

OF THE APOSTLES AND DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

DLXII.

The reason why the papists boast more of St Peter than of St Paul is this: St Paul had the sword, St Peter the keys, and they esteem more of the keys, to open the coffers, to filch and steal, and to fill their thievish purse, than of the sword. That Caiaphas, Pilate, and St Peter came to Rome, and appeared before the emperor, is mere fable; the histories touching that point do not accord. Christ died in the reign of Tiberius Caesar, who governed five years after his death. All histories unanimously agree, that St Peter and St Paul died under the emperor Nero, whose last year was the five and twentieth year after the death of Christ. But St Peter was eighteen years at Jerusalem after Christ's death, as the Epistle to the Galatians witnesses; and after that, he was seven years at Antioch. Then, as they fable, he ruled afterwards five and twenty years at Rome. No pope among them all yet ruled five and twenty years; and, according to this reckoning, St Peter was not crucified under Nero. St Luke writes, that St Paul was two whole years at liberty in Rome, and went abroad; he mentions nothing at all of St Peter. It is a thing not to be believed that St Peter ever was at Rome.

DLXIV.

Saint John the Evangelist wrote, at first, touching the true nature of faith - that our salvation depends only upon Christ the Son of God and Mary, who purchased it with his bitter passion and death, and through the Word is received into the heart by faith, out of his mere mercy and grace. At last he was constrained to write in his epistle also of works, by reason of the wickedness of those that, void of all shame, abused the Gospel through indulging the flesh.