

ΘΕΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ: ¹⁹¹⁰

OR,

God made Man.

A TRACT

PROVING

THE NATIVITY

OF OUR

SAVIOUR

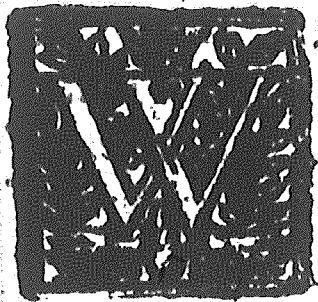
to be on the 25. of December.

By JOHN SELDEN, that eminently-learned
Antiquary, late of the *Inner-Temple*.

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TO THE
LEARNED GENTRY
OF THE
INNER TEMPLE.



Ere is not to comply with the mode of the Times, an Epistle had been altogether useless; for to expatiate upon his desert, were but actum agere, since the British world has been sufficiently sensible thereof. Opus authoris nomine insignitur; The Authors name in the Frontispiece commends the work above my ability, and will save me a labour. Now that this was the legitimate issue of famous Seldens brain is indisputable, since he that is never so meanly acquainted with the style, will soon acknowledge it. 'Twere pittie that so elaborate a Treatise should sleep in the grave of oblivion; especially, when there are so many persons in this age, (whose misguided Zeal christens all that thwarts the grain of their phanatique opinions with the nick-name of superstition) that do so much oppugne the subject and verity of this discourse; but, beyond all controversy, they that peruse it must be convinced or manifest themselves obstinately stubborn. 'Tis a mystery to me that I could never fathom, to imagine that any Levite should rely so much upon Christ for salvation; and yet deny, nay, be offended at the celebrations of his Nativity: But, if either Divine or Humane authority the practise of the Primitive times, or the Institution of our Holy Mother the Church of England, carry strength or prevalency along with them, I am confident of their recar-

ration. This abolishing of decency and solemnisations, hath quite consumed the substance of Religion; and the sad effects thereof, have been of late years too too apparent among us; Instead of endeavoring to order, they did ordure the House of God; Temples were turn'd into Stercoraries, into a confusion. But now, since it hath pleas'd the Supreme Architect of Heaven and Earth, that transplves Crowns, and tumbles down Diadems at his pleasure, to make us meet together like so many lines in the centre (that have been so long eccentric both in the Ecclesiastique and Politique capacity,) there is a certainty of a reformation of Ecclesiastique affairs according to the old and true form of the Church of England. To which this Tractate if it conduce not, I presume 'will no ways impede it; since it is not only solid but full fraught with variety of learning; insomuch that it will require three lives in the Law at least to purchase, and peruse those printed pieces, and manuscripts, out of which he hath collected his quotations: But I must not be so uncivil as to detain you too long in the Porch by a prolix Epistle; nor so injurious to withhold you from prying into the more sublime and refined sense of the Author: Now if your perusall be with as much candor, gravity and moderation, as the learned Selden penned it, (though now deceased) 'will certainly force you to acquiesce with him, and affirm, That the day of the Nativity of our Saviour is not onely to be celebrated, but also absolutely, and undeniably on the 25. of December.

Vale.

G. J.

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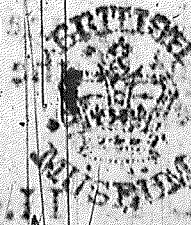
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S E C T. VIII.

S E C T. IV.

S E C T. V.

**IOANNIS SELDENI
EPITAPHIUM.**

*Joannes Seldenus
Heic juxta situs;
Natus est XVI Decembris MDLXXXIV*

*Salvintonia;
Qui viculus est Terring Occidentalis
in Suffexia Maritima;*

*Parentibus honestis,
Joanne Seldeno Thome filio;
è Quinis secundo.*

*Anno MDXLI nato,
Et*

*Margareta filiã & Hærede unicã Thome
Bakeri de Rushington ex Equestri Bakero-
rum in Cantia familiã, filius è cunis
superstitum unicus, Etatis ferè
LXX annorum.*

*Denatus est ultimo die Novembris,
Anno salutis reparata
MDCLIV.*

*Per quam expectas heic Resur-
rectionem felicem.*

Of the Birth-day of our
S A V I O U R.

*Briefly, of the Anniversary Celebration of
Birth-dayes: The state of the Question,
and this Discourse digested into parts.*



IN the review of the 4 Chap. having occasion to speak of the authority of the *Clementines*, the eighth book of *Constitutions*, attributed to the *Apostles*, in which an expresse constitution is, that the Birth-day of our Saviour should be celebrated on the 25 of *December* (or of the ninth month, as it is there called, being accounted from *April* as the first) I noted that Constitution, for one character of that volum's being supposititious; in regard that in the Eastern Church (where those *Constitutions* being in Greek must by all probability have been in most use) the Celebration of that day was not received on the 25 of *December*, till the ancient tradition of it was learn'd from the Western, about 400 years after Christ;

B

and

Of the Birth-day

and some touch also I have there of the opinion of them that think that day not to be the true time of his birth. This passage hath been so conceiv'd as if I had purpose-ly call'd in question the celebration of that sacred day (which is ἡ ἡμέρα καλῶν ἀπάντων, as (a) St. Chrysostome styles it, ἀκρόπολις ἡ πηγὴ ἢ ἡ πύλα παρὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν ἀγαθῶν, that is, as the main fort of all happinelle, and the fountain and root of all good that we enjoy; and to call it in question, as if I supposed it were observ'd at that time without sufficient ground, and as if I were too inclining to the part of the hot-brain'd and disturbing Puritans, which impiously deny the keeping of a day as an anniversary feast consecrated to the birth of our blessed Saviour; from which my conscience was ever, and is most clearly free. For I knew, first, both from sacred & profane Story, that the anniversary dayes, (b) not only of Princes, but of some private men also, were with frequency ever observ'd, and the beginning of Cities under that name yearly celebrated: and even among the Heathen, those that professed such Philosophy as was nearest to true Divinity, that is, the Platonists, were most religious in keeping their Plato's birth-day, which they received by tradition to be the (c) same with Apollo's, that is, the 7. day of the Attique moneth Thargelion (which answers to our April;) and this was still observed

(a) Tom. 7. edit. Saviliana, page 375. λογ. ια.

(b) 200 Theodos. & Justin. de feriis. Sed de hac re plenè Martinus de Rota lib. de die Nat. s. i.

(c) Plutarch συμ. cap. I. Laertius in vita Plat. c. 6.

served until the time of *Plotinus* and *(d) Porphyry*, who lived about 270 years after our Saviours birth; and after the discontinuance of it for many ages, it was revived in the dayes of our Grand-fathers with much solemnity in the Dutchy of *Florence* by *Lo- renzo Medices*. But he misplaced it in the year, while he and his guests being better *Platonists* than *Chronologers*, took the 7 of *Thargelion* to be the 7 of *November*: As also the old trifling *Astrologers* committed a like fault, while in the scheme *(a)* of his *Nativity* they place the Sun in *Pisces*, which must denote our *February*, or the Attique *Amhesterion*. But however, an anniversary day was observ'd for his Birth: so was there anciently for the birth of some false Gods; for they had their certain days for the births of *(b) Mars, Apollo, Diana, Minerva*, the *Muses, Hercules*, and others, and carefully observ'd them; and for Princes, and private persons, even to this day a celebration is in use at the yearly returning of their Birth-days. To deny therefore, with that way-ward Sect, such an anniversary honour to the Saviour of the World, were but to think him lesse worthy of it than false Gods were esteemed by the Gentiles, than Princes by their Subjects, than private friends by their greater friends, whose birth-dayes they yearly celebrated. But of this I trust no man that truly deserves a

(d) Marsil. Firmicus comment. ad Plat. Sympos. cap. 1.

(a) Firmicus Mathes. lib. 6. cap. 35.

(b) Calend. vet. Rom. à G. Hermartio, nuper editum, &c.

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name among Christians will make scruple. Some indeed (and those not a few among the learned) have doubted of the just time of the birth of our Saviour; which while they doubt, they offer the more occasion to others to question and impugne the celebration of it, as it is now settled in the Church; For if that were not the true day (as they argue) it follows that there were no more reason (save only what comes from the latter, and arbitrary constitutions of the Church) to keep that day than any other throughout the whole year, unless also some other day were found to be the exact time of it. But for my self here, as I was far from questioning the duty of it, so was I also from doubting of the right of Celebration of it on the very day of *December* whereon it is now kept. And to make clear my mind here, I shall now more largely, according to what *His Majesties* most learned instructions have taught me, declare the certainty of that feast, as it is at this day observed, even from the eldest of the Christian times, and Apostolical tradition, received even from the practice of his Disciples; for it is one thing to deny (as I have done) that it was so ordained by the Apostles in those *Clementines*, (which I think all learned and ingenuous men will deny) and another and far-different thing to affirm, that the tradition of that day, as it is now kept, is both Apostolical, and as ancient as the

the

of our Saviour.

the birth it self; as I shall presently deliver in the deduction of the continuance of it, according as it is now observed through all Christendom. For although in the feast, and in all others unmoveable, there be the known difference of ten dayes (which were taken out of *Octob.* in the year MDLXXXII* by Pope *Gregory* the Thirteenth, when he reformed the *Julian Kalendar*) 'twixt us, with some few other States, and those which have received the *Gregorian Kalendar*; yet both they and we agree in this, that upon the 25. of that Moneth (that is with us of our *Julian December*) this feast is ever to be observed. So that we meddle not here at all with any part of the differences 'twixt the *Julian* and *Gregorian* year, but onely endeavour to make it certain, that on this day of that Moneth *December* that Feast hath ever been settled in the Western Church; from whence the Eastern also anciently received it. For it is clear, that upon what day soever of any Moneth an unmoveable feast is to be kept in our *Julian* year, on the same day of the Month it is to be kept in the *Gregorian*; so that the proof here is equal for the use of both Accounts. Thus appears the state of the Question; and to this purpose, for orders sake, shall be shewed,

* *Constit. sum. Pontif. p. 775.*
Clavius in Kal. Greg. five m. 5.

1. *The Authorities of keeping it on this day both in the Eastern and Western Churches, about*

Of the Birth-day

400, years after our Saviour; and that then it was ancient in the Western Church, and known also under the name of the Winter-Solstice-day; which is especially here observable.

2. For preparation of more particular proof of the tradition of this Feast-day, the supposition which the most primitive Ages had touching the time of the Solstices and Equinoxes.

3. That the keeping of it on this day was so received from tradition, even of the eldest times since our Saviour; and this justified from the Fathers, supposing it to have been upon the very day of the ancient Winter-Solstice.

4. Express Testimonies to the same purpose out of ancient History, and a confirmation from the general use in the several Churches in Christendome.

6. The chief Objections that are made against this dayes being the true time of the birth, with plain Answers to them.

7. Some other Opinions among the Ancients touching it, and how some of them may agree with what we have received, and the rest are of no weight against it: And then more especially of the ancient confusion of this Feast with that of the Epiphany.

SECT.

S E C T. I.

The Authorities of keeping it on this day both in the Eastern and Western Churches about 400. years after our Saviour; and that then it was ancient in the Western Church, and known also under the name of the Winter-Solstice-day; which is especially here observable.

FOR the first, that is, the Authorities of the received use of keeping this Feast on the 25 of December 400 years after Christs Birth, they are frequent in S. Ambrose, S. Chrysostome, S. Augustin, and others of the Fathers that liv'd about the end of those 400 years: Those three especially have many Sermons appropriated to the celebration of this day, and they frequently tell the people confidently, that the Birth of our Saviour was on the 25 of December, or the 8 Kalends of January; as also that the birth of Saint John Baptist was on the 8 Kalends of July, or the 24 day of June, according as to this day they are observed. *Ecce, facta (a) Saint Ambrose, in nativitate Christi dies crescit, & Johannis nativitate decrescit; illo oriente lux proficit, hoc nascente minuitur*: That is, On our Saviours Birthday the days begin to lengthen, and on St. Johns to shorten; for the Fathers herein supposed the 25 of December to be the Winter-Solstice, at what time ever the days begin to lengthen; and the 24 of June to be the Summer-

(a) Serm. de Temp. 8. & 10.

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mer-solstice, in which they contrariwise begin to shorten : and this was according to the ancients Astronomy, out of which supposition in this Feast-day, the antiquity of the tradition shall be also presently confirmed.

And to this purpose of the Summer-solstice at St Johns Birth, and of the Winter at our Saviours, they apply (I dispute not how well)

* D. Joan. c. 3.
 comment. 30.
 † D. Aug. serm.
 de d. versis 40.
 & 59. l. 4. ad-
 vers. Crescon.
 c. 37. & in
 Psalm. 132.
 * D. Hiero. in
 epist. de celebr.
 Pasch. tom. 4.
 † Serm. de san-
 ctis 2.

that in St. Joh^s, * *Ἐξέτινον δὲ αὐξάνειν, ἐμὲ δὲ ἰσαρτῆσαι*, i. He must increase, but I must be diminished. So St. Augustine also, *Natus † est Johannes hodie, ab hodierno minuitur dies; natus est Christus 8 Kalend. Januariar, ab illo die crescunt dies.* And enough to this purpose occurs in others of that* age, wherein these two Births were observed, and only these two, and that in all, or the greatest part of Christendom; *Solius Domini* (saith † St. Augustine) *& Beati Iohannis dies Nativitatis in universo mundo celebratur & colitur.* But it being clearly plain that about this time of 400 years past after our Saviour, this 25 day was so observed, and taken generally for his Birth-day, it falls next to inquire the original whence it was so taken : Had those *Clementines* been of sufficient credit, there had been no need to have made any further inquiry ; for then we might have thence resolved that the Apostles had ordained it ; and it had been fit for them that stand so much for the Authority of those Constitutions, to have proved that the Apostles had done so, that so they might have

have cleared that supposititious Volume of such a Character of falshood. For doubtless had such a Constitution been published in that Volume, and by the Apostles, the Eastern Church had not so long been ignorant of it, as it appears by St. *Chrysostom* they were: For untill some 10 years before his Sermon † made upon this day, especially for the truth † *D. Chryf. edit. Savilianâ,* of the time of the Feast, that Church had not been generally instructed with this certainty *10m. 5:* of it; for then it was newly learn'd from the *λογ. οβ.* Western Church, in which even from *Thrace P. 511.* to *Cadiz* (as he tells us from such as instructed him) it was so observ'd. But although that Ordinance touching it in the *Clementines*, attributed to the Apostles, be supposititious, yet there is great reason for us to think that the tradition of this Feast to be so kept on that day was Apostolical, that is, taught and deduced into the Church (though not in writing) both from the Apostles, and first Disciples and Observers of our Saviour.

*Quid autem (saith *Ireneus) si neque Apostoli * Advers. Ha- quidem scripturas reliquissent nobis, nonne oportebat ordinem sequi traditionis quam tradiderunt iis quibus committebant Ecclesias?* And we shall here use aptly enough the very words also of *Tertul.* † speaking of divers observations in both Sacraments, and other parts of Christian Religion in his time, which was near the Apostles; *Harum & aliarum ejusmodi Disciplinarum si legem expostules scripturarum, nullam*

† *ref. l. 3. c. 4.*

† *De corona militis c. 4.*

invenies : But, *traditio praevalens auctoritas, consuetudo confirmatrix, & fides observatrix*. But for the order of proof here (it being first cleared that this tradition was about the time of those Fathers that testify it commonly received in Christendom) before we come to the particular deductions of it out of the elder ages that preceded them, we shall here not untimely first note, that as it was commonly received as a thing then settled, so was it generally thought of as what was then very ancient. So saies St. *Chryso-*
stom expressly, * being instructed from learned men of the Western Church, it was then
ἀνωθεν ἢ πρὸ πολλῶν παραδοθεῖσα ἐστίν, that is, of ancient time, and delivered in the Church many years before, as his words are; and yet, saith he, it is new too, new in the Eastern Church, because (as he writes) we have so lately learn'd it, that is, within ten years since; but he calls it *παλαιὰν ἢ ἡ ἀρχαίαν διὰ τὸ ταῖς πρεσβυτέραις ταχέως ὁμίλειν γίνεσθαι*, *sic*. i. old and very ancient, in that it is even of equal age with the ancients feast-days which they had received: and again, though it came but lately into the Eastern Church, yet it was, saith he, *παρὰ ταῖς αἰὲς ἰσπίεσαν ὁμίλειν ἀνωθεν γνωσθεῖσθαι*, i. well known from ancient time to those that were of the Western Church. And St. *Augustine* also * expressly saies that the birth was upon this day, *sic tradit Ecclesia*; which denotes great
 great

* *Serm. diſt. item in hom. 34. tom. 2. edit. Baſil. & in ſerm. 27. de nat. Jo. Baptiſt. eodem tom.*

* *Enarrat. in Pſalm. 132.*

great antiquity even in his time: and in * a. * Serm. de
 nother place speaking of the celebration of *sanct. 4.*

St. *Iohn Baptist's* birth-day, which was recei-
 ved with this, it seems, by a like tradition,

Hoc majorum traditione suscepimus, (saith he)
hoc ad posterorū imitanda devotione transmittimus.

These passages alone are enough testimony
 that this Feast-day thus placed was reputed
 in those times, that is, about 400. years af-
 ter Christ, very ancient: But to know how
 ancient it was more particularly; it behoves
 us to look backward from those times by
 such degrees, as that by careful observing
 one of them after another, up towards the
 times of our Saviour, we may be herein in-
 structed according to the occurrence of such
 testimony as may make to the end of the in-
 quiry; and I doubt not but we shall so well e-
 nough at length find it receiv'd in the Church,
 in the Western Church, even from Apostolical
 tradition, deriv'd from observation, while yet
 our Saviour was on the earth. But to begin
 this course of inquiry by looking back by
 degrees from the time of St. *Chrysostom*, and
 the rest of the Fathers of about his age, we
 shall first look on the time of near 100. years
 before them, that is, of *Constantine* the Great,
 and the first general Council of *Nice*, held
 in the year 325. at which time we shall with
 sufficient arguments first shew, that this
 Feast was kept on the 25. of *December*, as
 now it is, and that then also from ancients
 time;

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time; against those which suppose the beginning of it no elder than after or about *Constantine*. And from thence we shall go upward to the Apostles. But because that hath first reference to the time of this Council, and makes much otherwise also for confirmation of the antiquity of this, and the celebration of the day (as shall be presently shewed) consists especially in observation of the name of the time under which those Fathers received, denoted and celebrated it, that is, of the very day of the Winter-Solstice, with reference to the Spring-Æquinox, as to the time of the conception of our Saviour, and to the Summer-Solstice, and Autumn-Æquinox, as to *St. Johns* birth and conception; it is first here requisite that we shortly open the ancient supposition which the most primitive times had touching those four beginnings of the Quarters of the year, which (being much different from what was received, both at the time of the Council of *Nice*, and before it, and somewhat is also yet retain'd in Church-cycles) will make way for confirmation of the receiv'd opinion of that sacred Birth-day.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

For preparation of more particular proof of the Tradition of this Feast-day, the supposition which the most Primitive Ages had touching the time of the Solstices and Equinoxes.

THe ancient and civil supposition of the Solstices and Equinoxes, (in which an express character is found of the Antiquity of this Tradition, as shall be presently shewed) was both before and about our Saviours Birth-day, (especially in the Roman Empire) of another kind from that which either at this day is, or at the time of the Birth was agreeable to the more accurate and naturall Astronomy; I mean, the supposition which was generally received in their Characters and *Parapegmata*, which denoted both their Sacrifices, Feast-days, and Country-observations for matter of Husbandry: For they supposed in those Calendars, that the Suns entrance into the 1 degree of *Aries* was on the 15 Kalends of *April* in the *Julian* year, that is, on the 18 day of *March*; but that the spring-equinox was not untill the 8 Kalends of *April*, that is, the 17 of *June*, they placed the Suns first entrance into *Cancer*; but the Solstice on 8 Kalends, that is, on the 24 of *June*. So the 15 Kalends of *October*, or the 17 of *September*, was their supposed time of the Suns first entrance into *Libra*; but the
Autumn-

Autumn-æquinox on the 8 Kalends, or the 24 of September; and according to these the first entrance of the Sun into Capricorn they placed on the 15 Kalends of January, or the 18 of December: So that the Æquinoxes and Solstices were not supposed in the first entrance, or in the 1 degree of those 4 signes (as at this day they are, and many ages since have been) but at such time as the Sun held the 8 degrees of them. For the Suns proper Diurnal motion being about a degree, it so fell out in their Calculation, that 8 days being reckon'd from the first entrance into every of those signs (as is seen in the examples) on the 8 day the Sun was in the 8 degrees of those signes, and then made the supposed time of Solstices and Æquinoxes. The testimonies of this kind of placing in those times are frequent. Ovid

* *Fastorum* l. 6.

† *Hist. nat.* l. 2. c. 19. l. 18. c. 25. & 29.

* *De re Rusticâ* c. 14. & l. 11. c. 2.

† *Architect.* l. 9. c. 5.

* *Nupt. Philol.* & *Mercur.* † *Astron.* l. 3. ad extrem.

* expressly teacheth us so for the Summer-solstice. But in the Calendar that is commonly joyned with him, and received by others, it is therein mistaken. The like for all four do *Pliny*, † *Columel*, * *Virruvius*, † *Martianus Capella**, the Scholiast on *Germanicus* his *Aratus*, and the Author of the fragment joyn'd with *Censorinus*: And of the naturall forces of the two Tropiques or Solstices, to this purpose *Mamilius*; †

Has quidam vires octava in parte reponunt; Sunt quibus esse placet decimas; nec desunt Autor Qui prima momenta daret, franosque dierum.

Meas

Meaning that the common opinion was, they were (with the *Æquinoxes*) in the eight part of their signs, but that some thought them otherwise; some in the tenth, some (as they ought) in the first. But this opinion of the eight parts, and so by consequence of those times of the *Æquinoxes* and *Solstices* was a most ancient tradition, and retained still in their *Calendars*, or *Fasti*, made for civil, sacred and rustick use; notwithstanding that the more accurate *Astronomers* had found it to be an error; not otherwise then at this day those which keep the *Julian* and *Dionysian* account in the Church, (as we in *Great Britain*) suppose the spring-*æquinox* on the 21 of *March*, though the known *Astronomy* teach us that it anticipates about 11 days. And as it happens in like cases, they still retain'd what had been from ancient time settled in the State, neglecting the corrected *Astronomy*; and that especially because those old *Calendars* were already fitted to their *Faests* and *Sacrifices*, and were more known to the people, who could not but have been much troubled with an innovation of the time of all their publick solemnities. Neither *Sosigenes* in his divers amendments of the year made upon *Julius Casars* commands, or the rest after him so employed, alter any thing in this supposition: All which is fully expressed in that of *Columella*, in his *Precepts of Husbandry*; where having first spoken of
the

Agricult. 1.
D.C. 14.

† Parap. quod
gemino subne-
ctitur.

* Cod. Ms. est
V. C. Henrici
Sevill Eq. Au-
rati; mihi verò
communicavit
pro sua huma-
nitate V. C.
T. Bambridge
Medicine D &
Mathematicus
egregius.

the Solstices and Æquinoxes, falling upon the 8 degrees of those signes, he presently thus admonishes: *Nec me fallit* (saith he) *Hipparchi ratio, qua docet Solstitia & Æquinoctia non octavis, sed primis partibus signorum confici: Verum in hac raris disciplina sequor Eudoxi & Metonis, antiquorumque fastos Astrologorum, qui sunt aptati publicis sacrificiis; quia & notior est ista vetus Agriculis concepta opinio.* He gives here the true reason why that supposition was retained; but, by the way, is deceived in this, that he takes *Eudoxus* and *Meton* to be of those ancients Astronomers from whom it was received. It is true indeed that in the old † *Parapegmata*, which shew us that according to *Calippus* and *Euctemon*, the Solstices and Æquinoxes were at the first entrance of the Sun into the signes proper for them: *Eudoxus* yet had otherwise placed them; as for the purpose, the Spring-æquinox on the 6 day after the Sun's entrance into *Aries*, and the Winter-solstice on the 4 day after the 1 entrance into *Capricorn*: But we find not that he had taught this learning of the 8 days or parts; no more do we that *Meton* was any teacher of it; although also for this particular, beside the published *Parapegmata*, I made speciall search also for it in *Ptolomies* * *Φάσεις ἁπλοῶν ἀστέρων, ἢ συναγωγῆ ἰσσημασίαν*, a Book never yet printed, but fraught with divers pieces of the *Parapegmata* both of *Meton* and *Eudoxus*; and wholly

wholly another thing from that which goes under a like name for *Ptolomies*, published at the end of some Editions of *Ovids Fasti*. Beside, it is certain that the Summer-Solstice observed by *Meton* with *Eucltemon* in the 316. year of *Nabonassar*, that is about CCCCXL. before Christ, was upon the 21. of the *Egyptian Moneth Phamenoth*, as * *Ptolomy* expressly testifies, which for that time agrees with *Syntax. l. 3.* the 27. of the *Julian Iune*. Neither *Endoxus* therefore, nor *Meton*, thus placed the Solstices on the 8. Kalends of their Moneths. Others of late time have much troubled themselves to find the ground or original whence this supposition came among the Ancients; especially Cardinal *Contaren*, *Genesius de Sepulveda*, and most of all *Joseph Scaliger*; but their conjectures are most uncertain, and too weak to rely on. Neither, I guess, will the original be found among any of the Ancients that are clasick in Authority, but in a Transcript of some parts of a Latine Translation by *Abraham de Balmis*, of a Book titled † *Isagogicon Astrologia Ptolomei*, (which indeed appears to be *Geminus Phenomena*) compar'd with the Greek; I find these words, as if they were but translated from the first Author, *Uterque Tropicus, & ambo Equinoxia, secundum Astrologorum Græcorum opinionem, sunt in primis gradibus horum Signorum; sed secundum Chaldeorum opinionem, in octavis gradibus:* but the Greek copy had

† Copiam mihi perhumaniter fecit v. c. Jac. Usherus, sacrae Theol. D. undique doct. Barmus.

had no such thing; though it be like enough that the copy whence he translated it had, that is an Arabick copy of *Geminus*, who, as *Euclide* also, *Ptolomy*, *Aristotle*, much of *Galen*, and other Greek Authors, was turned out of Greek into Arabick, and thence into Latine, long before the Greek it self was translated immediately into Latine, as we have it at this day: and it appears that his translation was from an Arabick copy, in that alone, that the *parapegma* which is at the end of this Latine *Geminus*, hath the names of *Endoxus*, *Calippus*, *Euctemon*, *Dolirheus* and *Meton*, so varied as frequently other names are, which are expressed out of Arabick letters into Latin in like translations; as for *Endoxus*, it hath *Orchatis*; for *Calippus*, *Philidis*; for *Euctemon*, *Oetiman*; for the other two, *Dussionius* and *Macheon*; all which plainly mistaken by the translator; when he found either the names written without essential points in the Arabick character, or else mis-transcribed, as it might easily be, by such a writer that was not worthy to be trusted to; for the mishaping of a letter, or the doubling of a point, and the like, soon makes such variance of names expressed out of that Language. But for the matter of the 8 degrees, and the Solstices and Æquinoxes referred to them, here is authority that it had original from * the *Chaldees*, which I yet think is as far from truth as that of *Columel's*; neither is

* 9 Kal. Jan.
Brumale solstitium observant
Chaldæi, ait
Columella, l. 1. c. 2.

this a fit place to make larger inquiry after it. It here sufficeth to shew it manifest, that this placing of those parts of the year was observed from ancient time, and that especially in the State of Rome; as we see also in those their old Country-Feasts, the *Robegalia*, the *Floralia*, the *Vinalia*; which were the three main Feasts wherein from ancient time they made intercession to their gods against all hurt that might happen to their green Corn, and the ripening of the fruits, and their Vintage; and were kept and so noted by **Varro*, according to another account of the Suns place or motion then is before delivered. And according to this account are the *Æquinoxes* and *Solstices* in *Venerable Bede's* Ephemeris, noted with the addition of *juxta quosdam* to be understood, although in the Print they somewhat vary it: but it is clear, that in his *December* the *Solstitium juxta quosdam*, and in his *March* the *Æquinoctium juxta quosdam*, are both placed a day before they should be, that is, they ought to be on the 8. Calends, (not the 9.) the one of *January*, the other of *April*; with which the *Sol* in *Capricorn*, and the *Sol* in *Aries*, there before noted, to the 15. Calends, exactly suppose the *Solstice* in the 8. degree of *Capricorn*, and the *Æquinox* in the 8. of *Aries*, that is, in the 25. dayes of their Moneths; reference being still had to this ancient account, which he, being most curious in the cycles of time,

+ *Apud Plin.*
l. 8. c. 19.
& *Scholias*
ad Aratea
prognostica.

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would not omit; although his *Ephemeris* were purposely made for the *Dianysian* year, which also he hath together expressed in the same columns: But, I suppose, the chief reason, why these two stand so displaced, is, because the noting of the birth of *St. Anastasia* was thought more necessary to the 8. Cal. of *Jan.* than this old supposed Solstice to be added, it was cast upon a void place of a line next preceding. The same may be said of the Spring-æquinox, which had no room on the 8. Kalend of *April* in the Column, by reason of the conception and passion of our Saviour together noted to that day; and that he is so to be understood, he himself elsewhere is † testimony enough, expressly relating this ancient course of accounting the Solstices and Æquinoxes: So that his *Ephemeris* is a special example of it, if rightly understood; as also is that *Calendarium Romanum*, lately cut in Brass, and so published from the print, as supposed to be as ancient as *Constantine* the Great; where the Summer-solstice is indeed by the cutters or transcribers fault set to the 7. Kalend of *July*, which plainly should have been on the eighth, and the Sun's entrance into *Cancer* is on the 17. Kalend which should be on the 15. as also the Sun's entrance into *Aries* should have been placed on the 16. Kalend of *April*, which agrees just with the Feast of *Hilaria* being on the 8. Kalend. And according to this supposition of the ancients, did

† De Temp. ratione, c. 28.

of our Saviour.

that learned Gentleman, *George Herwart van Hochenburg*, (out of whose Library this Calendar was lately published) judiciously declare the reason of those differences that appear in it from the later Astronomy; and in his Letter written to Seignior *Haleander*, a Gentleman of curious learning in *Rome*, the Copy whereof was thence sent me through the hand of that learned and worthy Gentleman *Monsieur Piexese*, an Advocate in the Parliament of *Aix*; and this some two years since, when 'twixt him and my self, and from him to *Haleander* divers Letters passed touching the particulars and authority of that Calendar.

S E C T. III.

That the keeping of it this day was so receiv'd from tradition, even of the eldest times since our Saviour; and this justified from the Fathers, supposing it to have been on the very day of the ancient Winter-solstice.

That ancient supposition of the Solstices and Equinoxes being thus hitherto first opened; let us in looking back by degrees, first (as is before proposed) begin with the time of the Council of *Nice*, held in the year of our Saviour 325. It will so appear, that before that Council, this Feast was established in the Western Church, and that by the ge-

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general testimony of those Fathers, which with one voice suppose it as formerly placed on the very day of the Winter-solstice; for had it been begun after or about the time of that Council, and withall supposed to have ought to have been kept on the Winter-solstice day, then doubtless would they have placed it on that day which was received in the Church to be the Winter-solstice-day, after or about the same Council, as at this day in the *Gregorian* year, who doubts but that a Feast to be newly instituted on an *Aequinox* or *Solstice*, or with reference to either of those times, would be placed by them which have received that Reformation on the *Aequinoxes* or *Solstices*, or with reference to them according as they are in the corrected Calendar, and not as they fall in the *Julian* or *Dionysian* year? For example also, what greater testimony were there (if all other were lost) to prove the antiquity of that very kind of keeping the Feast of *Easter* as we do in our Church, to be of the Primitive time, than this, that the *Paschales terminus* are retained still according to the Spring-*Equinox* received in the Primitive times? Now to make clear our purpose, here it is also certain that about and after that Council of *Nice*, the Spring-*equinox* according whereunto the *Paschal*-cycles were made, was supposed in the Church upon the 21 of *March*, as it is seen also in the *Paschal*-account used to this day

day in the Church of *England*; so that it was become four dayes sooner than in those elder times, when it fell in common opinion on the 25 day; but when the Spring-æquinox was so changed, and according to the change also received, it could not but follow that the beginning of the other three parts of the year must also be altered, that is plainly seen in the known course of the Suns motion. And therefore the Solstices and the other Æquinoxes must also vary in their moneths, and by a like or very * near like difference of days anticipate, as they are accordingly cited in *Bede's Ephemeris*, who † elsewhere also admonishes us as much. Therefore it must follow too, that about and after that general Council the time of the Winter-solstice was placed (and so supposed in Ecclesiastical account) upon the 21 or 22 of *December*. But if it had been so receiv'd when this Feast-day was first ordained, and specially placed on the Solstice-day (as the Fathers generally by tradition from former times place it) there had been necessary cause enough to have had it fallen yearly three or four days sooner than it did, both in the Primitive times and at this day, that is, on the 21 or 22 of the same moneth. By consequence it was then ordained or receiv'd in the Church, at such time as the Winter-solstice was not supposed on the 21 or 22 day of the same moneth, but on the 25, that is, at

* *Vide sis Mar. cel. Francolin. de temp. hor. canonic. c. 75 & 76. † De temp. Nat. c. 18.*

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* Fos. Scal. de
emendat. Temp.
l. 6. p. 510. &
C. l. d. s. i. s. I. s. a.
gog. chron. c. 46.

least before that Council of *Nice*, or *Constantine* the Great, howsoever too rashly some have delivered * of it, that *post seculum Constantini Roma hac observatio instituta est*. Neither can Objection have power here, which perhaps may obviously be brought to impugn this kind of argument; that is, that it might notwithstanding be ordained first in the later part of the primitive times, or after *Constantine*, or that Council, in such sort that it might be placed on the day of the Solstice that was received at the time of the birth, that is, the 25. day, and not that which the received account had so innovated: for this Objection is partly answered before in the passage of Feasts at this day to be ordain'd, with reference to the Solstices in the *Gregorian* Calendar: and besides, if the Church about this time after *Constantine* had regarded in a new Institution the Solstice of the time of the birth, according as it was then to be found in the Moneth, it must be that they either regarded the true and natural, or the receiv'd and civil Solstice. For the first, if they had been so curious as to have sought what the true place of the Winter-solstice to this purpose had been in the age of that birth, as they had indeed sought for the true *Æquinox* of their own time for their direction of *Easter*, they had found that the true Solstice anticipated the 25. day about two dayes; for, by the most accurate cal-

calculation to the noon of the Meridian of
Bethlehem, on the 25. of *December*, in the year
 commonly attributed to the birth of our Sa-
 viour, the Sun was in the second degree of
Capricorn, and some minutes over, as * *Car-* Comment. ad
dan also places it in the scheme of that nati- Ptolem. qua-
 vity; whence it must clearly follow, that dripartit. l. 2.
 about the 23. day was the very point of the com. 54. & Vi-
 Winter-solstice, the diurnal true motion of de his Clavium
 that time of the year in the *Perigæum* being ad cap. 1. Job.
 somewhat more than a degree. No place de Sacro bosco.
 was then for this true Solstice in such their Alter quidem
 consideration of the birth-time, if they had Colurus, p. 297.
 thus inquired after it, unless they would edit. 4. 1602.
 have instituted the Feast (under that name of
 time) on the 23. day, and not on the 25.
 For the second, what colour have we
 to think that they should in those times
 have retain'd the old supposition of the civil
 Solstice for their Institution of this Feast-
 day, and yet so carefully alter the formerly-
 received æquinox for *Easter*? This of the
 birth being as the head and rule of the chief-
 est immoveable Feasts, as that of the Passi-
 on and Resurrection is of the moveable.
 Would they have retained the same error
 upon Institution of a new Feast, which with
 so much curiosity they corrected in establi-
 shing the certainty of an old one? It rests
 firm therefore, that whensoever it was first
 instituted for anniversary celebration, it was
 in such an Age as had the supposition of the

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Winter-solstice being on the 25. day of *December* yet retain'd in the Church; otherwise what dependence were there 'twixt the name of the Feast and the Solstice? But that dependence is, by the consent of the Fathers fully testified, as a tradition of former times; and the latest Age which in the Church retain'd that supposition, must at least be before the Council of *Nice*, as is already shew'd; therefore at least the Institution of it must precede that Council.

This being hitherto deduced, it will in the next degree, of searching backward follow also, if we can prove the received supposition of the Church touching the time of the Winter-solstice to have been long before this Council, agreeable to that which here is shew'd to the time of it, that the first observation or Institution of this Feast, under the name of the Solstice upon the 25. day, was also long before that Council. Now as the Spring-aquinox changed from the 25. to the 21. so did the Winter-solstice of necessity change also, as is before shew'd: But the Spring-aquinox was also at least some 50. years before that Council, upon the 21. or 22. of *March*, by the received supposition of them, from whose direction the Church-cycles were principally guided, that is, of the *Aegyptians*, and especially those of *Alexandria*; so is the express * testimony of *Anatolius*, born and bred in *Alexandria*,

* Apud Euseb.
hist. eccles. l. 7.
c. 26.

andria, but Bishop of *Laodicea* in the time of *Aurelian*, about 270 years after our Saviour. He shews that then the 11 Kalends of *April*, that is, the 22 of *March* was the supposed Equinox; which agrees well enough with that of the 21, if regard be had to that variation which the houres out of which the Leap-year is made must of necessity be a cause of, as *Bede* † withall in explanation of *Anatolius* hath taught us: The same *Bede* well admonishing, that it was *Regula Niceno probato Concilio*, not *statuta*,* to have that time receiv'd for the Spring-æquinox. And indeed the very words of the Epistles sent out of that Council touching it, and the Church-stories plainly prove it to have been generally known and receiv'd in the Church, both of the West, North, South, and part of the East long before. In *Constantines* Epistle † to the Churches of Christendom sent presently upon the Council; it is expressed that it was so generally received before; and *Ruffinus* † speaking of the Council, tells us, that, * *De observatione Pasche, antiquum Canonem, per quem nulla de reliquo varietas oriretur, tradiderunt.* † Nothing therefore can be clearer then that the æquinox of the 21 or 22 of *March*, according to the difference before noted, was ancient in the traditions of the Church, long before the *Nicene* Council: Otherwise they had as well in expresse terms innovated the æquinox, as established uniformity in obser-

†. In epist. ad
Michred de
Paschatis cele-
bratione, tom. 2.
 * *Wilfrid apud*
Bedam, hist.
Angl. l. 3. c. 25.

† *Euseb. de vi-*
ta Constant.
l. 3. c. 18.
Socrat. hist. l. 5.
c. 21.
Nicephor.
l. 12. c. 33.
 * *Hist. eccles.*
l. 10. c. 6.

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ving their *Easter* by it. Therefore also was the *Winter-solstice* about the 21 or 22 of *December* in the traditions of the Church long before that Council then: what follows hence touching the institution of the Feast which we inquire after, is according to the former inferences most apparent, for so much time as those testimonies reach back unto.

To go farther up in a third degree, it will be also justified, that the *Æquinox*, and by consequence another *Winter-solstice* then that of the 25 day of *December*, was not only ancients then the *Nicene Council* in the Church-cycles, but also equal to the Apostles times. For although we find in the Church-story great differences of the Primitive times touching the keeping of *Easter*, and divers cycles and Canons made for it, yet those differences are chiefly about the day of the week whereon it should be kept, as between the *Tessareskaidecatos* and the Churches of the West, but never (in any testimony of credit) about the diversity of supposition of the *Æquinox* that directs it, otherwise than according to that in *Anatolius*, which stands with the received time of the 21 of *March*, as is already noted; I say in any testimony of credit, for under favour of the learned, I conceive not that attributed to *Theophilus Bishopp of Casaria*, and published at the end of *Bedes* Epistle to *Wichred*,

where

* Tom 2. p. 232
edit. Colon.

where the 25 day is supposed for the Æquinox to be other then supposititious, the whole shape of it hath the Character of counterfeiting: But the Æquinox is still (for ought appears) supposed the same in that Controversie about *Easter* had under * Pope * *Euseb. eccles. Victor* about the year CXC. as it was in the ^{hist. l. 5. c. 21.} Council of *Nice*, and the same also before ^{&c.}

Victor, even up to the time of the Apostles.

What else is denoted in that of *Proterius*, Patriarch of *Alexandria* to *P. Leo* the First, where ^{temp. rat. 6. 42.} he tells him that *St. Mark* had taught the ^{& Vide sis Ce-} *Egyptians* (according as he had learned from ^{olfrid apud e-} *St. Peter*) that *Easter* was to be observed after ^{und. hist. eccl. l. 5. c. 22.}

the XIV. moon of the first moneth, the first moneth here was known by the spring-æquinox, of which if they had not been agreed, as much trouble (or more) would have been in establishing of that, as there was in clearing what day of the week the sacred Feast of *Easter* was to be kept on. The like is affirmed of the Apostolical tradition of that uniform celebration of *Easter*, by *Ceolfrid* in his Epistle to *Nathan* King of the *Picts*: And to confirm more fully that the observation of it established by the *Nicene* Council was such as had been even from the beginning of *Christianity*, or the Apostles time, the very words of the Epistle sent by that Council to the Churches of *Egypt* and *Africk* are, that now the controversie was ended touching *Easter*, and that those of the Eastern Church

* Socrat. hist.
eccles. l. i. c. 6.

† Hist. Tripart.
l. 2. c. 12.

Church that had before followed the Jews in observing it on the XIV. Moon, did hold it Συμφώνως Ρωμαίοις ἡ ἡμῖν, ἡ πᾶσιν ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐξ ἀρχῆς μετ' ἡμῶν φυλάττεσι τὸ πάχα, i. Agreeable to the Romans, to us, and to all you who from the beginning observe Easter as we do; or, *Consone cum Romanis, & vobiscum, & cum omnibus ab initio Pascha custodientibus*, as Cassiodore anciently translated it; which shews also that in Socrates he read ἐξ ἀρχῆς, that is, from the beginning, as some Copies are; and not ἐξ ἀρχαῖς, i. e. from ancient time, as in others the reading is. It followes therefore, that even from the beginning, that is, from the Apostles time, the same Spring-æquinox was receiv'd in the Church, that is, the 21 or 22 of *March* as was afterward; and that it was thence established on the 21 by the Council of *Nice*, and that by consequence, in those times of the Apostles, the formerly-receiv'd æquinox was altered from the 25 to the 22 or 21; and so also (as of necessity it followes) the Winter-solstice, from the 25 of *December* to near about the 21 or 22 of the same moneth. Whence also it is to be concluded, that this Feast-day was receiv'd as to be kept on the 25 day even before the Apostles time, and that among the Disciples of our Saviour, while he was yet on earth, that is, while in common reputation the 25 day of *December* was taken for the Winter-solstice: Otherwise what colour were there

there why the consent of the Fathers should denote it by that civil Winter-solstice which was out of use in the Church, both in their time, and been so likewise from the times of the Apostles, that is, from some time after the Passion of our Saviour, before which there was no need at all (for the establishing of our *Easter*, which was to be ruled by the Spring-æquinox) to vary the placing of those points of the Quarters of the year? But it being commonly received, out of the account and Kalendar of the Gentiles, that the 25. of *December* was the Solstice, and that on the same day our Saviour was born, it grew familiar, it seems, and so was delivered down to those Fathers, that the birth-day was on the very Winter-solstice, which they so often inculcate: But the Apostles and Evangelists not being able perhaps in the infancy of the Church to settle the anniversary celebration of *Easter*, until about their later times, that is, about 100. years after this birth, carefully observed, and especially St. *Peter* and St. *Mark*, where the natural æquinox was, according to which the Solstices ever vary, and so found it in that time about the 22. or 21. of *March*, as by exact calculation it will happen, according to that before noted touching *Anatolius*; and hence they delivered the knowledge of the change of those Quarters of the year to posterity. But also, because

* In common reputation among the Gentiles, yet would they not vary it from that day, because indeed it had no reference to the Solstice.

cause even from the very birth it self the 25. day of *December* had been kept, or known for it, notwithstanding that it was in vulgar opinion conceived to have been on the day attributed to the civil Solstice, * which anticipated it three dayes, as is before shewed, but was proper to the 25. day of *December* onely, as it was the 25. of that Moneth: Although those Fathers, being none of the best Astronomers, thought still however the Solstice was altered in their times, that at the time of the birth the natural Solstice had fallen on the 25. day, and then onely they so often note it, mistaking vulgar supposition delivered in the Kalendars of the Gentiles for exact calculation.

S E C T. IV.

Expresse testimonies to the same purpose out of ancient History; and a Confirmation from the general use in the severall Churches of Christendom.

Neither is this antiquity of certainty only thus proved from the common joyning the Feast with the Winter-solstice in the Fathers expressions of it, but also from expresse testimonies denoting as much in relations of the ancients. In which to observe first a like course, as before, in going upward from the time of those Fathers toward

ward the Apostles; we find, that many years before the Council of *Nice*, that is, under *Dioclesian*, this Feast was thus celebrated, and that in some part of the Eastern Church also; however that Church was not generally instructed in it, till in *St. Chrysostoms* age: For in the Church-story * it appears, that under that Emperour, *Antimus* Bishop of *Nicomedia*, together with many thousand Christians, were assembled to keep that Feast-day; when as the Emperour, or his fellow-Persecutor *Maximinus*, commanded fire to be put to the Church wherein they were assembled, and that none of them should escape that would not sacrifice presently to *Iupiter Victor*; whereupon they all willingly receiv'd the Crown of Martyrdom; and in the ancient Martyrology of *Rome*, the passion of those Martyrs is placed on the 25 of *December* in these words, *Nicomedia passio multorum millium Martyrum, qui cum in Christi natali ad dominicum convenissent, &c.* which also for the time is justified by the Greek *Menologie*, where the words, *συναθροισας* (*Αἰθμιος*) ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκκλησία τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ χριστοῦ λαοῦ, ὡς γὰρ πικροῦτα ἢ ἑορτῆ τοῦ θεοῦ χριστοῦ γενέσεως συνέβλεσαν αὐτοῖς, &c. that is, *Antimus* assembling in his Church a multitude of Christians on the Feast-day of Christs Birth, kept the Feast with them, &c. But indeed the Greek Church calls this Feast of the Martyrs on the 28 of *December*, as they do also

Nicephor. Galistus, l. 7. c. 6

ad Δεκ. κη.

D

up-

* *Menol. ad di-* upon other dayes the * memories of
Elos dies. St. *Eugenia* and St. *Anastasia* (both which

De ratione
 et ordine

the Western Churches retain with this Birth-day on the 25) the one on the 22, the other on the 24 day. But this was done by them only, because the more single honour might be given both to our Saviours Birth, and to those other names, being so divided: *Ut horum solennitatem* (speaking of those Martyrs saith † *Baronius*) *celebrius agerent, eam tran-*

† Old Marty-*stulerant.* As also among the Jews a Transla-
 rol. 8 Kalend tion was often used of their feasts from one
 Jan. day to another, that two Sabbaths or great Feasts might not concur, as their * Doctors

* *Talmud. maf-*
sec. Rosh. Haf-
sana.

deliver. Hence then it is enough also manifest, first, that by ancient testimony of the Monuments of the Church, this Feast was thus observed before *Constantine*, or that Council of *Nice* which was held many years after the death of *Dioclesian*.

De ratione
 et ordine
 De ratione
 et ordine
 De ratione
 et ordine
 De ratione
 et ordine

But also to look farther upon the times preceding this Martyrdom, we shall find good testimony that it was taught to posterity to be kept so, even by the Apostles, who knew it as a clear certainty while our Saviour was yet on earth: For though they ordain'd it not in those Constitutions falsely attributed to them, or in any other Writer, yet might they teach it as a tradition to be receiv'd ever to the Church, as they did the changing of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first of the week; the solemn Re-nunciation

nunciation of the Devil at Baptism; the keep-
 ing of *Easter* on the Sunday, or the like, *quasi*
sine ullius Scripturae instrumento, as * *Tertullianus* De corona
sayes, *Solius traditionis titulo, exinde consue-* *militis, c. 3.*
tudinis patrocinio, vindicamus. To this pur-
 pose, among St. Chrysostoms Works in La-
 tine, one Homily is † *De Nativitate Domini*,
 as the Latine title is, for the Greek of that † *Edit. Basile*
 Homily I have not yet seen; wherein he con- *tom. 2. hom.*
 fidently, as elsewhere, teaches, that this day *39.*
 of *December* is the just day of that birth, and
 for his authority brings no less than St. Pe-
 ters testimony; *Petrus*, are the words, *qui hic*
fuit cum Joh. qui hic fuit cum Jac. nos in occidente
docuit; which hath plain reference to that
 before noted out of his long Oration for the
 same matter, where he tells * us also, that * *Edit. Savil:*
 in the controversies of those times touching *tom. 5. p. 512.*
 this Feast, such as defended it as what ought
 to be kept on this day, justified that it was
 Παλαιὰ καὶ ἀρχαία, καὶ ἀνωθεν τοῖς ἀπὸ Θεοῦ καὶ μὴ
 χει Γαλατικῶν διέδοται κατὰ συνήθειαν καὶ ἐπίσημον, ἰ.
Very ancient and from old time known, and fa-
mous from Thrace to Cadis, that is in the whole † *Suid: in verb.*
Western Church. To these may be added that *Ναζωρεῖο*
 of *Enodius*, whom *Nicephorus* calls the Suc- *De Xetivovōt.*
 cessor of the Apostles, and it is delivered † *Cujus nominis*
 that it was ordained by St. Peter himself in *referuntur o-*
Antioch; that we may so distinguish him *pera aliquos ad*
 from that other *Enodius* Bishop of *Uzalis* * in *sa tom. 10. D.*
 St. *Augustines* time; he in an Epistle touch- *Aug. subjuncta*
 ing the times of the Passion of our Saviour, *edit. Lovani-*
ensi.

30
* Ecclesiast. hist.
l. 2. c. 3.

of *St. Stephens*, *Martyrdome*, of the death of
the blessed *Virgin*, and the like, sayes expre-
sly of her, (as the Latine is in * *Nicephorus*,
translated by *Langius*, for neither have I the
Greek of him) *Peperit autem mundi ipsius lu-*
cem, annum agens quindecimum 25. die mensis
Decembris. And likewise in an old Greek
Author (the Book being written about the
time of Pope *Honorius* the First) in the Li-
brary of *St. Mark's* in *Florence*, expresses te-
stimony is; *Apostolos memoria prodidisse Chri-*
stum ex Virgine natum Bethlema 25. Decem-
bris, as *Albertus Widemonstadius* of his own
sight witnesseth in his Notes on that impious
Book called *Mahomet's Divinity*, and brings
also *Hesychius* his authority to the same pur-
pose. And to these may be added *Cedren,*
Orosius, and some ancient Manuscripts *Fasti*
cited by *Cuspinan* upon *Cassiodore*; and there

† *Catholicus Armeniorum*
in legatione ad Armenios
malè legitur 20 Dec. sam.
in Biblioth. Patrum edit.
Paris. tom. 3. p. 864. quam
in edit. Colon. tom. 12.
part. 1. p. 891. Nam Gre-
cæ erat 20. Δεσ. quod vi-
dere est apud Jos. Scalig.
in Isagog. chron. l. 3. p. 30.

is authority also, † that howe-
ver *Epiphanius* in his Works have
another designation of the day of
this birth, (as anon is shewed) yet
out of the Monuments of the Jews
he learned, and then taught, that
this was the very day; which they
say was justified also; by some
Writers brought to *Rome* from *Je-*
rusalem by *Titus*; which also is

strengthened by that of *St. Chrysostome*, when
* *Tom. 5. edit.* he sayes * expressly, that in publick Records
Savil. fol. 12. kept at *Rome* in his age, the exact time of the
de-

description under *Quirinus*, spoken of by *St. Luke*, (which could not but be a special character of the time of our Saviours birth) was expressed; and then he goes on, *But what is this to us, saith he, that neither are at Rome, nor have been there, that so we might be sure of it? yet hearken, saith he, and doubt not; for we have received the day* *ταῦτα εἰδότες*, i. from those which accurately know these things, and dwell at Rome; *And that they ἀνωθεν καὶ ἐκ παλαιῆς παραδόσεως αὐτοῖς συνέτελες ἡμεῖς αὐτοῖς ἡμῖν τὸ ἑορταζόν*, i. having from ancient time and old tradition celebrated, have now also sent us the knowledge of it. This is likewise confirmed by an old barbarous Translation of what was taken out of *Africanus* and *Eusebius*, and published in the noble *Scaliger's Thesaurus Temporum*, where the words are, *Aug. & Sylvano Coss Dominus noster Jesus Christus natus est sub Augusto 8. calendas Ianuarias*: and then, *In ipsa die in qua natus est pastores viderunt stellam*, *Chnac 28.* which should rather be 29. for so agrees the 25. of *December* to that of the *Aegyptian Choiac*, which the Author means. And *Prudentius* upon the day, supposing the † old tradition of the concurrence of the Solstice with it,

* *Ibi.* p. 513.

† *In hymno ad calend. 8. Jan.*

*Quid est quod arctum circulum
Sol jam recurrens deserit?
Christusne terris nascitur,
Qui hincis aperet tramitem?*

Of the Birth-day

Hic ille natalis dies,
Quo te Creator ardore
Spiravit, & limo indidit,
Sermone carnem glutinans.

And of later times the Authorities are infinite.

These testimonies being compared with the consent of the Fathers, that about 400. years after Christ have written that it was ancient, as is already shewed; and being confirmed by the arguments made against the supposed later institution of it, out of the place of the received Winter-solstice, enough manifest the antiquity and certainty of this ancient Feast-day, according as we now observe it; and that even from the age wherein it first brought forth the redemption of Mankind. And to these we may adde the consent of Christian Churches ever since about those 400. years; for after that the Eastern or Greek Church of Asia had learned the truth of it from the Western, (as is delivered) this celebration of it yearly increased; and grew still more famous through Christendom: so expressly St. Chrysostom, καὶ ἕναρον ἕτερον ὁμολογῶσι καὶ λαμπροτέραν γίνονται, saith he, i. e. Every year it increased and grew more famous. But indeed, because in some places it was not as yet so received, but that old erroneous opinion touching it

* Paneg. in di-
 ctm n. 1. dit. 12
 Sav. l. to n. 5.
 p. 512.

(as

(as it happens in like cases, and shall anon be more particularly shewed) still held there place among some that were too wayward to be brought to prefer truth newly discovered to them before their own errors, therefore about 100. years after St. Chrysostome, it was expressly ordained by the Emperour Justin (if my Author deceive not) that in every place of the Christian world it should be thus observed: My Author here is *Nicophonus Calistus*, who (as the Translation of him is) tells us first of *Justinian*, that he *Primum. Servatoris exceptionem* (that is, the *Hypocrites*, which in our Western Church is the Purification of the blessed Virgin) *in octava terrarum festo die honorare instituit*: and then he addes, *sicut Justinus de sancta Christi matritate fecit*. And according hereto are the Kalendars and Book of Divine service, not onely of the Western, which are every where common, but of the Eastern Churches also: In the Menology of the Greek Church in December, *ἡ ἁγία εὐαγγελίστρια ἡ ἁγία ἡμετέρα ἡ κυρία ἡ θεοτοκος ἡ ἁγία ἡ ἡμετέρα ἡ κυρία ἡ θεοτοκος ἡ ἁγία ἡ ἡμετέρα ἡ κυρία ἡ θεοτοκος*. On the 25. of the same moneth, the Feast of the Incarnation of our Lord, and God, and Saviour, *Iesus Christ*; and

* Hist. eccles.
l. 17. c. 38.

ἡ ἁγία εὐαγγελίστρια ἡ ἁγία ἡμετέρα ἡ κυρία ἡ θεοτοκος ἡ ἁγία ἡ ἡμετέρα ἡ κυρία ἡ θεοτοκος

That is, The Virgin Mary brought forth our Saviour on the 25. day. Other Volumes of their

their Divine service, as their *Apostolo Evan-*
geli, and the like, enough shew this also.
 And for other Churches which are not under
 the name of the Greek, as those of *Antioch*,
 of *Syria*, of *Ethiopia*, and of *Elkopi* or *E-*
gypt, although we have not their Calendars
 published with such exactness of the placing
 of their feasts, as we have those of the Greek
 Church, yet have we testimonies enough of
 them also, whence we may collect that
 they agree with us in this anniversary cele-
 bration: As, first, for that of *Antioch*, they
 keep * this birth upon the same day with us
 in their *Moneth Canon* the former; and in
Alfragan (as he is translated) we read in his
 enumeration of the *Syriack* *Moneths*, *Canon*
prior 31. dierum, cuius 25. nox vocatur nox
Nativitatis: So in the *Ethiopian* Church on
 the 29. of their *Moneth* † *Thachfasch* they
 kept it, which agrees alwayes with the 25.
 of our *December*, though their *Intercalation*
 falling before ours (and in their *Mascha-*
rum, or our *August*) changes the day of the
 Week every Leap-year into the next after
 what we keep: And for that of *Elkopi* we
 see in a short description of their account, re-
 ceived from an *Ethiopian* * *Priest*, that their
Almolad, or the feast of the *Nativity*, is pla-
 ced against their *Moneth* *Chinch*, which an-
 swers to our *December*, and the succession of
 their Feasts is just as in the *Syriack* account;
 and therefore reason enough is, that thence

* *wid. monst. ad.*
in epist. sub-
nextâ Test. Sy-
riac. & vide
sis computum
Antioch. apud
Jof. Scalig. l. 7
de emend. it.

temo p. 670.
 † *Jof. Scalig.*
dicto l. p. 650.

* *Apud Scalig.*
dicto l. p. 661.

we collect the very dayes in both to be the self-same. And to conclude here, what greater testimony can there be that it was received into the Church, even from the Disciples and Apostles of our Saviour, than this, that it was so anciently observed, and hath been ever since so generally received through Christendom, for so of the like things that great Father St. Augustine pronounces, *Illaque non scripta, sed tradita, custodimus; quae quidem toto terrarum orbe observantur, dantur intelligi vel ab ipsis Apostolis, vel a plenariis Conciliis, quorum est in Ecclesia sanctissima auctoritas, commendata atque statuta retineri. Sicuti quod Domini Passio, & Resurrectio, & Ascensio in caelum, & adventus de caelo Spiritus Sancti, anniversaria solennitate celebrantur; & si quid aliud tale occurrerit quod servatur ab universa quaecunque se diffundit Ecclesia:* All such things he supposes either delivered by the Apostles, or ordained by general Councils; for Councils, here we have no testimony that they ordained it; therefore it rests by this argument, that we derive it from the eldest tradition that may be in Christianity. But we end here this inquiry, and resolve with that old Hymne of St. Ambrose, used in the service of this day in the Church of Rome:

* Epist. ad Januarium 118.

*Sic presens restatur dies,
Currrens per anni circulum,*

Quod

Of the Birthday

*Quod solus à sede Patris
Mundi salus adveneris:
Hunc cœlum, terra, hunc mare,
Hunc omne quod in eis est,
Auctorem adventus tui
Laudans exulet cantico.*

* *Catholicus |
Armeniorum
in legat. ad
Arm.*

Neither find I any Christian Church that in the later ages hath otherwise celebrated it, save onely that of the *Armenians*, who * retained an ancient custom of confounding it with the *Epiphany*, and that to the time of *Manuel Comnenus*, which is about 440. years since, and perhaps yet do; of which confusion of those feasts more in the last Paragraph. But, because in these proofs hitherto declared, the common and most received grounds and reasons brought for it out of the holy Text, and some other, are omitted; as also on the other side, some objections are made in later times against it, and that by such as bear even the greatest names in the state of Learning; and some ancient testimonies also impugne what we have hitherto concluded: It follows next, (lest the inquiry should seem done with too much negligence) that we both consider of those common grounds and reasons, and then shew why they were not here used; and furthermore, that we give such answer to those objections, and ancient testimonies, as that they may not at all hinder the credit of those

those arguments which before have so demonstratively justified it.

S E C T. V.

The common Reasons used out of the holy Text to justify this day, and how they are mistaken, and therefore not used here; together with what some would prove from the Scheme of his Nativity.

OF those which have generally received it, the Ancients about 400. years after it have striv'd to fetch reasons for it out of the holy Writ, (being unhappily not contented to rely wholly upon the tradition) and some of later time justify it by Astrological observations; both being deceived, the first by mis-understanding the Text, the other by too much mingling their errors in the consideration of Nature with the thoughts of this most sacred birth-day. For those Ancients, they knew out of * *Moses*, that the High Priest did onely once every year enter into the Holiest place, or the *Sanctum Sanctorum*; and this is ordained to be on the 10. day of the 7. Moneth, that is, the Feast of *Kippurim*, or Expiations in *Tisri*: Then out of *St. Luke*, they supposed that the Angel appeared to *Zachary*, being High Priest, and sacrificing there on the same day which they would make agree with the 24. of *September*,

* Lev. 16. & 23.

(al-

Of the Birth-day

(although for the very day they have somewhat differed in the Eastern Church, and some have also * supposed the conception in October, some in November) and that on the night following Zachary's Wife Elizabeth conceived St. John Baptist, as the Apostle foretold him: From hence, according to the Evangelist, they accounted 6. Moneths; at the end of which time the blessed Virgin Mary conceived, that time falls into the 25. of March, from whence 9. Moneths being accounted, (the common time of a birth) the 25. of December found the very birth-day of our Saviour: This is the summe of the calculation us'd out of the holy Text by the † Ancients, although not without some confusion of Moneths; while by reason of application of old Lunar Moneths to the Roman, which are Solar, they confound herein sometimes April with March, and September with October.

* Stephanus Gobarus Trith. apud Photium, cod. 232.

† D. Chrysofom. in saepe laudato Panegyrico. Anastasius Antiochenus, Cedrenus chronici Alexandrini autor, &c.

That other sort which would prove it by Astrology, shews us the Scheme of this Nativity, erected for the altitude and Meridian of Berblehem, to the midnight following the 25. of December, and then telling how wonderfully it is (by the Rules of that Art) agreeable to so wonderful a birth; and anticipating some part of the accusation they might justly look for, they declare themselves, that they mean not that any thing touching his Divinity, his Miracles, his Holiness

ness of life, or sending forth the Gospel, depended at all on the Stars; but they say, that as naturally he was of the best temperature, and exactest beauty, and had continuall health, and so singular gravity of aspect. *Sic etiam Deus optimus & gloriosus* (as *Candian's* * words are) *optimâ constitutione astrorum atque admirabili Genesim illius adornavit*; which constitution of the Heavens if the Almighty, sayes he, had not to this purpose ordained to have concur'd and have been observed, one of these two things had happened; either that the very day, and hour, and minute of the hour of that birth, had not been so constantly and diligently ever kept in the Church; or else that all the significations in the Scheme had not been *adeo singularia*, as he writes, *magnifica, gloriosa, & tanto concursu digna, tum vero omnibus que successerunt de vite sanctitate, de morum gravitate, &c. adeo congruentia, ut nil exactius possit excogitari*; and after the particulars largely declared, he too boldly concludes against such as justly enough impugne the art of Astrology as groundless, with this, that they can now have nothing esse left to speak against it, as *Ptolomy* teaches it, than this onely, that they should perhaps object, that *Ptolomy*, to gain credit to the profession, wrote his whole *Quadripartite*, according to the agreement twixt this Scheme, which it is most likely he never saw, and the parts of our Saviours life denoted by it; than which,

* *Ad Ptolom.*

Tetrabib. l. 2.

text. 54.

said he, as he well might, nothing can be more absurd. But out of this we may easily see, that such as stand upon those learned errors cannot but think with him, that the very day and hour of this birth is fully confirmed by that Scheme: Neither is there cause (so their grounds were certain) but that they might hence conclude also that this were the very time, although no other testimony were extant of it: For what want they in this pretence of that knowledge of the ancient *Turinus*, who was able (as he made some learned men believe) not onely to foretell out of the Scheme of a Nativity, but also to find out of the circumstances of any life and fortune, the very point of the birth, and to frame the Scheme it self? as *Plutarch* sayes he did both in the search after *Romulus* his birth-day, and the first foundation of *Rome*; and the finding the exact Scheme is the same with finding the exact time of the birth; which those Astrologers, it seems, think they have done, as well out of the congruity (as they suppose) of the Scheme to what they apply it, as out of any testimony or tradition of the Church.

But the truth is, that both this of some Astrologers, and that other of calculation out of the holy Text, deserve nor place nor name of reason to this purpose: For that of the Calculation of the months out of the holy Text, the chief ground on which it insists,

and

and which being taken away it all becometh
 meetly vain, is that of *Zacharius* being a
 High-Priest, and in his sacrificing in the
 holiest place, or *Sanctum Sanctorum*, or in
 the Oracle, as the names of it are varied.
 For a sacrifice in that place was only in that
 feast of Expiation, that is, the 10 of *Tisri*,
 or 7 month, and this only by the High-
 Priest; But it is most clear that *Zachario*
 was no High-Priest, but only one of those
 24 courses or stations of Priests which
 weekly served at the Temple. For *Da-*
vid distinguished the * posterity of *Elazar*
 and *Ithamar* by Lots for the continuall and
 daily service and sacrifice into 24 courses,
 and of those courses every one had a week
 for attendance, so that after every 24 weeks
 the first came to attend again; as also it
 was in the 24 courses of the Levites, their
 weeks in attendance alwaies ending on
 the morning of the Sabbath. Hereof is
 plentiful testimony, both in holy † writ
 and in the Jews Liturgies, besides *Ioseph*
 and the old Fathers, and it is fully and shortly
 expressed by *Eucherius*, *Erant sortes 24* (saith
 he) *et sacerdotum, et Levitarum et famularum,*
qui per totidem septimanas sibi ex ordine succederem,
sabbato nova turba intrante ad officium,
et post sabbatum, ea qua proxima septimana
ministraverat domum redeunte. In these 24
 courses the 8 is the family of *Abia*; of his
 8 course was *Zachario* a Priest, and was at
 this

1 Paral. 24.

† 1 Paral. 9.
 Ioseph. Comm. 25. Jos.
 de x. l. 7. c. 11
 in vita sua,
 2 adv. Api-
 onem.
 Ad l. 4. Reg.
 t. 23.

Of the Birth-day

this time in the week of his course burning incense in the Temple, but not in the Holy place; so is the Text of St. *Luke*; All certain Priest is *ἐπισημασμένος Ἀβιά*, i. of the course of *Abia*, speaking of *Zachary*; and afterwards, as soon as the ministrations were accomplished, &c. what course or special dayes of ministration to be accomplished could here belong to the Priests of the Jewes? But as *Matthias*, and *Flavius Josephus* were * Priests of the Sons, or course of *Jehoiarid* (that is, of the 1 course) so was *Zacharie* of *Abia*, or of the 8. Neither was any High Priest of that age bearing any such name: But he that was High-priest at the birth was *Josias*, and his predecessors were *Josaph* & *Matthias*, *Simon*, &c. So that nothing is more certain then this, that *Zacharie* was not High-Priest; although anciently very great names were deceived, while they took him to be so, as St. *Ambrose*, St. *Chryostomo*, *Anastasius* Patriarch * of *Antioch*, and others expressly: *Zachary* then being no High Priest, it plainly follows that their whole calculation of Moneths here from the 10. of *Tisri* (in which onely the High Priest entred into the Oracle) proves nothing at all, but supposes meerly false grounds; and so no proof of the certainty of this day can be extracted out of that holy Story; and *Zacharies* Sacrifice, for ought appears here, might indifferently be on any other day of the year. We omit

* 1 Macab. c. 2
comm. 1 Jos. in
ἀρχ. l. 12. c. 8
ἐν ὁμίᾳ σου.

† Niceph.
Patriarch. in
chronol. &c.

* MS. apud
Jof. Scalig.
l. 6. p. 509.

mit here their supposition of an exact number of dayes for the natural time of a Birth, which plainly can never be known; and in so clear a point thus much is too much then enough.

For that other reason or confirmation (as they would have it) out of Astrology, doubtless it is most vain (that we may speak no worse of it) both in regard of the Art it self, and also of this application of it. For the Art it self though very many Authors are of it, yet there is none extant of any great antiquity; and of those which are, very few agree to any purpose among themselves. *Ptolemy*, who is the ancientest of them, whose Volumes of it are publickly extant, and lived about CXL. years after our Saviour, varied * from what the *Chaldeans* before him had observed. The *Arabians*, as *Haly*, *Albuzar*, *Messalath*, the Author of *Alcabitus*, *Zabel*, and such more have another Doctrine from his. The *Latins*, as *Manilius* and *Julius Firmicus*, neither agree among themselves nor with others; to omit the numerous differences that are in the many Volums of it written in the middle and latter ages. What certainty thereof can there be in that Art whose Professors do make no other pretence then long continuance of constant observation of signes, and things signified to justify themselves; and yet in truth they have no testimony of such continuance of obser-

* *Retrabib. l. 1.*
comm. 57, 58,
&c.

vation? And I trust that no man will think
 that by ratiōnall collection only (as in some
 other faculties) without a preceding and
 constant observation of many ages at least, it
 is possible to discover the nature of this or
 that Star, or of the various positions of the
 Heavens which every minute produces. Be-
 sides, without supposition of a certainty, not
 onely of the degrees, but in some particulars
 of the minutes also in which this or that Pla-
 net is, the Astrologer proceeds not; yet it is
 most known that the Astronomers, from
 whose noble search these suppositions are
 patiently taken by the Astrologers, are here-
 in even almost as differing among them-
 selves as the Astrologers in denoting of ef-
 fects; witness the difference of hours in
 Calculation by the *Alphon sine* Tables from
 the *Pruenique*, made according to *Coperni-
 cus*, and of both of the restored motions of
Tycho Brahe. And two of the Planets, *Mars*
 and *Mercury*, which bear no small rule in
 the precepts of Astrology, have hitherto
 scarce lesse conceal'd their motions and pla-
 ces in the Heavens, then *Proteus* would have
 done his true shape. Yet still what the Astro-
 nomer knows is uncertain, and ingeniously
 confesses to be so; the Astrologer for the
 most part stothfully believing, and so fixing
 himself on that belief, takes for his infallible
 ground, and so deceives, and is deceived in
 his aspects (which he resolves parts, when
 they

they may perhaps be platique, and platique when they may be partile) in his directions in the print of his *Horoscope*, and the other three of his Figure in his *Fines*, in his *Ferdarie*, in his *Conjunctions*, and in what else stands upon such exactnesse of calculation. But this is no place to speak more in particular of that Art: Enough hath been said of the vanity of it by *Mirandula*, *Alexander ab Angelis*, and others that have purposely written Volumes against it. But for the application of it to this of our Saviours Birth-day, it is both too groundlesse also in respect of the hour to which the Figure is erected, and withall impious in the rest of the suppositions. For the hour, it is erected to midnight following the 25. of *December*, for so we must understand that which *Cardan* designes the time by; *Diebus 6. (saith he) horis 12. ante radicem Astrologorum, qui anni initium sumunt in Calendis Januariis*: This falls upon 12. of the clock of the night following the 25. of *December*. But whence, I wonder, was *Cardan* so sure that this was the minute of the hour of the Birth? Some indeed that among the Ancients erroneously placed it on the 6. of *January*, took the point of midnight to be the very minute, as we see out of those collections out of *Stephanus*, *Gobarus*, *Trithemius* in *Phorinus*. And in some part of the *Asiaticke Churches* (especially of *Syria*) the night of this day hath the name of the night of the *Nativity*, which

Ad Theolog.
 Muchamed. nos.
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Alfragan remembers. But ~~that~~ testimony of the Nativity cited out of an old Greek Manuscript in St. Marks Library at Florence by Widmonstadius, saies, it was *hora diei sexta*; Hesychius there also mentioned put in on *hora diei septima*; with which agrees that Chronicle of Alexandria, or the *Fasti Siculi* *† Editione R. d. aiga* (. τῆς ἡμέρας, i. e. the 7. hour of the day. And though none of those are of credit enough to justify the very hour; yet, it seems, they all meant it a Birth of the day, and not of the night, the houses of which they also note by the name of the hours of the night; neither can it be cleared in the holy Text, whether it were in the night or in the day. The Angel in the night saies to the Shepherds, *For unto you is born this day*, (that is, *ἐγέννηθη ὑμῖν σῶς*) a Saviour, out of which words it were too much rashnesse to resolve whether the point of the Birth were in the night or in the day. If then Cardan, or his followers had been led by authority, they should have rather erected the figure (if at all they erected it) to the 6. or 7. hour of the day, that is about 12. hours before their supposed time; and so the whole Scheme had been changed, and Aries had been the *Horoscope* instead of *Libra*, and *Capricorn* in mid-heaven for *Cancer*. Besides also, had the mid-night following the 25. day been the just time, those which in *Fewry* propagated the tradition to Posterity, should (by all probability) have deliver'd it

to have been on the 26. day of the *Julian Decem- ber*, not on the 25. For by the use of the *Jews*, their naturall days * were accounted from Evening to Evening: So that the night following the 25. was part in their account of the 26. day, as also the Ecclesiasticall account of days by the Cannon-Law, † and that from ancient time. Neither can it for this reason alone be salved, unlesse advantage of a different account of days be taken from the old use in the State of *Rome*, where unto *Jewry* was then subject: For in that State the naturall day was from midnight to midnight; yet according to that too it stands but indifferent to which of the two days the Birth should be referred, being thus placed in the very point of midnight which parts them. Besides also, the Church of *Rome* have taken it to have been in the night-time preceding the 25. day, for they in the Vigil of the Feast celebrate the Shepherds watching, and in the morning they have a special Masse with reference † to the Shepherds visitation of our Saviour, at that time in the Manger: So that according to their supposition, that Scheme is not for the birth, but for a day after: In summe, the hour is every way uncertain, their proof therefore being thus shewed groundlesse in regard of the exact hour of the natural day (which is unknown) I hope there needs not much be said to justifie that the suppositions of dependence

*Severus Aca-
robenus apud
Anastaf. Sinast.
quast. 152. § 1
preter litt. sac.
cras.
Quod die
dist. 75. & ex-
tra de feriis c. 1
Francolin de
horis canonic.
c. 43. & synod.
in Trullo cani-
20. 91.
F. tit. de fe-
riis l. 8. &
Plucarch in
probl. Rom. 84.
Ordo Roman.
sed & vide sis
Hugode S. Vi-
ctore, erudit.
Theol. l. 3. c. 5.*

* *Albunax* re
de conjunct.
differ. 8. tract. 2.
apud Rog.
Bacon in opere
majori MS. ad
Clem. P. P. 4.

† *D. August.* in
serm. 1. edit.
Paris. edit. Lo-
vaniens. tom.
10. p. 431. Ni-
cephor. Calist.
l. 1. c. 13.

reject any working or significations of the
Stars, and that great and most sacred mystery
of the Incarnation are most impious; although
it were so that otherwise the traditions
of that art had their place: As if either the
common objects of sense, or uncertain col-
lections of mans weak understanding, had so
much to do with what but at the best we are
able to apprehend by Faith onely. But *Car-*
dan had herein example to follow in those
who long before him had impiously refer'd
the beginning of Christian * Religion to a
certain number of revolutions of *Saturn*. And
therefore also he makes that Comet which in
1133. appeared in *Aries* under the Northern
part of the Milky way, and was (as he sup-
posed) of Martial, Joyial and Mercuriall
quality, to denore the Schisms and Changes
of Religion which soon after fell in this
Kingdom under *Henry 8*. For to *Aries*
(saies *Protony*) is this Island subject as to a
tutelar sign. And in this Nativity also, that
Star which *St. Matthew* speaks of, *Cardan*
takes for a signifying Comet, and places it in
the Ascendent, because it seems he read in the
Evangelist that the wise men saw it in the
East. But there is good authority among the
Ancients, & that by collection out of the ho-
ly Text, that their seeing of it in the East was
a continuall seeing of it † for two years time
before the birth in the Countries, that lay East
from *Jerry*; and doubtless also it could not be

of any such heights as Comets are at the low-
 est supposed to be, neither could it have de-
 signed a particular House in *Bethlem*, if it had
 been so high as to have been carried either
 as Stars or Comets are in the Diurnall mo-
 tion of the Heavens. But enough hereof is
 already said against him by that great *Ty-
 cho Brahe*, with whose * words also we con-
 clude here, that *Cardan* and his followers,
*plus impie quam justa ratione, quomodo cumque
 tandem excusent, hoc asseverant ut reliqua; puden-
 n. referre que. Astrologicis suis commentis has
 de re inferunt, non adducant.*

*Progymnasma
 de nova stella
 p. 316.*

There was reason enough therefore why
 neither of these first kind of arguments
 (whereof the one is taken from a groundless
 calculation of Moneths in the holy Text, the
 other from the vanities of Astrology) were
 used among the proofs brought for the cer-
 tainty of this Birth-day: For he that endea-
 vours to establish a truth by arguments,
 should no less religiously abstain from false
 premisses, than he ought carefully to meet
 with the sharpest objections; lest while the
 conclusion is of it self true, and would clear-
 ly appear so if no other but true grounds
 were used to induce it; the credit of it be
 therefore still questioned, because in the
 foundations whereon it is so made to insist
 there is such use of apparent falsehoods: At
 least, he rather seems too willing than truly
 able to prove, who so mixes truth, doubts

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and falshood in deducing his conclusion, that either some of his premisses first patiently received and credited by himself, and then offered in his arguments, have indeed either much more need of proof, but are less proved by him than his conclusion; or else are every way false, and so utterly betray both the conclusion and his judgment. But we leave these, and go next (as is before purposed) to the Objections of late time made against what is hitherto concluded touching the just day of this sacred birth.

[Faint, illegible text]

S E C T. VII.

The chief Objections that are made against this dayes being the true time of the birth, with plain Answers to them.

THe Objections against this received opinion or tradition of the day made in later time are chiefly two; the one taken out of the enumeration of those circular

Well. For the first, divers Chronologers after they have according to their own fancies altered the years of account from our Saviours birth, (some making it one, some two, some three, some more years anterior than the

The *Dionysian Epoch* received in the Church) then, than they may settle also the very day of the birth, or at least the time of the year wherein the day fell, they calculate by those weekly ministrations of the 24. courses of the Priests, to find out the week wherein the course of *Abia* (of which *Zachary* was) ministered in the Temple; for then would it follow, that the time of *Johns* conception, from which the conception, and birth of our Saviour was accounted would nearly, if not exactly be found also. For the Text is, That after those dayes (of his ministration) his wife *Elizabeth* conceived, and hid her self five months, &c. For example, some here supposing in their chronology that the birth was two years before the vulgarly-received time, and in the *MMMMCCXI.* year of the *Julian* period, thus work in calculation to find out the time of the year when our Saviour was born; they observe first that *Antiochus* polluted the Temple, and discontinued the daily Sacrifices, and so by consequence the continuance of these courses; then they say that *Judas Macchabeus*, upon the new Dedication of the Temple recontinued the daily Sacrifices, and by a like consequence restored the courses, and in restoring of them began with the first, that is, the course of *Jehoiarid*, and this in the 25. day of the Hebrew Moneth *Caslee*, in the *MMMMDXLIX.* year of the *Julian* period, which agrees with the 24. of

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November of that year; this day fell on *Munday*, so that the continuance of the course of *Iehoiarid* was (according to the first constitution) till the morning of the *Sabbath* following, the next *Sabbath* before this new Dedication of the *Temples* falling so on the 22. of *November*: From this renewing of the courses they thus reckon; from the course of *Iehoiarid*, being the first, to that of *Abia*, being the eighth, must intercede 49. dayes; so that the course of *Abia* began on the 10. of *January* *MMMMDL.* year of the *Iulian* Period; having then before supposed that the year of the birth was the *MMMMDCCXI.* year of the *Iulian* Period, and that the conception of *St. Iohn* was in the year preceding, that is, in the year *MMMMDCCX.* they account over the whole cycles of those 24. courses that intercede from the course of *Abia* in *January* of the year *MMMMDL.* and thence observe at what time the course of *Abia* falls again in that *MMMMDCCX.* year of the *Iulian* Period; thus they find that in those 160. years 349. of those courses being past, the course of *Abia* being the last (in this computation, which begins at the next from it) of the 349. falls exactly to begin upon the 21. of *Iuly* (being the *Sabbath*) of the year *MMMMDCCX.* and so ends upon the 28. of the same *Iuly*, that is, the morning of the *Sabbath* following: By which they conclude, that upon or immediately after the

28. of the same July St. John was concei-
ved; according to the Text, that tells us, Af-
ter the days of Zacharies ministration, &c. This
being granted, it would follow that the birth
of our Saviour (according to the vulgar cal-
culation from the time of St. Johns concep-

tion) would be in October or November
of the following year, that is, of the
MMMDCXXI. of the Julian Period. O-
thers by another liberty in this kind of num-
bering, placing it in September, others other-
wise, while they fetch their arguments out
of the revolutions of their courses.

The other Objection, that is, from the
circumstances of the time of the year of this
birth, is out of the holy Text; where it is

* written, that there were Shepherds in the
same countrey abiding in the fields, *xj* *ουρανοφί-
ταις* *ουρανας* *της* *νυκτος* *εν* *τη* *ποιμνη* *αυτων*; * D. Luc. c. 2.
comm. 8.

i. and keeping watch over their flock by night; and
this at the time of the birth: This, say
some, of all times fits not the midst of Win-
ter, or December; but rather the Spring,
Summer or Autumn, when the temper or
heat of the night permit both sheep and
shepherd to be in the fields.

But neither of these reasons have any
weight against that received tradition of the
25. of December, First, for the 24. courses,
it were something indeed if we exactly knew
with which of the courses Judas Machabe-
us began his Instauration of the Sacrifices;

for

28. of the same July St. John was conceived; according to the Text, that tells us, *After the days of Zacharies ministration, &c.* This being granted, it would follow that the birth of our Saviour (according to the vulgar calculation from the time of St. Johns conception) would be in October or November of the following year, that is, of the MMMDCCXI. of the Julian Period. Others by another liberty in this kind of numbering, placing it in September, others otherwise, while they fetch their arguments out of the revolutions of their courses.

The other Objection, that is, from the circumstances of the time of the year of this birth, is out of the holy Text; where it is * written, that there were Shepherds in the same countrey abiding in the fields, *καὶ ποιῶντες τὰς φυλάκας τῆς νυκτὸς ἐν τῷ ποιμένῳ αὐτῶν;* * D. Luc. c. 2. comm. 8. i. and keeping watch over their flock by night, and this at the time of the birth: This, say some, of all times fits not the midst of Winter, or December; but rather the Spring, Summer or Autumn, when the temper or heat of the night permit both sheep and shepherd to be in the fields.

But neither of these reasons have any weight against that received tradition of the 25. of December, First, for the 24. courses, it were something indeed if we exactly knew with which of the courses Judas Maccabeus began his Instauration of the Sacrifices; for

for supposing then that from this beginning and new dedication untill *Zacharies* ministrati-
 tion no disturbance of the continuance of
 those courses had hapned, & also that had the
 just number of years fully agreed upon from
 the same dedication to our Saviours Birth,
 it were such an argument as could not in any
 way be exceeded, so that we also otherwise
 allow the common calculation of time that
 was used by the Fathers out of *St. Luke*, in
 regard only of the distance between the con-
 ception of *St. John*, and the conception and
 Birth of our Saviour. For *St. John* was, as
 they commonly agree conceived presently
 upon the end of *Zacharies* Ministrati-
 on, and this conception once fixed were a constant *E-*
pocha (according to the vulgarly-receiv'd in-
 terpretation of *St. Luke*) from whence the
 time of the year at least of our Saviours
 Birth-night may be clearly collected. But
 on the other side, if we fail in the certainty
 of the beginning of the courses, who sees not
 that nothing can be concluded out of them to
 satisfie such a judgement as dares not rely up-
 on such conjecturall inferences without an o-
 pen clearnesse in their antecedents? Now for
 that matter, no old Stories have mention of
 the name of that particular course with
 which *Judas Maccabaeus* began; but they
 onely shew the new dedication, in which it
 may be granted that there was an instaura-
 tion of the courses; but whether by begin-
 ning

* *Lib. Hasm.*
naorum c. 1. 20.
Epit. Jasonis c. 10.
15. item Jo-
seph Ben Gori-
on l. 3: c. 13.

ning again (as they suppose) with that of *Lehoiarib*, which is first in *Dauids* distribution, or with that of *Jedaiab*, being the second or with any other of the 24. nothing is left to instruct us; and we know that through *Antiochus* his prophanation of the Temple, the courses were discontinued in the 143. year from *Selucus Nicanor*, and that upon the 25. of *Casten*; and that upon the same day five years after the sacrifices, and by consequence the courses were restored. But it is neither known what course was then in Ministration, when *Antiochus* prophan'd the Temple (for we have no certain *Epocha* from which that can be deduced) or with what course the first week after the dedication was served; How then is it possible to reckon by the cycles of those courses, and so find the just time of this of *Abia*, or the eight? No more then it might be possible for one who knew only we had 12 moneths in the year, but withall were wholly ignorant when the first began, could yet tell at what season the 8. fell? And for that their conjecture of the beginning with the course of *Jehoiarib*, because that was the first in *Dauids* distribution, it is both in itself a very weak one and perhaps expressly against the strictness us'd among the Jews in observation of those courses. For besides that, no testimony at all assures us, but that any other of the courses, as well as that of *Lehoiarib* (according to the opportunity

bringd yd to the ... opportunity

portunity of time, and fitness of persons) might be the first at that new dedication. We have it confessed by the greatest of them which this way impugne the receiv'd tradition, that the certainty of the cycles of those 24 courses was so carefully kept so long as the sacrifices continued, that no one course might supply the room of another, against the order of succession in their cycles: For example, if that of *Iehoiarib* were for this week, then of necessity that of *Iedaiah*, being the second in the cycle, must be for the week following, and that of *Harim* for the third week, that of *Seorim* for the fourth, and so the rest according to their succession in the cycle; and this inso much, that if (for the purpose) that of *Harim* should have missed at the Temple at the third week, after the end of the course of *Iedaiah*, yet might not the service be supplied either by the following course of *Seorim*, or by the continuance of that of *Iedaiah*; neither might any other minister in the Temple that week, nor might that of *Seorim* (being the next in the cycle) begin till the Sabbath following. And to this purpose also, * they bring that old Canon of the Jews, *במזבח כל כהן וכל לוי* i. Every Priest and every Levite that puts himself into the ministrati- on of any of his fellows is punishable with death. And by this also they understand that in *Josephus*, † where he saies that the daily sacri-
fice

* Vide sis in-
 primis Jos:
 Scalig. Isag.
 canon. l. 3.
 p. 298.
 † πει ἀλώ-
 σως. ε. κ.
 φα. κ.

side failed upon the 17. day of the *Maadoni-*
an moneth *Panemus* (which was the 17. day
of their *Tammuz*, whereon the *Jews* keep a
solemn Fast to this day) and that this was
~~the~~ *Minister*, & for want of those that should
~~be~~ *Minister*, as if onely (as they understand it)
of the reason were, because the course of that
week failed, and might not be by their *Ca-*
nons supplied either by the preceding
course, or that which was the next week to
succeed, nor by any other. This being thus
confessed by them, they should otherwise
have searched in their way of proof, out of
those courses accounted from the new *Dedi-*
cation under *Judas Macchabees*: For upon
of this supposition, they should first have been
sure what had been the last course at the time
of *Antiochus* his prophanation; then should
they have reckoned over the cycles from that
course, and so have observed from which of
the 24. the *Ministration* beginning on the
Sabbath, being the 23. of *Casten* in the 148.
year (of *Seleucus*, or *Dilkarnon*) would hap-
pen; and thence might they have reckoned
forward to search out that of *Abia*, in
this question of *Zacharie's* *Ministration*. For
if there were such a careful avoiding of sup-
plying the course of one by another, then
followes it plainly, that it was so cer-
tainly known at the time of *Antiochus* his pro-
phanation, to which of the courses the *Mi-*
nistration five years from that week would
necessarily

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necessarily belong as it was then known what course was in the present ministration: For example, admit five years were complete from the end of the week of the prophanation and discontinuance of the courses under *Antiochus* to the end of the week of the Dedication; and suppose also that the first course, that is of *Iehoiarid*, had served in the Temple in the week of prophanation, then must it necessarily first follow, that the course of *Iedaiah* on the second, must have served in the week following, that is, the first week of those five years: Now in those five years (taking in about a day to make the numbers round in the example) we have CCLXI. weeks, and 261. weeks are ten complete cycles of those 24. courses, and 21. weeks of advantage to go on with to make an eleventh cycle: If then the strict observation of keeping every course to his own week (which was as well foreseen alwayes by the revolution of those cycles as any immoveable Feast, or the Dominical letter in our Ecclesiastick accounts is fore-known) were in such use, then clearly what course soever should have served in the sixth week of this eleventh cycle, which in our example falls to that of *Iedaiah*: Reckon with him in this eleventh cycle till the 21. course (as the weeks require) and then the course of *Gannul* is proper to the very week of the new Dedication; and this way, if the course which served

served at the prophanation were known, it
 were easie to find which of them should by
 that tradition of the Jews have served at the
 Dedication: But when we neither know
 which of them served at the prophanation,
 nor which at the Dedication, what rashness
 is it to rely upon a bare conjecture; and that
 also such an one as is adverse to that received
 tradition of the exact keeping of the cycles;
 and is in substance confessed to be so by such
 as have used it? These things thus consider-
 ed, it follows, that they which insist upon
 this argument, taken from the beginning of
 the 24. courses in that of *Iehoiarib* under *In-
 das Macchabeus*, fail in their ground, and
 prove nothing at all against our received tra-
 dition: The weakness of their Objection al-
 so is therein increased, that their chronolo-
 gy in it is so uncertain, that they know not
 clearly in what year to fix the birth; some
 of them making it one, some two, some
 three or more years before the common *E-
 pocha*, and this also upon conjecture. But
 while they vary so much in the year, they
 have little reason to be confident (out of
 their own grounds only, wherein they re-
 fuse this so ancient tradition) that they can
 in their supposed years be sure of the very
 day of which no other old testimony in-
 structs them; then either what we have be-
 fore remembred, or that which shall presents-
 ly be both delivered, and so cleared also
 that

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that it may not have weight against what is already justified. And it might easily fall out, that the certain year of the birth might be forgotten, or at least not so remembered, or the memory of it not so preserved, as that later posterity could clearly have notice of it; and yet that the day of the moneth on which the Birth fell, might by the continuance of tradition (as it hath been) be clearly known. The anniversary celebration gave the day certain to posterity, which could not thence find any thing to rectifie them in the exactnesse of the year, as we see also in an example of the Roman States. They clearly knew that the birth of *Servius Tullius*, who was the first that was King there against the will of the common people, first fell upon the *Nones* of some moneth, but they * knew not at all of what moneth, nor in what year, for ought appears: And therefore they avoided publick meetings in the City upon the *Nones* of every moneth through the year, that so they might be sure to avoid them (as supposed most unlucky to the State) anniversaryly upon his birth-day. This anniversary avoiding publick meetings, or Fairs, on the *Nones*, continued the certainty of his being born on the *Nones* of some moneth, though the moneth were unknown; and so did the anniversary celebration continue from the Disciples to the day of the moneth, though perhaps the year

be

* *Macrobius*,
 l. i. *Saturnal.*
 c. 13.

be not clearly enough certain. And there was other reason also why the certainty of the year might be unknown: For there is nothing that preserves such a certainty, but either such expresse testimonie of Authors as cannot be questioned, or else a continuance of vulgar supputation of time from, or very near from the time of the Birth it self. But we have herein had neither of these. For the first, that is, the testimony of old Authors, they vary in the years of *Augustus* and of the Consuls, which are the Characters by which they design it; and besides, they are not of such antiquity as that we can clearly rely upon them; and for that of the vulgar supputation of time, the common account either in Instruments, Letters, Receipts, or the like, was not all made by the years of our Lord, till between D. and DC. after the Birth; that is, after the time that *Dionysius* made his cycle of DXXXII. by multiplication of the cycle of the Sun into the Golden Number, and from that time brought * in (according to his own suppositions) the supputation of time by the years of our Lord. For before that age the Christians use was, either to note times by the Consuls of the year, as the ancient course of *Rome* was; and as we see in old General Councils, and in Receipts of the Emperours, in the Codes of *Theodosius* and *Justinian*; whence also *Constantine* ordained it for a Law; that if any Edicts or Constitu-

* Beda de Temp. rab. c. 49.

+ C. Theodos. tit. de constit. prim. l. i. si quis

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ditions of the Emperours should be found sine
die & Consule, they should be held of no au-
thority; or else by that *Era* (commonly
called *Era Hispanica*) which began under
Augustus 38. years before the *Dionysian Epo-*
cha of our Saviour, and was chiefly used in
Spain; as we see both in the Titles of the old
Councils of *Sivill*, *Bracara* and *Toledo*, and in
the Inscriptions of that Country; but also it
was in use in *Africk* and *France*, as we may
collect by most of the Titles of the Councils
of *Carthage*, of *Arles*, and *Valence*; unless we
suppose that *Isidore* (from whose Volumes of
Councils we have these) being a *Spaniard*,
used the supputation by that *Era* in the Ti-
tles, without warrant of the original Copies.
But we have in the very Acts of the fourth
Council of *Arles* use of this *Era*; which
was also in the accounts of time at *Rome*, as is
seen in the Epistles of Pope *Lea* subscribed
with the years of it. Others denoted the
years by an account from some regaining of
their freedom; as those of *Amiochia* did
from *Epocha* 48. years before our Saviour,
which is the *χενωτικη ετις Αντιοχεια*, so
frequently spoken of in *Evagrius* his Church-
story; or from that of *Seleucus*, or *Dhalgermus*,
beginning after *Alexanders* death. Others
from the year of the Creation as the Greek
Church: others from a time that fell 283.
years after our Saviour (as those of *Egypt*,
and the adjoining Churches) that is, from
Diocle-

Diolesians persecution; which in *Egypt* and *Ethiopia* is to this day * retained; and by the Christians that use *Arabique* call

* Jos. Scalig.
de emendat.
Temp. p. 465,
629.

led **تاريخ السنين** *Tarick Alshehn*

ida, in The *Epocha* of the Martyrs; and among the *Ethiopians* **ዓመተ: ወ: ሐ: ቀ: ል: ል:** *amath Michraab*, i. The year of Grace. So was also that of *Spain* in common use there, till somewhat above 300. years since it was by special constitution abrogated, and the year of our Lord made the beginning of the account of time; and this alteration is by the *Spanish* Lawyers referred to *John* the first King of *Castile*. *Duravit (Era) usque ad tempora Iohannis primi* (saith † *Lopez*) *qui iussit apponi annos Nativitatis Domini*. So also writes *Azedo*, * so others of them; whence it appears, that anciently, till long after our Saviour, no account was vulgarly made by the years of his birth in which the true year might be by a continual tradition retain'd: and also, that although about the time of *Iustinian* (that is, when *Dionysius* began his cycle) the course of reckoning from the Birth was brought into use, yet it was received but in few parts of *Christendom*, & that principally within *Italy*; in the instruments, it seems, of the Court of *Rome*. And it is observable here also, that with us in *England* however our ancientest Stories of the time since Christianity, both in *Saxon* and *English* and

† ad l. 52. par. tit. 3. tit. 18. de las escrituras.
* ad l. 3. Recopil. l. 2. tit. 1. de las leges.

and *Latine*, are deduced by distinction made out of the years of our Saviour, and that according to the Court of *Rome*; our Church proceedings and instruments belonging to that jurisdiction they have anciently had, and still retain an account by those years; yet the characters of time, both in the pleadings and instruments of the secular jurisdiction, hath been ever and is chiefly by the years only of our Sovereigns, Kings or Queens; so are our Records distinguished, of Pleas, Patents, Parliaments, and the like; so are the instruments of conveyance, and what else is of that nature: In which, doubtless, the ancient course of computation is so retained, that it shews us that none other hath been ever proper to the practice of our secular jurisdiction. And although indeed at this day clearly it be not of exception or erroneous, if the times in a pleading or instrument be distinguished onely by the year of our Lord, yet anciently it was much stood upon under * *Edward* the Third, when in a Writ of Annuity brought by the Prior of *St. Trinity* of *London* against an Abbot, the Prior declared upon a composition bearing date in such a year of the Lord, and the Defendants Counsel took exceptions to it, supposing that none should declare at the Common Law of the year of our Lord, but of the King; but upon deliberation it was resolved good, for this reason onely, because the composition had

* 23 Ed 3. fol.
21 b. 24 Ed. 3.
fol. 51 a. &
53 b.

had

had onely the date of the Lord; as in properly
 ly and necessarily otherwise it should have
 been of the year of the King: And so, doubt-
 less, did they think who in the times of
 King Henry the Third, and King Iohn, not
 onely carefully used the years of the King
 onely, as at this day; but also in Recogni-
 fances entred for payment of money a year
 or two after the entry, they denoted the
 time of payment by the year of the King,
 that should happen onely if he reigned so
 long; as in the 41. of Henry the Third the
 Recognifance should bind the Recognifor to
 pay money in 42. or 43. of his Reign. All
 which further confirms, that the computati-
 on of time by the years of our Lord, even
 after such time as it came at all to be in use,
 hath not been near so vulgarly received as
 the anniversary celebration of the day of the
 birth, under the name of the old civil Sol-
 stice or the 25. of December; and therefore
 it may easily be, that the very year may be
 uncertain for want of such a continuance of
 tradition, which might have come to us from
 the time of the birth, if from thence a com-
 putation received at first in the Church had
 continued it. But the yearly celebration of
 memory continued even from the eldest of
 Christian time, hath taught us the exact day
 of the Moneth; therefore we have reason e-
 nough still to resolve on it.

Archia. de
 temp. reg. Job.
 & Hen. 3.

of the birth of
 the Saviour
 & the 25. of
 December

But also for farther search into what may

of the Birth-day.

at all afford us any certainty of the course that Ministred at the time of St. *Johns* Conception; if we first believe the perpetual continuance of them according to the succession in their cycles, and then also the testimony of an old Jew touching the course that serv'd at the second destruction of the Temple under *Vespasian*, shall so have another time then hath been yet mentioned for the course of *Abia* in the conception of St. *John*, and by consequence another Birth-day of our Saviour, if we keep still the vulgar supputation of time collected out of St. *Jerome*. That Jew is *Rabbi Jose*, whose words in the *Seder Olam** *Rabba* are these; when the Temple was first destroyed, it was Evening of the Sabbath, and the end also of the Sabbatical year, *וְהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה שֶׁל מִרְחֶשֶׁת שָׁנַת הַשַּׁבָּת וְהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה שֶׁל יְהוֹיָרִיב*, that is, *and the weekly course was that of Jehoiarib, and it was day of Ab*; and so it was also in the time of the second destruction. If we find the course of *Jehoiarib* fixed at the second destruction under *Vespasian*, that is, in the 70. year of the vulgar account from the birth, and that about the beginning of *August*, to which the 9. day of *Ab* answers: From hence therefore reckon by the cycles backwards into the year that precedes the *Julian* year, in which our Saviours birth is commonly fixed, and so between the beginning of this *August* in the year of the destruction, and the beginning

* Edit. Basil.

p. 125.

ning of *August* preceding the vulgarly-sup-
 posed time of the conception of *St. John*, will
 intercede 7 1/2 complete years, that is, 154.
 cycles of those courses of 24. and 9. courses
 over; therefore plainly in that year the course
 of *Iehoiarck* is about the 9. week from the be-
 ginning of *August*, that is, in the end of *Sep-*
tember; and so it follows, that the end of the
 course of *Abia*, being the 8. fell in the end of
November, or 8. weeks later than in the old
 calculation, which placed it in the end of
September: And the birth of *St. John* (as it is
 now celebrated) would thus have been in the
 7. Moneth from the conception, which in
 nature were reasonable enough; but the ho-
 ly *Text* well endures the common and most
 ancient interpretation, which denotes it to
 be in the 9. at least. And were this autho-
 rity of *Rabbi Iose* to be insisted on, and the
 perpetual succession in the cycles of those
 courses in this age preceding the destruction
 to be resolved on, there were cause enough
 here to seek for another exposition of the
 time of the birth out of the words of the ho-
 ly *Text*: For the common account from
Zacharias Ministration will so fall wholly,
 unless we change the vulgarly-received year
 of our Saviours birth, and (as some do) place
 three or four years back more than the *Dio-*
nyfian account doth; for so will the course
 of *Abia* be brought into *September*: and if
 we make it fall four years sooner (as *Susliga*
 doth)

D. Luc: c. r.
 com. 36. & 56.

doth) that course will end also in the end of *Septemb.* according to the common calculation herein used by the Fathers: But I will avoid here the making of such uncertainties of chronology of years to be arguments to justify what is otherwise certain enough in the day. Neither can we rely here, either upon the perpetual succession of the course, or on the testimony of that Rabbi; for the constant continuance of the courses in their succession, there is great reason in this time after *Augustus* to doubt of it, in regard both of the Jews doing frequently otherwise than their Canons bind them, as also in regard of some meer necessity which might occasion some change in the succession, when they were in those later dayes subject to the State of *Rome*. And for that of the course of *Iehouanib* then ministring, there is not credit enough in the Author to make us believe him: For, besides that while he tels us so, he is mistaken in the true day of the second destruction of the Temple, which fell on the 10. of *Lous* or *August*, in that * year, not on the 4. which answers to his 9. of *Ab*; the Sacrifices, and so the courses of the Priests ceased about three weeks before, that is, on the 17 day of the Moneth *Tamuz*, and this for the want of Priests, as *Iosephus*, who knew it of himself, expressly hath written: But he tels us not a word of what course then ministred, no more doth *Abraham Ben David*

* *Ioseph* *dei*
αλώσεως. l. 5.
κερ κς.

vid



vid in his *Cabala*, or he that extracted the *Seder Olam Zuta* out of the *Seder Olam Rabba*, where this is reported from *Rabbi Iose*; although both these Authors speak most particularly of the second destruction of the Temple, but they abstain from this of the courses then in service, as from what had been delivered without warrant by *Rabbi Iose*, who indeed had learned from an old groundless tradition, that at the first destruction under *Nebuchadnezzar*, the course of *Iehoiarib* served in the Temple, and that this second destruction was upon the same day of the same Moneth which the first was on; and because he would have all in both destructions alike, he added also, that the course of *Iehoiarib* served now at the second destruction, when indeed no service at all was in the Temple, and that the Sacrifices and Ministration were ended: So before the destruction other testimony is in the *Jews* Liturgy, which confirms that of *Iosephus* to be infallible; on the Fast of their seventeenth of *Tammuz* they sing

יְהוָה הָיָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
 i. Because in this day the continual Sacrifice ceased, this day the continual Sacrifice was taken away: If the Sacrifices then, and the courses with them (for the one of them is not without the other) ceased on the 17. day of *Tammuz*, what credit is to be given to him that tells us what course ministred in the Sacrifices three weeks after? which being so cleared, there

there is nothing remaining in the cycles of those courses that can impugne the received tradition of this birth-day.

And for that other argument of the Shepherds watching in the night, what makes that against this of *December*? as if the shepherds might not properly be in the fields watching their sheep in the night at the midst of Winter, especially in so warm and continually temperate a Climate: For, although in *Italy* the precepts of Husbandry were, that in the Winter their sheep should be kept in

* *Virgil. Georg.*
3. & vide *Colu-
mell. l. 7. c. 4.*
Varro. l. 2. c. 2.
& *Pallad. in*
Novemb.

Coats* rather than in Fields, yet they had their Winter-feedings abroad also; and the Climate of *Bethlehem* is of less latitude by ten degrees than that of *Rome*, and is also by so much the more temperate alwayes; and even in our Climate, which is much colder than either of them, we have watching of sheep, feeding, or remaining in the fields, at this time of the year. The rest objected out of the circumstances of time, as that the birth of the Redeemer of all men should be on that day on which the creation of the first man was, that is, as they without ground suppose, on the 25. of *March*, and such like, are far more vain, and not worthy of mention. These things being at length cleared, we need not, I trust, be at all moved by the opposition of those learned men, *Beroald*, *Paulus de Middleburgo*, *Suslyga*, *Ioseph Scaliger*, *Kepler*, (although he stands for the same
time

time of the year, but relies on the tradition of the day) *Wolfius, Hospinian, Lidiar, Calvisius, Casaubon*, and the rest that have both made it a question, and shewed also their opinions against it.

S E C T. VIII.

Some other opinions among the ancients touching it, and how some of them may agree with what we have received, and the rest are of no weight against it; and there more especially of the ancient confusion of this Feast with that of the Epiphany.

BUT we have hitherto omitted the different opinions among the ancients, touching the day of this Birth; which shall be therefore next collected, and then also it shall be shewed, that they bear no weight against what is before concluded. Those opinions (as they are delivered) are various, and chiefly five. The first is of them who taught it to be on the 25. day of the *Egyptian Moneth Pachon*, which is the 20. of *May* in the first *Egyptian* year. For after that the *Egyptian Moneth Thoth* was fixed in the end of *August*, and to the rest of the following Moneths (30. days being allowed to a Moneth, which with the five *ἡμεραι* make up the whole common year) both the Fathers, and the most of prophane writers

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commonly used the Egyptian Moneths as fixed; and not as they are wandering in the years of Nabonassar in the Almagest, this of the 25. of Pachon is delivered in Clemens Alexandrinus, that lived some eighty years after the* Apostles. Εισὶ δὲ οἱ (saith he) περιεργότερον τῆ γενέσει Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, ἢ μόνον τὸ ἔτος, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἡμέρας προσθέντες ὡς φασὶν ἄλλοι Κ Η Αὐγύστου ἐν πέρασι τῆ πάχων καὶ ἐλάδι. There are some also that more curiously denote, not only the year, but the very day also of the Birth of our Saviour; which they say was on the 25. of Pachon in the 28. year of Augustus, where the account is not by the common years of Augustus deduced from the death of Julius Caesar, but by the years that were past from the taking of Alexandria, and the death of Anthony. The second (that seems to differ here) is in the Chronicle (of Alexandria, where it is delivered that the birth was on the 25. day of the Egyptian Moneth Choiac, which is the 21. of the Italian December. The third is of those which supposed the day to have been on the 24. or 25. of Pharmathi, (that is, the Moneth preceding Pachon) which agrees with the 19. or 20. of April: And with this may be reckoned the 4. which is found in Athanasius, that saies it was upon the 23. of the Arabique Moneth Ramadhan, but in what year he designes not. But however in the Hagaron or Arabian year, this

* Stromat. I.

† Vide sis Cen. sorin. de die Natali c. 21.
* Edit. Rader. p. 533.

† Clem. Alex. Stromat. I.

of our Saviour.

cannot come near our December, for according to that year of the Moneth *Ramadhan* falls in *June* and *July*, about the time of our Saviours birth, *Vigesimo tertio die Ramadhan* (are the words in the Translation of a most impious Book of his long since done by *Hermannus*) *natus est Christus filius Mariae, orationes Dei super eum.* For the *Mahomedans* celebrate our Saviour as a great Prophet, and his Birth, of the *Virgin Mary* * also is related in their *Alcoran* † although with much difference from the holy Story, as most other things are which occur there with reference to either of the Testaments. A fifth is of those who thought the day to be the 11. of the *Egyptian* Moneth *Tybi*, that is, the 6. of our *January*, on which we celebrate the *Epiphany*: So *Epiphanius*, † τὸν γενέσθαι τὴν ἑορτήν, ἧς ἡμεῖς ἐπιφάνειαν καλοῦμεν, ἐν τῷ μηνί τῷ Τυβί. The Birth-day (of our Saviour) that is, the *Epiphany* fell upon the 6. day of *January*, being the 11. of the *Egyptian* Moneth *Tybi*; which opinion is remembered by *Stephanus Gobarus* † *Trithemius*, where yet the fifth of *January* is in the stead of the 6. as also in some places of some Editions of *Epiphanius*: But *Stephanus* plainly meant the 6. day, for he interprets it by the 8. day of *January*, which is the 6. day; and here with agrees the common opinion of the ancient Church of *Egypt*, which kept the Feast of the Birth on the 6. of

* *Alex. Ar. or. 5. Canrac. or. 5. or. 1. 2. c. 2. ad cap. Elur.*
 † *l. 2. tom. 1. heres. 51. ita etiam ad extr. l. 3.*

Apud Phos. cod. 232.

of

Of the Birth-day

† Callat. 10 c. 2
¶ vide s̄s O-
rig. homil. de
divers. 8.

* D. Hieron. ad
Ezechiel. l. 1:
D. Chrys. tom. 2:
edit. Erasmiã
p. 1198

of January, so confounding it with the Feast of his Baptism: Callian † relates so of him; *In-
tra Egypti regionem mos iste antiquã traditione
servatur, ut peracto Epiphaniorum die, quem
provincia illius sacerdotes, vel Domini Bap-
tismi, vel secundum carnem Nativitatis esse defi-
niant; & idcirco utriusque Sacramenti solenni-
tatem, non bifariam, ut in occidentis provinciis, sed
sub unã diei hujus festivitate concelebrant, &c.*

And other * testimonies there are of this ob-
servation of the Feast on the 6. day with
the Epiphany. But there is none of these opi-
nions but that may be either so interpreted,
that they may stand with what is before
delivered of the 25. of December, or else
so shewed to insist upon false, or no grounds,
that they are no authority at all against it.
For the first, which casts it on the 25. of Pa-
chon; and is very ancient; it may be well
interpreted to agree with this of December,
for in consideration of it we must, first, re-
member that according to the old Jews,
there was among the Fathers of the Primi-
tive times a reckoning of their Moneths
as well by the order of enumeration as by
proper names; so that September and Octo-
ber were known as well by the names of the
7. and 8. Moneths (as also their names de-
note) as by their names themselves being
accounted from March; which was the first.
But the Greek Fathers frequently took A-
pril, instead of March, for the first Moneth of
the

the year, as we see expressly in St. † *Chry-
stom* in *Anastasius** Patriarch of Antioch, in
those Constitutions † attributed to the Apo-
stles in * *Macarius* † *Stephanus*, *Gobarus*, and in
other testimonies of the ancients, where the
Julian April is made the first, as the *Hebrew*
Moneth Nisan was; and therefore also they
had the very day of this Birth known by the
name of the 25. day of the 9. Moneth *De-
cember*, being the 9. from *April*; and this
kind of noting it is like enough to have de-
ceived those which said it was on the 25. of
Pachon; for *Pachon* is the 9. Moneth. rec-
koned from *Thoth*, being the first among the
Egyptians, as *December* is, being accounted
from *April*; so that when the tradition was
delivered in those terms of the 9. Moneth,
no designation being of the account of the
Moneths, nor of what Moneths were meant,
it was perhaps rashly received by some, and
instead of the 25. of the 9. Moneth in the
Roman year (account to that account of the
Fathers) it was apprehended to be, and so
by mistaking placed on the 25. of the 9. of
the *Egyptian year*; neither is this conjecture
for interpretation of the original of that mi-
stakeing so new, but the others, and those
which are very learned and † judicious, have
also used it; and by a like or easier way may
the second which is before related be under-
stood: For though the 25. of *Choiac* fall up-
on the 21. of *December*, taken strictly accor-

† In *Panegy-
r. p. 11. n. 11. p. 11. n. 11. p. 11. n. 11.*
* MS. apud
Scal. de emend.
p. 509.

† *Lib. 8. cap. 4*
Cedren. p. 143
&c.

* *Homilia 5.*
† *Apud Photi-
um cod. 232.*

† *Herrard &
Keplerus. Vide
Kepler. de anno
nat. ab. c. 15.*

ding to the *Egyptian* account from the first of *Thoth*, being the 29. of *August*; yet in regard that all *December*, except the last five days, falls within *Choiac*, and so the very Birth-day in the same Moneth, that is, on the 29. of *Choiac* (which truly answers to the 25. of *December*) it is reason enough that we suppose that *Choiac* was taken there for *December* it self, so that the 25. of the one and the other went with the Author for the same day: And such examples are frequent, as applying of *Hebrew*, *Arabique*, *Greek* and *Egyptian* Moneths to the *Roman*; and therefore also the Translator of that *Chronicle* hath well expressed it (preferring upon this reason) by the 25. of *December*; For the third and fourth neither of them having any ground at all, are as easily and as reasonably denyed as affirmed; nothing is brought to justify them, therefore as little will serve to confute them, especially that of *Mahomed* can have little weight here, when as he is so false in the whole relation of the Birth of our Saviour, in his *Alcoran*, that he makes the Virgin *Mary* to be the same with *Mari*, or *Mariam*, the Sister of *Aharon*; and talks of *Zacharies* being three days onely dumb; and of our Saviours precepts given as soon as he was born, touching Prayers and Almes (as *Robert Reading*, that anciently translated the *Alcoran*, turnes it; but the word being

the same
ing

Zachariah, frequent-

ly occurring in the *Alcoran* for Alms or good works, is in that place by *Postellus** a *De Orbis con-* translated Tithes; it being indeed in the *cordia l. 2. c. 3.* *Arabique Testament*† expressly used for first fruits also) with other impudent falsehoods † *Fpist. ad E-* like the rest which are every where in that *bud. c. 7. com.* 4. absurd Volume of his Law; and there also the season of the year is noted by a tale of the Blessed Virgins having dates presently upon the Birth (which as the *Muslimans* say) * is yet growing. But for the fifth opinion, which is from confounding of the Feasts of the *Epiphany* with this of the Birth, (a custom also retained in the latter ages † in the Churches of *Armenia*) † *Catholicus* and made by *Stephanus, Gobarus, Tretheites* *Armenian legat. ad Armenios.* in his Contrarieties of ancient opinions of the Church, to be the main and as the one by one that crosses that of the 25. of *December*; however it be so often taken clear in *Epiphany*, and rashly also affirmed by the *Generall* or *Patriarch* of the *Armenians*, that all Churches had observed it so ever from the *Apostles*: yet doubtlesse there is great reason that we should think that this confusion began both without any sufficient ground, and was also bred by some such mistakings as may be observed to have been in their consideration, both of

Of the Birth-day

de his
 Marc. l. 21. in
 Constantio &
 Eusebio. &
 Greg. homil. de
 anastasis 8.

the name and time of the Feast of the *Epiphany*. For their grounds (besides what is in mistaking the name and circumstances of the time of this Feast) there appears none that hath any colour of power of truth among those which have so noted it: But for the name first of the *Epiphany*, the Feast being anciently observed for the* Baptism of our Saviour in *January* as at this day; and that in the Eastern Churches, before such time as they had learned of the Western the true day of the Birth, they first thought that the tradition of the Feast under the name of *ἐπιφάνεια*, or *ἐπιφάνια*, might well denote the Birth it self, and so teach them that on this very day our Saviour was born; for the Birth being of it self the first apparition of the Son of God in the Flesh, and *Epiphania* denoting in the language of the then both past and present ages the apparition of a Deity (as is especially noted also by the most learned *Casaubon*) they took it at length here to denote also the first apparition of our Saviour to the World, and that in the Feast-day kept on the 6. of *January*; and so concluded that this was the Birth-day. Now for the circumstance of the time of the *Epiphany*, this confusion of the Feasts doubtlesse was much confirmed to them by an interpretation of a passage of Saint *Luke*, where the Baptism of our Saviour

our

of our Saviour.

our (which is celebrated in the *Epiphany*, though *Epiphanius* place that also upon another day in *November*) is delivered to have been, when he was *ὡσεὶ ἰηρὶ τριάνωτα ἀρχομένη*, i. beginning to be about 30. years of age; which words are interpreted by some as if he had been of 30. complete, and beginning to be 31. on that day, which must so of necessity be on his birth-day: And so this way also one and the same day became sacred among them to the *Baptism* and the *Birth*. But all this and what other mistakings the Greek Church herein had was embraced by the most of them, but till they were better informed from the Western Church: and the *Generall* of the *Armenians* * expressly tells *Theorianus* (who objects to him that *Sermon* of *Saint Chrysostom* touching it) that they knew not yet, nor had not heard of any *Sermon* of *St. Chrysostom* to this purpose: So that want of instruction onely continued this error among them, which hath been long since reformed in the *Syrian*, *Egyptian*, and *Ethiopian* Churches, as well as in the *Greek*; as is before shewed in their agreement with us in the celebration of this *Birth*: But for those collections out of the name of the *Epiphany*, and circumstances of time of the *Baptism*, it will soon appear that they justify nothing here against the received tradition. And first

* In legatione ad Armenios.

for that of the name of *Epiphania*, denoting the apparition of a Deity, it is otherwise enough satisfied; and there was no need at all to have it restrained to the noting of the Birth-day: For though the word *ἐπιφάνεια* be used in the holy * Text, both for the first appearing of our Saviour, or his Incarnation, as also for his coming at the † last day; yet in the first institution of this Feast of the *Epiphany*, it was used (I suppose) for neither, but for that publick apparition or Manifestation (by which the Latin Fathers denote *Epiphania*) of him to the World at his Baptism, in regard whereof he was before but privately known. So expressly *Saint Chrysostom*, whose authority is here beyond exception; *Τινος ἐπιφάνειαν λέγουσιν; ἐπειδὴν ἔχ' ὅτι ἐλέσθη τὸ ἐπὶ πάντων ἐγένετο καὶ δόξα, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐβαπτίσθη. μὴ χεὶ γὰρ ταύτης ἠγροῦντο τῆς ἡμέρας τοῖς πολλοῖς.* Why then is it called *Epiphany*? (in regard, as he before had said, it is not the celebration of the Birth-day, but of the day of the Baptism;) because (saith he) when he was born, he was not then manifested to all men, but when he was baptized; for till then he was unknown to the multitude: and to this purpose also he brings that of *Saint John*, *I baptize with water, but there standeth one among you whom ye know not, speaking of our Saviour: and the same E-*

* *Epist. 2. ad Timoth. c. 1. comm. 10.*

† *Panegy. εἰς τὸ ἄγιον Βάπτισμα tom. 5. edit. Savil. p. 525.*



vangelist expressly; I knew him not, but
 in *cap. 12. v. 10.* That he might be
 manifested to Israel; therefore I came bap-
 tizing with water. So Saint Jerom tells *in commen.^o*
 what the name of Epiphany denotes; *Significat Ezechiel. 1. 1.*
ficus (hath he) baptisma in quo aperti sunt
Christo oculi. & Epiphaniotum dies hucusque
venerabilis est, non, ut quidam putant, nata-
lis in die, tunc enim absconditus est & non
apparuit. Others of the Fathers have as-
 much. *notionem* may be added the consent of po-
 pularity, after such time as the true day of the
 birth was discovered to them in the Eastern
 Church; and in a Poem (as they call it) in-
 serted in the Service of the Epiphany in the
 Greek Church, made by * Sophronius Patri- * *Euchologium*
 archbishop of Jerusalem, an express passage is sub- p. 93 b.,
 ly to this purpose; *Δοξαζόμεν σε τὸν ἀπάτορα*
καὶ μητέρα, ὃν ἀπατορα ἐν πατρὶ, ἐν γὰρ τῷ
πρῶτῳ ἡμεῖς σε εἶδον, ἐν δὲ τῷ πα-
ρῶντι ἡμεῖς σε εἶδον, τὸν ἐν τέλει τέλειον ὄντα
ὡς ἄνευ πατρὸς, ἢ μητρός. i. We glorify thee that art with-
 out Father of a Mother, and without Mother
 (of a Father); and in a preceding Feast (of the
 Nativity) we know thee an Infant, but in this
 present Feast (of the Epiphany) we see thee at
 full growth, appearing to be our most perfect God.
 According whereto also St. Augustine † hath *† Serm. in E. i.*
 express words, and that often: For howe- *ph. 17. & ca*
 ver they had anciently in the Greek Church *di. versis 64.*
 confounded the Feasts of the Baptism, or

REV

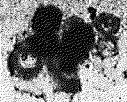
Epiphany, and the Nativity; yet, being admonished from the Western Church, they confessed their error in this, that they severed the commemoration of the Baptism from this of the Birth, and placed the Birth on his proper day in December; and yet they retained still for the Baptism the name of Epiphania, which also is sometimes, *Θεοφάνια*, as in the *Menology*, and in the *Apostolovangelia* of the Greek Church, *τῆς αὐτῆς ἡμέρας ἡ ἀγια Θεοφάνια τῆς κλεισθῆτος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, i.e. On the sixth of the same month the holy Theophania of our Lord Jesus Christ; for then was the first publick apparition of his Godhead. In the Church of Egypt also this day is severally kept by the † name of *الكبير*

* Vide sis Theonhil. Alexand. in edicto tom. bibl. Patrum edit. Paris. p. 61.

† Comput. E-copli apud Scalig. de emendat. l. 7. p. 661.

* Parez vis ος τὸ ἄγιον Βάνιονα. edit. Sivil. p. 524. tom 5. † in dimonastad. in subnexis T. B. Syriaco.

Alchamim, i. the Feast of Washing or Bathing; *Quod Ecclesia versus Egyptiaca baptismum eo die iteraret*, says *Ioseph Scaliger*; though perhaps that name may have reference to that old custom used in the Church, of providing water in the night of that day for the holy uses of the whole year following; which *St. Chrysostom* * remembers, and is yet retained in the Greek Church (as it appears by their *Enchologium* or Common-Prayer-Book) as also in the *Syriack* Church, which hath this Feast severed (as ours here) from the Birth, and keeps it † under the name



name of *Ilhadu* *Ilhadu* *Ilhadu*
nohora, i. *At nocht iagh*, (as *Nazianzen*
 calls it) on the Feast of Lights; and
Ilhadu *Didinacha*, i. e. Of Light ap-
 pearing in the East; according where-
 to also they, as others, use in this Feast
 great store of Lights; which hath reference
 to the very word *Epiphania* doubtless, which
 denotes Enlightning also, or Illumination
 in the Vulgar Translation of the New Te-
 stament; and both in that sense, as also in
 the other of Apparition or Manifestation, it
 may verbally besides signifie the apparition
 of the Star to the Wise men:

*Stella, que Solis rotam
 Vincit decore ac lumine.*

As *Prudentius* of it: and *Sedulius* of the Wise
 men.

*Stellam sequentes præviam,
 Lumen requirunt lumine.*

Both in their Hymnes made proper to this
 of the *Epiphany*.

So that the name of the *Epiphany* is from
 the ancient and primitive times fully satis-
 fied, either in that of the Baptism, or in the
 apparition of the Star: Whence also the

Dutch,

Dutch, French, Italian and Spaniard note it by The day of the three Kings, for so those wise men are commonly reputed to have been; and also the Feast it self hath been long since, after the truth learned from the Western Church, observed apart by it self, as having in the first observation of it no community with this of the Birth-day; and that among those which before had confounded them. It follows then, that even by their own confession that had been the Authors of this confusion, they had been deceived in application of the name of *Epiphany* to the birth of our Saviour: and for that collection of time out of the testimony of *St. Luke*, it is clear that no certainty of the day can be thence extracted; the word *ὡς*, i. as it were about, expressly excludes such certainty: So *St. Iohn*, *ὄψεως ὡς δέκατον*, i. it was about the tenth hour, which clearly denotes not the beginning or end of the hour; neither needs there farther proof of the weakness of that collection.

At length to conclude therefore, the Authorities of the Ancients, and the consent of Christian Churches for this Birth-day, as it is now anniverfarily kept, being as before declared, the mistaken reasons being rejected (lest their falshoods might prejudice the clearness of the Truth) the Objections of later time being answered, and the different Opinions of the Ancients touching it being
either

of our Saviour.

either groundless, or not in truth opposing
it; it rests that we resolve on it, as upon a
certain and clear Truth of Tradition, set
by rational inference, by express testimo-
ny of the Ancients, by common and conti-
nual practice of severall Churches, and by
accurate inquiry, may be discovered.

But such a Truth, as is to be found in the
word had existed long before, and
it follows that such a Truth
had been had in the world
before had been had

and for that
of the testimony
of the
word
excludes such

E N D

of the
proof of the

to intend
as it
being as before
the
of a
different
being
either