

With respect to the clause—"Antichrist, that man of sin,"—doubtless the divines were aware that there were "many antichrists" in the time of John and after his time; but they also were aware that the same Apostle spake of *One* who was "the Antichrist," and who has by the great majority of commentators been identified with the antichristian powers spoken of by Paul in several passages and delineated in Daniel and in the Apocalypse.

This was also the opinion of the most literal of all interpreters of Scripture, Calvin, who speaks of the Antichrist of Daniel and Paul thus: "illius scelerati et abominandi regni ducem et antesignanum, apud nos facimus Romanum Pontificem." But Calvin in the same place admits that true churches might remain under papal domination. In these "Semisepultus lateat Christus." Protestant commentators have been wont to distinguish between R. Catholic churches and the Papacy, and the Westminster Divines present the view generally expressed in commentaries and dogmatic treatises, then and now. So also the phrase; "other idolaters" owes its obnoxiousness solely to the one word "other"—a small text upon which to found a chapter of "the greatest doctrinal discussion held in this country." The mass was considered an idol and when we reflect upon what the doctrine of the mass is, it is difficult to view it in any other light—not to speak of the vast pantheon of saints, angels and their images from the Virgin Mary downwards. Considering the time in which they lived; the grand Popish assault upon England of the Armada; the comparatively recent attempt to blow up King, Lords and Commons in one vast hecatomb and, above all, the Irish massacre of 1641, the horrors of which were ringing in their ears, the divines expressed the opinions of their own and other ages on this subject with singular brevity and moderation. The revisers may eliminate these few words from the Confession—and there would be no great harm in this; as such views are no part of the theory of the Christian religion or the system of Christian doctrine, but they will not eliminate them from the minds of men. They were held long ago by many earnest and some learned men in the Latin Church before the Reformation.

"The greatest doctrinal discussion held in this country" may have appeared in a better light to those who took part in it than