

THE IRISH ARTICLES OF RELIGION. A.D. 1615.

[The Irish Articles— probably composed by the learned Archbishop James Ussher (then Professor of Divinity in Dublin), and adopted by the Archbishops, Bishops, and Convocation of the Irish Episcopal Church, and approved by the Viceroy in 1615, four years before the Synod of Dort—although practically superseded by the Thirty-nine Articles, are important as a testimony of the prevailing Calvinism of the leading divines in that Church, which had previously been expressed also in the nine Lambeth Articles. They are still more important as the connecting link between the Thirty-nine Articles and the Westminster Confession, and as the chief source of the latter. The agreement of the two formularies in the order of subjects, the headings of chapters, and in many single phrases, as well as in spirit and sentiment, is very striking. See the comparison in Dr. Alex. F. Mitchell's *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, Edinb. 1874, *Introd.* pp. xlvi. sqq. On the history and authority of the Irish Articles see *Hardwick's History of the Articles of Religion*, 2d ed. pp. 181 sqq.]

The text is taken from the original edition of 1615, as appended to Dr. Ellington's *Life of Archbishop Ussher* (in *Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher*, Dublin, 1847, Vol. I. Appendix IV.), and reprinted in *Hardwick's History*, *Append.* Sixth, pp. 351 sqq. He added a few references to the Lambeth Articles. The spelling is here modernized.]

Articles of Religion,

Agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops, and the rest of the Clergy of Ireland, in the Convocation holden at Dublin in the Year of our Lord God 1615, for the Avoiding of Diversities of Opinions, and the Establishing of Consent touching True Religion.

OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE AND THE THREE CREEDS.

1. The ground of our religion and the rule of faith and all saving truth is the Word of God, contained in the holy Scripture.
2. By the name of holy Scripture we understand all the Canonical Books of, the Old and New Testament, viz.:

Of the Old Testament.

The Five Books of Moses. Job.

Joshua. Psalms.

Judges. Proverbs.

Ruth. Ecclesiastes.

The First and Second of Samuel. The Song of Solomon.

The First and Second of Kings. Isaiah.
The First and Second of Chronicles.
Jeremiah, his Prophecy and Lamentation.
Ezra. Ezekiel.
Nehemiah. Daniel.
Esther. The Twelve lesser Prophets.
Of the New Testament.

The Gospels according to Luke,
Matthew, John,
Mark, The Acts of the Apostles.

527

The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. Titus.
II. Corinthians. Philemon.
Galatians. Hebrews.
Ephesians. The Epistle of St. James.
Philippians. St. Peter II.
Colossians. St. John III.
II. Thessalonians. St. Jude.
II. Timothy The Revelation of St. John.

All which we acknowledge to be given by the inspiration of God, and in that regard to be of most certain credit and highest authority.

3. The other Books, commonly called Apocryphal, did not proceed from such inspiration, and therefore are not of sufficient authority to establish any point of doctrine; but the Church doth read them as Books containing many worthy things for example of life and instruction of manners.

Such are these following:

The Third Book of Esdras. Baruch, with the Epistle of Jeremiah.

The Fourth Book of Esdras. The Song of the Three Children.

The Book of Tobias. Susanna.

The Book of Judith. Bell and the Dragon.

Additions to the Book of Esther. The Prayer of Manasses.

The Book of Wisdom. The First Book of Maccabæus.

The Book of Jesus, the Son of Sarah, called Ecclesiasticus.

The Second Book of Maccabæus.

4. The Scriptures ought to be translated out of the original tongues into all languages for the common use of all men: neither is any person to be discouraged from reading the Bible in such a language as he doth understand, but seriously exhorted to read the same with great humility and reverence, as a special means to bring him to the true knowledge of God and of his own duty.

5. Although there be some hard things in the Scripture (especially such as have proper relation to the times in which they were first uttered, and prophecies of things which were afterwards to be fulfilled), yet all things necessary to be known unto everlasting salvation are clearly delivered therein; and nothing of that kind is spoken under dark mysteries in one place which is not in other places spoken more familiarly and plainly, to the capacity both of learned and unlearned.

6. The holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, and

528

are able to instruct sufficiently in all points of faith that we are bound to believe, and all good duties that we are bound to practice.

7. All and every the Articles contained in the Nicene Creed, the Creed of Athanasius, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought firmly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrant of holy Scripture.

OF FAITH IN THE HOLY TRINITY.

8. There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this God-head, there be three persons of one and the same substance, power, and eternity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

9. The essence of the Father doth not beget the essence of the Son; but the person of the Father begetteth the person of the Son, by communicating his whole essence to the person begotten from eternity.

10. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

OF GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE AND PREDESTINATION.

11. God from all eternity did, by his unchangeable counsel, ordain whatsoever in time should come to pass; yet so, as thereby no violence is offered to the wills of the reasonable creatures, and neither the liberty nor the contingency of the second causes is taken away, but established rather.

12. By the same eternal counsel God hath predestinated some unto life, and reprobated some unto death: of both which there is a certain number, known only to God, which can neither be increased nor diminished.⁸²⁷

13. Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed in his sacred counsel to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ unto everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor.

529

14. The cause moving God to predestinate unto life is not the foreseeing of faith, or perseverance, or good works, or of any thing which is in the person predestinated, but only the good pleasure of God himself.⁸²⁸ For all things being ordained for the manifestation of his glory, and his glory being to appear both in the works of his mercy and of his justice, it seemed good to his heavenly wisdom to choose out a certain number towards whom he would extend his undeserved mercy, leaving the rest to be spectacles of his justice.

15. Such as are predestinated unto life be called according unto God's purpose (his spirit working in due season), and through grace they obey the calling, they be justified freely; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity. But such as are not predestinated to salvation shall finally be condemned for their sins.⁸²⁹

16. The godlike consideration of predestination and our election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things: as well because it doth greatly confirm and establish their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God; and, on the contrary side, for curious and carnal persons lacking the spirit of Christ to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's predestination is very dangerous.

17. We must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth unto us in holy Scripture; and in our doings that will of God is to be followed which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God.

OF THE CREATION AND GOVERNMENT OF ALL THINGS.

18. In the beginning of time, when no creature had any being, God, by his word alone, in the space of six days, created all things, and afterwards, by his providence, doth continue, propagate, and order them according to his own will.

530

19. The principal creatures are angels and men.

20. Of angels, some continued in that holy state wherein they were created, and are by God's grace forever established therein; others fell from the same, and are reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

21. Man being at the beginning created according to the image of God (which consisted especially in the wisdom of his mind and the true holiness of his free will), had the covenant of the law ingrafted in his heart, whereby God did promise unto him everlasting life upon condition that he performed entire and perfect obedience unto his Commandments, according to that measure of strength wherewith he was endued in his creation, and threatened death unto him if he did not perform the same.

OF THE FALL OF MAN, ORIGINAL SIN, AND THE STATE OF MAN BEFORE JUSTIFICATION.

22. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death went over all men, forasmuch as all have sinned.

23. Original sin standeth not in the imitation of Adam (as the Pelagians dream), but is the fault and corruption of the nature of every person that naturally is engendered and propagated from Adam: whereby it cometh to pass that man is deprived of original righteousness, and by nature is bent unto sin. And therefore, in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation.

24. This corruption of nature doth remain even in those that are regenerated, whereby the flesh always lusteth against the spirit, and can not be made subject to the law of God. And howsoever, for Christ's sake, there be no condemnation to such as are regenerate and do believe, yet doth the Apostle acknowledge that in itself this concupiscence hath the nature of sin.

25. The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he can not turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God. Wherefore, we have no power to do good works, pleasing and acceptable unto God, without the grace of God preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.

26. Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of

531

his Spirit are not pleasing unto God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School Authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea, rather, for that they are not done in such sort as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they are sinful.

27. All sins are not equal, but some far more heinous than others; yet the very least is of its own nature mortal, and, without God's mercy, maketh the offender liable unto everlasting damnation.

28. God is not the author of sin: howbeit, he doth not only permit, but also by his providence govern and order the same, guiding it in such sort by his infinite wisdom as it turneth to the manifestation of his own glory and to the good of his elect.

OF CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR OF THE SECOND COVENANT.

29. The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the true and eternal God—of one substance with the Father—took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance, so that two whole and perfect natures—that is to say, the Godhead and manhood—were inseparably joined in one person, making one Christ very God and very man.

30. Christ, in the truth of our nature, was made like unto us in all things—sin only excepted—from which he was clearly void, both in his life and in his nature. He came as a lamb without spot to take away the sins of the world, by the sacrifice of himself once made, and sin (as St. John saith) was not in him. He fulfilled the law for us perfectly: For our sakes he endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body. He was crucified, and died to reconcile his Father unto us, and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt, but also for all our actual transgressions. He was buried, and descended into hell, and the third day rose from the dead, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature: wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father, until he return to judge all men at the last day.

OF THE COMMUNICATING OF THE GRACE OF CHRIST.

31. They are to be condemned that presume to say that every man

532

shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature. For holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved.

32. None can come unto Christ unless it be given unto him, and unless the Father draw him. And all men are not so drawn by the Father that they may come unto the Son. Neither is there such a sufficient measure of grace vouchsafed unto every man whereby he is enabled to come unto everlasting life.⁸³⁰

33. All God's elect are in their time inseparably united unto Christ by the effectual and vital influence of the Holy Ghost, derived from him as from the head unto every true member of his mystical body. And being thus made one with Christ, they are truly regenerated, and made partakers of him and all his benefits.

OF JUSTIFICATION AND FAITH.

34. We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, applied by faith, and not for our own works or merits. And this righteousness, which we so receive of God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God, for our perfect and full justification.

35. Although this justification be free unto us, yet it cometh not so freely unto us that there is no ransom paid therefore at all. God showed his great mercy in delivering us from our former captivity without requiring of any ransom to be paid or amends to be made on our parts; which thing by us had been impossible to be done. And whereas all the world was not able of themselves to pay any part towards their ransom, it pleased our heavenly Father of his infinite mercy, without any desert of ours, to provide for us the most precious merits of his own Son, whereby our ransom might be fully paid, the law fulfilled, and his justice fully satisfied. So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly believe in him. He, for them, paid their ransom by his death. He, for them, fulfilled the law in his life; that now, in him, and by him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the law: forasmuch as that which our infirmity

533

was not able to effect, Christ's justice hath performed. And thus the justice and mercy of God do embrace each other: the grace of God not shutting out the justice of God in the matter of our justification, but only shutting out the justice of man (that is to say, the justice of our own works) from being any cause of deserving our justification.

36.831When we say that we are justified by faith only, we do not mean that the said justifying faith is alone in man without true repentance, hope, charity, and the fear of God (for such a faith is dead, and can not justify); neither do we mean that this, our act, to believe in Christ, or this, our faith in Christ, which is within us, doth of itself justify us or deserve our justification unto us (for that were to account ourselves to be justified by the virtue or dignity of something that is within ourselves); but the true understanding and meaning thereof is, that although we hear God's Word, and believe it—although we have faith, hope, charity, repentance, and the fear of God within us, and add never so many good works thereunto—yet we must renounce the merit of all our said virtues, of faith, hope, charity, and all our other virtues and good deeds which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as things that be far too weak and imperfect and insufficient to deserve remission of our sins and our justification, and therefore we must trust only in God's mercy and the merits of his most dearly beloved Son, our only Redeemer, Saviour, and Justifier, Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, because faith doth directly send us to Christ for our justification, and that by faith given us of God we embrace the promise of God's mercy and the remission of our sins (which thing none other of our virtues or works properly doth), therefore the

Scripture useth to say that faith without works—and the ancient fathers of the Church to the same purpose—that only faith doth justify us.

37. By justifying faith we understand not only the common belief of the articles of Christian religion, and the persuasion of the truth of God's Word in general, but also a particular application of the gracious promises of the gospel to the comfort of our own souls, whereby we lay hold on Christ, with all his benefits; having an earnest trust and confidence in God, that he will be merciful unto us for his only Son's

534

sake. So that a true believer may be certain, by the assurance of faith, of the forgiveness of his sins, and of his everlasting salvation by Christ.⁸³²

38. A true, lively, justifying faith and the sanctifying spirit of God is not extinguished nor vanished away in the regenerate, either finally or totally.⁸³³

OF SANCTIFICATION AND GOOD WORKS.

39. All that are justified are likewise sanctified, their faith being always accompanied with true repentance and good works.

40. Repentance is a gift of God, whereby a godly sorrow is wrought in the heart of the faithful for offending God, their merciful Father, by their former transgressions, together with a constant resolution for the time to come to cleave unto God and to lead a new life.

41. Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, can not make satisfaction for our sins and endure the surety of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing to God, and accepted of him in Christ, and do spring from a true and lively faith, which by them is to be discerned, as a tree by the fruit.

42. The works which God would have his people to walk in are such as he hath commanded in his holy Scripture, and not such works as men have devised out of their own brain, of a blind zeal and devotion, without the warrant of the Word of God.

43. The regenerate can not fulfill the law of God perfectly in this life. For in many things we offend all; and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

44. Not every heinous sin willingly committed after baptism is sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. And therefore to such as fall into sin after baptism, place for repentance is not to be denied.

45. Voluntary works, besides over and above God's commandments, which they call works of supererogation, can not be taught without arrogancy and impiety; for by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required.

OF THE SERVICE OF GOD.

46. Our duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to

535

love him with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our soul, and with all our strength; to worship him, and to give him thanks; to put our whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honor his holy name and his Word, and to serve him truly all the days of our life.⁸³⁴

47. In all our necessities we ought to have recourse unto God by prayer: assuring ourselves that whatsoever we ask of the Father, in the name of his Son (our only Mediator and Intercessor) Christ Jesus, and according to his will, he will undoubtedly grant it.

48. We ought to prepare our hearts before we pray, and understand the things that we ask when we pray: that both our hearts and voices may together sound in the ears of God's majesty.

49. When almighty God smiteth us with affliction, or some great calamity hangeth over us, or any other weighty cause so requireth, it is our duty to humble ourselves in fasting, to bewail our sins with a sorrowful heart, and to addict ourselves to earnest prayer, that it might please God to turn his wrath from us, or supply us with such graces as we greatly stand in need of.

50. ⁸³⁵Fasting is a withholding of meat, drink, and all natural food, with other outward delights, from the body, for the determined time of fasting. As for those abstinences which are appointed by public order of our State, for eating of fish and forbearing of flesh at certain times and days appointed, they are noways meant to be religious fasts, nor intended for the maintenance of any superstition in the choice of meats, but are grounded merely upon politic considerations, for provision of things tending to the better preservation of the commonwealth.

51. We must not fast with this persuasion of mind, that our fasting can bring us to heaven, or ascribe holiness to the outward work wrought; for God alloweth not our fast for the work sake (which of itself is a thing merely indifferent), but simply respecteth the heart, how it is affected therein. It is, therefore, requisite that first, before all things, we cleanse our hearts from sin, and then direct our fast to such ends as God will allow to be good: that the flesh may thereby be chastised, the spirit may be more fervent in prayer, and that our fasting may be a testimony of our humble submission to God's majesty, when we acknowledge

536

our sins unto him, and are inwardly touched with sorrowfulness of heart, bewailing the same in the affliction of our bodies.

52. All worship devised by man's phantasy besides or contrary to the Scriptures (as wandering on pilgrimages, setting up of candles, stations, and jubilees, Pharisaiical sects and feigned religions, praying upon beads, and such like superstition) hath not only no promise of reward in Scripture, but contrariwise threatenings and maledictions.

53. All manner of expressing God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in an outward form is utterly unlawful; as also all other images devised or made by man to the use of religion.

54. All religious worship ought to be given to God alone: from whom all goodness, health, and grace ought to be both asked and looked .for, as from the very author and giver of the same, and from none other.

55. The name of God is to be used with all reverence and holy respect, and therefore all vain and rash swearing is utterly to be condemned. Yet, notwithstanding, upon lawful occasions, an oath may be given and taken, according to the Word of God: justice, judgment, and truth.

56. The first day of the week, which is the Lord's day, is wholly to be dedicated unto the service of God; and therefore we are bound therein to rest from our common and daily business, and to bestow that leisure upon holy exercises, both public and private.

OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE.

57. The King's majesty under God hath the sovereign and chief power within his realms and dominions, over all manner of persons, of what estate, either ecclesiastical or civil, soever they be; so as no other foreign power hath, or ought to have, any superiority over them.

58. We do profess that the supreme government of all estates within the said realms and dominions, in all cases, as well ecclesiastical as temporal, doth of right appertain to the King's highness. Neither do we give unto him hereby the administration of the Word and Sacraments, or the power of the Keys, but that prerogative only which we see to have been always given unto all godly princes in holy Scripture by God himself; that is, that he should contain all estates and degree

537

committed to his charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, within their duty, and restrain the stubborn and evildoers with the power of the civil sword.

59. The Pope, neither of himself, nor by any authority of the Church or See of Rome, or by any other means with any other, hath any power or authority to depose the King, or dispose any of his kingdoms or dominions; or to authorize any other prince to invade or annoy him or his countries; or to discharge any of his subjects of their allegiance and obedience to his Majesty; or to give license or leave to any of them to bear arms, raise tumult, or to offer any violence or hurt to his royal person, state, or government, or to any of his subjects within his Majesty's dominions.

60. That princes which be excommunicated or deprived by the Pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever, is impious doctrine.

61. The laws of the realm may punish Christian men with death for heinous and grievous offenses.

62. It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the magistrate, to bear arms and to serve in just wars.

OF OUR DUTY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBORS.

63. 836Our duty towards our neighbors is, to love them as ourselves, and to do to all men as we would they should do to us; to honor and obey our superiors; to preserve the safety of men's persons, as also their chastity, goods, and good names; to bear no malice nor hatred in our hearts; to keep our bodies in temperance, soberness, and chastity; to be true and just in all our doings; not to covet other men's goods, but labor truly to get our own living, and to do our duty in that estate of life unto which it pleaseth God to call us.

64. For the preservation of the chastity of men's persons, wedlock is commanded unto all men that stand in need thereof. Neither is there any prohibition by the Word of God but that the ministers of the Church may enter into the state of matrimony: they being nowhere commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life or to abstain from marriage. Therefore it is lawful also for them, as well

538

as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness.

65. The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same: as certain Anabaptists falsely affirm. Notwithstanding every man ought of such things as he possesseth liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

66. Faith given, is to be kept, even with heretics and infidels.

67. The Popish doctrine of Equivocation and Mental Reservation is ungodly, and tendeth plainly to the subversion of all human society.

OF THE CHURCH AND OUTWARD MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

68. There is but one Catholic Church (out of which there is no salvation), containing the universal company of all the saints that ever were, are, or shall be, gathered together in one body, under one head, Christ Jesus: part whereof is already in heaven triumphant, part as yet militant here upon earth. And because this Church consisteth of all those, and those alone, which are elected by God unto salvation, and regenerated by the power of his Spirit, the number of whom is known only unto God himself: therefore it is called the Catholic or universal, and the Invisible Church.

69. But particular and visible Churches (consisting of those who make profession of the faith of Christ, and live under the outward means of salvation) be many in number: wherein the more or less sincerely, according to Christ's institution, the Word of God is taught, the Sacraments are administered, and the authority of the Keys is used, the more or less pure are such Churches to be accounted.

70. Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the Word and Sacraments: yet, forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and minister by his commission and authority, we may use their ministry both in hearing the Word and in receiving the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which are effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men. Nevertheless it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church that inquiry be

539

made of evil ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offenses, and finally, being found guilty, by just judgment be deposed.

71. It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching or ministering the Sacraments in the Church, unless he be first lawfully called and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given them in the Church to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

72. To have public prayer in the Church, or to administer the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people, is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God and the custom of the Primitive Church.

73. That person which by public denunciation of the Church is rightly cut off from the unity of the Church, and excommunicate, ought to be taken of the whole multitude of the faithful as a heathen and publican, until by repentance he be openly reconciled and received into the Church by the judgment of such as have authority in that behalf.

74. God hath given power to his ministers, not simply to forgive sins (which prerogative he hath reserved only to himself), but in his name to declare and pronounce unto such as truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel the absolution and forgiveness of sins. Neither is it God's pleasure that his people should be tied to make a particular confession of all their known sins unto any mortal man: howsoever, any person grieved in his conscience upon any special cause may well resort unto any godly and learned minister to receive advice and comfort at his hands.

OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH, GENERAL COUNCILS, AND BISHOP OF ROME.

75. It is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word: neither may it so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of holy Writ, yet as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not enforce any thing to be believed upon necessity of salvation.

76. General councils may not be gathered together without the commandment

540

and will of princes; and when they be gathered together (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men not always governed with the Spirit and Word of God) they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining to the rule of piety. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be shown that they be taken out of holy Scriptures.

77. Every particular Church hath authority to institute, to change, and clean to put away ceremonies and other ecclesiastical rites, as they be superfluous or be abused; and to constitute other, making more to seemliness, to order, or edification.

78. As the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred, so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in those things which concern matter of practice and point of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith.

79. The power which the Bishop of Rome now challengeth to be supreme head of the universal Church of Christ, and to be above all emperors, kings, and princes, is a usurped power, contrary to the Scriptures and Word of God, and contrary to the example of the Primitive Church; and therefore is for most just causes taken away and abolished within the King's Majesty's realms and dominions.

80. The Bishop of Rome is so far from being the supreme head of the universal Church of Christ, that his works and doctrine do plainly discover him to be that man of sin, foretold in the holy Scriptures, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and abolish with the brightness of his coming.

OF THE STATE OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

81. In the Old Testament the Commandments of the Law were more largely, and the promises of Christ more sparingly and darkly propounded, shadowed with a multitude of types and figures, and so much the more generally and obscurely delivered as the manifesting of them was further off.

82. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New. For both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard which feign that

541

the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. For they looked for all benefits of God the Father through the merits of his Son Jesus Christ, as we now do: only they believed in Christ which should come, we in Christ already come.

83. The New Testament is full of grace and truth, bringing joyful tidings unto mankind that whatsoever formerly was promised of Christ is now accomplished; and so, instead of the ancient types and ceremonies, exhibiteth the things themselves, with a large and clear declaration of all the benefits of the Gospel. Neither is the ministry thereof restrained any longer to one circumcised nation, but is indifferently propounded unto all people, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. So that there is now no nation which can truly complain that they be shut forth from the communion of saints and the liberties of the people of God.

84. Although the Law given from God by Moses as touching ceremonies and rites be abolished, and the civil precepts thereof be not of necessity to be received in any commonwealth, yet, notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is freed from the obedience of the Commandments which are called Moral.

OF THE SACRAMENTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

85. The Sacraments ordained by Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather certain sure witnesses and effectual or powerful signs of grace and God's good will towards us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

86. There be two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel: that is to say, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

87. Those five which by the Church of Rome are called Sacraments, to wit: Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be accounted Sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown from corrupt imitation of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God, together with a promise of saving grace annexed thereto.

88. The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon,

542

or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect and operation; but they that receive them unworthily, thereby draw judgment upon themselves.

OF BAPTISM.

89. Baptism is not only an outward sign of our profession, and a note of difference, whereby Christians are discerned from such as are no Christians; but much more a Sacrament of our admission into the Church, sealing unto us our new birth (and consequently our justification, adoption, and sanctification) by the communion which we have with Jesus Christ.

90. The Baptism of Infants is to be retained in the Church, as agreeable to the Word of God.

91. In the administration of Baptism, exorcism, oil, salt, spittle, and , superstitious hallowing of the water, are for just causes abolished; and without them the Sacrament is fully and perfectly administered, to all intents and purposes, agreeable to the institution of our Saviour Christ.⁸³⁷

OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

92. The Lord's Supper is not only a sign of the mutual love which Christians ought to bear one towards another, but much more a Sacrament of our preservation in the Church, sealing unto us our spiritual nourishment and continual growth in Christ.

93. The change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, commonly called Transubstantiation, can not be proved by holy Writ; but is repugnant to plain testimonies of the Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to most gross idolatry and manifold superstitions.

94. In the outward part of the holy Communion, the body and blood of Christ is in a most lively manner represented; being no otherwise present with the visible elements than things signified and sealed are present with the signs and seals—that is to say, symbolically and relatively. But in the inward and spiritual part the same body and blood is really and substantially presented unto all those who have grace

543

to receive the Son of God, even to all those that believe in his name. And unto such as in this manner do worthily and with faith repair unto the Lord's table, the body and blood of Christ is not only signified and offered, but also truly exhibited and communicated.

95. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Lord's Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner; and the mean whereby the body of Christ is thus received and eaten is Faith.

96. The wicked, and such as want a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly (as St. Augustine speaketh) press with their teeth the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet in nowise are they made partakers of Christ; but rather to their condemnation do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing.

97. Both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, according to Christ's institution and the practice of the ancient Church, ought to be ministered unto God's people; and it is plain sacrilege to rob them of the mystical cup, for whom Christ hath shed his most precious blood.⁸³⁸

98. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

99. The sacrifice of the Mass, wherein the priest is said to offer up Christ for obtaining the remission of pain or guilt for the quick and the dead, is neither agreeable to Christ's ordinance nor grounded upon doctrine Apostolic; but contrariwise most ungodly and most injurious to that all-sufficient sacrifice of our Saviour Christ, offered once forever upon the cross, which is the only propitiation and satisfaction for all our sins.

100. Private mass—that is, the receiving of the Eucharist by the priest alone, without a competent number of communicants—is contrary to the institution of Christ.

OF THE STATE OF THE SOULS OF MEN AFTER THEY BE DEPARTED OUT OF THIS LIFE, TOGETHER WITH THE GENERAL RESURRECTION AND THE LAST JUDGMENT.

101. After this life is ended the souls of God's children be presently received into heaven, there to enjoy unspeakable comforts; the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, there to endure endless torments.

544

102. The doctrine of the Church of Rome concerning Limbus Patrum, Limbus Puerorum, Purgatory, Prayer for the Dead, Pardons, Adoration of Images and Relics, and also Invocation of Saints, is vainly invented without all warrant of holy Scripture, yea, and is contrary unto the same.

103. At the end of this world the Lord Jesus shall come in the clouds with the glory of his Father; at which time, by the almighty power of God, the living shall be changed and the dead shall be raised; and all shall appear both in body and soul before his judgment-seat, to receive according to that which they have done in their bodies, whether good or evil.

104. When the last judgment is finished, Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to his Father, and God shall be all in all.

THE DECREE OF THE SYNOD.

If any minister, of what degree or quality soever he be, shall publicly teach any doctrine contrary to these Articles agreed upon, if, after due admonition, he do not conform himself, and cease to disturb the peace of the Church, let him be silenced, and deprived of all spiritual promotions he doth enjoy.