
A
CRITICAL HISTORY

Of the TEXT of the

New Testament,

Wherein is establish'd

The Truth of those **A C T S** on which
CHRISTIANITY is founded.

P A R T I.

CHAPTER I.

*The Verity of the New Testament defended in general
against the ancient Hereticks. Reflections upon the
Principle made use of by the Fathers to establish the
Authority of these Books.*

JESUS Christ having profess'd that he came not into the World Matth. 17.
to destroy the Old Law, but rather to accomplish it, it seem-
ed not to him necessary to publish his Doctrine in Writing.
He was content to prove his Mission by his Miracles, and
to support his Reformation upon the Books of the Old Testament
which were received by all the Jews, to whom the Messias had
been promised. So that we do not find him to have given order

Mar. xvi.
15.

to his Disciples to put any thing into Writing. He only commands them to Preach his Gospel to all the Nations of the Earth; *Go ye, says he to them, into all the world, and preach the Gospel.* The Books of the New Testament took their Original from this preaching. This it was that caused *Tertullian* to say, (a) That the Apostles, to whom Jesus Christ had given this Command to promulge the Gospel, were the Authors thereof. Upon the whole matter, the Gospels had not been put in Writing but at the request of those People who were willing to preserve the memory of that which the Apostles had preached to them. *S. Paul* composed the greater part of his Epistles for the Instruction of Churches which were already erected. That History which we call the *Acts of the Apostles* was published to no other end but to shew to the Faithful the Progress of the Christian Religion upon its first advance into the World: and the Christians not having at that time any State separate from that of the Jews, and being present and assisting at all their Ceremonies in the Temple and in the Synagogues, they had no Persons appointed to record any thing of importance which pass'd among them. And this is the reason that we find not here, as in the Old Testament, any publick Writers who had the Charge of collecting the Acts of their State. This, during the Primitive times of Christianity, gave a pretence to several Hereticks to doubt of the truth of those Apostolical Books which to them seem'd to want some publick Attestation. *S. Ignatius*, in one of his Epistles, complains, (b) That he understood there were some men who said they could not believe the Gospel, except they could find it written in the * *Archives*. The holy Martyr answers them, That it was written, that the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and a Faith in him, were instead of the most authentick *Archives*. It was then difficult to distinguish the Books which had been composed by the Apostles, or by their Disciples, from those which had been forged by false Apostles or by some Sectaries. Every one bore in its front either the Name of the Apostles in general, or of some single one of their number: and since there were no publick *Archives*, to which recourse might be had for the deciding and clearing of matters of this nature, the Hereticks took occasion from thence

* There
are some
who read
ἀρχαίαις
ἀρχαίαις.

(a) *Constitutum in primis Evangelicum instrumentum Apostolos autores habere, quibus hoc munus Evange.ii promulgandi ab ipso Domino sit impostum.* Tertul. l. 4. adv. Marcion. c. 2.

(b) * *Ἡλικία πῶν ἀρχαίων, ὅτι εἶναι μὴ ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ἔνθα, ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ἔστιν ἡ ἀρχαία.* Irenaeus Ep. ad Philad.

to publish a great number of false Acts; of which hardly any thing is left to Posterity except the Titles of them and a few Fragments.

These Sectaries boasted that they taught the Doctrine of the Apostles, or at least of their Disciples. *Basilides*, who was one of the most ancient Hereticks, avouched that he had for his Master, (c) *Glaucias*, one of St. Peter's Interpreters. *Valentin* affirmed with the same boldness, that he had been instructed in Religion by *Theodad*, (d) who was one of St. Paul's familiar Acquaintance. But whereas they did not agree amongst themselves, and on the contrary the Doctrine of the Apostles was perfectly uniform in the Churches that they had planted; the Fathers made use of this Uniformity of Doctrine to confirm and establish the truth of the Apostolical Writings. *Clemens Alexandrinus* answers *Basilides* and *Valentin*, that there was but one true ancient Church, that was before all Heresies. From thence he brings an unquestionable proof of the falsity of the Doctrine of these Sectaries, who durst be so bold as to give the Name of * the Doctrine of the Apostles to their own Inventions: he represents to them, that (e) the Doctrine of the Apostles were one, as well as their Tradition. The Primitive Christians argued against the Hereticks of those times, from Tradition, and from the Conformity of that Belief that was manifest in all the Churches founded by the Apostles; as may be seen at large in the Works of St. *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, and St. *Augustin*, and in a word, of all the Fathers that have defended the Writings of the Apostles against the Hereticks. Whensoever any Sectary opposed the declared Gospel, they immediately convinced him of the forgery of those Acts that he produced, by the true ones that were kept in the Apostolical Churches, and were instead of *Archives*. (f) If any one, saith St. *Epiphanius*, should go about to counterfeit the Edicts or Ordinances of Emperors, the Cheat would be soon laid open, by producing the true Copies taken from the *Archives* of the Court; In like manner, adds he, false Gospels composed by Hereticks may be detected; their spurioufness may be easily discovered, by

(c) Γλαυκίαν τὸν Πέτρου ἑρμηνέα. Apud Clem. Alex. lib 7. Strom.

(d) Γνώμεθ Παύλου. Apud Clem. Alex. ibid.

(e) Μία ἡ πάντων μέγιστος καὶ ἀποστόλων ἄσπαστος διδασκαλία, ἕως ἡμετέρας καὶ ἡ ἀληθείας. Clem. Alex. ibid.

(f) Ὅταν βλασφηγήσῃ τις βασιλικὴ προσημασία, ἀπὸ καὶ ἀρχαίων τῶν ἀντι-
 λέξεων σεβασμιωτάτων ἡσυχαστικῶν ἔχοντα ἐλέγχει τὸ ἀθετοῦν ἕως καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν βα-
 σιλικῶν ὀρκῶν, ταῦτά τῆς ἀγίας τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκκλησίας σεβασμιωτάτων τῶν οὐραγγαλιῶν ἐλέγχει
 τὸ ἀραναίως καὶ καλῶν ἐκδυμάτων μίαν. Epiph. Hæc. 42.

producing the true Gospels, that are kept in the Churches as it were in *Archives*.

This manner of defending the Truth of the Apostolical Writings against the ancient Sectaries, hath proved so effectually convincing, that the *Gnosticks* were obliged to support their Novelties, to fly to I know not what secret Tradition that was known to none but themselves. They were so insolent as to prefer themselves before the Apostles and Disciples of Jesus Christ, accusing them as not having preached the Purity of the Gospel with sincerity, because, say they, they have retained many Ceremonies of the old Law. They thought by this means, that they might be able with Authority to reform the Writings of the Apostles. (g) There is no way (saith St *Irenæus*) of convincing this sort of People, neither by the Testimony of the Scriptures generally received in the Churches planted by the Apostles, nor by authentick Traditions, because they imagine themselves to be above all this. They were persuaded, that they alone were in possession of the truth of Religion that contained hidden Mysteries: *Se indubitatè & incontaminatè & sincerè absconditum scire mysterium*. And since they had joined Philosophy with Christianity, they intended also to accommodate the one to the other. They argued on matters of fact after a pure metaphysical manner; and being filled with an infinite number of Prejudices and Notions taken from the Principles of their Philosophy, they reformed the Doctrine of the Apostles, and even that of Jesus Christ on this foundation, under pretence of bringing Religion to a greater Perfection. They pretended that the Apostles had preached the Gospel before they had a perfect knowledge of the Truth, and that therefore they were at liberty to correct them: *Ante prædicaverunt, quàm perfectam haberent cognitionem*. This was that which caused them to take the ambitious Title of Learned and Knowing Men, or *Gnosticks*, as if none but they were endued with the true knowledge of Religion. They vainly boasted also that they had reformed the Apostles: *Gloriantes emendatores se esse Apostolorum*. S. *Irenæus* sharply reproves their rashness in bragging that they had made perfect that which was gross and obscure in the Gospel published by the Apostles.

It hath been necessary to make all these Reflections on the an-

(g) *Cum autem ad eam iterum traditionem quæ est ab Apostolis, quæ per successiones Presbyterorum in Ecclesiis custoditur, provocamus eos, adversantur traditioni dicentes, se non solum Presbyteris, sed etiam Apostolis existentes superiores sinceram invenisse veritatem; Apostolos autem admiscuisse ea quæ sunt legalia Salvatoris verbi.* Iren. lib. 3. adversus Hær. c. 2.

cient Sect of the *Gnosticks*, because they have applied themselves more than any others in those primitive times of the Christian Religion, to the obtruding of false Acts under the Names of the Apostles, or other specious Titles. These are a sort of Philosophers that ought not to pass but for half Christians, who have altered the Traditions that the Disciples of Jesus Christ had left to the Churches. And therefore no regard ought to be had to all the Books that they have produced under what Name soever, since they have professed that they understand Religion better than the Apostles themselves, and (b) have been so bold as to publish new Gospels, to which they have given the Title of *The Gospel of Truth*, altho these Gospels do not agree with those of the Apostles. This alone is sufficient to make it appear, that the Gospels of the *Gnosticks* were false Acts, that cannot be opposed to the Apostolical Writings that have been acknowledged by the primitive Churches.

It were an easie matter to answer *Celsus* by this same Principle; who heretofore objected to the Christians, that they changed their Gospel every day, adding thereto, and diminishing what they thought fit, that they might be able by this means to retract that which they had formerly alledged. *Origen* judiciously answers this Philosopher, who was a great Enemy to the Christian Religion, that he unhappily confounded the ancient Sectaries with the true Faithful. He protests, that he knows not in the least, that the Gospel hath been corrupted by others than the *Gnosticks* or *Marcion*: (i) This is not a Crime (saith he) that ought to be imputed to the Gospel, but to them that have dared to corrupt it. He brings an Example of the Sophisters, whose false Doctrine cannot be attributed to true Philosophy. (k) It is the same thing (saith this great Man) with respect to the Sects that have introduced Novelty into the Doctrine of Jesus Christ; which cannot be charged on true Christianity. It is certain, that in all times; and in all places there hath been a perfect Conformity between the different Copies of these Books; the Diversities that are found

(h) *Existentes extra omnem timorem suas conscriptiones preferentes, plura habere gloriantur quam sint ipsa Evangelia. Si quidem in tantum processerunt audacia, uti quod ab his (Apostolis) non olim conscriptum est veritatis Evangelium risulent, in nibilo conveniens Apostolorum Evangelis, ut nec Evangelium quidem sit apud eos sine blasphemia.* Iren. adv. Her. lib. 3. c. 11.

(i) *Τὸ τὸ ἡλεθέρων ἢ τὰ λόγια εἶν ἔγκλημα, ἀλλὰ πολυμάθων βλαβερότητα τὰ εὐαγγέλια.* Orig. lib. 2. contra Cels.

(k) *Οὐτως ἢ τὰ ἀληθινὰ χειρῶν ἡμεῶν ἔγκλημα ὁ μεταχρησθῆναι τὰ εὐαγγέλια, ἢ αἰετοῖς ξίνας ἐπισημαίνοντες τὸ βιβλίον τῆς Ἰησοῦ διδασκαλίας.* Orig. 10. d.

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therein, and shall be remarked in the Sequel of this Work, are not of so great moment, as that we may say with *Celsus*, that the Christians have changed their Gospels, to the end that they might suit them to their own opinions. This cannot be understood but of the ancient Hereticks, who having no certain Rules for their Belief, reformed them according to their capricious humor. This is that for which the Orthodox Christians heretofore censured the *Theodosians*, who corrupted the Sacred Books under a pretence of correcting them; and whereas several among them had taken this liberty, all their Copies differed one from another: there were of them under the Names of *Aselepiades*, *Theodosius*, *Hermophilus* and *Apollonius*, that did not in the least agree together.

Ensb. l. 5.
Hist. Eccl.
c. 28.

I will say nothing here concerning the Gospel of the *Marcionites* whereof *Origen* makes mention, because I design to treat of it in another place: I shall only add, that if we compare the Gospels and the other Books of the New Testament with the Liturgies that we have under the Names of several Apostles, to whom the most part of the Eastern Christians do attribute them, we shall be convinced that the Gospels are truly of the Apostles. For all the Churches have preserved them in their ancient Purity; whereas every particular Nation hath added to their Liturgies, and hath taken the liberty often to revise them. The respect that hath been always had to the Writings of the New Testament, without inserting any considerable Additions therein, is an evident proof, that all People have looked upon them as Divine Books, which it is not lawful for any to alter. On the contrary they have been persuaded, that the Liturgies, altho they bear the Names of the Apostles, or of some Disciples of Jesus Christ, were not originally written by them to whom they were attributed. And therefore it hath been left free to the Churches to add to them, or to diminish from them, according as occasion requires.

The Principles that have been maintained above in discoursing of the *Gnosticks*, may serve to confute the *Manicheans*, who likewise acknowledge nothing Divine in the Scriptures but that which pleased them, or rather was agreeable to their Fancies. This caused *S. Austin* to say, addressing himself to *Fauftus*, who was one of the chief of this Party, (1) *You are then the Rule of Truth, whatsoever is against you is not true.* He clearly demonstrates to them, that they were only upheld with false prejudices, when they

(1) *Tu es ergo regula veritatis. Quidquid contra te fuerit non est verum.*
Aug. lib. 11: cont. Faust. c. 2.

rejected the Writings of the Apostles against the Authority of all the Churches of the World, and at the same time received the Apocryphal Books that had no Authority. If any one (continues this Father) should oppose you, and should make use of your own words, that that which you alledge on your behalf is false; and on the contrary that which is against you is true, (m) what would you do? How could you defend the truth of those Acts that you produce? How could you prove their Antiquity, not having any Witnesses in Tradition by whose Testimony they might be confirmed? From whence he concludes (n) that it is absolutely necessary on this occasion to have recourse to the Authority of those Churches that were established ever since the primitive times of the Christian Religion, and to the consent of Nations that have received the Books of the New Testament from the Apostles.

He observes further, and more close to the purpose; that if it were only disputed concerning the variety of Copies, since they are but few in number, it would be sufficient to consult the Copies of different Countries; and if they did not agree in this point, the greater number should be preferred before the lesser, or the more ancient before the later: *Plures paucioribus, aut vetustiores recentioribus preferrentur.* But the *Manicheans*, who judged not of the Truth of these Books but with relation to their own Ideas, refused to submit to this Authority; they consulted only their reason in matters of Fact, wherein all Deference ought to be given to Authority; therefore when any passage was urged to them that thwarted their Opinion, they boldly affirmed that that part had been corrupted, or that the Book wherein it was found had been composed by some Impostor under the name of the Apostles. *Fauftus*, for example, who avouched, that after having diligently perused the Books of *Moses*, he could not find therein any Prophecy that had any regard to Jesus Christ, takes this method in answering the Texts of the New Testament. Where express mention is made of these Prophecies, Jesus Christ saith in speaking of himself, *Moses hath wrote of me*; *Fauftus* answers to this, that after a serious examination of this passage, (o) his reason obliged

Joann. v. 46.

(m) *Quid ages? Quò te convertes? Quam libri à te prolatis originem, quam vetustatem, quam seriem successionis testem citabis?* Aug. *ibid.*

(n) *Vides in hac re quid Ecclesie Catholicae valeat auctoritas, quae ab ipsi fundatissimis sedibus Apostolorum usque ad hodiernum diem succedentium sibimet Episcoporum serie & tot populorum consensione firmatur.* Aug. *ibid.*

(o) *Ratione cogebat in alterum è duobus, ut aut falsum pronunciarem capitulum hoc, aut mendacem Jesum: sed id quidem alienum pietatis erat Deum existimare mentitum. Retius ergo visum est scriptoribus adscribere falsitatem, quam veritatis auctoritati mendacium.* Apud Aug. lib. 16. contra *Fault.* c. 2. him

Matth. v.
17.

him to conclude, either that it was false, or that Jesus Christ had not spoken the truth; and since it would be no less than impious Blasphemy to say that God could lie, it would be more advisable to attribute the falsification to the Writers themselves. When it was demanded of this Heretick why he did not receive the Old Law, and the Prophets whom Jesus Christ himself hath authorised in the New Testament, by his words, *I am not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfil them*: he objected against the Testimony of S. Matthew, because he is the only Evangelist that hath related this. It is supposed (saith he) that this Discourse was delivered in the Sermon that Jesus Christ made on the Mountain. In the mean time S. John (p) who was there present speaks not a word thereof; and yet they would have S. Matthew, who saw nothing, to mention it. He pretends that this hath been wrote by some other person, and not by S. Matthew.

After this manner the *Manicheans* who sacrificed all to their Reason, and almost nothing to Authority, entirely destroyed the Books of the New Testament, receiving them no farther than they were conformable to their Prejudices: they had formed to themselves a certain Idea of Christianity, after which they regulated the Writings of the Apostles. They would have it that all that which could not be adjusted to this Idea had been inserted in their Books by later Writers who were half *Jews*: *Faustus* saith, *Multa enim à majoribus vestris eloquiis Domini nostri inserta verba sunt, quæ nomine signata ipsius, cum fide non congruant; præsertim quia, ut jam sæpe probatum à nobis est, nec ab ipso hæc sunt, nec ab ejus Apostolis scripta; sed multa post eorum assumptionem à nescio quibus, & ipsis inter se non concordantibus Semi-Judæis, per famas opinionisque comperta sunt, &c.*

But S. Augustin represents to them in this very same passage, that one must renounce common sense to argue after this manner on matters of Fact, to which imaginary reasons ought not to be opposed. (q) We cannot be certain (saith he) of any Book, if once we call in question those Works that the Church that is extended throughout the whole World receives with a common consent, and if on the contrary we authorise as Apostolical Books

(p) *Testis idoneus tacet, loquitur autem minus idoneus.* Apud Aug. cont. Faust. lib. 17. c. 1.

(q) *De quo libro certum erit cujus sit, si literæ quas Apostolorum dicit & tenet Ecclesia ab ipsis Apostolis propagata, & per omnes gentes tantâ eminentiâ declarata, utrum Apostolorum sine incertum est; & hoc erit, certum scripsisse Apostolos quod huic Ecclesie contrarii hæretici proferunt Auctorum suorum nominibus appellati longè post Apostolos existentium.* Aug. ibid.

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that dispute therewith, and that carry the name of Writers who have lived a long time after the Apostles. He charges them (r) with making Fables and Apocryphal Works to pass for Apostolical Writings: and he shews at the same time the falsity of these A&S, because they have not any testimony of the Doctors of the Church that were then living. He urgeth *Fausus* to prove what he hath alledged, by Books that are Canonical, and generally received in all the Churches: *Non ex quibuscunque literis, sed Ecclesiasticis, Canonicis, Catholicis.* This Holy Doctor calls this way of arguing of the *Manicheans* folly, *insaniam & dementiam*, who not being able to accommodate the Writings of the Apostles to the Idea that they had formed to themselves of the Christian Religion, or under colour of certain contradictions in the Scriptures, which they could not resolve (f) would needs have it believed that these Books were composed after the Apostles themselves by uncertain Authors, who had made bold to borrow the Names of these Apostles to gain Credit and Authority to their Works.

Aug. l. 13.
adv. Fau.
c. 9.

To convince them the more easily of their folly, he sets before their eyes the Books (s) of *Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Varro* and *Cicero*, and of several other Writers, that are believed to be the Authors of those Works that we have under their Names, because they have been attributed to them in the time wherein they lived, and they have been always so attributed successively from Age to Age. Now there is nothing more contrary to reason, than not to grant the same privilege to the Church, and not to acknowledge that she hath faithfully kept the Writings of the Apostles, whose Doctrine she hath always preserved by the means of the Succession of Bishops.

We have enlarged a little on these Reflections of *S. Augustin*, and of the other Fathers that preceded him; because they have mightily evinced the Truth of the Books of the New Testament, without having recourse to I know not what particular Spirit, which is an in-

(r) *Legunt Scripturas apocryphas Manichæi à nescio quibus fabularum sutoribus sub Apostolorum nomine scriptas, quæ suorum scriptorum temporibus in auctoritatem sanctæ Ecclesiæ recipi mererentur, si sancti & docti homines qui tunc in hac vitæ erant, & examinare talia poterant, eos verâ locutos esse cognoscerent.* Aug. cont. Faust. lib. 22. c. 99.

(s) *Non à Christi Apostolis, sed longo post tempore à quibusdam incertis n. min. viris, qui ne sibi non haberetur fides, scribentibus, quæ veserent, partim Apostolorum nomina, partim eorum qui Apostolos secuti viderentur, scriptorum suorum frontibus indiderunt, asseverantes secundum eos se scripsisse quæ scripserint.* Apud Aug. lib. 32. cont. Faust. c. 2.

(t) *Platonis, Aristotelis, Ciceronis, Varronis, aliorumque ejusmodi auctorum libros, unde noverunt homines quid ipsorum sint, nisi temporum fitimet succedentium contestatione continû.* August. cont. Faust. lib. 33. c. 6.

vention of these later times. We cannot imagine any thing more opposite to good reason, than these Words of the Confession of Faith of those that formerly took the Name of the Reformed of the Churches of France: *We acknowledge these Books (in speaking of the whole Scriptures) to be Canonical, not so much by the common agreement and consent of the Church, as by the testimony and inward persuasion of the Holy Ghost.* The Fathers nevertheless have always confuted the ancient Hereticks who refused to acknowledge these Books as Canonical, *by the common agreement and consent of the Church.* It would have been a pleasant way of reasoning, if every one in these primitive times of Christianity, would not have acknowledged for divine Books, only those that his private Spirit should dictate to him to be such. This hath appeared to be so great an extravagance to those of that Persuasion, who in the *Low Countries* are called *Remonstrants*, that they look upon the *Calvinists* that follow this Principle, as People that have renounced common sense. *Simon Episcopus*, who hath been one of the Champions of this Party, after having handled this question with a great deal of subtilty, concludes that it is a very ill sort of argumentation, to admit besides the testimony of the Church, another inward testimony of the Holy Ghost, to know whether certain Books have a divine Authority stamp't upon them. *Hinc patet (saith this Protestant) ineptos esse eos, qui vel præter vel citra testimonium Ecclesiæ requirunt internum Spiritus Sancti testimonium, ad hoc ut libros hos divinos esse, & auctoritatem divinam habere*

Confess.
Art. 4.

Remonst.
Confess. c.
1. de scrip.
n. 8.

Grot. Animad. in
Anim.
Riv.

intelligamus: It is sufficient according to the *Remonstrants*, that we have there upon the testimony of (v) the primitive Church, that certainly knew that these Books were written by the Apostles, or approved by them, and that this testimony is come down to us by a constant Tradition. This Spirit that is diffused through the whole Church, ought without doubt to be preferred to a private Spirit, that can only serve to make a division therein. This is what *Grotius* hath judiciously observed: *Spiritus ille privatus (saith this Critick) Spiritus Ecclesiæ divisor.*

It would be to no purpose for the *Calvinists* to object to the *Remonstrants*, that their Opinion is taken out of the Writings of *Socinus*; because an evident truth ought not to be rejected, under pretence that it may be found in the Books of *Socinus*. This Heretick hath proved in his Treatise *Of the Authority of the Holy Scriptures*, and in

(v) *Ecclesia primitiva quæ temporibus Apostolorum fuit, certissimè resciscere potuit, & indubie etiam resciscit libros istos ab Apostolis scriptos esse, vel saltem approbatos, nobisque istius rei scientiam quasi per manus tradidit, ac veluti depositum quoddam reliquit.* Remonst. Confess. cap. 1. de Script. n. 8.

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another Work intituled *Sacred Lectures*, the Truth of the Sacred Books, and principally of those of the New Testament, by the very same reasons, and after the same manner that *S. Irenæus*, *Tertullian* and *S. Augustin* have done. (x) Let them read (saith *Socinus*) Socin. lib. de Aucto. Script. sac. that which *Eusebius* hath written on this matter in his Ecclesiastical History, and they will find therein a perpetual consent of all the Churches of the World, since these Books were written, to the time of this Author. He insists very much in these two Treatises on the Testimonies of the ancient Fathers. Will any one say for this, that this is a *Socinian* Method, because *Socinus* hath made use of it after the most Learned Ecclesiastical Writers? Would to God that this Enemy of the Traditions of the Catholick Church had always followed this Principle! he would not have introduced so many Innovations into Religion. Neither can he avoid an Objection that may be made even by those of his own Party, that according to his Principles, he ought necessarily to acknowledge a Tradition after the same manner as it is maintained in the Church of *Rome*. We cannot (might they say to him) receive the Gospel of *S. Matthew*, and reject that which hath been published under the Name of *S. Thomas*, without establishing Tradition at the same time, because it is impossible to prove this by any Testimony of the Scriptures.

Socinus, To answer this Objection without departing from his Principle, lays down (y) a certain Medium between the Scriptures and Tradition; which Medium consists, according to his opinion, in written Histories, in other Testimonies and in Ratiocinations, from whence it is proved without making application to any Authority of the Church, that the Gospel of *S. Matthew* contains the true History of *Jesus Christ*, and that on the contrary, that which carries the name of *S. Thomas* is a supposititious Book. *Episcopus* and

(x) Legantur ea quæ hac de re *Eusebius* scribit pluribus in locis *Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ*, & invenietur usque ad illius *Eusebii* ætatem, hoc est per 250. circiter annorum perpetuum spatium, postquam scripta illa conscripta atque edita fuerunt, nunquam fuisse in Ecclesia qui dubitaret quin quatuor quæ habemus *Evangelia*, *liber Actorum Apostolorum*, *Epistola* omnes quæ *Pauli Apostoli* esse dicuntur, præter eam quæ ad *Hebræos* est scripta, prior *Apostoli Petri*, & prima *Joannis Apostoli*, hæc, inquam, omnia ab iis scripta fuissent quibus attribuantur. *Socin. lib. de Aucto. Script. Sac.*

(y) Est quiddam medium inter *Scripturas* & *traditionem*. - *Interdum non quiddam modo, sed multiplex quiddam, scriptæ nimirum historiæ, aliaque testimonia & rationes, ex quibus factum est & fit ut cordati homines *Matthæi* *Evangelium* pro vera de *Jesu Christo* historia habeant, *Thomæ* non habeant, nullâ hiâ intercedente auctoritate Ecclesiæ & *Spiritus* quo ipsa perpetuo gubernetur. *Soc. Epist. 4. ad Christoph. Ostorod.**

the other *Remonstrants* do also make use of this Answer, that they may not be obliged to acknowledge the Traditions of the Church. But this Medium which they suppose to be between the Scriptures and Tradition, is a true Tradition, which differs in nothing from that which *S. Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, *S. Augustin* and several other Fathers have established, when they intended to convince the ancient Hereticks of the Truth of the Apostolical Books. These Histories, and these other Acts whereof *Socinus* makes mention, are taken from the Churches, or from Ecclesiastical Writers; and this is that which composeth Tradition. He ought to agree to it himself, since he avoucheth in his *Treatise of the Authority of the Holy Scriptures*, that since the times of the Apostles to those of *Eusebius*, none have doubted in the Church, that the Books of the New Testament were not composed by those, whose Names they bear. For it is certain that many Hereticks that were out of the Church, have not only doubted thereof, but have absolutely rejected them. That which hath deceived *Socinus* and the other Sectaries, is a false notion that they have conceived of the Authority of the Church; they imagine that she Judges by her own Authority only, and not upon good Acts and Records, that the Books that compose the Old and New Testament are Divine and Canonical.

C H A P. II.

Concerning the Titles, that are at the Head of the Gospels and other Books of the New Testament: Whether these Titles were made by the Authors of these Books, or whether they were since added?

WE have no solid proof in Antiquity, to make it appear to us, that the Names that are set at the Head of every Gospel, were thereunto prefixed by those who are the Authors of them: *S. John Chrysostom* assures us expressly of the contrary in one of his Homelies: (a) *Moses* (saith this Learned Bishop) hath not put his

(a) Μωσῆς μὴ πῶτε βιβλία γέγραπται ἔδωκε τὸ ὄνομα τῷ ἑαυτοῦ τίθειν, ἔδωκε μὲν ἑαυτὸν, τὰ μὲν ἑαυτοῦ συνδόντες· ἀλλ' ἔδωκε Μαρκοῦ, ἔδωκε Ἰωάννου, ἔδωκε Ματθαίου, ἔδωκε Παύλου. Ὁ δὲ Μαρκεῖος Παῦλος πᾶσι καὶ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν αὐτῶν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ προτίθεισιν, τί δὲ πῶτε; ὅτι ἑαυτοῦ μὴ παρέσθαι Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ δούλον παρέσθαι; ὅτι δὲ διὰ μακροῦ τὰ γεγραμμένα διατίθεισιν, καὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῦ ὀνόματι· οὐδὲ καὶ ἀναξία αὐτῶν τῶν ὀνομάτων προτίθειν. Joann. Chryf. Hom. 1. in Epist. ad Rom.