

rents of the Romish Church condemn the assumption of authority in such matters, which in this one instance, at least, was made by the ecclesiastical tribunals. The author of the *Ages of Faith* (book viii. p. 248) says, "A congregation, it is to be lamented, declared the new system to be opposed to Scripture, and therefore heretical." In more recent times, as I have elsewhere remarked,¹² the Church of Authority and the Church of Private Judgment have each its peculiar temptations and dangers, when there appears to be a discrepance between Scripture and Philosophy.

But though we may acquit the popes and cardinals in Galileo's time of stupidity and perverseness in rejecting manifest scientific truths, I do not see how we can acquit them of dissimulation and duplicity. Those persons appear to me to defend in a very strange manner the conduct of the ecclesiastical authorities of that period, who boast of the liberality with which Copernican professors were placed by them in important offices, at the very time when the motion of the earth had been declared by the same authorities contrary to Scripture. Such merits cannot make us approve of their conduct in demanding from Galileo a public recantation of the system which they thus favored in other ways, and which they had repeatedly told Galileo he might hold as much as he pleased. Nor can any one, reading the plain language of the Sentence passed upon Galileo, and of the Abjuration forced from him, find any value in the plea which has been urged, that the opinion was denominated a *heresy* only in a wide, improper, and technical sense.

But if we are thus unable to excuse the conduct of Galileo's judges, I do not see how we can give our unconditional admiration to the philosopher himself. Perhaps the conventional decorum which, as we have seen, was required in treating of the Copernican system, may excuse or explain the furtive mode of insinuating his doctrines which he often employs, and which some of his historians admire as subtle irony, while others blame it as insincerity. But I do not see with what propriety Galileo can be looked upon as a "Martyr of Science." Undoubtedly he was very desirous of promoting what he conceived to be the cause of philosophical truth; but it would seem that, while he was restless and eager in urging his opinions, he was always ready to make such submissions as the spiritual tribunals required. He would really have acted as a martyr, if he had uttered

¹² *Phil. Ind. Sci.* book x. chap. 4.