

world, and that apologies were written to promote its diffusion; we may not be able to trace their insensible operation or find recorded instances of their power, but it is at least not improbable that the steadfast endurance of a martyr whose blood was the seed of the Church, might have itself resulted from the patient and private study of such writings as these. Even their perpetual repetition argues an experience of some little previous success. At all events, the cause which they advocated was triumphant, and if we cannot discover how much of its prosperity they were mediately the authors of, that is no just or logical ground for refusing them any credit at all.

TERTULLIANI  
LIBER APOLOGETICUS  
ADVERSUS GENTES.

I. SI non licet vobis, Romani imperii antis-  
tites<sup>1</sup>, in aperto et edito ipso fere vertice civitatis  
præsidentibus ad judicandum, palam dispicere et  
coram examinare, quid sit liquido in causa Chris-  
tianorum; si ad<sup>2</sup> hanc solam speciem auctoritas  
vestra de justitiæ diligentia in publico aut timet  
aut erubescit inquirere: si denique, quod proxime  
accidit, domesticis judiciis nimis operata sectæ  
hujus infestatio obstruit<sup>3</sup> viam defensionis: liceat  
veritati vel occulta via tacitarum litterarum ad

CAP.  
I.

You are  
persecuting  
you know  
not what,  
and what  
indeed such  
evidence as  
comes be-  
fore you  
proves to be  
unworthy  
of the treat-  
ment.

I. <sup>1</sup> *Antistites*. These are termed *præsides* afterwards, c. 9, and 50. *Licet* in this sentence means little more than *libet*, which I only mention because it has been referred to the compulsory injustice of the government, (c. 28, *imposita est vobis necessitas cogendi*), under the influence of dæmoniacal agency.

<sup>2</sup> *Si ad hanc*, &c. I think the construction of this rather intricate sentence is as follows: *si auct. vestr. timet aut er. inq. in publico de just. diligentia, ad hanc solam speciem*. *Ad* may thus mean either simply "with reference to," like *nihil ad hanc causam retractandum*, c. 25; or it may be used after *timet*, like *expavescere*

*ad lucem*, c. 39; *ad solitudinem*, c. 37. *pavere ad Christi mentionem*, Arnob. i. 13. *Species* in Tertullian is used for "case" or "subject," as de Orat. c. 1, *oportebat enim in hac quoque specie*, &c. but it probably signifies here *species criminis*, as de Idol. c. 1, *suam speciem tenet unumquodque delictum*. So that the sense will be, "If with regard to this charge only of all others, (i. e. Christianity), you are either ashamed or afraid to enquire publicly into the due administration of justice."

<sup>3</sup> *Obstruere viam*. This phrase, like *obstruere gradum*, (de Virg. Vel. c. 15; de præ. Hæc. c. 15), is equivalent to *impedimento esse*.