



FOR THE TARBOROUGH PRESS.

The Mouse trying to gnaw out of the Catholic Trap
(continued from our last paper.)

A further proof is, that in all countries, ours not excepted, the Protestant religion and the Catholic religion are diverse, and mean two different and distinct religions. I cite as proof, all the histories of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the two Americas. This is a fact not to be denied. Then I would ask the Convention, how can you amalgamate or metamorphose these two distinct religions, so as to make out of them what you call the Christian religion, when all the histories of the world are against you? For if you do not make a horse of one and a jack of the other, I am sure you cannot make out this mule you call the Christian religion. If they have always been known in all the histories of the world, and even in our own country and day, to be two distinct religions, how will you unite them now so as to make them mean the same thing; or to take them both to make the Christian religion? I told you in the outset it could not be done. Then if the Catholic religion be the Christian religion, the Protestant religion cannot—so vice versa. Nor is there proof to be had, that the Protestant religion can be called the Christian religion; but, Sirs, there is proof upon proof that the Catholic religion can be called the Christian religion with propriety, and has been so called for 1500 years. And it was for this reason, in my opinion, that the change was wanted; for the Catholic religion was called the Christian religion for 1200 years, in all the histories of Europe, before the name of the Protestant religion was heard of. But now the Convention will make a marriage between the mother of harlots and the Protestants, and thus make out the Christian religion. Sirs, I tell you the match cannot be allowed—I forbid the bans, and think I will show just cause for so doing before I am done.

Then if the Catholic religion existed 1200 years and was called the Christian religion, before the existence of the Protestant religion, surely they cannot be the same—this is clear. One of the two is the Christian religion, and it does not take them to be incorporated to make the Christian religion. Then what a squabble and mighty ground of contention the alteration you have proposed makes in this State, for Catholics and Protestants to contend about; and who is to be the arbiter in this dispute? the Supreme Court? Good heavens deliver us! for Protestants cannot help seeing that it must go against them, and that they must be again smashed under the paw of this cursed beast, that had the deadly wound and was healed.

Then I set it down as a point that cannot be overturned, from historical facts, that the Catholic religion is not the Protestant religion; but that they are two distinct religions, known to be so in all nations and on the face of all historical records—and that the Convention cannot make the Christian religion out of them both; that one or the other must, when proof is sought, be left out in the article Christian religion. And I contend that that word shuts out the Protestants from office, and admits the Catholics; for the Protestants will never fail to deny the religion of the Catholics to be the Christian religion, and the Catholics will claim that theirs only is the Christian religion; and thus at loggerheads we go in church and State—the Lord deliver us from this whirlpool of State and church distress.

Then let the argument stand thus: Jesus Christ was the founder of the Christian religion—this will not be denied. Next, the Christian religion was established in the year of the world 4033, or thereabouts—this will not be denied. Next, by the Christian religion is to be understood that system of faith, doctrines, ordinances, practices, and discipline Christ and his apostles taught—this, I presume, will not be denied. Next, that this Christian religion, which had its believers, was called the Christian church—this also, I presume, will not be denied. Taking these as admitted and granted, the questions at once arise on us with force, who was Christ? what was the system of religion he taught? what were its doctrines and its ordinances? what kind of people were those that composed the first Christian church? Now you can see the field of contention and argument opening on you with the last question, which of the sects comes nearest the Christian church, the Catholics or any of the Protestant sects? As the Catholics form one religion, and all Protestant sects form but one Christian religion; thus the whole Christian world is concentrated in these two religions, less or more. For all Protestants of all sects agree in this, in protesting against the Catholic religion; and equally do the Catholics agree, in declaring their religion the only Christian religion, and their church the only spouse of Christ; this is the controversy, and who is to settle it, as each put up their claim to be the Christian church, and theirs the Christian religion. Then all we have to do to decide the argument, is to show by proof what the Christian religion is, and what the Protestant religion is; and this will show that the Catholic religion is not the Protestant religion, and that the Protestant religion is not the Catholic religion, and that it cannot and does not take them both to make the Christian religion; and will further shew which has the best claim to be called the Christian religion.

Then the first thing we have to do is, to show what the Christian religion is, and that by proof, to settle the argument. And first, we must have some standard to try by; and I contend, and it cannot be denied, that the New Testament is the first book and the most historical record, that treats of the origin, rise and progress of the Christian religion; and that it is therefore to be tried by this book, in order to find out what the Christian religion is, and what it is not. Then I contend that what is called the United Baptists, when tried by this book, has the best claim to be called the Christian church; and their doctrine, ordinance and discipline, or the whole system of their faith, to be called the Christian religion and the Christian church; and that they come higher and their claim is better founded than that of any other sect in this State, when tried by the New Testament. But will the Legislature or Supreme Court try by this book, and say what the Christian religion is? No, Sir, neither kings, parliaments, nor Legislatures, Popes nor their councils, courts of inquisition, nor ecclesiastical judicatures try by this book what the Christian religion is; if they did, Protestants would never have had any thing to have feared. Leave the field of argument and free enquiry open, unaided by law, and Protestantism has never had any thing to fear. Indeed she has driven back Popery, backed by law, fire and sword; and obtained more than an equality and toleration in the nations of the earth; but now Catholicism wants to trample her under foot again, which she can never do unaided by law. Then instead of trying the claim of the Christian religion, and which is the Christian church, by

the New Testament, resort has always been had by statesmen in all countries to history, the opinions of the fathers of the church, common, general, and public opinion; these have been their proofs with popish councils, popish canons, and ancient customs of the church, to establish what the nations have called the Christian religion; however foreign that religion has failed being supported by express clauses from the New Testament.

To show that the United Baptists have the best claim to the Christian religion, and of their being the Christian church, in a short way is not a hard matter to do, by the New Testament, for it is full of proof to that effect. And to show by the New Testament, that the Catholic religion is the Christian religion, cannot be done; for the doctrine of the Catholics, in the New Testament, is called the doctrine of devils; and the church a whore, which has committed fornication with the kings of the earth; and the church said to be the habitation of devils, and the Pope anti-Christ, and of course the Catholic church his wife—all of which I shall not take time to explain. But to prove by history, and popish councils, and the opinions of old time, and the history of nations, that the Catholic religion is the Christian religion, is an easy matter; and that no sect of Protestants have, or can from history or ancient opinions claim to be the Christian church, is equally easy. And here it is that Protestants have in all countries fell in the lurch; because their religion must be tried by statesmen, inquisitors, ecclesiastical courts and parliaments; not by the New Testament, the only law by which their religion ought to be tried, as the standard of the Christian religion; but by history, old opinions, canons of Popes, and councils, and ancient usages and customs. And when things have been tried this way, why the Protestants have always, with a few instances excepted, been condemned as heretics and unfit to live; and as having no claim to be of the Christian religion. And, indeed, Protestants might as well expect the devil to do justice between them and the Catholics, as a magistrate, a Legislature, or an ecclesiastical court; for they are tried by a wrong law, and of course the sentence must go against them—the law being wrong by which they have been tried, thus the sentence has been always wrong also.

So then according to the New Testament the Protestants have the best claim to the Christian religion; but according to history, old customs, traditions, and records of old time, (the New Testament excepted,) they have no claim; but must surrender it to the Catholics, as far more ancient in name than the Protestants, by 1200 years.

Then to show these claims will finish the argument. And first, I have already hinted that John the Baptist commenced preparing materials for the Christian church; Jesus Christ was cotemporary with him in preparing and founding the Christian religion; and after his death the first Christian church was founded in Jerusalem by his apostles, and from thence spread throughout the extensive Roman empire; and hundreds of churches were founded of baptised believers, seventeen of which can be proved from the New Testament, of which I cannot now speak for length sake particularly, but will give the public should I live in some future piece. From founding the first church in Jerusalem and its progress onwards, we may consider and date the rise of the Christian religion. Then from that time up to the year 323, the Christian church and of course the Christian religion, waded through fire, sword, persecution and death. During this 323 years of the first progress of the Christian religion, there appeared many sects; first, Basilides and his followers, about the year 120; the Valentians, a little after this time, 125; the Carpocratians, about the same time; the Sethians, 150; the Montanists, 156; the Marcians, 160; Hermogenes, 180; Praxias, 196; Artemon, 200; Theodotus, 200; Novatus, 251; the Donatist, 328—all these men and sects were never called, not one of them, the Protestant religion; but the term used for these sects, in the general they were all denominated heretics; and the Christian church passed sentence on them, as not belonging to the Christian church, nor of the Christian religion. For during this 323 years, the church was judge what was the Christian religion, and not Legislatures nor Supreme Courts; and although heathen judges and governors judged the Christians and their religion, yet they only called it a superstition. Now during this 323 years of the first progress of the Christian religion, the Christian church kept herself separate from all sectarian principles; for as these men and sects arose, she condemned them and thrust them from her communion. Then when Constantine established the Christian religion by law, about the year 323 or 4, did he establish any one of these sects? No, Sir, not one of them, became the established religion of the Roman empire; but it was the Christian church and the Christian religion, she herself being judge, and who more capable of judging rightly than herself, who was of the Christian religion, and not a sectarian party. At this time, 323, when Constantine established the Christian religion by law, Sylvester was Bishop of Rome, and the Catholics say he was the thirty-fourth bishop in succession from Saint Peter. But I say they have nothing to do with Saint Peter—Peter did not plant the church in Rome, but Paul. This is proven from scripture, and they cannot prove from scripture that Christ ever gave the keys to Paul, but Peter. Then if they cannot prove that Paul had the keys given to him, let the Catholics give up the keys; for they have stolen them, if they cannot prove their succession from Peter; which I defy them to do from any authentic record under heaven—for Peter was an apostle to the Jews, and Paul planted the first Christian church at Rome. And further, I defy the Catholics to prove this succession of bishops for the first 300 years—come forth, if you can do it. Then the Catholics may claim, and have a right to claim, according to history, councils, ancient writings, &c. that they possess and are the Christian church, and that their religion is the Christian religion, from the days of Sylvester and the establishment of Christianity by the Roman Emperor, to this day; and that no other religion is the Christian religion but theirs—for as yet during this 300 years the Protestant religion is not heard of by name. From 323 up to 606, the Catholic religion continued to be the established religion of the Roman empire; when Boniface the III. was proclaimed universal bishop of the Christian church. So then, if it was the Christian religion that was established by law by Constantine, which no man can deny from history, then the Catholic religion is that established Christian religion, which no man that reads history dare deny. Then here is the place where the Protestants have lost their claim to the Christian religion in all ages? and have been called heretics, from 606 up to 1529. The Catholic religion, which is historically called the Christian religion, but cannot be called so when tried by the New Testament, continued to be the

established religion of Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and England, with but little exceptions, as well as other countries, and was in all countries called the Christian religion; but by their opponents called popery, &c. During this time of 1500 years, altho' there were thousands and tens of thousands that opposed the Catholic religion, and condemned it as not being the Christian religion; yet that it was the Christian religion in its origin and its establishment by Constantine, none can deny. Then why they denied its being the Christian religion was, because the Catholics had changed every thing in the Christian religion as respects doctrine, ordinances, discipline, &c. into some fooleries that were not recognized by the New Testament; and it is the just the same now by the Protestant sects, yet no man dare deny that from history, and from the proofs of sixteen councils held by the Christian church, that the Catholics only, during this 1500 years, are entitled to the name of the Christian church, and their religion the Christian religion; and that the name Protestant religion was not then mentioned among the nations, as meaning a certain specific religion.

Now from 323, the time of the establishing the Christian religion by law, up to 1529, there arose a great many sects in opposition to the Christian church. The Priscillianists 378, the Pelagians 405, the Samothracians, the Sabellians, the Arians, the Socinians, the Arminians, and many others—the Waldenses, the Hugonots, &c. &c. yet not one of these sects acquired the epithet of the Protestant religion; nor did any of them acquire the term of the Christian church, or Christian religion, although they protested against the Catholic religion as much as Protestants do in this day. Then the matter is fairly made out by history, councils, ancient usages and customs, that the Catholic religion is the Christian religion; and that during 1500 years, no other sect was called or entitled to their religion being called the Christian religion, but the Catholics. Thus when that clause of the Constitution shall be tried by Legislatures or Supreme Courts; and not by the scriptures, but by history, old councils, and mouldy records of Catholics, the Protestants may tuck tail and haste away with as much speed as sheep-killing dogs, and say, every man to his tent, North Carolina Protestants, we have no part in the Son of Jesse, nor in the offices of the civil department of this State. Farewell, bright eyes; for there is nothing new under the sun—and what has been may be again, is sound reasoning.

Now I come to the claim the Protestants have for their religion to be called the Christian religion, by history, old councils, &c. which is just none at all—for this name Protestant was first given in Germany to the Lutherans, or those who adhered to the doctrine of Luther; because in 1529, they, the followers of Luther, protested against a decree of the Emperor Charles the V. and the Diet of Spire—for these Lutherans declared they would not submit to the Diet of Spire, but appealed to a General Council. The name was afterwards given to the followers of Calvin, and all that followed the reformation of that age, whether in France, Germany, Poland, or any other nation; and has long since, on the pages of history, become a general name or denomination for all sects which dissent from and oppose the Catholic religion, no matter in what sect they may be found, nor in what country they may reside.

This, then, is the Protestant religion that our forefathers put in the 32d article, and stands opposed to the Catholic religion in all countries and in all ages. Now then you can have, I think, a clear view that the Protestant religion is not the Catholic religion; and if the Protestant religion is not the Catholic religion, then the Protestant religion cannot be called, with any proof but the scriptures, the Christian religion. All history is against the Protestant religion for 1500 years—for the date of the establishment of the Christian religion is 323, which is the Catholic religion; but the date of the Protestant religion is 1529—how then the same, or how will you join them together to make them both mean the Christian religion, when one existed 1500 years before the other? I told you it could not be done. And thus leaving out the decision by the New Testament, every Protestant in this State is shut out of office, for their conscience will compel them, when put to the test, to deny that the Catholic religion is the Christian religion, in its present form. So I shall end the argument, being tired of writing, although I have much more to say but not now, except to offer some further proofs and light on the subject.

What is the Christian religion, in the 32d article? What does the convention mean by it? Do they mean all sects in the State? I have shown that if they do, they cannot prove it, nor have they so defined it, and this is the defect. And I have shewn that the Protestant religion is not the Christian religion, but by the New Testament; if tried by that it may be, otherwise it cannot be. Does the Convention mean to establish Catholicism? No, Sir, I have too high an opinion of those gentlemen to impute any such an intention to them—yet if the people ratify their proposed Constitution, I have shown they will do so, so far as that clause in the Constitution can do it.

Now just for a miniature take the following as proof: the Methodist comes forward and says, mine is the Christian religion—and a sect of Protestants too, whose shoes many Catholics are not worthy to clean, for their preachers are not gowns men from colleges, and oppressors and blood suckers as the Catholic bishops have been; but plain honest men, brought up and called of God from the plow tail, at the pittance of £60, and scarce that, have spread abroad and sounded experimental salvation in every hole and corner of the State, and achieved wonders in doing good to the souls of men. But, says the Catholic, yours is not the Christian religion—and why? because we can trace back your origin to the hole from whence you were digged, in England, by Morgan and John Wesley; and you had your rise in 1729, and therefore you cannot be the Christian church nor the Christian religion—and why? because the Christian church and the Christian religion, it is acknowledged by all historians, was established in 323, and we, the Catholics, are of that religion, which existed 1400 years before your Methodist name or religion was heard of. Then, Methodists, yours cannot be the Christian religion, so hang up your fiddle and cry, every man to the ballot box, O Israel!

Then comes forward the Presbyterian, and says, ours is the Christian religion. No, says the Catholic—do you not know that John Knox was a disciple of Calvin, and brought Presbyterianism from Geneva to Scotland, and that it became the established religion of Scotland in 1690—and you are all of that breed in North Carolina, you have no right to claim to be the Christian religion; for the Christian religion, which is Catholicism, existed 1300 years before your