

"commanded faith is wanting;" *ergo*, "in every action not commanded, there is sin<sup>1</sup>:" I would demand of them first, forasmuch as the nature of things indifferent is neither to be commanded nor forbidden, but left free and arbitrary; how there can be any thing indifferent, if for want of faith sin be committed when any thing not commanded is done. So that of necessity they must add somewhat, and at leastwise thus set it down: in every action not commanded of God or permitted with approbation, faith is wanting, and for want of faith there is sin.

[4.] The next thing we are to inquire is, What those things be which God permitteth with approbation, and how we may know them to be so permitted. When there are unto one end sundry means; as for example, for the sustenance of our bodies many kinds of food, many sorts of raiment to clothe our nakedness, and so in other things of like condition: here the end itself being necessary, but not so any one mean thereunto; necessary that our bodies should be both fed and clothed, howbeit no one kind of food or raiment necessary; therefore we hold these things free in their own nature and indifferent. The choice is left to our own discretion, except a principal bond of some higher duty remove the indifferency that such things have in themselves. Their indifferency is removed, if either we take away our own liberty, as Ananias did<sup>2</sup>, for whom to have sold or held his possessions it was indifferent, till his solemn vow and promise unto God had strictly bound him one only way; or if God himself have precisely abridged the same, by restraining us unto or by barring us from some one or moe things of many, which otherwise were in themselves altogether indifferent. Many fashions of priestly attire there were, whereof Aaron and his sons might have had their free choice without sin, but that God expressly tied them unto one<sup>3</sup>. All meats indifferent unto the Jew, were it not that God by name excepted some, as swine's flesh<sup>4</sup>. Impossible therefore it is we should otherwise think, than that what things God doth neither command nor forbid, the same he permitteth with approbation either to be done or left undone.

<sup>1</sup> T. C. l. ii. p. 58.<sup>2</sup> Acts v. 4.<sup>3</sup> Exod. xxviii. 4, 43; xxxix.<sup>4</sup> Lev. xi.

"All things are lawful unto me," saith the Apostle<sup>1</sup>, speaking as it seemeth in the person of the Christian Gentile for maintenance of liberty in things indifferent; whereunto his answer is, that nevertheless "all things are not expedient;" in things indifferent there is a choice, they are not always equally expedient.

[5.] Now in things although not commanded of God yet lawful because they are permitted, the question is, what light shall shew us the conveniency which one hath above another. For answer, their final determination is, that<sup>2</sup> "Whereas the Heathen did send men for the difference of good and evil "to the light of Reason, in such things the Apostle sendeth "us to the school of Christ in his word, which only is able "through faith to give us assurance and resolution in our "doings." Which word *only*, is utterly without possibility of ever being proved. For what if it were true concerning things indifferent, that unless the word of the Lord had determined of the free use of them, there could have been no lawful use of them at all: which notwithstanding is untrue; because it is not the Scripture's setting down such things as indifferent, but their not setting down as necessary, that doth make them to be indifferent: yet this to our present purpose serveth nothing at all. We inquire not now, whether any thing be free to be used which Scripture hath not set down as free: but concerning things known and acknowledged to be indifferent, whether particularly in choosing any one of them before another we sin, if any thing but Scripture direct us in this our choice. When many meats are set before me, all are indifferent, none unlawful, I take one as most convenient. If Scripture require me so to do, then is not the thing indifferent, because I must do what Scripture requireth. They are all indifferent, I might take any, Scripture doth not require of me to make any special choice of one: I do notwithstanding make choice of one, my discretion teaching me so to do. A hard case, that hereupon I should be justly condemned of sin. Nor let any man think that following the judgment of natural discretion in such cases we can have no assurance that we please God. For to the Author and God of our nature, how shall any

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 12.<sup>2</sup> [T. C. ii. 60.]

operation proceeding in natural sort be in that respect unacceptable? The nature which himself hath given to work by he cannot but be delighted with, when we exercise the same any way without commandment of his to the contrary.

[6.] My desire is to make this cause so manifest, that if it were possible, no doubt or scruple concerning the same might remain in any man's cogitation. Some truths there are, the verity whereof time doth alter: as it is now true that Christ is risen from the dead; which thing was not true at such time as Christ was living on earth, and had not suffered. It would be known therefore, whether this which they teach concerning the sinful stain of all actions not commanded of God, be a truth that doth now appertain unto us only, or a perpetual truth, in such sort that from the first beginning of the world unto the last consummation thereof, it neither hath been nor can be otherwise. I see not how they can restrain this unto any particular time, how they can think it true now and not always true, that in every action not commanded there is for want of faith sin. Then let them cast back their eyes unto former generations of men, and mark what was done in the prime of the world. Seth, Enoch, Noah, Sem, Abraham, Job, and the rest that lived before any syllable of the law of God was written, did they not sin as much as we do in every action not commanded? That which God is unto us by his sacred word, the same he was unto them by such like means as Eliphaz in Job describeth<sup>1</sup>. If therefore we sin in every action which the Scripture commandeth us not, it followeth that they did the like in all such actions as were not by revelation from Heaven exacted at their hands. Unless God from heaven did by vision still shew them what to do, they might do nothing, not eat, not drink, not sleep, not move.

[7.] Yea, but even as in darkness candlelight may serve to guide men's steps, which to use in the day were madness; so when God had once delivered his law in writing, it may be they are of opinion that then it must needs be sin for men to do any thing which was not there commanded them to do,

<sup>1</sup> Job iv. 12. ["A thing was "thoughts from the visions of the  
"secretly brought to me, and mine "night, when deep sleep falleth on  
"ear received a little thereof; in "men," &c.]

whatsoever they might do before. Let this be granted, and it shall hereupon plainly ensue, either that the light of Scripture once shining in the world, all other light of Nature is therewith in such sort drowned, that now we need it not, neither may we longer use it; or if it stand us in any stead, yet as Aristotle speaketh of men whom Nature hath framed for the state of servitude, saying, "They have reason so far forth as to conceive when others direct them<sup>1</sup>, but little or "none in directing themselves by themselves;" so likewise our natural capacity and judgment must serve us only for the right understanding of that which the sacred Scripture teacheth. Had the Prophets who succeeded Moses, or the blessed Apostles which followed them, been settled in this persuasion, never would they have taken so great pains in gathering together natural arguments, thereby to teach the faithful their duties. To use unto them any other motive than *Scriptum est*, "Thus it is written," had been to teach them other grounds of their actions than Scripture; which I grant they allege commonly, but not only. Only Scripture they should have alleged, had they been thus persuaded, that so far forth we do sin as we do any thing otherwise directed than by Scripture. St. Augustine was resolute in points of Christianity to credit none, how godly and learned soever he were, unless he confirmed his sentence by the Scriptures, or by some reason not contrary to them<sup>2</sup>. Let them therefore with St. Augustine reject and condemn that which is not grounded either on the Scripture, or on some reason not contrary to Scripture, and we are ready to give them our hands in token of friendly consent with them.

V. But against this it may be objected, and is, That the Fathers do nothing more usually in their books, than draw

The first  
assertion  
endeavour.

<sup>1</sup> Arist. Pol. i. c. 5. [ὁ κοινω-  
νῶν λόγον τοσοῦτον ὅσον αἰσθάνεσθαι  
ἀλλὰ μὴ ἔχειν.]

<sup>2</sup> August. Ep. 19. [al. 82. t. ii.  
190. "Ego enim fateor caritati  
"tuæ" (he is writing to St. Jerome,)  
"solis eis Scripturarum libris, qui  
"jam canonici appellantur, didici  
"hunc timorem honoremque deferre,  
"ut nullum eorum auctorem scri-  
"bendo aliquid errasse firmissime  
"credam. Ac si aliquid in eis  
"offendero literis quod videatur

"contrarium veritati, nihil aliud,  
"quam vel mendosum esse codicem,  
"vel interpretem non assecutum  
"esse quod dictum est, vel me  
"minime intellexisse, non ambigam.  
"Alios autem ita lego, ut quanta-  
"libet sanctitate doctrinaque præ-  
"polleant, non ideo verum putem,  
"quia ipsi ita senserunt, sed quia  
"mihi vel per illos auctores ca-  
"nonicos, vel probabili ratione,  
"quod a vero non abhorreat per-  
"suadere potuerunt.]"

BOOK II.  
Ch. v. 2.

ed to be  
proved by  
the use of  
taking arg-  
uments  
negatively  
from the  
authority  
of Scrip-  
ture :  
which  
kind of dis-  
puting is  
usual in the  
Fathers.

arguments from the Scripture negatively in reproof of that which is evil ; "Scriptures teach it not, avoid it therefore : " these disputes with the Fathers are ordinary, neither is it hard to shew that the Prophets themselves have so reasoned. Which arguments being sound and good, it should seem that it cannot be unsound or evil to hold still the same assertion against which hitherto we have disputed. For if it stand with reason thus to argue, "such a thing is not taught us in Scripture, therefore we may not receive or allow it ; " how should it seem unreasonable to think, that whatsoever we may lawfully do, the Scripture by commanding it must make it lawful ? But how far such arguments do reach, it shall the better appear by considering the matter wherein they have been urged.

[2.] First therefore this we constantly deny, that of so many testimonies as they are able to produce for the strength of negative arguments, any one doth generally (which is the point in question) condemn either all opinions as false, or all actions as unlawful, which the Scripture teacheth us not. The most that can be collected out of them is only that in some cases a negative argument taken from Scripture is strong, whereof no man endued with judgment can doubt. But doth the strength of some negative argument prove this kind of negative argument strong, by force whereof all things are denied which Scripture affirmeth not, or all things which Scripture prescribeth not condemned ? The question between us is concerning matter of action, what things are lawful or unlawful for men to do. The sentences alleged out of the Fathers are as peremptory and as large in every respect for matter of opinion as of action : which argueth that in truth they never meant any otherwise to tie the one than the other unto Scripture, both being thereunto equally tied, as far as each is required in the same kind of necessity unto salvation. If therefore it be not unlawful to know and with full persuasion to believe much more than Scripture alone doth teach ; if it be against all sense and reason to condemn the knowledge of so many arts and sciences as are otherwise learned than in Holy Scripture, notwithstanding the manifest speeches of ancient Catholic Fathers, which seem to close up within the bosom thereof all manner good and lawful knowledge ; where-

BOOK II.  
Ch. v. 3.

fore should their words be thought more effectual to shew that we may not in deeds and practice, than they are to prove that in speculation and knowledge we ought not to go any farther than the Scripture ? Which Scripture being given to teach matters of belief no less than of action, the Fathers must needs be and are even as plain against credit besides the relation, as against practice without the injunction of the Scripture.

[3.] St. Augustine hath said <sup>1</sup>, "Whether it be question of Christ, or whether it be question of his Church, or of what thing soever the question be ; I say not, if we, but if an angel from heaven shall tell us any thing beside that you have received in the Scripture under the Law and the Gospel, let him be accursed <sup>2</sup>." In like sort Tertullian <sup>3</sup>, "We may not give ourselves this liberty to bring in any thing of our will, nor choose any thing that other men bring in of their will ; we have the Apostles themselves for authors, which themselves brought nothing of their own will, but the discipline which they received of Christ they delivered faithfully unto the people." In which place the name of Discipline importeth not as they who allege it would fain have it construed, but as any man who noteth the circumstance of the place and the occasion of uttering the words will easily acknowledge, even the selfsame thing it signifieth which the name of Doctrine doth, and as well might the one as the other there have been used. To help them farther, doth not St. Jerome <sup>4</sup> after the selfsame manner dispute, "We believe it

<sup>1</sup> Aug. cont. Liter. Petil. lib. iii. c. 6. [t. ix. 301 : "Sive de Christo, sive de ejus Ecclesia, sive de quacunque alia re quæ pertinet ad fidem vitamque vestram, non dicam nos, nequaquam comparandi ei qui dixit, *Licet si nos*, sed omnino quod secutus adjecit, *Si angelus de cælo vobis annunciat, verit præter quam quod in Scripturis legalibus et evangelicis accepistis, anathema sit.*"]

<sup>2</sup> T. C. l. ii. p. 80 : "Augustine saith, Whether it be question of Christ, or whether it be question of his Church, &c. And lest the answerer should restrain the general saying of Augustine unto the Doctrine of the Gospel, so that he would thereby shut out the Disci-

pline ;" [Here T. C. alleges the passage ascribed to St. Cyprian, quoted by Hooker in the next note ;] even Tertullian himself, before he was imbrued with the heresy of Montanus, giveth testimony unto the discipline in these words, "We may not give ourselves, &c."

<sup>3</sup> Tertull. de Præscript. [c. 6 : "Nobis vero nihil ex nostro arbitrio inducere licet, sed nec eligere quod aliquis de arbitrio suo induxerit. Apostolos Domini habemus auctores, qui nec ipsi quicquam ex suo arbitrio, quod inducerent, elegerunt : sed acceptam a Christo disciplinam fideliter nationibus adsignaverunt."]

<sup>4</sup> Hieron. contra Helvid. ["Ut hæc quæ scripta sunt non nega-

BOOK II. "not, because we read it not?" Yea, "We ought not so  
Ch. v. 4. "much as to know the things which the Book of the Law  
"containeth not," saith St. Hilary. Shall we hereupon then  
conclude, that we may not take knowledge of or give credit  
unto any thing, which sense or experience or report or art  
doth propose, unless we find the same in Scripture? No; it  
is too plain that so far to extend their speeches is to wrest them  
against their true intent and meaning. To urge any thing  
upon the Church, requiring thereunto that religious assent  
of Christian belief, wherewith the words of the holy prophets  
are received; to urge any thing as part of that supernatural  
and celestially revealed truth which God hath taught, and not  
to shew it in Scripture; this did the ancient Fathers ever-  
more think unlawful, impious, execrable. And thus, as their  
speeches were meant, so by us they must be restrained.

[4.] As for those alleged words of Cyprian<sup>1</sup>, "The Christ-  
ian Religion shall find, that out of this Scripture rules of  
"all doctrines have sprung, and that from hence doth spring  
"and hither doth return whatsoever the ecclesiastical disci-  
"pline doth contain:" surely this place would never have  
been brought forth in this cause, if it had been but once read  
over in the author himself out of whom it is cited. For the  
words are uttered concerning that one principal command-  
ment of love; in the honour whereof he speaketh after this  
sort<sup>2</sup>: "Surely this commandment containeth the law and

"mus, ita ea quæ non sunt scripta  
"renuimus. Natum Deum esse de  
"virgine credimus, quia legimus:  
"Mariam nupsisse post partum non  
"credimus, quia non legimus." t. ii.  
13.] Hilar. in Ps. cxxxii. [§ 6.  
pag. 463: "Quæ libro legis non  
"continentur, ea nec nosse debe-  
"mus." He is speaking of an apo-  
cryphal tradition, that the angels  
supposed by some to be mentioned  
in Genesis vi. 1, 4. used to haunt  
Mount Hermon especially.]

<sup>1</sup> "Let him hear what Cyprian  
"saith, The Christian Religion (saith  
"he) shall find, that," &c. T. C.  
l. ii. p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> "Vere hoc mandatum legem  
"complectitur et prophetas, et in  
"hoc verbo omnium Scriptura-  
"rum volumina coarctantur. Hoc  
"natura, hoc ratio, hoc, Domine,

"verbi tui clamatur auctoritas, hoc ex  
"ore tuo audivimus, hic invenit  
"consummationem omnis religio.  
"Primum est hoc mandatum et ul-  
"timum; hoc in libro vitæ conscrip-  
"tum indeficientem et hominibus et  
"angelis exhibet lectionem. Legat  
"hoc unum verbum et in hoc man-  
"dato meditetur Christiana religio,  
"et inveniet ex hac Scriptura omni-  
"um doctrinarum regulas emanasse,  
"et hinc nasci et huc reverti quic-  
"quid ecclesiastica continet disci-  
"plina, et in omnibus irritum esse  
"et frivolum quicquid dilectio non  
"confirmat." [Arnold. Carnotens.  
de Baptismo Christi, ad calc. S. Cy-  
prian. ed. Fell. pag. 33. Udall in  
his Demonstration of Discipline  
having quoted the same passage,  
Sutcliffe, Remonstrance to the De-  
monstration, page 17, meets it with

BOOK II. "the Prophets, and in this one word is the abridgment of all  
Ch. v. 5. "the volumes of Scripture. This nature and reason and the  
"authority of thy word, O Lord, doth proclaim; this we have  
"heard out of thy mouth; herein the perfection of all religion  
"doth consist. This is the first commandment and the last:  
"this being written in the Book of Life is (as it were) an  
"everlasting lesson both to Men and Angels. Let Christian  
"religion read this one word, and meditate upon this com-  
"mandment, and out of this Scripture it shall find the rules  
"of all learning to have sprung, and from hence to have risen  
"and hither to return whatsoever the ecclesiastical discipline  
"containeth, and that in all things it is vain and bootless  
"which charity confirmeth not." Was this a sentence (trow  
you) of so great force to prove that Scripture is the only rule  
of all the actions of men? Might they not hereby even as  
well prove, that one commandment of Scripture is the only  
rule of all things, and so exclude the rest of the Scripture, as  
now they do all means beside Scripture? But thus it fareth,  
when too much desire of contradiction causeth our speech  
rather to pass by number than to stay for weight.

[5.] Well, but Tertullian doth in this case speak yet more  
plainly<sup>1</sup>: "The Scripture," saith he, "denieth what it  
"noteth not," which are indeed the words of Tertullian<sup>2</sup>.  
But what? the Scripture reckoneth up the kings of Israel,  
and amongst those kings David; the Scripture reckoneth up  
the sons of David, and amongst those sons Salomon. To  
prove that amongst the kings of Israel there was no David  
but only one, no Salomon but one in the sons of David;  
Tertullian's argument will fitly prove. For inasmuch as the  
Scripture did propose to reckon up all, if there were moe it  
would have named them. In this case "the Scripture doth

the following, which occurs just be-  
fore in the same tract: "Magister  
"bone, libenter te audio, et cum ad-  
"versaris mihi, etiam in plagis et  
"doloribus intelligo disciplinam, nec  
"latet me, te docente, ad siccandas  
"corruptionum mearum putredines  
"prodesse cauterium, et mundare  
"cicatrices veteres salem disciplina  
"tuæ, Evangelio tuo medente infu-  
"sum.... You see, that which he  
"first called Doctrine, he after,

"ἐξηγητικῶς, calleth Discipline."]

<sup>1</sup> Tertull. lib. de Monog. [c. 4:  
"Semel vim passa institutio Dei  
"per Lamechum, constitit postea in  
"finem usque gentis illius. Secun-  
"dus Lamech nullus extitit, quomo-  
"do duabus maritatus. Negat Scrip-  
"tura quod non notat." p. 671.]

<sup>2</sup> "And in another place Tertul-  
"lian saith, That the Scripture de-  
"nieth that which it noteth not."  
T. C. l. ii. p. 81.

"deny the thing it noteth not." Howbeit I could not but think that man to do me some piece of manifest injury, which would hereby fasten upon me a general opinion, as if I did think the Scripture to deny the very reign of King Henry the Eighth, because it nowhere noteth that any such King did reign. Tertullian's speech is probable concerning such matter as he there speaketh of. "There was," saith Tertullian, "no second Lamech like to him that had two wives; the Scripture denieth what it noteth not." As therefore it noteth one such to have been in that age of the world; so had there been moe, it would by likelihood as well have noted many as one. What infer we now hereupon? "There was no second Lamech; the Scripture denieth what it noteth not." Were it consonant unto reason to divorce these two sentences, the former of which doth shew how the later is restrained, and not marking the former to conclude by the later of them, that simply whatsoever any man at this day doth think true is by the Scripture denied, unless it be there affirmed to be true? I wonder that a cause so weak and feeble hath been so much persisted in.

[6.] But to come unto those their sentences wherein matters of action are more apparently touched: the name of Tertullian is as before so here again pretended<sup>1</sup>; who writing unto his wife two books, and exhorting her in the one to live a widow, in case God before her should take him unto his mercy; and in the other, if she did marry, yet not to join herself to an infidel, as in those times some widows Christian had done for the advancement of their estate in this present world, he urged very earnestly St. Paul's words, "only in the Lord<sup>2</sup>:"

<sup>1</sup> T. C. l. ii. p. 80: "And that in indifferent things it is not enough that they be not against the word, but that they be according to the word, it may appear by other places, where he saith, 'That whatsoever pleaseth not the Lord, displeaseth him, and with hurt is received,' lib. ii. ad Uxorem.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 39. Ad Uxor. l. ii. c. 2. ["Cum dicit, Tantum in Domino, jam non suadet, sed exserte jubet... Igitur cum quædam istis diebus nuptias suas de Ecclesia tolleret, id est, Gentili conjunge-

"retur; idque ab aliis retro factum recorderar; miratus aut ipsarum petulantiam, aut consiliariorum prævaricationem, quod nulla Scriptura ejus facti licentiam profferrent, 'Numquid,' inquam, 'de illo capitulo sibi blandiuntur primæ ad Corinthios, ubi scriptum est, Siquis frater infidelem habet uxorem, et illa matrimonio contentit, ne dimittat eam,' &c. Hanc monitionem forsân fidelibus injunctis simpliciter intelligendam putent, (etiam infidelibus nubere liceat,) qui ita interpretantur." p. 198.]

whereupon he demandeth of them that think they may do the contrary, what Scripture they can shew where God hath dispensed and granted license to do against that which the blessed Apostle so strictly doth enjoin<sup>1</sup>. And because in defence it might perhaps be replied, "Seeing God doth will that couples which are married when both are infidels, if either party chance to be after converted unto Christianity, this should not make separation between them, as long as the unconverted was willing to retain the other on whom the grace of Christ had shined; wherefore then should that let the making of marriage, which doth not dissolve marriage being made?" after great reasons shewed why God doth in converts being married allow continuance with infidels, and yet disallow that the faithful when they are free should enter into bonds of wedlock with such, [he] concludeth in the end concerning those women that so marry, "They that please not the Lord do even thereby offend the Lord; they do even thereby throw themselves into evil<sup>2</sup>;" that is to say, while they please him not by marrying in him, they do that whereby they incur his displeasure; they make an offer of themselves into the service of that enemy with whose servants they link themselves in so near a bond. What one syllable is there in all this prejudicial any way to that which we hold? For the words of Tertullian as they are by them alleged are two ways misunderstood; both in the former part, where that is extended generally to "all things" in the neuter gender, which he speaketh in the feminine gender of women's persons; and in the latter, where "received with hurt" is put instead of "wilful incurring that which is evil." And so in sum Tertullian doth neither mean nor say as is pretended, "Whatsoever pleaseth not the Lord displeaseth him, and with hurt is received;" but, "Those women that please not the Lord" by their kind of marrying "do even thereby offend the Lord, they do even thereby throw themselves into evil."

[7.] Somewhat more show there is in a second place of Tertullian, which notwithstanding when we have examined it

<sup>1</sup> [This is Hooker's division (A, line 1.] 1886. and B.). It implies the insertion of the pronoun before "concludeth." <sup>2</sup> "Quæ Domino non placent, utique Dominum offendunt, utique Malo se inferunt." [Tertull. ad Uxor. lib. ii. c. 7.]