliance upon it, and that this memorial ordained by our Saviour is the ground of their doctrine, the entrenchment where they think they are in safety. Now that you see the weakness of all its parts, would you wish to know the true and just signification of these words, *do this for a commemoration of me*? it is not difficult to discover: you must begin by ridding yourself of this essential connection of which you have so often heard but with which neither St. Matthew, nor St. Mark nor any of the bishops or doctors of the

Church were acquainted: and which was only taken up as an after-thought by those who renewed the doctrine of the figurative sense. These two passages, *this is my body*, *do this for a commemoration of me*, are independent one of another, and have each of them a separate, a peculiar and distinct sense. The first gives the reality, the second supposes, rather than destroys it. The one is a proposition declaratory of what is presented—the body of Jesus Christ; the other, a precept as to the spirit and disposition in which we ought to receive it, that is, as we learn from St. Paul, by remembering that he was delivered up and that he suffered for us: “For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord.” Jesus Christ was desirous that our thoughts, and our hearts should be fixed upon his passion, at the time of our receiving his adorable body. Of all the benefits conferred upon us, that which he wishes us to reflect upon the most and to choose by preference, is his death, that is, the pledge of our redemption, the only hope of our salvation, the most heroic act of his love for us, as being the best calculated to inflame our souls at the moment of our approaching his sacred table.

Thus, Sir, although a memorial need not suppose absence, it is nevertheless true to say that the object of our remembrance in this great act of religion is not present in the Eucharist: for this object, which the memorial is to bring to our mind, is the death of our Saviour, merely represented to us by the separation of his body under the appearance of bread, and of his blood under that of wine. “It might seem that the Eucharist being a memorial of his death ought to be preceded by it. But no, it is for men, whose knowledge and foresight are uncertain, to permit things to happen, before they command others to keep them in remembrance.” The command to shew forth the death of the Lord, belonging to the very institution of the mystery, there is no doubt that at the first Lord's supper it was complied with by the apostles.—They shew forth by the anticipation of one day that passion which all christian ages have since shewn forth by commemoration: and it is most evident that a duty practised by the apostles, in the presence of Jesus Christ living and speaking before them, can never become for us a proof of his absence.

In general all the objection we have just seen, and those lesser ones, which we have suppressed, that we may not stretch out the dissertation into a volume, tend equally to convince us that the Eucharist presents not really the body, but merely the figure of the body. Observe that from all these objections it would result that Jesus Christ must be made to say precisely the contrary to what he did say: for if he has only left us the figure, it follows that what he said was his body, is not so, and what he said was his blood, is not so, since the sign is not the object itself, but only the representation of it. Therefore, instead of the positive words that came from his mouth, *this is my body*, *this is my blood*, he must be made to say, at least equivalently, *this is not my body*, *this is not my blood*; for it is only the figure of them,