RICHARD BAXTER'S ICCOUN'

Hispresent Thoughts

CONCERNING the Controversies about

THE

Perseverance of the SAINTS.

Occasioned by the gross misreports of some passages in his Book, called, The Right Method for Peace of Conscience,&c; which are left out in the last Impression to avoid offence, and this here substituted, for the fuller explication of the same Points.

Lutherus, referente Hopfinero Saxon. Evangel. p. 110.

Nihil pestilentius in Ecclesia doceri potest, quam si ea, que Necessaria non sunt, Necessaria fiant: Hac enim tyrannide conscientie illaqueantur, & libertas fidei extinguitur; mendacium pro veritate, Idolum pro Deo, abominatio pro sanctitate, culitur.

LONDON,

Printed for Tho. Underhill at the Anchor and Bible in Pauls Church-yard, and F. Tyim at the three Daggers in Fleetstreet. M. D C. L V III.





SAIN TS PERSEVERANCE

Aving let fall some passages concerning
Perseverance, in a Book entitled The
Right Method for Peace of Conscience in
32. Directions, &c. agreeable to the
state and experience of my own soul: no
sooner were they published, but many
suspicious Brethren gave out, that I had
wrote against the certain Perseverance of

the Saints. How little reason they had for their report, I manisested in the next Edition by an Apology. But the case is come to that at last, even with pious Brethren, that they know my Belickmuch better than I know my own: and therefore to tell them my Judgment, is in vain. But because I cannot think that all are so sagacious or censorious, and because I think it meetest to the utmost of my power to avoid offence, and to leave out controversie as much as may be in such practicall Writings, I have, in the last Edition of the Book, lest out all those passages that occasioned mens mistake, and withall the additional Apology, (as being then needless:) But lest any

There are many Opinions concerning this Point adiong the Professors of the Christian faith; which I think meet to fet down, that I may the better declare my own thoughts of the whole. And I shall begin at the utmost extreme on one side, and proceed on to that on the other side, taking the middle Opinions in the way.

1. The first Opinion which I shall mention, is that of the Papifts, who do not only hold the Doctrine of actual Apostacy of Saints, but also that every mortal finne, as they call them, doth excuss the Spirit of grace, and put a sinner not only under an actual guilt, but also into an unjustified estate, and so into a state of death and damnation: so that a state of grace (according to them) is frequently lost with many, and frequently recovered. If any would fee this Point open'd and debated judicionfly, let them read Rob. Baronius his small Trattate de Peccato Mortali & Veniali.

2. The second Opinion is, that the truly Regenerate and justified (indefinitely) may and do (some of them) fall totally and finally from a state of grace or justification, into a state of death and condemnation; and perish everlasting. This Opinion excepteth not the Elect themselves considered Antecedent. ly; but only confidered confequently: because it is a contradiction to be Elect and yet not to persevere: For the maintainers of it hold that God doth Elect men only upon forefight of faith and perseverance, and not to perseverance and faith it felf; For they deny any Antecedent absolute election to the first differencinggrace: and deny any such grace it felf, as

by an infliperable operation shall infallibly convert. This O. pinion was too common among both Greek and Latine Fathers, that wrote before the daies of Augustine, as appeareth both by expects passages in many of their Writings; and by their Doctrine of free-will, and predeftination upon forelight of the good use thereof, and other Points that inferre it : which Scultetus and many other of the reformed Divines do inter nevos Patrum recite. And though they faw that this would not confift with a certainty of falvation, yet they chose rather to deny that cer- *Birnard him. tainty, than to affert the Perseverance of all the Regenerate; self Sermir ! and to fay, as Origen, and after him Eusebien Preparat. Evangel. lib. 6. pag. 289. 290. [aua se i juano suor en ivero, ton randor i test dicere, αλαθόν βρέξαι πνα το τίω πρόγενωση εληλυθέναι,-

i.e. Immo pagnarent ista lecum ut idem & probus evaderet, & lum? Ego de certo probum fe futurum esse prenoset.] And Augustine himself predestinaite (as afterward) hath the like or more *.

sum filiorum Dei : Quis bec inquam dicere potest? reclamante nimirum scriptura : Nescit homo samere dignus sit, an odio. Gertitudinem igitur non babemus; sed spei fiducia consola-

Yea, when they saw that this was lyable to be affaulted with the abfurd consequence of inferring a change in God, some did not flick upon it : as Tertull. contr. Marcion. lib 2. cap.23,24. Per tot si vero etiam circa personas levem vultis intelligi, quum reprobat aliquando probatos, aut improvidum, quum probat quandoque reprobandos, quasi judicia sua aut damnet praterita, aut ignoret futura : atqui nihil tam bono & judici convenit quam pro presentibus meritis & rejicere. & adlegere, &c.

This Opinion pollefleth the farre greatest part of the Christian world at this day, but in Europe the chief friends of it are those that are called Arminians and Lutherans, and abundance of the Jestites and their followers, who also take in the first Opinion.

Ego de electis

^{3.} The third Opinion is, That no certainty of Perseverance doth arife from Election, nor can be concluded from our meer justification; and adoption and fanctification: for they think that there

This feems

allo Origens

Opinion, as

Rem. 8, Fol,

I 93. Col. 2.

194. C.2.

there is no such thing as Antecedent Election of persons individually, to faith and falvation: and they think that many of the truly justified and Regenerate, do fall away and perish for ever. But yet they fay that there is a certain height of holinefs. which is attainable in this life, which who foever attaineth shall never fall away. If you ask what is that height or state: I answer. They are obscure teachers who hold this that thun the clear disclosure of their minds, and therefore I cannot fully answer vou: only thus much I can fay, that I have met with those of them that express themselves these several waies. Some of them fay, that there is a state of finless persection attainable in this life: and that those that are thus perfect shall not fall away. Some of them make new descriptions of the Covenants. and fay that those that are under the first Covenant may fall away, but not those that are under the second: I confess I do not fully understand their describing and differencing the Covenants. And some affirm, that there is in this life, a state. of confirmation, confistent with Peccability and venial sinnes, which whofoever attaineth shall never fall away. They think that the Angels themselves were first made righteous without confirming grace: and then confirmed as a reward for their adhereing to God, when the rest fell. And so, that Adam should have been confirmed as a reward, if he had conquered the first temptation and adhered unto God. And so, that Christ doth first set men in an unconfirmed state of Justification and life, and will confirm them and put them beyond the perill of falling away, upon certain termes or conditions. (whose punctum or discernable state, they do not tell us.) The persons holding this third Opinion are the Paracelsians (under whom I comprehend the Weigelians and the rest of the may be feen in Enthusiasts) and many newly risen in England. And it seems by Hom. 26. that holy Macarius * inclined that way. And it is the (edit Afcenf.) Opinion of some later Papists: Of which more under the fifth.

free, effectuall grace, be infallibly brought to faith and perfeverance; and therefore none of the Elect shall ever totally and finally fall away or perish: But yet that some are effectually called. Regenerated, Justified and Sanctified, besides the Elect: and these will all fall away and perish. This was the opinion of Augustine, who rose up against Pelagius and his followers in defence of differencing free grace, and first plainly and fully vindicated that Grace against the exalters of Nature and free will: whom the contrary minded do now unjustly accuse of running too farre, even into a contrary extreme in the heat of his difoutations against Pelagius. Because some are so immodest as to deny this to be Augustines Doctrine, I shall add this much: I. I askt the reverend Bishop User in the hearing of Dr Kendall. Whether this were not plainly the judgment of Austin? who answered, that without doubt it was. And he was as likely to know as any man that I am capable of confulting with. 2. If any be in doubt, these passages following, among many other, may end his doubts.

August. de bono persever. c.8, & 9. \(\Gamma\) Ex duobus autem più, cur huic donetur perseverantia usq; in finem, illi autem non donetur; inscrutabiliora sunt judicia Dei. Illud tamen sidelibus debet esse certissimum ; bunc elle ex pradestinatis, illum non esse. Nam si fuissent ex nobis, ait unus ex pradestinaterum, qui de pettore domini bibebat hoc secretum, mansiffent utiq; nobiscum. Quid eft quaso, non erant ex nobis, &c. nonne utriq; vocati fuerant & vocantem secuti? utrig; ex impis justificati &c? Quanam est tandem ista discretio? Patent libri Dei: non avertamus aspe-Etum. Clamat Scriptura divina: adhibeamus auditum: Non erant ex nobis, quia non erant secundum propositum vocati : Non erant in Christo electi ante constitutionem mundi,&c. Nam si boc essent, exillis essent, & cum illis sine dubitatione man sissent.

Idem Lib. de corrept. & gratia. cap.8, & 9. [De his enim difserimus, qui perseverantiam bonitatis non habent; sed ex bono in malum desiciente bona voluntate morinntur. Respondeant si possunt, curilles Dens cum fideliter & piè viverent, non tune de vita bujus periculis rapuit ne malitia mutaret intellectum corum, & ne fictio deciperet animas corum ? Utrum bec in potestate non habuit? Anequum mala futura nescivit? Nempe nibil borum nisi perverfiffime asquinsanissime dicitur cur ergo non fecit ? &c. Quia, in-[crutabilia

^{4.} The fourth Opinion is, That God hath not only decreed that all that will believe and persevere shall be saved; but also that fuch and fuch persons by Name, shall by his differencing,

Scrutabilia judicia ejus,&c. 9. Nec vos moveat quod filiis suis quibusdam Deus non dat istam perseverantiam. Absit enim ut ita esset, si de illis pradestinatis essent, & fecundum propositum vacatis, qui verè sunt filii promissionis. Nam isti cum pie vivant, dienntur filis Des: Sed quoniam victuri sunt impie, & in eadem impietate morituri, non illos dicit filios Dei prascientia Dei. _____ Non quia justitiam simulaverunt, sed quia in ea non permanserunt : Nam si suissent ex nobis, veram, non sictam justitiam tenuissent utiq; nobiscum,&c.] vid. ult.

Idem de corrept. & grat. cap. 8. Hic si a me queratur cur eis Deus perseverantiam non dederit, qui cam qua Christiane viverent dilectionem dedit? Me ignorare respondeo : Non enim arroganter, sed agnoscens modulum meum audio dicentem Apostolum,

O homo tu quis es,&c.]

Ibid cap. 12. Quamvis ergo de omnibus regeneratis & pie viventibus loqueretur Apostolus dicens, Tu quis es qui judicas servum alienum? suo domino stat aut cadit. Continuo tamen re-

spexit ad prædestinatos, & ait : stabit autem.

Idem de dono persever. cap.22. avoiding the harsher expresfions that might offend, he teacheth them to substitute such as these: [Si qui autem obediunt, sed in regnum ejus & gloriam. pradestinati non sunt, temporales sunt, nec usq; in sinem in eadem obedientia permanebunt. The fame he hath before and there

frequently.

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Idem de correp. & grat. cap.8. Mirandum est quidem, multumq; mirandum, quod filies suis Deus quibusdam, quos regeneravit in Christo, quibus sidem, spem, ailectionem dedit, non dat perseverantiam &c.] Ib. cap. 9. [Propter boc Apostolus, cum dixisset, Scimus quoniam diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum : sciens, nonnullos diligere Deum, & in eo bono usq; in finem non permanere, mox addidit; his qui secundum propositum vocati sunt : hi enim in eo quod diligunt Deum, permanent usq; in finem, &c Ibid.cap. 6. Si autem jam regeneratus & justificatus in malam vitam sua voluntate relabitur, certe is non potest dicere, non accepi; quia acceptam gratiam Dei suo in malum libero amisit arbitrio

Ibid cap. 12. Dicit fohannes Apostolus, Est peccatum ad mortem, non pro illo dico, ut roget quis : de quo peccato quoniam non expressum est, possunt multa & diversa sentiri: Ego antem dico idesse peccatum, sidem qua perdilectionem operatur deserere usq; ad mortem.

Abundance of such passages makes Austins mind, as plain as his

Pen could express it.

Nor did he flick at the utter overthrowing of all certainty of sal. vation hereby (except conditional.) As appeareth de cor. & grat. c.13. pag.539. (Saris.) Quis enim ex multitudine sidelium quamdiu in hac mortalitate vivitur, in numero pradestinatorum se esse prasumat? quia id occultari opus est in hoc loco; ubi sic cavenda est elatio, ut etiam per Satana Angelum ne extolleretur tantus collophizaretur Apostolus.......Nam propter hujus utilitatem secreti, ne forte quis extollatur, sed omnes etiam qui bene currunt, timeant, dum occultum est qui perveniant. Propter hujus ergo utilitatem secreti credendum est quosdam de filiis perditionis, non accepto dono perseverandi usq; in finem, in fide que per dilectionem operatur incipe vivere, ac aliquandiu, fidelitèr ac juste vivere, & postea cadere, neg; de hac vita priusquam hoc eis contingat, auferri. Quorum si nemini contigisset, tamdiu baberent homines istum saluberrimum timorem, quo vitium clationis opprimitur, donec ad Christi gratiam, qua pie vivitur, pervenirent; deinceps jam securi, nunquam se ab illo esse casuros. Que presumptio in isto tentationum loco non expedit, ubi tanta est insurmitas, ut saperbiam possit generare securitas.

Idem Epist. 101. ad Vitalem. [Utile est quippe omnibus, vel pene omnibus propter humilitatem saluberrimam, ut quales futuri fint scire non possint.

Et in Lib. 11. de Civitate Dei cap. 12. pag. 670. [Quis enim primos illos homines in Paradiso negare audeat beatos suisse ante peccatum? quamvis de sua beatitudine quam diuturna, vel utrum aterna esset incertos ? esset antem aterna nisi peccassent. Cum bodic non impudenter beatos vocemus, quos videmus juste ac piè cum spe futura immortalitatis hanc vitam ducere sine crimine vastante conscientiam, facile impetrantes peccatis hajus infirmitatis divinam misericordiam? Qui licet de sua perseverantia pramio certi sin:, de ipsa tamen perseverantia sua reperiantur incerti? Quis enim bominum se in actione profectuq; justitia perseveraturum ujq; in finem se sciut, nist alique revelatione ab illo stat certus qui de hac re justo latentiq; judicio, non omnes instruit sed neminem fallit.

Of the same mind with Austin, were Prosper, Fulgentius and the rest of the highest defenders of free grace, that the Church for many ages did enjoy: as appeareth in Profperi Respons. ad Gall. Sentent 2. & Super Sent. 7. & 12. & ad object. Vincent. object. 12. & passim. Ita & Fulgentius. I forbear to recite the words, as

having been too long on that already.

The same doctrine of Augustine, Prosper, &c. do the Dominicans maintain against the Jesuits; as may be seen in Alvarez Diffut. 107. and commonly in others: as also in fausenim, Augustine de Grat Christi, lib. 9 c. 7. p. 392,393. & sequent, & lib. 3. c.20. p. 163, 1.64. who is more exact than most other Dominicans, especially in the point of predeffination, and the nature of main with the Grace. The same opinion also some of the Reformed Protestant Divines maintain : as Musculus Loc. com. de Remission. & 6. par. (mihi) 620,621,622. and D. Overall in the short addition to Davenants Differtations (wrongfully fathered on Davenant, 25 BP Wher told me.)

Pererius and feme few of the lefuites joyn in the Deminicans. Vid. Perer. Dìsp. 28. in 8.Rom & Disp.6,7,8.

> 5. The fifth Opinion is ; That God Electeth all that he will fave, to Faith and perseverance, and that some are confirmed in this life in a state of Justification, and so are past the danger of Apostasie : so that either Election or confirming Grace, will necessarily inferre the certainty of perseverance: for neither the Elect nor the confirmed shall finally fall away. And they sup. pose that many are elect which are not confirmed; and none confirmed but those that are elect. But yet they adde, that there are many truly regenerate, justified, fanctified, adopted, and live in love and obedience to God, who are yet neither elected nor confirmed: and that all these will certainly fall away.

> This Opinion is the same with that of Augustine last mentioned, but that it addeth, the non-apostatizing of the confirmed, to the non-apostatizing of the Elect. And Vossius supposeth that Augustine himself was of this mind, and joyned this point with the former. Of which I am not able to determine: For though I am as fure as words can make me, that Auftin, Profeer and Fulgentins, are of the last mentioned opinion; yet I cannot say so of this, because the footsteps of it in their writings are so few and

dark that to me they are uncertain.

Most of the Domincians go this way, and some Jesuites part of it but then they fearcewell agree about the nature of this confirme ing Grace. Viguerius (a Collector out of Thomas) and others fav., that it is nothing but the gift of Perseverance it self. Others admit a reall distinction between the grace of confirmation and perseverance, who yet agree not in the nature or effects. For some think that Habitual infused Grace, and speciall affishin g Grace, are enough to perseverance, but not to confirmation: some say a third fort is necessary to perseverance also, and that a Reprobate may have the two former. Some Papifts think, that confirming Grace doth take away Free-will in obedience, and cause such a determination of the will to good, that they do neceffarily obey, and so they are not freely but necessarily saved: These Papists hold this, it seems, because their definition of freewill is so far inconsistent with the Dominicans, that when they veeld that Confirmation doth so effectually determin the will. they must needs say that it takes away its liberty, as they think Heaven it felf doth, vize by perfecting the will, and raising it to a higher pitch than liberty. But another part of the Papifts of whom it is that Alvarez speaks, lib. 10. Disput. 104. pao: 419. (1.) do hold, that the Grace of Confirmation and Perseverance, are distinguished only accidentally, by a greater or less intension of the same Helps, but not Really. The fuller explication of their opinion and their reasons, you may find in the forecited Disputation.

But the Opinion which Ferrariensis, Alvarez, and others of that Classis do maintain, as the common opinion of the Thomists, is, that the Gift of Confirmation and Perseverance is not the same: that all the Elect persevere, but all are not here Confirmed: And for the point of Impeccability, they agree with the Jesuites, that the Confirmati are Impescabiles as to mortal fin : but not as to venial (to which they annumerate, the remnants of ignorance, inconsiderateness, the fomes peccati, &c. Vid. Alvarez Differt, 104. \$.4.) This Impeccability as to Mortal fin. is the perfection or fulfilling of all Gods Commandements which the Papifts mean and fay, we may attain. But then some of them fay, that this Immpeccability is only to be ascribed to intrinsick-Grace: others with Durandus (in 3. d. 3. 9.4) do ascribe it only to extrinsick removall of the occasions of sinue: somethink

that

that it is partly from intrinsick Grace, and partly from extrinsick; that is, ex perfectione Gratic habitualis & virtutum & ex custodia, protectione & directione Dei (as Alvarez.) Of these, the Dominicans ascribe it to a Physical Determining Grace (which Physical determination the most of them make necessary to every act of every creature; but fansening denieth that, and makes it specially necessary to saving good) and the Jesuites as is said, do most of them ascribe to a special fort of moral help leaving the will free: and others to a Necessitating determination. It is ordinarily judged (as Alvarez out of Thom. maintaineth) that this Impeccability is not fimple, as not being ab intrinseco totaliter, but only secundum quid, as being partim ab extrinseco; quod contingit quando alicui datur aliquod munus gratia que inclinatur in bonum, ita ut ab ille non possit de facili destecti; non tamen per hoc ita retrabitur a malo. nt omnino peccare non possit, nisi divinà providentia protegatur & custodiatur.

And its very observable wherein Alvarez placeth this Confirming Perfection, ibid § 4, viz. in a certain participation of Charitas Patria, which is distinct secundam modum a Charitate violaria non Consistemante: His words are [Resp. non consistere in majori intensione especial formation Habitualis. Etenim gratia non Confirmans, aliquando est magus intensa, quam gratia in bono Consistemans, quod ex eo patet: nam multi sun in via non Consistemati in gratia qui habent gratiam & charitatem magus intensam, quam aliqui existentes in patria: (Believe this that can:) Dicendum est ergo quod hac perfectio attenditur secundum quandodum est alterius rationis a gratia vel charitate non consistente at ait S. Thom 22. 9.24, art. 7. ad 2.

As I account it more gross, according to the first opinion to say that every sinne which they call mortal destroyeth Justification, than to say only, that it is lost by some; and grosser to say, that All may sall away, than that All, save the Consirmed may sall away (which is the second opinion:) and that yet it is less culpable to say, that all the Elect shall persevere, though not all the Justified (which is the fourth:) so I take this last recited to be less culpable than the fourth; because it alloweth a double ground of certain perseverance, that is,

both Election and Confirmation, when the former alloweth but one.

6. The fixth Opinion is, That an Adult state of faving grace or Justification is never lost, but a state of Infant Justification may, because fit is but a change of his Relation upon the condition of the Parents being a Believer. 7 Yet some of them deny not, but Elect Infants may fome of them moreover have fome secret feed of grace which is never lost.) Of this mind were the British Divines in the Synode of Dort; and Davenant and Ward have particularly wrote for it: and many more at home and abroad are of the same mind: And it should seem, fo was the Synode of Dort it felf, by those words Artic. 1. Can 17. pag. 244. Quandoquidem de voluntate Dei ex verba ipfius nobis est judicandum, quod testatur liberos fidelium esse sanctos, non quidem natura, sed beneficio faderis gratuiti, in quo illi cum parentibus comprehenduntur, pij parentes de Electione & salute snorum liberorum quos Deus in infantis ex hac vita evocat, dubitare non debent.] Yet they that are of this Opinion think it more fit to call this a ceffation of their former Title to falvation, than a falling from grace as in their explications may be feen.

7. The seventh Opinion is, That no one that is truly Justified and Sanctified, doth ever totally fall away or lose the estate of grace; but yet it is possible for them to fall away and lose it, though it shall never come to pass. I For it is not the Impossibility but the non-suturity that God decreeth. Of this Opinion are many of the Resormed Divines, called Calvinists.

^{8.} The eighth Opinion is, That for a Justified person Infant or Aged to lose that estate, is not only a thing that never shall come to pass, but that it is impossible for them to lose it: This is the Judgmenr also of very many Reformed Divines.

o. The ninth Opinion is, that because it is impossible to fall away from grace, therefore it is unlawfull for any Believer to sear it, or, to perswade other Belivers to sear it; or to pray against it, or to think that any sin can endanger it; And though a Beliver did sall into Adultery and murder with David, or into Incest and Drunkenness with Lot, he ought not to sear the loss of his Justification, nor to be humbled with such considerations, nor to rise from the sin with such a Motive. This is the Judgment of the Antinomians commonly maintained in their Writings.

10. Another Opinion is, that, Though some degrees of saving grace may be lost, which by increase were supreaded to the first grace which we received; yet no degree of the first habitual grace can be after lost by any sinne.

11. Another Opinion is, That though the Acts of grace may be sinfully omitted, and so grace may act weaklier than it did before, yet the internal root or stock, whether you call it a habit or a power, or a new nature is never diminished, or lost in any degree, either which was at first insused, or is afterward insused by way of Augmentation.

The two last Opinions are only dropt in by some sew of the Reformed Divines, who are over-bold in their determinations: The last is by most discovered; and the former by sew of ours medled with in their Writings; but usually past over in silence.

12. Another Opinion about Perseverance is, That no sinne of a Believer, small or great, doth so much as contract on the person a guilt of death or any punishment; that is, an Obligation to punishment: and that in Gods account we are neither sinners, nor deserve damnation; for God seeth no sin in his people: the guilt falls all on Christ; and the punishment

is all born by him alone; and no such thing as true punishment suffered by any Believer: And therefore that they may not confess the guilt of any sinne to be on themselves, nor pray for the pardon of it, but only when they mean by pardon of the feeling of pardon, or assurance or knowledg of it, or some new effect of it, in renewed mercies. This also is the known Opinion of the Antinomians, and the most extreme on this hand that is worthy our present Observation.

Having thus shewed you the differing Opinions among Christians about Perseverance, I shall next lay down so much of my own Judgment as I think needfull for the present purpose, in certain *Propositions*, before I speak of the offence which do occasion it.

Prop. 1. It is a gross Error to think that every sin which they call mortal or we call grofs, doth excuss all Charity, or put a man out of a state of Justification. There are indeed fins that may be called mortal, eminently, which will prove a man out of the state of Grace, though they cannot be said to put him out of it because he was never in it. I mean the sinne unto death, or the dominion of finne, or any one finne so aggravated as will prove that dominion, and so is inconsistant with saving grace. But it is not every act of a gross sinne that makes or proves a man to be unjustified. David was an adopted Sonne, an Heir of life, a Member of Christ, even a living Member. as foon as he had committed those heinous sinnes: though he contracted such a guilt, as anon we shall describe, yet his former guilt returned not on him (as many Schoolmen themselves maintain) nor was he cut off from Christ, nor his state and Relation to him overthrown.

Objett. Adam by one act did lose his habitual state of grace, and Relation to God, becoming unholy and unjustified: therefore so may we.

Anf. 1. I deny the Antecedent: For it was not by one Act, but by many that Adam so farre sell: 2. And I deny the consequence: First, Because Adams sinne was such, as no regenerate man doth commit (for ought ever I have yet heard proved.)

Secondly, At least, the difference of the Laws that he and we were

nated

were under, would make this difference. For according to the Law that Adam was under, one finne, yea any one finne, did make him lyable to death, and confequently to be for faken by the grace or Spirit of God, and to be under the curfe: But it is not so with a Believer according so the gentler Law of grace: The cause therefore of the difference is principally extrinsick in God and Christ and the Covenant of Grace: Whether there were any Internal, in the nature of the grace that Adam had, and that we have, I shall not now enquire.

Prop. 2. The Opinion of those Ancients, and of the Jesuites, Arminians and Lutherans, who deny an absolute personal Election of men to saith and Perseverance, and so maintain indefinitely a total and final falling from a state of justification, without excepting such Elect themselves, is an Eerror of dangerous consequence, against the grace and sidelity of God, if not against his wisdom and his power, and against the peace of the Saints: and therefore is to be carefully avoided and resisted, by those that would not wound their faith: as Augustine, and his followers, and since them the Dominicans and Reformed Divines have voluminously evinced.

Yet note, that the Jesuites themselves may consess that the Elect shall none of them finally fall away, but shall all Persevere. But that is, because they hold that Election is upon the foresight of perseverance, and so that these Propositions are inconsistent as to their truth [This man is Elected] and [This man shall not Persevere:] But they do not make Election, or differencing grace, the Cause of Faith and Perseverance.

Prop. 3. The third Opinion hath three Parts: Of which, I take one to be true, and the other two to be false. That which is true is, That the confirmed in grace, shall certainly Persevere. The Parts that I take to be false, are, First, That some of the truly justified, and sanctified are not Elect to salvation (which is common to them with Angustine.) Secondly, That Perseverance

Perseverance is no fruit of Election, but only of mans good use of his grace, and of Gods remunerative Justice and Mercy: For they think that there is no Election of Individuals, but upon supposition of foreseen faith and repentance: so that this Opinion differeth not from the second, save only in that it addeth a state of confirmation, which none shall lose: and so maketh some in this life to be certainly past the danger of falling away: Of which more under the fifth Opinion.

Prop. 4. The fourth Opinion, viz. of Austin, with Prosper, Fulgentius and the rest of his followers that resisted the Pelagians, and of the Dominicans, and Musculm, &c. who maintain personal absolute Election, and free grace, against the conceit of mans merits, and the certain Perseverance of all the Elect; and yet maintain that many of the Prasciti or non-elect are truly sanctified, and justified, and fall away from it and perish, doth seem to me to be unsound, and contrary to many Texts of ho'y Scripture, and therefore not to be received.

To produce that Evidence against it, which is so common in mens hands in many Volumes written to this purpose, would here be worse than needless. And methinks Austins Exposition is a forcing of the Text. He expoundeth 1 70b 2. 19. They were not of us, ie. of us the Elect. And Rom. 8 30. he expoundeth by prefixing to each linke the foregoing words, viz. the called according to his purpole: q.d. [whom he called, viz. according to his purpose, them he justified; and whom he justified, that is, those whom he so called and justified, them he glorified; q.d. those before mentioned whom he jutified he glorified; or those whom he predestinated, called and justified (conjunctily) them he glorified. As if the Text did not comprehend all the Justified, nor speak of the Justified as such, but did only extoll Gods Love to the Elect, and consequently speak of them as Elect, and so of the Elect only, connexing every former Propolition in the chain with the later as necessary to make upits sense : as if the meaning were no more but this: [fo great is the everlatting Love of God to his chosen, that he fore-knew them, and predefti

nated them to be conformed to his Son; and having predeflinated them all, he effectually calleth them, and having called them he justifieth them, and having justified them he glorifieth them :] and so he would not have all others excluded from calling and justifying, but only from predestination and glory. But I see not a sufficient warrant in the Text for such a limiting Exposition: It seems rather to me that [whom he called] is as much as [all whom he called] and whom he justified] as much as [all whom he justified] And to me it feems unlikely, that ever fuch a love of God can change, by which he embraceth any man as a Sonne; For if Sonnes, than Heires, &c. That love which made us Sons, and taketh complacency in us as Scris, will furely continueus in a state of Son-ship, and give us the Inheritance. How else can the little Flock be raifed from their fears, because of the good pleasure of the Father to give them the Kingdom! For, alas, nothing more certain than that we should lose our grace, and so lose the Kingdom, if the Father had no other good pleasure towards us, but only to give us the Kingdom if we Persevere, and not also to give us perseverance that we may have the Kingdom. I know that Angustine distinguisheth of Sonnes; and some he saith may be called Sonnes because they are Regenerate, and justified, and in such a state as they should have been saved if they had died in; who yet are not Sonnes by predeftination, but God fore-feeing their falling off, intendeth them not the Inheritance. But where he can find this distinction of Sonnes in Scrip: u.e, I know not : though another dictinction of Sonnes I confess may be found.

Prop. 5. Though I presume to dissent in this point from Augustine and the common Judgment of the Teachers of that and many former and later Ages; yet do I find my self obliged by the Reverence of such contradicting Authority, and forced also by the consciousness of my ignorance, to suspect my own understanding, and to dissent with modelty, both honouring the contrary-minded, and being willing to receive any further evidence, and to know the truth if it be on their side. And so I must needs say, that I see not neer such clear evidence against this Opinion, as I do against the former, much less as I do for the Fundamental Articles of the Faith:

and therefore I am not arrived at that certainty in the Doctrine of the Perseverance of all the Justified, as I am for the Doctrine of the Perseverance of all the Elect; much less as I am about the death and resurrection of Christ, the Life Everlasting, and such other verities.

I know that there is very great variety of evidence of the feveral Truths revealed in the Scriptures, one Text being more or less plain than another. Though we know that all that God. faith, is equally true, yet we have not an equall evidence of every Truth, that it is indeed the Word of God. And therefore our reception of these several Points must needs be as unequall as the evidence is, upon which we do receive them. I dare not say that I have attained a certainty in understanding this Point and all the Texts of Scripture that concern it. better than Augustine, and the common Judgment of the Church for fo many Ages: And therefore I dare not fay that I have attained to a certainty, that all the justified shall perfevere. I dare and I do venture my foul and everlasting hopes upon the truth of the Fundamentals; so that I dare, I must fay: I'If these be not true, I will forfeit my hopes; I expect no falvation. T But I dare not, I do not venture my falvation upon this Opinion: nor dare I say, [Let me have no salvation if any of the Justified fall from their Justification. 7 And therefore if I were put to it in arguing to deny either this or an evidenter truth, I would sooner reduce this to the more evident, than the more evident to this.

And that it is not so evident as many others, or as that a common agreement in it by the godly can be expected, is apparent enough.

1. From the difficulties that occurre, which the Scriptures and the differences reasonings may easily acquaint us with.

2. And from their answers to our Arguments.

3. And from the number and quality of the Differences. First, Sure that can be no very easile point which all or almost all the Church, for so many Ages erred in. Secondly, And which not only the most of the Christians of the world, but also so man in Nations of Protestants themselves do err in to this day. Thirdly, And which the choicest men for Learning and diligence, and those that were the Leaders in desending the grace of God; as Austin and abundance of Protestant Divines, could never

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attain

attain the understanding of, but relisted them as errors. Fourthly, Yea when they were and are as holy as we; and fo as like to have Divine Illumination. All this being in the case, it feemeth to be high felf conceited arrogancy, for such a one as I to profess such a point to be so evident and casie, and to imagine that all the most holy and judicious Writers for so many Ages, and so many at this day, are so farre below me in the understanding of the Scriptures, and that even in points which they had so much occasion to search into, and so many and great advantages to understand. I do not, I dare not pre-

Prop. 6. Hence it is most apparent, that this difference about the Perseverance of all the Justified, is not of so great moment, as to encourage or warrant us to withdraw our affection or communion from those that differ from us herein; as if they were Hereticks, or no Members of the Church, or could not be faved, because they erre herein. For confirmation of which confider, 1. By the contrary conclusion we should be excessively Uncharitable, in condemning to Hell fire, for ought we can find, all, or next all, the Church of Christ for 1300 or 1400 years at least. 2. And we should be very proud in exalting our felves so high above our Brethren, and the Churches of Christ. 3. And it were high presumption and arrogancy to step into Gods seat and pass so bold a cenfure. 4. And it were great Impiety to make Christ hereby to have no visible Church on earth (nor for ought we can prove, many persons) for so many hundred years: Hereby we should go farre toward the giving up our Cause to the Infidels. For, no Church, no Head of the Church. 5. Hereby we should censure the form of Belief or Profession of all these Churches as insufficient. For the Doctrine of Perseverance now in question, was never (that is proved) in any of their Creeds. Sixthly, Hereby we should foment Divisions in and between the Churches, and make the healing of our Divisions seem desperate. For if we conclude all the Lutherans and Arminians (who yet go further than Austin in denying Perseverance) to be uncapable of falvation or of our communion, what room is left for any motions of Peace? 7. And also hereby we should very much encourage the Papifts; if we make our first Protestants, Luther; Melanch

Melanchton and the rest that subscribed the Augustane confession. to be Hereticks and persons whose communion was to be avoided. 8. And Laftly, We should be guilty of so notorious schism, as few fober men in the world have been guilty of; I mean in our principles: while we plainly imply that if we had lived in those former Ages that were of a contrary mind to us in this, we would have avoided the communion of them all. I do but name these things briefly, because I suppose that they will find few diffenters. I hope few among us are guilty of fuch conclu.

fions as I gainfay.

Prop. 7. Hence also it is very clear, that the denval of the Doctrine of the Perseverance of all the fanctified, doth not neceffarily destroy all Christian consolation. It doth indeed tend to the diminishing of it, as to all that have a certainty of their Julification, while it denyeth them the certainty of Perseverance: and while it denveth to all men a certainty of falvation by ordinary meanes. But it doth not wholly defirou the comforts of the Saints: Nay, it is plain from hence, that a life of much Christian comfort may be had, without affurance of falvation. Which I prove, 1. Adam might live comfortably without assurance of Perseverance or salvation: (thats past dispute: for Adam had no such assurance in his innocency:) therefore a Christian may live comfortably whithout asfurance of Perseverance or Salvation. There is no dis-parity between Adams condition and others in other respects that will weaken the consequence, as long as the case is the same in the point in question.

Obj. Being finless, he had nothing to sadden him, as we have. Ans. True: therefore the uncertainty of Perseverance and of falvation was nothing or not enough to fadden him, or at leaft, to deprive him of a life of peace. If necessary to our peace,

why not to his?

2. It were unreasonable and uncharitable to think that none of the Ancient Churches that differed from us in this had Christian peace: that none of the Lutherane Protestants, or Arminians now have peace; that fuch holy men as Anftin and Luther and multitudes more were deprived of this peace, who have manifested so great confidence and joy both in their lives and Writings. When we read so many of the Ancients and of the Lutherans professing their Peace and joy in believing, we cannot pretend that we knew their hearts betterthan they knew themselves; seeing we never knew the men: nor have we any certain or probable evidence to prove that they wrote fallly of themselves.

3. If we could not have joy and Peace in believing, except we receive it from the certainty of our own Perseverance then it would follow that exceeding few even of them that hold the Doctrine of the Perseverance of all the Justified, have joy and peace in believing. For that Doctrine of Perseverance can give assurance of their own Perseverance to none but those that are certain of their fincerity and Justification. If a man be uncertain whether he be functified truly himself, he must needs be uncertain whether he shall persevere in that grace which he knoweth not that he hath; yea and in common grace it feli. But too fad experience telleth us that there be but few exceeding few of the godly among us that are certain of their fincerity, Justification, or falvation: I have defired leveral Ministers that converse much with experienced Christians, and hear them open the state of their fouls, to tell me how they find them in this point of affurance? And divers of them of largest acquaintance tell me that they meet not with one that hath it: but that they all profess some doubting and uncertainty, and none that they ask will fay, I am fure. Others tell me that they meet with none that will fay they are certain, except some passionate persons, especially women that are melancholy who are carried on by passionate seelings; and they will fometime say they are certain of this Sanctification, Justification, and Salvation; but it is but in a fit which is quickly gone, and then they are usually in greater doubting and trouble than any others. I confess my own observation is the same or neer it. Amongst many hundreds of Prosessors, I meet not with one that will fay they are certain of their fincerity and falvation, except four forts; First, Such women or melancholy people afore-mentioned, who can give no great folid reason for it, and quickly lose it, and are passionate in their conversation. Secondly, Some persons that are fallen into new Opinions and focieties, disowning our Profession and our Churches; who presently are rapt up with a seeming certainty that they are

truly holy and justified; when both their doctrines and lives do cause their soberest acquaintance to sear that they are either proud hypocrites, or deluded Christians, worse than before. Thirdly, Some few very earnest Disputers for Assurance, that will say they are sure of their own salvation, in an eager maintaining of their Arguments. Fourthly, Some very few judicious holy men, who fay they have no strict certainty nor are free from all doubting; but yet they have so confident a perswasion as may be called a moral certainty, and freeth them from troublefome fears of damnation. And these last (though exceeding . few) are the highest that ever I met with, whom I have cause to believe, as being judicious credible fober persons. and giving probable evidence in their lives of what they faid. I never knew the man that attained any more than such a strong perswasion, mixed with some doubtings and fears, yet so far overcoming them as to live a peaceable joyfull life.

Now if Affurance of fincerity and Justification be so rare (and impersect in the best) then it must needs sollow that certainty of their own Perseverance must be as rare. And all these Persons that are uncertain of their Perseverance, can setch no

comfort from that certainty which they have not.

But yet we cannot conclude that all these persons are void of Christian Peace and Joy: For, first we see by experience that hundreds of these Christians that dare not say they are sure of their Justification or salvation, do yet express much Peace and Joy. Secondly, And the Holy Ghost telleth us that the Kingdom of God consisteth in Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost; and therefore we may not so farre exclude the most of the Saints out of the Kingdom of God.

4. Moreover, the nature of the thing may convince us that a man may live a comfortable life through believing, though he attain not a proper certainty of perfeverance or falvation. For a high degree of probability, and a strong perswasion thereupon, may bear down the trouble of most of our doubts and sears. And though it may be objected, that Hell is such a misery, and the loss of Heaven so great a loss, that a man hath no ground of solid grace that is uncertain to escapeit, especially considering how little trust is to be put in the slippery will of man: yet (for answer to this) let it be considered. First,

That Heaven is fo great a good, that the least true belief and hope of it, may afford abundance of comfort; and Hell is fo great an evil, that the least true hope of escaping it, may be very comfortable. Secondly, Yet such uncertainty indeed to a Saint in Heaven would be more troublesome, because it is a condition worse than he is in already: But such hopes, though with uncertainty to the damned in Hell would be unspeakably comfortable; and so should they be to us on earth; because we were before in a state of death, condemned by the Law, and under the curse, and had been actually damned, if death had cut us off. Thirdly, That the goodness of Gods nature, his common mercy to mankind, the fulness and freeness of grace in Christ, the experiences of Gods Love both in common and special mercies, with abundance of comfortable passages in the Scripture, all these may do much to the support and comfort of the foul, against the sear of Apostacy, though there had been no absolute promise of the perseverance of all the Justified.

5. I argue a pari: First, There is no Sonne of the wisest and most constant Father that is certain he shall persevere in the favour of his Parents, and that he shall not fall into their very hatred, and be disinherited by them: And yet it doth not follow that therefore all Children should uncomfortably vex themselves with fears, lest their Parents should hate them or disinherit them: yea, or that no Son may take comfort in the consideration of his Fathers love.

Secondly, There is no Wife that hath the best and most loving Husband, that is certain, he will not hate her and cast her off: And yet when she sees, no probability of it, but much to the contrary, she need not be disquieted by the sears of it; nor forbear the peace and comfort of her condition.

Thirdly, There is no man of greatest boliness certain that he shall not fall into some odious scandalous sinne; For though there be promises of our perseverance in a state of grace, yet in the judgment of all, there is no promise to the best of us all, that we shall not fall into any such hainous particular sinne. No man is certain but he may be drunk as Noah was, or incessuous as Lot was, or commit adultery and murder as David did, or deny Christ as Peter did. And if you were sure you should

should fall thus, and wound your conscience, and dishonour the Lord and your holy Profession, would it not even break your hearts? But what? Must all Christians live in doubts and sears of such a thing? Or may not they live in peace and comfort upon the strong probabilities they have of escaping these, though they have no certainty. Yea more; you are not certain but you may for such Capital crimes, be hanged at a Gallows, and made a publique example to the world: And yet I hope we may live comfortably for all that, and need not trouble our selves with such sears save only by necessary caution to prevent the evil. The same grounds therefore which may give you comfort against the sears of such scandalous sinnes, may give them comfort concerning their Salvation, who either believe not the Doctrine of the perseverance of all Saints, or are not certain of their own Sanctification.

Prop. 8. It is fit and needfull that as we maintain the truth of the aforesaid Doctrine of perseverance: fo we should withall make known that it is not to be numbred with the most necessary or most evident certain truths, which our salvation, or all our peace, or the Churches Communion doth reft upon: and accordingly that we put it not into our Creed, or Confessions of Faith, which are purposed to express the Fundamentals only, or only those Points which we expect all should subscribe to, with whom we will hold communion. As we maintain it to be a truth : fo we must shew (as is done in the aforefaid Propositions.) which rank of truths it belongeth to. For it is a very hurtfull and dangerous thing to the Church, to affirm the less evident controvertible truths to be more evident and past doubt, and to affirm those to be of necessity to our Salvation, Communion, or Comfort, which are not fo. This is the wrack that hath torn both the Church and the Consciences of men.

Upon this occasion I may fitly give you an account of the reafon of a passage in the Catechism agreed on by the Worcestershire Ministers, which I understand some Reverend, godly Divines, have taken exceptions at.

In the Seventh Article of that Catechism it is said that [the Holy Ghost doth by the Word enlighten mens understandings, and sosten and open their hearts, and turn them from

the power of Satan unto God by faith in Christ: ther being joyned to Christ the Head and into one Church which is his Body, and freely justified and made the Sonnes of God, they may be a fanctified peculiar people to him, and may overcome the flesh, the world, and the devil, and being zear lous of good works, may serve God in holiness and righteousnels, and may live in the special love and communion of the Saints, and in hope of Christs coming and of everlasting life. Here they are offended at the word [may :] because we say not, they shall or will do these things, but only [that then may,] which they say importeth but a Duty and a Paffibility, but not the certainty of the event. To this I answer : 1. Our Question was about the first Participation of Christ and life: and our perseverance is not any part of that, and therefore we were not obliged to determine that controversie in answer to that question. 2. The first [may] prefixed to our fanctification doth clearly speak of the certainty of the event; for it is impossible the fore-expressed work should be done and yet men be unsanctified, 3 Whereas these Brethren object this in their uncharitable suspicion, that we did it to intimate the Apostacy of the fanctified, I must tell them that I am confident there is not one of the subscribers (to the fi st impression, and I think not to the last neither) that doth question the Doctrine of perseverance; and that our own meaning is, that the Holy Ghost doth convert us, that we may be a holy people and overcome, &c. that is, that he intendeth this as the event, and useth the former as a meanes to the later; and that God is never frustrate of his intention, and consequently in our sence the Doctrine of perseverance is here expressed. 4. But I must adde, (as the principal part of my answer) that we purposely put it in larger termes that all that subscribed might not be necessitated to understand it as we did; and we purposely avoided the determining of the controversie about perseverance; in lihe place. We had before drawn up our (prefixed) Confession of faith, which was to be a test of our peoples capacity of Church-Communion in the point of knowledg and foundness in the faith commonly called Orthodoxnes:) and fo we were to disown all those that owned not all that was here contained : And when we composed our Catechism, it being in part to the same end, and

partly to be so brief that all might learn it, we agreed to make up the first Eight Articles of the Catechilm from the fore going Confession: To that we were to put nothing in it but the Fundamentals of Salvation or of Communion; or nothing but what we thought we must exact a confession of from all that we would hold Communion with. Now I confess it is far from my Opinion that a man cannot be faved that denyeth the perseverance of all the sanctified, or that we must reject all from our Communion that are of that mind: And I should rather have abhorred than subscribed a confeission, that had contained any fuch thing, or that had put in the point of perseverance to the ends and on the termes as our confession was subscribed. And this is the true reason of our termes in that Seventh Article: And a hundred other controversall men, may as well find fault with us, for leaving out of our Confession or Catechism the points which they maintain, as these Brethren may find fault with us in this. For we have left out many hundred controversies, whereof very many are as weighty as this. And I despair of pleasing all Disputers.

Prop. 9. We cannot deny but that the Doctrine of the certain perfeverance of all the fanctified, may Accidentally occasion much more trouble than Confolation, to many doubting

fouls that are fincere.

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I must confess I have had to do with some my self, that have pleaded this Objection so importuna ely that a wifer man than I might have found work enough to fatisfie them. They fay, that I if they could have any assurance that they are truly fantlified, the Detrine of certain Perseverance of all such would be comfortable to them; but they are brought now into such doubts of it, that they fear they shall never attain to Inch assurance, being rather induced to conclude themselves certainly unsanctified: For (say they) we never reached so high as somethat we have known that have fallen away: We have known divers that have been judicious and affectionate. and constant and lively in duty, and of very uprinhs carefull lives, and so great contemners of the world that they would not have emisted an appartunity for their feals, for worldly gain, nea, they mere perfecused and suffered very much for godlines in evil times, and in the Sharpell tryals never Shrunk, when others 20.0

others did, and laid out themselves almost altogether in doing good: their Prayers and Conference were very boly and heavenly and affectionate, and their lives agreeable. So that they were incomparably beyond me in all these Qualifications, and yet some of them now do deny the God-head of Christ and the Holy Ghost; some deny the Scripture, and that there is any Church or Ministry; some are turned Quakers, and some Licentious, if not Insidels; and therefore certainly have now no faving grace. Now before we can ever be sure that we are justified, we must be sure that we go surther than any of these did, or any other that ever fell away: Whereas we find our selves far short of many of them. And we are in a manner certain that some of them did not dissemble: both by our observation of their mbole course, being intimately acquainted with them, and by the plainness and openness of some of their hearts, which they manifest even to this day in the way that they are in, being unapt for difsimulation.] I have found it no easie matter to quiet the minds of some that were troubled with this doubt. If we tell them, that these men were gross dissemblers, they will not believe it, nor can I tell them so of all as being confident of the contrary by my acquaintance with some. If we tell them that at the highest they came short of sincerity, they answer that they have much more reason then, to suspect that they are short of it themselves: and that among an hundred Professors of Religion, there is not ordinarily two that feem to go further than these men did seem to go; and therefore who can have affurance? If we tell them, that yet God faw the unfoundness of their hearts; they answer, so he may fee the unsoundness of mine; For these men did more in selfexamination, Prayer, and other meanes to know their hearts than ever I did, and had greater knowledg and helps to discern them. Some Learned Divines do answer this Objection thus: That it's true, these difficulties and temptations do stand in our waies, but they are no greater then many other temptations which we must encounter, and that the Members of Christ have that Spirit, that Teaching, and Anointing within them, which will sufficiently relieve them against all such temptations, and do more to comfort them than all the evidences of their uprightness can do, yea, when we do not see

our uprightness, nor that we go beyond the persons that have apostatized, in our Qualifications. To this I have known this answer returned; 1. That they know not of any witness of the Spirit to assure us of our justification, but these three; First, The Witness contained in the Scripture, proving the truth of the Promise: Secondly, The Witness of Evidence, contained in the fanctifying Works of the Spirit on the Soul. Thirdly, And the effective Witness of actual illumination and exciting grace, causing us to see our Evidences within, and the truth of the Promise without, and to believe the later, and conclude our justification from both laid together, and to be thankfully and joyfully affected herewith. And many holy Learned Divines and of great experience, profess they have no more, nor know of any more. 2. But if any other immediate revelation and Testimony of the Spirit without evidence be the thing that must satisfie, comfort, and establish us, those that have such a Testimony or Revelation may be comforted by it, but for our parts we must say that we know not what it is, and never had any fuch, and know not how to obtain it; and therefore must rather conclude the more confidently that we are unfanctified, because we have none of that Witness. And though we have had some sweet delights in Prayer, Meditations and other duties, and some strong perswasions of the Love of God to. us, yet we know not whether these were from the Spirit, or whether such delights were not some common work; and those that sell off did seem to us to have more of them, than we could reach.

For my part, the answer that I usually make to this Objection is this. [Though the falls of others must warn you to take heed, and with a godly jealousie to search your heart more exactly, and to watch over it more diligently, yet God never made the hearts or lives of other men, the Standard for you to try your own by: Nor are you to trouble your Souls by the doubtfull conjectures which you fetch from the former Qualifications of others. God never opened you a window into their hearts: There might be abundance less good and more evil there than ever you suspected in them: The heart of man is deceitfull above all things: Who (besides God and himself) can know it? And will you run out of the

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light into the dark for help to fearch after your fincerity and Tuttification? Why you know that God hath told you expressly in his Word, that he that repenteth and believeth Ball be laved, and that loving him, and loving one another, and efleeming Christ and eternal life above this world, are the fure markes of Christs Disciples. If you find these in your own fouls, what need have you to doubt of them because that others have been deceived? God hath made you more capable of knowing your own hearts than others; and accordingly hath made it your duty to fearch your own and not theirs: You may know certainly what is in your felves; but you can but uncertainly conjecture at what is in them. And is it fit in vour inquiry to try a certain thing by an uncertain? Your own hearts which you know or may know, by other mens which you know not, nor cannot know? This is not the way that God hath appointed you for the tryal of your flate: and therefore no wonder if it puzzle and perplex you.

Some answer the foresaid Objection by telling them that as in actual sinne (like Davids or Selomons) the habit of grace was alive under contrary actings: so in the foresaid actual Errors, the habit of found faith may possibly be alive in many that feem to be fallen quite away. Though I do make use of this answer in some cases where there is hope of such habits remaining, yet I am afraid of using it in most of the forementioned cases. I dare not say that a man that long deliberately and industriously cryeth down the God-head of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and that denyeth the Scripture and Immortality of the Soul, &c. can be at that time in a state of Salvalion; The comfort is farre fetcht that is given men on fuch terms; and how we can make it good to them, I know

Prop. 10. Moreover, we cannot deny but that carnal security, not only in hypocrites, but in the godly themselves, may possibly and too frequently take advantage for increase, from the Doctrine of perseverance.

For the remnants of corruption in us will dispose us to make an ill use of this and many another truth. Hence we are too ready to argue thus; That which is impossible (or certainly

not future) need not, and ought not, and if known to be fuch. cannot be the object of rational fear, and care to escape it. But the damnation and the Apostacy of any of the sanctified, is impossible, or not future and known so to be: therefore it need not, and must not be the object of their fear, and care to escape

So on the other fide from the necessity of this fear, the Differences argue against the certainty of perseverance. That which is known impossible, or not future, cannot be the object of rational fear: But the Apostacy and damnation of them that are now Believers, must be the object of rational fear: therefore it is not impossible. &c.

They confess, that yet there may consist with the impossibility of Apostacy, First, An irrational forced fear, which is not a moral act: fuch as a man would have if he were never fo fast on the pinacle of a Steeple, or the top of a steep Rock; Were he most certain to have no hurt, yet it would affright him to look down: Secondly, A reverence of Gods Judgments as they shall be inflicted upon others: Thirdly, A use of means from the sole force of Love, and Faith, to avoid an evil, which yet we have not the least fear of, as knowing it to be impossible. But the fear and care in the Argument, they fay cannot confift with this impossibility. For, say they, It is impossible the Act should be without its proper object. But a personall possible exil called, a danger, is the proper object of that personal fear: for it is a fear of such an evil: therefore, &c. The Minor, and so the necessity of this fear they prove from many Texts of Scripture: Luk 12.5. Fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell fire. Heb. 4 1. Let us therefore fear lest a Promise being left us of entering into rest, any of us should Seem to come short of it. 1 Cor. 9.27. I tame or keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others I my felf should be a castaway. With many the like.

To these Objections, there are divers forts of answers made according to the various principles of the Answerers: fome deny the Major, and fay that a known impossible evil may be the object of rational fear. To this it is replied that this is a denying of natural Principles, and the common experrience :

rience of mankind; it being agreed on by Philosophers, and felt by all men, that we fear nothing but an evil apprehended as possible. The Answerers say surther, that it's true, that if it were impossible in the nature of the thing, we could not fear it: but that which is only impossible by accident or from an extrinsick cause, such as is the Decree, or Will of God, and his Promises may be the object of rational sear: because God hath not simply decreed our perseverance, but hath decreed that by the means of this rational fear we shall persevere, and accordingly commandeth us to fear as the means of our certain perseverance; To this it is further replied, First, That it still denyeth a most undoubted principle, even the definition of fear, and also the common experience of men. For whence ever the impossibility be, extrinsick or intrinsick, reason tells me there is no cause of sear; and all the sear that ariseth about an evil that is known to be impossible is against reason, or without it. An aversion or displacency there may be, but no proper fear of that evil befa!ling us. And therefore (fay they) you seign God to decree contradictions, and to command them. For to decree to give men perseverance by the means of a fear of Apostacy, is to make the evil impossible, and so to be no object of fear, and yet to decree that we shall fear it: And to command a man to fear a known impossible evil, is as if he should command us to love a known evil as fuch. The earth could not stand an hour if God upheld it not: therefore the ruine or annihilation of it to morrow is in it felf possible: But yet as long as God hath told us that it shall continue till the refurrection, and we see that it never failed any one yet, but hath endured through all Ages, reason teacheth us not to fear the diffolution of this world till the day of Judgment. An impossibility of event from some one cause, doth properly denominate the thing impossible though in regard of an hundred other things it were not impossible.

Some therefore take another course, and say that the Major of the Diffenters Argument is true, but the Minor is falle, viz. that we ought to fear our not-perfevereing, or our damnation. But the Texts are so many and plain that require us to fear coming short of rest, the killing of the soul, &c. and confequently our not persevering, that this Answer is not satisf factory.

factory; but indeed dangerous, yeelding the Minor to the prefum ptuous and fecure.

Others therefore yeeld the conclusion that our Apostacy and damnation are not impeffible, but only non futura; (Or which more anon.) But to this it is replied that an evil certainly known to be not suture, can no more be the object of rational fear, than that which is impossible. And therefore this hath the same answers as the former.

For my own part, the answer that satisfieth me, is this: That it's true that a known impossibility or non-futurity of evil doth evacuate rational fear: But then he that will be perfectly freed from that fear, must have a perfect knowledg of the impossibility or non-futurity. But Christ and his Apostles knew that those whom they wrote to had no such perfect knowledg: Nay more, it is not (at least by any ordinary meanes) to be expected in this life, that this knowledg of our fincerity, Justification and perseverance should be so persect as to have no degree of doubting, habitual or actual, at that time or any other. If no grace be perfect in this life, then the affurance of our fincerity, Justification and Perseverance are not persect in this life: But the Antecedent is true: therefore fo is the confequent.

Obj. But was not Pauls affurance perfect who had been in the third Heavens? Is it possible that he should have any doubt of his falvation? And yet he faith I tame my body, &c. left when I have preached, &c. Anf. 1. Those words do not necesfarily express fear, but the use of a meanes to avoid an evil that without such means would not be avoided. 2. Paul himfelf was not yet perfect as he professeth, Phil.3.12. and knew but in part, I Cor 13.9. and therefore might have use for fear. Though he had special revelations of his salvation, yet his Fifth and continued apprehensions and improvement of these, were yet imperfect. 3. If one man by revelation were perfectly certain, that's nothing to the generality of the Saints. Seeing therefore that we are all imperfect in our certainty of our fincerity and Perseverance, it's meet and requisite that we be called on to a rational working preventing fear, according to the measure of our uncertainty.

Obj. But these fears then are finfull, as being the fruits of fin-

full doubts or ignorance, and so you make the Holy Ghost to command men to sin. And. They are not sinfull, in themselves, but necessary duties: It's true, that the uncertainty that goes before them is a sinne; but the sears that follow are a duty. Many things are duties to sinfull man in order to his recovery, that would have been no duties if we had no sinne: To believe for pardon, to repent, to pray for pardon, to confess sin, &c. would have been no duties, but on supposition of sinne. But when we are once sinners, these are become special duties to help us out of it. And so is it of this sear of falling away and of damnation. But when assurance and love are perfect, and that is, when we are perfect in Heaven, then I shall yield that fear of these is needless. In this answer to this great Objection, I rest.

Therefore, notwithflanding all the Objections that are against it, and the ill use that will be made of it by many, and the accidental troubles that it may cast some Believers into, yet it feems to me, that the Doctrine of perseverance is grounded on the Scriptures, and therefore is to be maintained, not only as extending to all the Elect against the Lutherans and Arminians, but also as extending to all the truly sanctified, against Augustine and the Jansenians, and other Dominicans: though we must ranke it but among truths of its own order, and not lay the Churches Peace or Communion upon it.

Prop. 11. Though it cannot afford them affurance of salvation, yet may this perswassion of the certain perseverance of all the sanctified, afford much comfort to those that have no certainty of their own sincerity or perseverance.

If I have no perswasson either of my own sincerity, or perseverance, or yet of my perseverance as certain if I were certainly sincere, then I should have two difficulties in the way of my somfort; which is more than one alone, and therefore must put me surther from comfort. But if I were sure that all true Believers shall persevere, if I had withall but a strong hope or probability that I am a true Believer, I should freely reseive the comfort of that probability, without the impediment of surther doubts concerning perseverance. When otherwise I should be thinking, What if I be justified, yet how can I tell but I may lose it by back-slidings. So that this Doctrine Doctrine of perseverance firmly retained, doth free me from one of the doubts, though not from both.

Prop. 12. As to the fifth Opinion before mentioned (which makes either Election or Confirmation causally to inferre perseverance) I have faid enough on the third and fourth Opinion (which contain this between them) to shew my thoughts of it. Though it be nearer the truth than the rest fore-mentioned, vet I see no ground to believe their supposition, that there is a third fort of truely Justified sanctified Persons, that are neither Elected nor Confirmed, and therefore will fall away. As I know of no such degree of habitual grace in this life, which would preserve men from apostacy without Gods continued tutelary preferving grace; fo I know of no such thing as true Sanctification and lustification, without that Grace which is radicated in the foul and fo may be called a confirmed state; or without the Antecedent and Concomitant Decree of Gods Election, which layeth a certain ground of perseverance. Sure I am that the ground which received the feed upon a Rock and never gave it depth of earth, did from the beginning differ from the good ground. and fo did the thorny grounds: and they feem to me to intimate, that the one fort were never hearty refolved Christians. and the other had never extirpated the love of the world, but had taken up a profession in a subordination to the world, and the flesh which had the dominion. So that if these persons had persevered in that unfound estate, they could not have been faved: For hrift hath affured us that he that loveth any thing, even his own life better than him, and he that forfaketh not all for him cannot be his Disciple, Luk 14. 33. And the house that falleth when the winds arise and the stormes affault it, was never built upon the Rock, but on the fands. Mat. 7.26 So that I think that which some Papists call a state of Confirmation is the flate of every true Christian, and that which they call unconfirmed grace, is but some preparatory grace, that is yet short of a flate of Justification; and that which others of them (and most) call a state of Confirmation, which is supposed to be a state of impeccability, is not to be actained in this life; Though I must confess they very much mollifie

molliste the matter in their Definitions of sinne and of perfection, while they make him impeccable or perfect from sinne, that is lyable only to venial sinnes; and make some such venial sinnes, that I know many tender-conscienc't men, that would be both to hold communion with such venial sinners, and loth to keep a servant in their houses that were guilty of such. To make sinne no sinne, and then to say we are perfect, and have no sinne, is a near way to perfection; but they

that go further about, will sooner come thither.

This is my present Judgment of their Doctrine of Confirming Grace: but yet I am not so obstinate, as to refuse any evidence that may tend to give me better information, if I be mistaken, and therefore shall willingly read what they will fay to clear it more. And I marvell to finde fo little or nothing in Bellarmine and many another of that way, concerning this matter, and that those that do touch it, do it so superficially, rather taking the main Point for granted, then offering us any seeming proof of it. Aquinas 22. q. 24. art. 8 on the question, Whether Charity may be perfect in this life, concludeth, that though ex parte diligibilis it be not (for fo only God himself can perfectly love himself) yet ex parte diligentium it may, that is, cum quantum possibile est ipsis, Deum diligunt : which faith he, ventingit tripliciter: Uno medo sie quod totum tor hominis actualiter semper feratur in Deum: Et hac est perfectio charitatu patria, que non est possibilis in hac vità. Alio modo, ut homo studium suum deputet ad vacandum Deo. & rebus Divinis pratermissi alijs nisi quantum necessitas prafentis vita requirit & ista est perfectio charitatu qua est possibilis in vià: non tamen est communis omnibus habentibus charitatem. Tertio modo ita quod habitualiter aliquis totum cor suum ponat in Deo. sta scilicet qued nihil cogitet vel velit qued Divina dilections fit contratrium. Et hac perfectio eft communis omnibus charitatem babentiben.

If the Papils will insist upon this conclusion of Aquina, I shall desire them to consider, I. That Themas himself doth afterwards affirm that Perfectio via non est perfectio simpliciter, idea semper babet quo crescat. Therefore it is but perfectio secundum quid, and wanting in degree. 2. How will they be ever able to prove that those impersections of degree are not properly

properly sinnes. 3. Aquinas in the description of his second fort of perfection, doth but huddle up the matter in the dark, For that fludium deputare ad vacandum Deo confidered simply in it self may argue fincerity, but not perfection of degree. Perfection of degree is either that which is the highest that our nature is capable of: and that is only to be had in Patria: Or the highest that we are obliged to here, and that our natural powers on earth are capable of if freed from all vitious dispositions: and this may be called perfectio via; but the doubt is whether any man shall attain it: It is such a perfection as in the way we are capable of, but shall not have. And they that affirm it, must try it by these two things: 1. Hath any man as much Love in Habit and Act as he ought to have, or is obliged to? What man that knowes himself dare say it? Who dare say, I will not be beholden to God, or to the Blood of Christ, for a pardon for my defect of Love to God in act or habit? Yea, were it but for one day, or hour. I must profess for my own part, I am much more fensible of the finfulness of my soul, for this defect, and of my need of a pardon for it, even in the best day and duty that I pass through (that I can love God no more vigoroully and conflantly,) than I am as to any of my external finnes They must pervert the Law, or pharifaically boast of what they have not, before they can fay that they do love God with all the heart, and mind and strength, in the fense which it requireth as to the degree, and to uninterrupted exercife of their love.

2. And they must measure it also by their Natural Powers: If they love him in intention and constancy of exercise, as much as our Natural Powers are able, if they were perfectly sanctified, or habituated thereto, and perfectly freed from all sinfull dispositions, then indeed they have that which may be called here perfection of degree: But this no man hath. If the Natural Powers can love God no more then they do (in sensu composito) because they are clogged by vicious dispositions, or are not elevated and rightly disposed by due habits, this is its moral impotency, and is farre from proving it innocent or perfect, that it is the very sinne and imperfect on it self. If this be perfection, perhaps the damined might

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be called perfect. But if any man dare fay that his foul is perfectly habituated, and freed from evil dispositions, and doth exercise Divine Love, and all other graces, alwaies, ad Ultimum poffe, to the highest capacity that the right desposed Natural Powers-in via, can reach, I am past doubt that that man is a stranger to his own heart, and an unhumbled Pharifee. Their making concupifcence in the habit or act to be ro sinne (added to their fore mentioned Doctrine, that venial sinnes are but sinnes Analogically, and not properly) is but a forry way to lead men to perfection. We confess that the ordinate habitual or actual sensitive Appetite is no sinne: But withall we must fay, that in finfull man this Appetite is corrupted, and become inordinate and rebellious, and the phantafie infected with finfull fenfual habits, and no man here perfectly freed from these (besides the remnants of sinfull dispositions in the superiour powers of the soul.) And we dare not fay that these are not sinnes; and consequently, that man is perfect.

Prop. 13. As to the fixth Opinion (of the Amissibility of a state of Infant Justification, or rather the cessation of it) which is a point of great difficulty, and a controversie (though not much agitated) among the most Learned of the Resormed Divines, I shall for divers Reasons at this time purposely forbeare the delivering of my Opinion in it.

Prop. 14. As to the controversie contained in the Seventh and Eighth Opinions, I think it is but verball, and is to be dispatch't by several distinctions of possibility and impossibility. To omit divers others that might conduce to the decision, these sew at present may suffice. I. We must distinguish between an Impossibility in re, and extra rem; or a causis intrinsection, or a causis extrinsection or else, accidental. It is possible that true grace be lost, if you speak of a possibility, a causis intrinsection do natura rei; that is, the habit and subject together. But it is impossible that it should be totally and since the content of the subject to the decision of soully and since the content of the subject to the decision of the subject together.

finally loft, if you also respect the extrinsiek causes: And that both per impossibilitatem consequentia; because it is not possible that these Propositions should be both at once true. [God willeth absolutely or fore-knoweth that Peter will perlevere] and [Peter will not persevere.] (And yet this following is reconcileable with the first [It is impossible in natura rei for Peter to fall away. And also 2. Per impossibi. litatem caula; First, Because God hath not only decreed the perseverance of the sanctified, but also the Holy Ghost hath undertaken it as his special charge. Secondly, And the faithfulnels of God, (as farre as I can yet understand it) is by his Promise engaged for the perseverance of all the truly Justified and fanctified Believers; and, I am fure, for all the Elect that are such: which made the Lord Jesus himself judge it a fit speech to say, They should deceive if it were possible the very Elett, Mat 24.24. I intimating that it is not possible so to deceive them; and that is, because they are Elect; even an extrinsick accidental impossibility. It's a dry evasion of them that expound the Elect, of pravisi perseverantes; as if Christ had faid \(\Gamma\) It is not possible to deceive them that God foreknowes will not be deceived. 7 For there is some present cause here plainly intimated of their perseverance or future nondeception; and it is not a meer logical impossibility of consequence that is spoken of. And if this cause was within them, then it must be the nature or degree of their grace: If without them, it must be the Election and preservation of God, which indeed was the cause.

For my part, I lubscribe to Aquina his explication of this matter in 22, q. 24, art 11. Otrum charitae semel habita possis amitis, as it lieth in these words in conclusion which I think worth the reciting though somewhat large [Quanquam patria charitae, ubi Deus per essentiam videtur amitti nullatenum possit; charitae tamen vie, in cujus statu Dei essentia non videtur amitti paccando potest. (But marke the Explication) Respondient qued per charitatem spiritus sanctus in nobis habitat. Tripliciter ergo possumus considerare charitatem. Uno modo ex parte spiritus sancti moventis animum and distigendum demic & ex bac parte charitae impeccabilitatem habet (I would say it is inextinguibilic or imextirpabilic), ex vientes spiritus sancti, qui infallibiliter operatur quedcunque vienteries.

Unde impossibile est bac duo simul esse vera, quod spiritui Santtus velis aliquem movere ad actum charitatis, et qued

Vid. Aquin.

contr.Gentil.

lib. 3. qu. 155.

fol,125.

ipie charitatem amittat peccando. Nam donum perfeverantia computatur inter beneficia Dei quibus certissime libe. rantur quicunque liberantur ut Aug. Alio modo poteft considerari charitas secundum proprium rationem : & sic charitas non potest aliquid, nisi id quod pertinet ad charitatu rationem: Unde charitas nullo modo potest peccare, sicut calor non potest infrigidare, & sicut injusticia non potest borum facere, ut August. Tertio modo potest considerari charitat ex parte subjecti quod est vertibile secundum arbitris libertatem. Potest autem attendi comparatio charitatis ad hoc subjectum, & secundum universalem rationem qua comparatur forma ad materiam; & Jecundum specialem rationem qua comparatur babitus ad potentiam. Est autem de ratione forma, quod sit in subjecto amissibiliter, quando non replet totam potentialitatem materia - sic ergo charitas Patria (cilicet omnis actualis motus ejus fertur in Deum) inamiffibitui in quantum facit id videri bonum quod es convenit, ma. sapores secundum suam dispositionem: ita mens hominis dijudisat de alique faciendo secundum suam babitualem dispositiofinis videtur ei. Ibi ergo cha itas inamissibiliter habetur, ubi licet in Patria, ubi Deus videtur per effentiam, qua eft ipfa essentia bonitatis: & ideo charitas patrea amitti non poteft. Charitas autem vie in cujus statu non videtur ipla Deieffen tia, qua eft effentia bonitatis, poteft amieti] (that is, in respect of the subject alone considered) I take this for a plain and found explication of the point: if the rek were added, viz. in whom the Holy Ghoft doth thus preferve Grace.

quia replet totam potenti elicatem racionalis mentis (in quantum biliter habetur. Charitas autem via non sic replet potentialitatem sut Subjecti, qui non semper actu fertur in Deum, Unde quando actu in Deum non fertur, potest aliquid occurrere per quod charitas amittatur. Habitui vero proprium est ut inclinet Potentiam ad agendum : quod convenit halum autem qued ei repugnat. Si nt enim gustus disudicat nem : Unde Philos. dicit, Quod qualu unufquisque eft, talu id quad convenit charitati non potest videri nisi bonum, sci-

And here I cannot see but Aquinas is against Alvarez conceit of a confirming grace in this life, which is a participation charita. tis Patrie: For Aquinas confineth charitatem Patrie ad patriam. and exclude this a viatore: and he confineth it to the Vision of God per effentiam, which both he and the truth do exclude from earth. And De veritate Mater. 18. it is his first Quand he determineth that it is an Error in them that think that Adam in innocency did see God per effentiam, though impersectly, and in a midle fort inter statum beatorum & peccatorum.

See also Capreolus Defenf. li. 2. Dist. 23. qu. 1. of this.

Yet of the main point Aquinas speaks as Alvarez before cited. And most fully lib de verit. Mater. 24 qu. 9. fol. 137, 138. where he concludeth that in vià no man can be perfect and confirmed in good simpliciter, ita viz quodin se sussiens, sua sirmitatis principium habeat quod omnino peccare non possit: but only per hec quod datur eis aliquod munus gratia per quod inclinantur in bonum, quod non possunt de facili a bono desticti: non tamen per hoc ita retrahuntur a malo quod omnino peccare non possint, nisi divinà providentià custodiente.] And ad 4m he thus qualifieth his perfection [Quod ex ratione illa potest baberi, quod non est aliquis in statu via omnino confirmatus, ficut nec omnino perfectus. (And ad 5m adds that posse peccare non facit ad meritum, sed ad meriti manifestationem; which the Jesuites may consider of.)

Prop. 15. The ninth Opinion being the Libertines, is fo gross against nature, and express Scripture, and the very holy nature. and the experience of the Saints, that I think it not necessary here to fay any more of it, than to disclaim it, and open the truth in these few Assertions. 1 No mans assurance of his perseverance is perfect in this life: 2. Therefore in that measure as his atsurance is imperfect, and he is lyable to the least doubts, in that measure it is his duty to fear: The fear may be a duty, when the doubt that doth occasion it is a fin. 3. A very great cautelousness according to the weight of our work, would be necessary, if our assurance of perseverance were persect. 4. God hath not only decreed and promised that we shall persevere, but also that we shall by the means of this holy cautelousnels, and solicitude and fear, persevere: Jer. 32.40 I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart

from me. 5. The dominion of any one fin is inconfistent with faving grace and justification. 6. Therefore he that is under the dominion of any fin, may be fure that he is unjustified, but he cannot be affured that he hath that holiness or justification which he hath not, or that he shall persevere in it, before he have it. 7. He that hath not more hatred than love to any fin, and that had not rather be rid of it even in the use of Gods means, than keep it, in regard of the habituated state of his will, is under the dominion of sin, and in a state of damnation. 8. He that is thus resolved and affected against a gross sin, or any known sin that is under the power of his will, is not like to live in, or give up himself to it: Nay he cannot commit it without renewed resolutions against it, and a restless importunity of foul to be delivered, which will prevail. 9 It is therefore a great suspicion, if not a certain thing, that the man that can live in such a sin, and quiet his mind in it on this account, that once he had grace, and therefore shall persevere, is yet without true faving grace. 10. Sin doth as naturally breed troubles and fears as the fetting of the fun caufeth darkness, or as a gross fubstance in the sunshine causeth a shadow. And this from the nature of the thing, and by the will of God. 11. A lapfed Christian mult be recovered, and fear is one of the means of his recovery. 12. Therefore the Libertine Doctrines, of not fearing, mourning, praying, confessing in order to pardon, are pernicious Doctrines: as I have more fully manifested in other Writings on that Subject.

Prop. 16. As to the tenth Opinion, which affirmeth that no measure of our first stock of grace can be lost, which was insufed in our regeneration: I distinguish between two forts of converts: In some God may put at the first but the smallest degree of faving grace; and perhaps that may be Gods most ordinary way: And then no doubt, that cannot be diminished, but the sincerity or life it felf must be lost: For the diminishing of the smallest sparke would be the extinguishing of it. But for ought I know, in others God may give a greater measure of grace in their first conversion, than to most he doth after long use of means. I think he did so to Panl. Now in this case, though it is most probable that Cod never will fuffer that grace to be brought to a fmaller measure then at first it was insused, yet I know no certainty

by Promise or any other proof that he will never permit such a diminution. Let them that affirm it, bring us their evidence, and we shall try and judge of it as we find it.

A godly Divine Mr John Barlow in his Discourse of Spiritual stediastnels gives this Reason. [As we were meer patients at the first reception, so are we no agents in its destruction. Lose we may what addition, by our co-operation with it we have gained: but not the least dram of that which without our co-working, was at our effectual call infused.] To which I answer. 1. It's but barely faid. that we are no agents in it's destruction; and not proved. I deny the consequence: A man may be active in destroying grace, that was but passive in receiving it. 2. We may merit the diminution. and so may be active. 3. It is not yet proved, but that we are as truly passive in receiving each superadded degree, as the first; or that every degree is not infused as the first was: though it be true that there are higher preparatory dispositions in the soul for further degrees than were for the first. 4. This whole Argument is confuted by the instance of Adam: For he was as passive as we in receiving his first grace, and yet lost it, and was too active as to the losing it: therefore the reason is insufficient.

Prop. 17. The Eleventh Opinion, (that no degree of the habit can be diminished either which was first infused or after added) is less probable than the former; And Mr Barlew in the foregoing page doth give four Reasons against it. And yet not only some few of ours, but most of the School-men, are against the diminu. * And the tion of the habit; but very differently, for though Aquinas De cirine of simply say that [Quanquam charitas secundum se ac directe, the I homists nullatenus diminui possit, dispositive tamen & indirecte per venia- against the inlia peccata & cessando ab operibus virtutum diminutionem admit. cresse of Chatit] Yet Gr. Ariminensis, and abundance other School-men ti y by additiadde that ex natura sua potest diminui, & si non potest respectu degrees, doth ordination's divina : And their denyal of the diminution of it, is lead them to from their false Opinions about venial and mortal fin. * For they think it cannot feign a thing called venial finne, which is not against charity, nor, be diminished.

Bronerly finne, and then they give that as a reason why it cannot. Against which properly sinne, and then they give that as a reason why it cannot fee Rada.contr. directly (that is, neque effettive neque meritorie as Aquin.) di- 18. and other minish charity. And then for mortal sin, they say it doth totally Scoults.

evacuate and corrupt Charity, both effective & meritorie aquin 22.qu.24.art.10. concl. But it will be long before they will be able to teach their Scholars to know which are mortal and which venial sianes, according to their own descriptions (so truly doth Gerson and with him others, complain of the difficulty of discerning them:) and longer before they will prove any sins to be venial in their sense: and as long will it be before they will well prove that every sin which they call mortal doth charitatem totaliter corrumpere as they affirm; and that Peter, David, Noah, &c. were utterly void of Charity when they sinued, and were afterwards new-born a second or third time. I think I need not stand upon their Reasons.

Prop. 18. As for the Twelfth Opinion which is the Libertine of that strein that are next the Familists, I have said so much a gainst it in other Writings, and so many others have said more, and it is so gross as before was said of the Ninth which draws near it, that I shall suppose I may be here excused from medling with it any surther, than to bid the weak and unskilsull to beware of it, as being a ready way to carnal security, impiey, liceniousness and perdition.

Errata.

PAge 8.1.12. for [predest ination] r. [predetermination] p. 10.1. 21. for [violaris] r. [viatoris] p. 21.1. 37. for [grace] r. [peace] p 37. 1.6. for [impossible] r. [possible.]

 $F I \mathcal{N} I S.$