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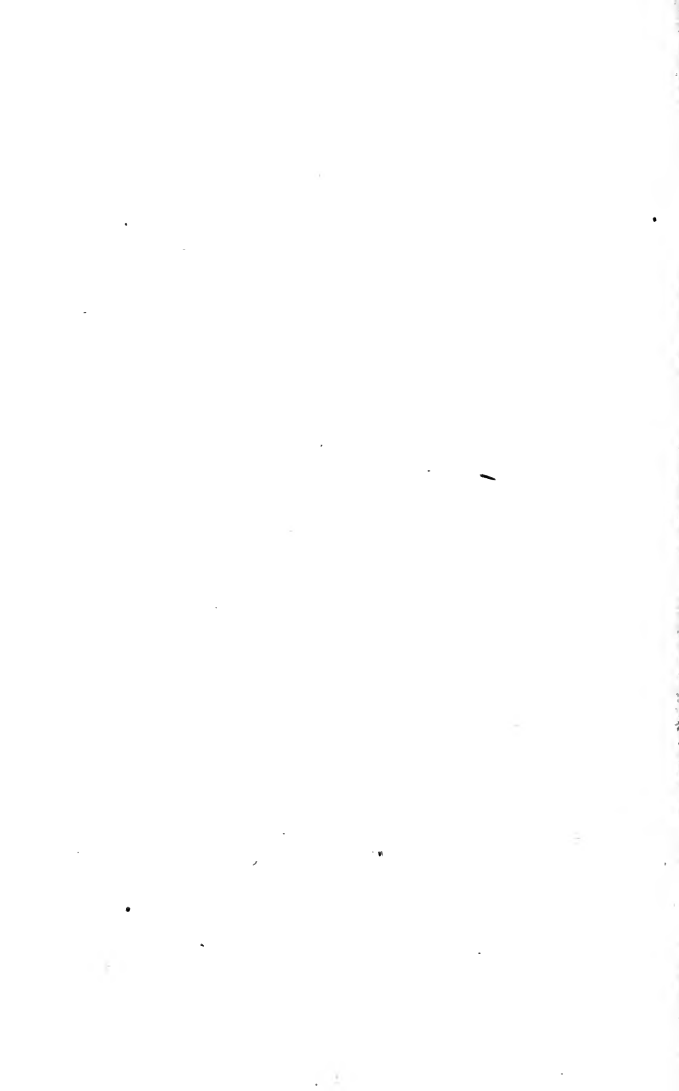


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AN

APPEAL

TO

MATTER OF FACT AND COMMON SENSE:

OR,

A RATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

OF

MAN'S CORRUPT AND LOST ESTATE,

BY J. FLETCHER.

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—LUKE XIX. 10.

NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY DAVID EDWARDS.

DAYTON, O.

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INTRODUCTION TO REVISED EDITION.

Of all the writers who have taken part in the great "conflict of ages" on the question of human depravity, none have excelled *John Fletcher* in plainness and simplicity of style and force of argument. His "Appeal to Matter of Fact" has never been answered. Thousands have been rescued by it from the various labyrinths of the Pelagian heresy and led to embrace the doctrine of man's native depravity. This little volume has been in circulation for nearly a century, and it is as popular now as when it was first presented to the public. It is one of the few productions which, like "Paradise Lost" and "Pilgrim's Progress" is destined to live and exert a powerful influence long after the immediate causes which gave rise to it have been forgotten.

To those who are acquainted with this work and appreciate the sentiments advocated by it, no apology is needed for presenting to the public a new and revised edition. No change has been attempted in the author's style or arrangement, nor have his sentiments been altered. Some matter which did not strengthen the argument nor bear particularly upon the main design of the work has been left out. The most important omissions

were, the arguments from the ritual of the Church of England, to which Mr. Fletcher belonged, and a digression on the evidences of the truth of the Bible. As now presented, it is a plain, straight-forward, and it might be added, unanswerable treatise upon man's fallen state.

The doctrine discussed in these pages should not be viewed as a merely speculative sentiment for the trial of the skill of theologians ; it is of the utmost *practical* importance to the cause of religion, as the following brief remarks will show :

A denial of the doctrine of man's total depravity prepares the way for almost all other gross errors. Wrong views upon this subject almost inevitably lead to wrong views upon other truths of vital importance to the Christian system. Hence nearly all classes of errorists that are fundamentally and practically wrong on other points, deny the doctrine advocated in these pages. I refer particularly to such as are skeptical in reference to the Bible, the new birth, or the agency of the Holy Spirit in man's salvation. Deists, Universalists, Disciples, [or Campbellites] and the various classes of Unitarians deny, in whole or in part, the natural corruptions of the human heart ; while on the other hand, it has always been a leading sentiment in the creeds of those bodies of christians most distinguished for their usefulness in turning men from darkness to light and from sin to holiness. To this there may be exceptions ; some persons

A good hearts who were unsound on the doctrine of human depravity may have been to some extent useful ; and some churches of note that have held this doctrine, have embraced errors, and by sinful alliances lost their power to accomplish good. But this by no means destroys the position here assumed, viz., that those persons most distinguished in history as great religious reformers, and those churches which have been known as the most evangelical in spirit and practice, have held the doctrine of man's complete depravity as a fundamental principle. This may be set down as an argument for the truth of the doctrine in question, as well as an evidence of its practical importance in preserving the mind from dangerous errors.

Our appreciation of the richness and abundance of the grace of Christ depends very much upon the views we entertain of man's lost estate. If he is but partially fallen, or, what amounts to the same thing, has been *really* restored ages before he was born, he needs the less grace to save him. His dependence on Christ for salvation can not be greater than the consciousness of his necessities. If he is totally fallen he needs a complete Savior. So far is this doctrine from undervaluing the grace of Christ in the atonement, that it magnifies it. None exalt Jesus more than those who advocate this sentiment ; none cleave to him more closely, nor trust him more unwaveringly than those who admit that they

have no moral strength or goodness of their own. The very fact of their deeply fallen state induces them, as by a moral necessity, to cast all their cares and burdens upon him. Finding no help in themselves, they turn to the cross as the only hope of a lost world, saying, penitently and believingly,

“ ’Tis all my hope and all my plea,
For me the Savior died.”

Their practical creed on this point may be summed up in two brief sentences—“ without Christ we can *do nothing*,—but with him we can *do all things*.” They sing the God-honoring song of grace, *grace*, GRACE! at every step of progress in the work of their salvation, from its first foundation to the topstone.

This doctrine has an important bearing upon personal experience. No person can seriously seek for that which is already in his possession ; no one will seek for a degree of holiness which he is not conscious of needing. Therefore, in proportion to the degree of moral strength and holiness he possesses by nature will be his efforts for purifying grace. New discoveries of the depravity of the heart both *precede* and *follow* every advance step in true holiness. A sight of our natural corruptions will lead the soul to unite with the Psalmist in his fervent supplications for a clean heart and a right spirit ; and then again, the new light which is reflected back upon the heart from the divine holiness as we ap-

proach nearer the throne, brings to view hitherto unseen forms of refined selfishness,—which in their turn show the necessity of another, and another approach to the fountain that cleanses from all sin. In this way those who see and deplore their inbred corruptions are led forward from step to step ; while those who deny the natural inherent corruption of their nature are generally satisfied with the forgiveness of sins, without subsequently seeking to be cleansed from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit,—for the very good reason that they acknowledge no such pollution.

The character of revivals is also much affected by the doctrine of depravity. That preaching which either discards man's total helplessness and corruption, or places it in the back ground as an unimportant sentiment, will produce but superficial results. The more thoroughly the hearts of sinners are probed and searched by the humiliating truth, that they are entirely undone and altogether filthy, the more deep and thorough will their repentance and conversion be, and consequently, the more lasting the fruits of revivals. It is owing to the want of such preaching that many of the converts of modern revival efforts are so sickly and short-lived. We need more of the searching, apostolic preaching of olden times, to lay open the hearts and arouse the sleeping consciences of sinners. Men must be made to see their depravity, the deceit and desperate wickedness of their

hearts before they will cry out as they did under the pungent preaching of the apostles, "Men and Brethren, what shall we do?" A proper presentation of the plain truths contained in this "Appeal" would produce similar results in this age.

The doctrine of the fall of man has been fruitful in controversies. Good men have differed widely as to the extent and degree of man's depravity. And it is to be sincerely regretted, that some have given too much evidence of the existence in their own hearts of the very evil about which they were disputing. In numerous instances, charity has been lost, confidence destroyed, and the Church of Christ made to suffer, while satan has gained a victory over both parties. O for the tears of a Jeremiah, to weep day and night over the desolations of Zion in consequence of the bitterness and selfishness of her theological wranglers!

The differences of opinion among the true followers of Christ upon this subject is often more seeming than real. And those which do exist are more frequently on impractical, speculative points than upon the doctrine itself as a fact of revelation and every day observation. Brethren aiming at the same thing should exercise charity and toleration toward each other.

Yet there might be cases where toleration would not be a virtue. If a brother or a church hold fundamentally wrong views, such as lead to sin or prevent salvation,

such brother or church should not be fellowshipped. But it is wrong to divide or distract the body of Christ for a useless abstraction, hatched in the brain of some would-be champion of orthodoxy. The writer would earnestly recommend to those persons or societies that may be troubled with harrassing controversies upon this subject, to agree to exercise Christian tolerance toward one another on all matters of opinion which do not vitally affect man's salvation. For instance; let those who believe that all who arrive to years of understanding are so depraved, that a new spiritual birth is absolutely necessary as a condition of entering the kingdom of heaven, be considered *substantially* and *practically orthodox*, whatever their views may be in reference to the kind and degree of depravation that belongs to infants. God will take care of them—let us labor earnestly and unitedly to save those who are old enough to understand the declaration of the bible—“*except ye repent ye shall all perish.*” Let every one be more anxious to save souls than to conquer an opponent, or propagate a favorite theory, and all these little speculative differences will soon be forgotten. The Spirit of Christ will descend upon us, and melt our hearts with his love; and then, when *filled* with the Spirit that indited the Scriptures, we shall find no difficulty in seeing eye to eye on all the great truths that are of vital interest to the souls of men. That this period may be hastened is the sincere prayer of the editor of this revised edition.



AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.

IN religious matters we easily run into extremes. Nothing is more common than to see people embracing one error, under the plausible pretense of avoiding another.

Many, through fear of infidelity, during the night of ignorance, and storm of passion, run against the wild rocks of superstition and enthusiasm; and frequently do it with such force, that they *make shipwreck of the faith*, and have little of *godliness* left, except a few broken pieces of its *form*.

Numbers, to shun that fatal error, steer quite a contrary course; supposing themselves guided by the compass of reason, when they only follow that of prejudice; with equal violence they dash their speculative brains against the opposite rocks of Deism and profaneness; and fondly congratulate themselves on escaping the shelves of fanaticism, while the leaky bark of their hopes is ready to sink, and that of their morals is, perhaps, sunk already. Thus, both equally overlook sober, rational, heart-felt piety, that lies between those wide and dangerous extremes.

To point out the happy medium which they have missed, and call them back to the narrow path where reason and revelation walk hand in hand, is the design of these sheets. May the *Father of lights* so shine upon the reader's mind,

that he may clearly discover Truth, and, notwithstanding the severity of her aspect, prefer her to the most soothing error!

If he is one of those who affect to be the warm votaries of reason, he is entreated to be a *close thinker*, as well as a *free thinker*; and with careful attention to consider reason's dictates, before he concludes that they agree with his favorite sentiments. He has, no doubt, too much candor not to grant so equitable a request; too much justice to set aside *matter of fact*; and too much good sense to disregard *an appeal to common sense*.

Should he incline to the opposite extreme, and cry down our rational powers, he is desired to remember, *right reason*, which is that I appeal to, is a ray of *the light that enlightens every man that comes into the world*, and a beam of the eternal *Logos*, the glorious *Sun of righteousness*.

God, far from blaming a proper use of the noble faculty by which we are chiefly distinguished from brutes, graciously invites us to the exercise of it: *Come now*, says he, *and let us reason together*. Jesus commends the unjust steward, for reasoning better upon his wrong, than the children of light upon their right principles. Samuel desires the Israelites to stand still, that he may REASON with them before the Lord. St Peter charges believers to give an answer to every one that asketh them a REASON of their hope. And St. Paul, who reasoned so conclusively himself, intimates that *wicked men are UNREASONABLE*; and declares that a total dedication of ourselves to God, is *our REASONA-*

BLE service; and, while he challenges the vain *disputers of this world*, who would make jests pass for proofs, invectives for arguments, and sophistry for reason, he charges Titus to use, not merely *sound speech*, but as the original also means, **SOUND REASON**, *that he who is of the contrary part may be ashamed.*

Let us, then, following his advice and example, pay a due regard both to reason and revelation; so shall we, according to his candid direction, break the shackles of prejudice, *prove all things*, and, by Divine grace, *hold fast that which is good.*

AN APPEAL TO MATTER OF FACT.

FIRST PART.

IN every religion there is a principal truth or error, which, like the first link of a chain, necessarily draws after it all the parts with which it is essentially connected. This leading principle, in Christianity, distinguished from Deism, is the doctrine of our corrupt and lost estate; for if man is not at variance with his Creator, what need of a Mediator between God and him? If he is not a depraved, undone creature, what necessity of so wonderful a Restorer and Savior as the Son of God? If he is not enslaved to sin, why is he redeemed by Jesus Christ? If he is not polluted, why must he be washed in the blood of that immaculate Lamb? If his soul is not disordered, what occasion is there for such a divine Physician? If he is not helpless and miserable, why is he perpetually invited to secure the assistance and consolations of the Holy Spirit? And, in a word, if he is not born in sin, why is a new birth so absolutely necessary, that Christ declares, with the most

solemn asseverations, without it no man can see the kingdom of God?

This doctrine then being of such importance, that genuine Christianity stands or falls with it, it may be proper to state it at large; and as this can not be done in stronger and plainer words than those of the sacred writers, I beg leave to collect them and present the reader with a picture of our natural estate, drawn at full length by those ancient and masterly hands.

I. Moses, who informs us that God created man in his own image, and after his likeness, soon casts a shade upon his original dignity, by giving us a sad account of his fall. He represents him after his disobedience as a criminal under sentence of death; a wretch filled with guilt, shame, dread, and horror; and a vagabond, turned out of a lost paradise into a cursed wilderness, where all bears the stamp of desolation for his sake. Gen. iii. 17. In consequence of this apostasy he died, and all die in him; for by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned in him, who was all mankind seminally and federally collected in one individual. 1 Cor. xv. 22; Rom. v. 12.

The sacred historian, having informed us how the first man was corrupted, observes that he begat a son in his own image, sin-

ful and mortal like himself; that his first-born was a murderer; that Abel himself offered sacrifices to avert Divine wrath, and that the violent temper of Cain soon broke out in all the human species. The earth, says he, was filled with violence, all flesh had corrupted its way—and God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, so great, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, continually. *Only* evil, without any mixture of good; and *continually*, without any intermission of the evil. Gen. vi. 5.

When the Deluge was over, the Lord himself gave the same account of his obstinately rebellious creature. The imagination of man's heart, said he to Noah, is evil from his youth. Genesis viii. 21. Job's friends paint us with the same colors; one of them observes, that man is born like the wild ass's colt, and another, that he is abominable and filthy, and drinks iniquity like water. Job xi. 12, and xv. 16.

David doth not alter the hideous portrait; the Lord, says he, looked down from heaven upon the children of men; to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. And the result of the Divine inspection is, they are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Psalm xiv. 2. Solomon gives a finishing stroke to his father's draught, by

informing us, that foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; and not of a child only, for he adds, The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and while they live, madness is in their heart. Prov. xxii. 15; Eccl. ix. 3.

Isaiah corroborates the assertions of the royal prophets, in the following mournful confession: All we, like sheep, have gone astray—we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Isa. liii. 6, and lxiv. 6.

Jeremiah confirms the deplorable truth, where he says: The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the tables of their hearts; O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved; for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Jer. iv. 14, and xvii. 1, 9.

Thus the prophets delineate mankind in a natural, impenitent state. And do the apostles dip their pencil in brighter colors? Let them speak for themselves. The chief of them informs us, that the natural, unrenewed man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, and that they are foolishness to him. 1 Cor. ii. 14. And he lays it down as matter of fact, that the carnal mind, the taste and disposition of every unregenerate person, is not only averse to goodness, but

enmity itself against God, the adorable fountain of all excellence. A blacker line can hardly be drawn to describe a fallen, diabolical nature. Rom. viii. 7.

Various are the names which the apostle of the Gentiles gives to our original corruption; and they are all expressive of its pernicious nature and dreadful effects. He calls it emphatically sin, a sin so full of activity and energy, that it is the life and spring of all others; indwelling sin, a sin which is not like the leaves and fruit of a bad tree, that appear for a time, and then drop off; but like the sap that dwells and works within, always ready to break out at every bud; the body of sin, because it is an assemblage of all possible sins in embryo, as our body is an assemblage of all the members which constitute the human frame; the law of sin, and the law in our members, because it hath a constraining force, and rules in our mortal bodies, as a mighty tyrant in the kingdom which he hath usurped; the old man, because we have it from the first man Adam, and because it is as old as the first stamina of our frame, with which it is most closely interwoven; the flesh, as being propagated by carnal generation, and always opposing the Spirit, the gracious principle, which we have from Adam the second; and concupiscence, the mystic Jezebel, who brings forth the infi-

nite variety of fleshly, worldly, and mental lusts, which war against the soul.

Nor are St. James and St. John less severe than St. Paul upon the unconverted man. The one observes, that his wisdom, the best property naturally belonging to him, descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish; and the other positively declares, that the whole world lieth in wickedness. James iii. 15; 1 John v. 19.

Our Lord, whose Spirit inspired the prophets and apostles, confirms their lamentable testimony. To make us seriously consider sin, our mortal disease, he reminds us that the whole have have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. Luke v. 31. He declares, that men love darkness rather than light. That the world hates him; and that its works are evil. John iii. 19, xv. 18, vii. 7. He directs all to pray for the pardon of sin, as being evil, and owing ten thousand talents to their heavenly Creditor. Matt. vi. 12, viii. 11, xviii. 24. And he assures us, that the things which defile the man come from within; and that out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness, and, in a word, *all moral evil*. Mark vii. 21; Matt. xv. 19.

Some indeed confine what the Scriptures say of the depravity of the human heart, to the abandoned heathens and persecuting Jews; as if the professors of morality and Christianity were not concerned in the dreadful charge. But if the apostolic writings affirm that Christ came not to call the righteous, but *sinner*s, that he died for the *ungodly*, and that he suffered, the just for the *unjust*, it is plain that, unless he did not suffer and die for moral men and Christians, they are by nature sinners, ungodly, and unjust as the rest of mankind. Rom. v. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 18.

If this assertion seems severe, let some of the best men that ever lived decide the point, not by the experience of immoral persons, but by their own. I abhor myself, says Job, and repent in dust and ashes. Job xlii. 6. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, says David, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Psalm li. 5. Woe is me, for I am undone, says Isaiah, because I am a man of unclean lips. Isa. vi. 5. I know, says St. Paul, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. Rom. vii. 18. We ourselves, says he to Titus, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. Tit. iii. 3. And speaking of himself and the Christians at Ephesus, he leaves upon

record this memorable sentence. We were *by nature* the children of wrath, even as others. Eph. ii. 3. Such humbling thoughts have the best of men entertained, both of their natural estate and themselves.

But as no one is a more proper person to appeal to, in this matter, than this learned apostle, who, by continually conversing with Jews, heathens, and Christians, in his travels, had such an opportunity of knowing mankind; let us hear him sum up the suffrages of his inspired brethren. What, then, says he, are we better than they? Better than the immoral Pagans and hypocritical Jews, described in the two preceding chapters? No, in nowise. And he proves it by observing: 1. The *universality* of human corruption; *all* are under sin, as it is written, there is *none* righteous, no, not *one*. 2. The *extent* of it in individuals, as it affects the whole man, especially his mind; there is none that understandeth the things of God. His affections, there is none that seeketh after God. And his actions, they are all gone out of the way of duty. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. For all have their conversation in the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. 3. The *outbreakings* of this corruption through all the parts of the body. Their throat, their lips, their mouth, their feet, their eyes, and all their members, are together become un-

profitable, and instruments of unrighteousness. As for their tongue, says St. James, it is a world of iniquity, it defileth the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell. And lastly, its *malignity* and *virulence*: it is loathsome as an open sepulcher, terrible as one who runs to shed blood, and mortal as the poison of asps.

From the whole, speaking of all mankind, in their unregenerate state, he justly infers that destruction and misery are in their ways. And, lest the self-righteous should flatter themselves, that this alarming declaration doth not regard them, he adds, that the Scriptures conclude *all* under sin; that there is no difference, for *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and that the moral law denounces a general curse against its violators, that every *mouth* may be stopped, and *all the world* may become guilty before God. Rom. iii. 9-23, vi. 19; Eph. ii. 2.

If man is thus corrupt and guilty, he must be liable to condign punishment. Therefore, as the prophets and apostles agree with our Lord in their dismal descriptions of his depravity, so they harmonize with him in their alarming accounts of his danger. Till he flies to the Redeemer as a condemned malefactor, and secures an interest in the salvation provided for the

lost, they represent him as on the brink of ruin.

They inform us that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, not only against some atrocious crimes, but against *all* unrighteousness of men. Rom. i. 18. That *every* transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward. Heb. ii. 2. That the soul that sinneth shall die, because the wages of sin is death. Ezek. xviii. 4; Romans vi. 23. They declare, that they are cursed, who do err from God's commandments; that cursed is the man whose heart departeth from the Lord; that cursed is every one who continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them; that whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all; and that, as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law. Psalm cxix. 21; Jer. xvii, 5; Gal iii. 10; James ii. 10; Rom. ii. 12.

They entreat us to turn, lest we should be found with the many in the broad way to destruction, Ezek. xviii. 23; Matt. vii. 13. They affectionately inform us, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; that our God is a consuming fire to the unregenerate; that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, hang over every soul of man who doeth evil; that the Lord shall be revealed from heaven in

flaming fire, to take vengeance on them who know him not, and obey not the Gospel; that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God; that they shall be punished with eternal destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; and that they all shall be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. Heb. x. 31, xii. 29; Rom. ii. 9; Thess. i. 8, ii. 12; Psalm ix. 17.

Nor does our Lord, who is both the fountain and pattern of true charity, speak a differnt language. He bids us fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Luke xii. 5. He solemnly charges us to oppose corrupt nature with the utmost resolution, lest we be cast into hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, Mark ix. 43. With tenderness he informs us, that whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool! shall be in danger of hell fire; that not only the wicked, but the unprofitable servant, shall be cast into outer darkness, where will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; and that he himself, far from conniving at sin, will fix the doom of all impenitent sinners by this dreadful sentence: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. v. 22, xxv. 30, 41.

SECOND PART.

As no man is bound to believe what is contrary to common sense; if the above stated doctrine appear irrational, the Scriptures are quoted in vain: when men of parts are pressed with their authority, they start from it as an imposition on their reason, and make as honorable a retreat as they possibly can.

Some, to extricate themselves at once, set the Bible aside, as full of incredible assertions. Others, with more modesty, plead that the Scriptures have been frequently misunderstood, and are so in the present case. They put grammar, criticism, and common sense to the rack, to show, that when the inspired writers say the human heart is desperately wicked, they mean that it is extremely good; or at least like blank paper, ready to receive either the characters of virtue or of vice.

That such objectors may subscribe as a solemn truth, what they have hitherto rejected as a dangerous error, and that humble sinners may see the propriety of a heartfelt repentance, and the absolute need of an almighty Redeemer, they are here presented with some proofs of our depravity, taken from the astonishing severity of God's dispensations toward mankind.

AXIOM.

If we consider the supreme Being as creating a world for the manifestation of his glory, the display of his perfections, and the communication of his happiness to an intelligent creature, whom he would attach to himself by the strongest ties of gratitude and love, we at once perceive that he never could form this earth and man in their present disordered, deplorable condition. It is not so absurd to suppose the meridian sun productive of darkness, as to imagine that infinite goodness ever produced any kind or degree of evil.

Infinite holiness and wisdom having assisted infinite goodness to draw the original plan of the world, it could not but be entirely worthy of its glorious Author absolutely free from every moral defilement and natural disorder; nor could infinite power possibly be at a loss to execute what the other divine attributes had contrived. Therefore, unless we embrace the senseless opinion of the Materialists, who deny the being of a God, or admit the ridiculous creed of the Manichees, who adore two gods, the one the gracious author of all the good, and the other the mischievous principle of all the evil in the world, we must conclude with Moses, that everything which God made,

was at first very good ; or, in other words, that order and beauty, harmony and happiness, were stamped upon every part of the creation, and especially on man, the masterpiece of creating power, in this sublunary world. . On this axiom I raise my

FIRST ARGUMENT.

Does not the natural state of the earth cast a light upon the spiritual condition of its inhabitants? Amidst a thousand beauties, that indicate what it was when God pronounced it very good, and, as the original also imports, extremely beautiful ; amidst the elegant and grand ruins, which form the variety of our smiling landscapes and romantic prospects ; can an impartial inquirer help taking notice of a thousand striking proofs, that a multiplied curse rests upon this globe ; and that man who inhabits it, is now disgraced by the God of nature and providence ?

Here, deceitful morasses, or faithless quicksands, obstruct our way : there, miry, impassable roads, or inhospitable, sandy deserts, endanger our life. In one place we are stopped by stupendous chains of rocky mountains, broken into frightful precipices or hideous caverns : and in another, we meet with ruinous valleys, cut deep by torrents and waterfalls, whose tremendous roar stuns the astonished traveler. Many

of the hills are stony, rude, and waste; and most of the plains are covered over with strata of barren sand, stiff clay, or infertile gravel.

Thorns, thistles, and noxious weeds,* grow spontaneously everywhere, and yield a troublesome, never-failing crop: while the best soil, carefully plowed by the laborious husbandman, and sown with precious seed, frequently repays his expensive toil with light sheaves, or a blasted harvest.

Consider that immense part of the globe, which lies between the tropics; it is parched up by the scorching beams of the vertical sun: there, the tawny inhabitants fan themselves in vain: they pant, they melt, they faint on the sultry couch; and, like the birds of night, dare not appear abroad, till evening shades temper the insufferable blaze of day. View the frozen countries around the poles: in summer, the sun just glances upon them by his feeble, horizontal rays: in winter he totally deserts them, and they lie bound with rigorous frosts, and buried in

* Those who oppose the doctrine of the fall, say that "weeds have their use." I grant they are serviceable to thousands of poor people, who earn their bread by pulling the general nuisance out of our fields and gardens; but till our objectors have proved that thistles are more useful, and therefore grow more spontaneously, and multiply more abundantly, than corn, we shall discover the badness of their cause through the slightness of their objection.

continual night. There, the torpid inhabitants know neither harvest nor vintage; the ocean seems a boundless plain of ice, and the continent immense hills of snow.

The temperate zones are, indeed, blessed with milder climates; but even here, how irregular are the seasons! To go no farther than this favored island, what means the strange foresight, by which the ice of January is laid in to temper the ardors of July; and the burning mineral is stored in June, to mitigate the frost in December? But, notwithstanding these precautions, what continual complaints are heard about the intenseness of the heat, the severity of the cold, or the sudden pernicious change from the one to the other!

Let us descend to particulars. In winter, how often do drifts of snow bury the starved sheep, and entomb the frozen traveler! In summer, how frequently do dreadful storms of hail cut down, or incessant showers of rain wash away, the fruits of the earth! Perhaps, to complete the desolation, water pours down from all the neighboring hills; and the swelling streams, joining with overflowing rivers, cause sudden inundations, lay waste the richest pastures, and carry off the swimming flocks; while the frightened inhabitants* of the vale either retire to the top

* This was the case of several families in the author's parish, November, 1770.

of their deluged houses, or by timely assistance of boats, fly from the imminent and increasing danger.

If heaven seems to dissolve into water in one place, in another it is like brass; it yields neither fruitful rains nor cooling dews: the earth is like iron under it, and the perishing cattle loll out their parched tongues, where they once drank the refreshing stream. Suppose a few happy districts escape these dreadful scourges for a number of years, are they not at last visited with redoubled severity? And, while abused affluence vanishes as a dream before the intolerable dearth, do not a starving,* riotous populace, leave their wretched cottages, to plunder the houses of their wealthy neighbors, desperately venturing the gallows for a morsel of bread?

— When some, secure from the attacks of water, quietly enjoy the comforts of plenty, fire perhaps surprises them in an instant: they awake, involved in smoke, and surrounded by crackling flames, through which—if it is not too late—they fly naked at the hazard of their neck, and think themselves happy if, while they leave behind them young children or aged parents, burning in the blaze of all their goods, they escape

* This happened some years ago in this neighborhood.

themselves with dislocated joints or broken bones. Their piercing shrieks, and the fall of their house, seem to portend a general conflagration; loud confusion increases, disastrous ruin spreads; and perhaps, before they can be stopped, a street, a suburb, a whole city, is reduced to ashes.

Turn your imagination from the smoking ruins, to fix it upon the terrifying effects of the air, agitated into roaring tempests and boisterous hurricanes; before their impetuous blast the masts of ships and cedars of Lebanon are like broken reeds; men of war and solid buildings like the driven chaff. Here, they strip the groaning forests, tear the bosom of the earth, and obscure the sky with clouds of whirling sand: and there they plow up the liquid foaming plains, and, with sportive fury, turn up mountains for ridges, or cut valleys instead of furrows. As they pass along, the confounded elements dreadfully roar under the mighty scourge, the rolling sea tosses herself up to heaven, and the solid land is swept with the besom of destruction.

To heighten the horror of the scene, thunder, the majestic voice of an angry God, and the awful artillery of heaven, bursts into loud claps from the lowering sky. Distant hills reverberate and increase the alarming sound, and, with rocking edifices, declare to man that vengeance belongeth to

God. And, to enforce the solemn warning, repeated flashes of lightning, with horrible glare, dazzle his eyes, and with forked fires strike consternation into his breast, if they do not actually strike him dead in the midst of his shattered habitation.

Nor doth heaven alone dart destructive fires; earth—our mother earth—as if it were not enough frequently to corrupt the atmosphere by pestilential vapors, borrows the assistance of the devouring elements, to terrify and scourge her guilty children. By sudden frightful chasms, and the mouth of her burning mountains, she vomits clouds of smoke, sulphureous flames, and calcined rocks; she emits streams of melted minerals, covers the adjacent plains with boiling fiery lavas; and, as if she wanted to ease herself of the burden of her inhabitants, suddenly rises against them, and in battles of shaking, at once crushes, destroys, and buries them in heaps of ruins.

These astonishing scenes, like a bloody battle that is seen at a distance, may indeed entertain us. They may amuse our imagination, when in a peaceful apartment we behold them beautifully represented by the pen of a Virgil, or the pencil of a Raphael. But to be in the midst of them, as thousands are, sooner or later, is inexpressibly dreadful. It is actually to see the forerunner of Divine vengeance, and hear the shaking of

God's destructive rod. It is to behold at once a lively emblem and an awful pledge of that fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, which the righteous Governor of the world will rain upon the ungodly; when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth with the works that are therein, shall be burned up.

Now, as reason loudly declares that the God of order, justice and goodness could never establish and continue this fearful course of things, but to punish the disorders of the moral world by those of the natural, we must conclude that man is guilty, from the alarming tokens of Divine displeasure, which sooner or later are so conspicuous in every part of the habitable globe.

SECOND ARGUMENT.

We have taken a view of the residence of mankind: let us now behold them entering upon the disordered scene. And here reason informs us, that some mystery of iniquity lies hid under the loathsome, painful, and frequently mortal circumstances which accompany their birth. For it can never be imagined, that a righteous and good God would suffer innocent and pure creatures to come into the world skilled in no language but that of misery, venting itself in bitter cries of doleful accents.

It is a matter of fact, that infants generally return their first breath with a groan, and salute the light with the voice of sorrow: generally, I say, for sometimes they are born half dead, and can not, without the utmost difficulty, be brought to breathe and groan. But all are born at the hazard of their lives; for while some can not press into the land of the living, without being dangerously bruised, others have their tender bones dislocated. Some are almost strangled; and it is the horrible fate of others, to be forced into the world by instruments of torture; having their skull bored through or broken to pieces; or their quivering limbs cut or torn off from the unfortunate trunk. Again:

While some appear on the stage of life embarrassed with superfluous parts, others, unaccountably mutilated, want those which are necessary. And what is more terrible still, a few, whose hideous, misshapen bodies seem calculated to represent the deformity of a fallen soul, rank among frightful monsters; and to terminate the horror of the parents, are actually smothered and destroyed.

The spectators, it is true, concerned for the honor of mankind, frequently draw a veil over these shocking and bloody scenes; but a philosopher will find them out, and will rationally infer that the deplorable and

dangerous manner in which mankind are born, proves them to be degenerate fallen creatures.*

THIRD ARGUMENT.

If we let our thoughts ascend from the little sufferers, to the mothers that bear them, we shall find another dreadful proof of the Divine displeasure, and of our natural depravity. Does not a good master, much more a gracious God, delight in the prosperity and happiness of his faithful servants? If mankind were naturally in their Creator's favor, would he not order the fruit of the womb to drop from it without any more inconveniency than ripe vegetables fall from the opening husk, or full-grown fruit from the disburdened tree? But how widely different is the case!

Fix your attention on pregnant mothers:

* Logicians will excuse the author, if he prefers the common, unaffected manner of proposing his arguments, to the formal method of the schools. But they may easily try his enthymemes by giving them the form of syllogisms, thus:

I. Argument. If the rod of God is fearfully shaken over this globe, the disordered habitation of mankind, it is a sign they are under his displeasure.

But God's rod is fearfully shaken over this globe, etc
Therefore, mankind are under his displeasure.

II. Argument. A pure and innocent creature can not be born under such and such deplorable circumstances.

But man is born under such and such deplorable circumstances. Therefore man is not a pure and innocent creature.

see their disquietude and fears. Some go beforehand through an imaginary travail, almost as painful to the mind as the real labor is to the body. The dreaded hour comes at last. Good God! What lingering, what tearing pains: what redoubled throes, what killing agonies attend it! See the curse—or rather see it not. Let the daughter of her who tasted the forbidden fruit without the man, drink that bitter cup without him. Fly from the mournful scene, fly to distant apartments; but in vain, the din of sorrow pursues and overtakes you there.

A child of man is at the point of being born; his tortured mother proclaims the news in the bitterest accents. They increase with her increasing agony. Sympathize and pray while she suffers and groans, —perhaps while she suffers and dies—for it is possibly her dying groan that reaches your ear. Perhaps nature is spent in the hard travail; her son is born, and, with Jacob's wife, she closes her languid eyes and expires. Perhaps the instruments of death are upon her; the keen steel mangles her delicate frame; as Cæsar's mother, she generously suffers her body to be opened, that her unborn child may not be torn from her in pieces; and the fertile tree is unnaturally cut down, that its fruit may be safely gathered.

Perhaps neither mother nor child can be saved, and one grave is going to deprive a distracted mortal of a beloved Rachel, and a long-expected Benjamin. If this is the case, O earth, earth, earth, conceal these slain, cover their blood, and detain in thy dark bosom the fearful curse that brought them there. Vain wish! Too active to be confined in thy deepest vaults, it ranges through the world; with unrelenting fierceness it pursues trembling mothers and forces them to lift up their voice for speedy relief; though varied according to the accents of a hundred languages, it is the same voice—that of the bitterest anguish; and while it is reverberated from hamlet to hamlet, from city to city, it strikes the unprejudiced inquirer, and makes him confess, that these clouds of unbribed witnesses, by their loud, consentaneous evidence, impeach *Sin*, the tormentor of the woman and murderer of her offspring.

But suppose the case is not so fatal, and she is at last delivered; her labor may be over, yet not her pain and danger; a lingering weakness may carry her slowly to her grave. If she recovers, she may be a mother, and yet unable to act a mother's part. Her pining child sucks her disordered breast in vain; either the springs of his balmy food are dried up, or they overflow with a putrid, loathsome fluid, and excruciating ulcers

cause the soft lips of the infant to appear terrible as the edge of the sword.

If she happily escapes this common kind of distress, yet she may date the beginning of some chronical disease from her dangerous lying-in; and in consequence of her hard wrestling for the blessing of a child, may, with the patriarch, go halting all her days. How sensible are the marks of Divine indignation in all these scenes of sorrow! and consequently, how visible our sinfulness and guilt!

Nor can the justness of the inference be denied, under pretense that the females of other animals, which neither do nor can sin, bring forth their young with pain, as well as women. For, if we take a view of the whole earth, we shall not see any females, except the daughters of Eve, who groan under a periodical disorder that entails languor and pain, weakness and mortal diseases, on their most blooming days. Nor do we in general find any that are delivered of their offspring with half the sorrow and danger of women. These two remarkable circumstances loudly call upon us to look for the cause of the sorrow which attends the delivery of female animals, where that sorrow is most sensibly felt; and to admire the perfect agreement that subsists between the observations of natural philosophers, and the assertion of the most ancient historian. Gen. iii. 16.

FOURTH ARGUMENT.

If we advert to mankind, even before they burst the womb of their tortured mothers, they afford us a new proof of their total degeneracy. For reason dictates, that if they were not conceived in sin, the Father of mercies could not, consistently with his goodness and justice, command the cold hand of death to nip them in the unopened or just opened bud. This, nevertheless, happens every hour. Who can number the early miscarriages of the womb? How many millions of miserable embryos feel the pangs of death before those of birth, and preposterously turn the fruitful womb into a living grave? And how many millions more of wretched infants escape the dangers of their birth-day, and salute the troublesome light, only to take their untimely leave of it, after languishing a few days on the rack of a convulsive or torturing disorder? I ask again, would a good and righteous God seal the death-warrant of such multitudes of his unborn or newly-born creatures, if their natural depravity did not render them proper subjects of dissolution?

It is true, the young beasts suffer and die, as well as infants; but it is only because they are involved in our misery. They partake of it as the attendants of a noble trai-

tor share in his deserved ruin. Sin, that inconceivably virulent and powerful evil, drew down God's righteous curse upon all that was created for man's use, as well as upon man himself. Hence only springs the degeneracy and death that turn beasts to one promiscuous dust with mankind. Compare Gen. iii. 17; Rom. v. 12, viii. 22. We may then justly infer from the sufferings and death of still-born or new-born children, that man is totally degenerate, and liable to destruction even from his mother's womb.

FIFTH ARGUMENT.

But take your leave of the infant corpse, already buried in the womb, or deposited in a coffin of a span long; fix your attention on the healthy, sucking child. See him stupidly staring in his nurse's lap, or awkwardly passing through childhood to manhood. How visible is his degeneracy in every stage!

Part of the Divine image, in which he was made in Adam, consisted in purity, power, and knowledge; but now, he is naturally the least cleanly, as well as the most helpless and ignorant of all animals. Yes, if the reader could forgive the indelicacy of the assertion, for the sake of its truth, I would venture to show, that there is no comparison between the cleanliness of the little active animals which suck the filthy swine,

and of helpless infants, who suck the purer breasts of their tender mothers. But, casting a veil over the dribbling loathsome little creatures, without fear of being contradicted, I aver that the young of those brutes, which are stupid to a proverb, know their dams, and follow them as soon as they are dropped ; while infants are months without taking any particular notice of their parents, and without being able, I shall not say to follow them, but even to bear the weight of their swaddled body, or stand upon their tottering legs.

With reference to the knowledge necessary for the support of animal life, it is undeniable that brutes have greatly the advantage of mankind. Fowls and fishes, immediately, and with amazing sagacity, single out their proper nourishment, among a thousand useless and noxious things ; but infants put indifferently to their mouths all that comes to their hand, whether it be food or poison, a coral or a knife ; and what is more astonishing still, grown-up persons scarce ever attain to the knowledge of the quantity or quality of the meat and drink which are most suitable to their constitutions.

All disordered dogs fix at once upon the salutary vegetable that can—in some cases—relieve their distress ; but many physicians, even after several years' study and practice, hurt, and sometimes kill their pa-

tients, by improper medicines. Birds of passage, by mere instinct, find the north and south more readily than mariners by the compass. Untaught spiders weave their webs, and uninstructed bees make their combs to the greatest perfection; but fallen man must serve a tedious apprenticeship to learn his own business; and with all the help of masters, tools, and patterns, seldom proves an ingenious artist.

Again: other animals are provided with a natural covering, that answers the double end of usefulness and ornament; but indigent man is obliged to borrow from plants, beasts, and worms, the materials with which he hides his nakedness, or defends his feebleness; and a great part of his short life is spent in providing, or putting on and off garments, the gaudy tokens of his shame, or ragged badges of his fall.

Are not these plain proofs that man, who, according to his superior rank and primitive excellency, should in all things have the pre-eminence, is now a degraded being, cursed for his apostasy with native uncleanness, helplessness, ignorance, and nakedness, above all other animals?

SIXTH ARGUMENT.

Man's natural ignorance, great as it is, might, nevertheless, be overlooked, if he had but the right knowledge of his Creator. But

alas! the holy and righteous God judiciously withdraws himself from his unholy, apostate creature. Man is not properly acquainted with him in whom he lives, and moves, and hath his being. This humbling truth may be demonstrated by the following observations :

God is infinitely perfect; all the perfection which is found in the most exalted creatures, is but the reflection of the transcendent effulgence belonging to that glorious Sun of spiritual beauty; it is but the surface of the unfathomable depths of goodness and loveliness, which regenerate souls discover in that boundless ocean of all excellence. If, therefore, men saw God, they could far less help being struck with holy awe, overwhelmed with pleasing wonder, and ravished with delightful admiration, than a man born blind, and restored to sight in the blaze of a summer's day, could help being transported at the glory of the new and unexpected scene. Could we but see virtue in all her beauty, said a heathen, she would ravish our hearts.* How much greater would our ravishments be, if we were indulged with a clear, immediate discovery of the divine beauty—the eternal origin of all virtue—the exuberant fountain of all perfection and delight? But, alas! how few

* Si virtus conspiceretur oculis, mirabiles amores excitare, sui.—*Cic.*

thus behold, know, and admire God, may easily be seen by the impious or vain conduct of mankind.

If a multitude of men ingeniously confess they know not the king; if they take his statue or one of his attendants for him; or if they doubt whether there be a king, or sport with his name and laws in his presence, we reasonably conclude that they neither see nor know the royal person. And is not this the case of the superstitious, who, like the Athenians, worship an unknown God? Of idolaters, who bow to favorite mortals, or lifeless images, as to the true God? Of infidels, who doubt the very being of a God? And of open sinners, the bulk of mankind, who live every-where as if there was none?

Our natural ignorance of God manifests itself still more evidently by the confessions both of real and nominal Christians. The former, before they knew God, and were admitted to behold his glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ, bitterly complained as Isaiah, Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself; or mournfully asked with David, How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? It is plain, then, that by nature they were as others, without God (practical Atheists) in the world, and have as much reason as St. Paul to declare that the world by wisdom knew not God.

As for nominal Christians, though they daily pray that the fellowship of the Holy Ghost may be with us all, it is evident they are utter strangers to communion with God by his Holy Spirit. For if we affirm that he blesses his children with a spiritual discovery of his presence, and manifests himself to them as he doth not to the world, they say we are mad, or call us enthusiasts. This behavior shows, beyond all confessions, that they are totally unacquainted with the light of God's countenance; for what greater proof can a blind man give, that he has no knowledge of the sun, than to suspect his neighbor of lunacy for affirming that sunshine is a delightful reality?

From this moral demonstration of our natural ignorance of God, I draw the following conclusion: If the Lord, who is a mild and condescending King to all his loyal subjects, a Father full of endearing and tender love to all his dutiful children, hides his face from mankind in a natural state, and if what little they know of him is only by conjecture, hearsay, or inference,* it is a proof that they are under his displeasure; and, consequently, that they are rebellious, fallen creatures.

* This is the knowledge of God mentioned Rom. i, 21. It is sufficient to leave without excuse those who do not improve it, till they attain to the saving knowledge mentioned John xvii, 3; 1 John v, 20.

For, what but rebellion could thus separate between beings so nearly related as an infinitely gracious Creator and favorite creatures, whose soul is, according to a heathen, *divinæ particula auræ*, and, according to Moses, the very breath of God? We may then rationally conclude with the evangelical prophet, that our iniquities have separated between us and our God, and that our sins have hid his face from us, eclipsed the Sun of righteousness, and brought such darkness on our souls, that by nature we know neither what we are, nor what we should be: neither whence we come, nor whither we are going: neither the grand business we have to do, nor the danger that attends our leaving it undone.

SEVENTH ARGUMENT.

If by nature mankind know not the Lord to be their God, is it surprising that beasts should not know mankind to be their lords? Nevertheless, reason agrees with Scripture in maintaining that man, by far the noblest work of God here below, should, according to the reason and fitness of things, bear rule over all the sublunary creation. But, alas! even in this respect, how is the crown fallen from his head! Inferior animals have as little regard for him as he has for his God.

Notwithstanding his artful contrivances, greedy birds and mischievous beasts eat up,

trample down, or destroy part of the fruit of his rural labor. In warmer climes, armies of locusts, more terrible than hosts of men, frequently darken the air, or cover the ground, and equally mock at human power and craft. Wherever they light, all verdure disappears, and the summer's fruitfulness is turned into wintry desolation.

If locusts do not reach this happy island, caterpillars, and a variety of other seemingly insignificant, but really formidable insects, make a more constant, though less general, attack upon our trees and gardens. In vain are they destroyed by millions—they can not be fully conquered; and the yearly returning plague forces the considerate spectator to acknowledge the finger of a sin-avenging Providence.

Happy would it be for man if rebellious animals were satisfied with the produce of his fields and orchards; but, alas! they thirst after his blood, and attack his person. Lions, tigers, rattlesnakes, crocodiles, and sharks, whenever they have an opportunity, impetuously attack, furiously tear, and greedily devour him. And what is more astonishing, the basest reptiles are not afraid to breed in his stomach, to live in his very bowels, and to consume his inward parts; while swarms of flying, leaping, or creeping insects, too vile to be named—but not to humble a proud apostate—have the

insolence to fix upon his skin, and, by piercing or furrowing his flesh, suck his blood, and feast upon him from his cradle to his grave.

Domestic animals, it is true, do man excellent service; but is it not because he either forces or bribes them to it, by continual labor and expense, with which he breaks and maintains them? What business have multitudes of men, but to serve the drudges of mankind? What are smiths, farriers, farmers, servants, grooms, hostlers, etc., but the slaves of brutes—washing, currying, shoeing, feeding, and waiting upon them both by day and by night?

And yet, notwithstanding the prerogative granted to Noah's piety, Gen. ix, 2, and the care taken of domestic animals, do they not rebel as often as they dare? Here sheep, deemed the quietest of all, run astray, or break into the fields of a litigious neighbor: there, the furious bull pursues and gores, or the raging dog sets upon the inoffensive traveler. To-day you read that an impetuous, foaming steed, hath hurried away, thrown off, and dragged along his unfortunate master, whose blood, sprinkling the dust, and brains dashed upon the stones, direct the search of his disconsolate friend: and to-morrow, you may hear that a vicious horse has darted his iron-fenced hoof into

his attendant's breast or forehead, and has lamed or killed him on the spot.

And would the wise Governor of the world, the kind protector of his obedient creatures, permit this rebellion, even of the tamest animals and basest vermin, against man, if man himself was not a daring rebel against him?

EIGHTH ARGUMENT.

That a contemptible insect should dare to set upon, and be able to devour a proud monarch, a Herod in the midst of his guards, is terrible: but the mischief stops not here. Numerous tribes of other base animals are armed with poisonous tongues or stings, and use them against mankind with peculiar rage. To say nothing of mad dogs, have not asps, vipers,* tarantulas, scorpions, and other venomous serpents and insects, the destructive skill of extracting the quintessence of the curse which sin, our moral poison, hath brought upon the earth? When we come within their reach, do they not bite or sting us with the utmost fury? and, by infusing their subtile venom in our blood, spread they not anguish and destruction through our agonizing frame? An-

* Some will say that viper's flesh is useful in physic. I grant it, but is the poison of that creature useful? This must be proved before the argument can be invalidated.

swer, ye thousands who died in the wilderness of the bite of fiery serpents; and ye multitudes, who, in almost all countries, have shared their deplorable fate.

Let us descend to the vegetable world. How many deceitful roots, plants, and fruits, deposit their pernicious juices in the stomach of those who unwarily feed upon them? Did not Elisha and the sons of the prophets narrowly escape being poisoned altogether, by one of them fatally mistaking a pot-herb? And do not many go quickly or slowly to their grave by such melancholy accidents?

Minerals and metals are not the last to enter into the general conspiracy against mankind. Under inoffensive appearances, do they not contain what is destructive to the animal frame? And have not many fallen a sacrifice to their ignorance of the mischief lurking in arsenic, and other mineral productions? * Nor are metallic effluvia less hurtful to hundreds; and the health of mankind is, perhaps, more injured by copper alone, than it is preserved by all the mineral waters in the world. It is acknowledged that numbers are poisoned by food

* It is objected that excellent remedies are prepared with antimony and mercury. But it is well known that the persons who use them only expel one poison with another; as the decayed constitutions of those who have frequent recourse to such violent medicines abundantly prove.

prepared in utensils made of that dangerous metal; and how many are insensibly hurt by the same means, is only known to a wise and righteous Providence.

Thus, God leaves us in the world, where mischief lurks under a variety of things apparently useful without giving us the least intimation of destruction near. To say that infinite goodness can deal thus with innocent creatures, is offering violence to our reason, and an affront to Divine justice. Conclude, then, with me, reader, that we have lost our original innocence, and forfeited our Creator's favor.

NINTH ARGUMENT.

But if the generality of mankind escape all the various sorts of poison, do they escape the curse of toil and sweat? And is not a great majority of them reduced to such sordid want, and pressing necessity, as to be obliged to do the greatest drudgery for a wretched maintenance?

When God made them to have dominion over the works of his hands—when he put all things in subjection under their feet, and crowned them with glory and honor, they filled up each happy hour in evidencing their love to him and to each other; they spent their golden moments in admiring the variety and beauty of his works, finding out the divine signature impressed

upon them, swaying their mild scepter over the obedient creation, and enjoying the rich, incorruptible fruits, which the earth spontaneously produced in the greatest perfection and abundance. Thus their pleasure was without idleness or pain, and their employment without toil or weariness.

But no sooner did disobedience open the floodgates of natural evil, than arduous labor came in full tide upon mankind; and a thousand painful arts were invented to mitigate the manifold curses which sin had brought upon them.

Since the fall, our bodies have become vulnerable and shamefully naked: and it is the business of thousands to make, or sell, all sorts of garments for our defense and ornament. The earth has lost her original fertility; and thousands more with iron instruments open her bosom to force her to yield us a maintenance; or with immense labor secure her precarious, decaying fruits. Immoderate rains deprive her of her solidity, and earthquakes or deluges destroy her evenness; numbers, therefore, are painfully employed in making or mending roads.— Each country affords some only of the necessaries or conveniences of life; this obliges the mercantile inhabitants to transport, with immense trouble and danger, the produce of one place to supply the wants of another. We are exposed to a variety of dangers;

our persons and property must be secured against the inclemency of the weather, the attacks of evil beasts, and assaults of wicked men; hence the fatigue of millions of workmen in wood and stone, metals and minerals; and the toils and hazards of millions more who live by making, wearing, or using the various instruments of war and slaughter.

Disorder and injustice give rise to government, politics, and a labyrinth of laws; and those employ myriads of officers, lawyers, magistrates, and rulers. We are subject to a thousand pains and maladies; hence myriads more prescribe and prepare remedies, or attend and nurse the sick. Our universal ignorance occasions the tedious labor of giving and receiving instruction in all the branches of human and Divine knowledge. And to complete the whole, the original tongue of mankind is confounded, and even neighboring nations are barbarians to each other; from hence arise the painful lucubrations of critics and linguists, with the infinite trouble of teaching and learning various languages.

The curse introduced by sin is the occasion of all these toils. They are soon mentioned; but, alas! how long, how grievous do they appear to those that feel their severity? How many sighs have they forced from the breasts, how much sweat from the

bodies of mankind? Unite the former, a tempest might ensue; collect the latter, it would swell into rivers.

To go no farther than this populous parish, with what hardships and dangers do our indigent neighbors earn their bread! See those who ransack the bowels of the earth to get the black mineral we burn; how little is their lot preferable to that of the Spanish felons who work the golden mines?

They take their leave of the light of the sun, and, suspended by a rope, are let down many fathoms perpendicularly toward the center of the globe; they traverse the rocks through which they have dug their horizontal ways; the murderer's cell is a palace in comparison of the black spot to which they repair; the vagrant's posture in the stocks is preferable to that in which they labor.

Form, if you can, an idea of the misery of men kneeling, stooping, or lying on one side, to toil all day in a confined place, where a child could hardly stand; while a younger company, with their hands and feet on the black, dusty ground, and a chain about their body, creep and drag along, like four-footed beasts, heavy loads of the dirty mineral, through ways almost impassable to the curious observer.

In these low and dreary vaults all the elements seem combined against them.—

Destructive damps, and clouds of noxious dust infect the air they breathe. Sometimes water incessantly distills on their naked bodies; or bursting upon them in streams, drowns them and deluges their work. At other times, pieces of detached rocks crush them to death, or the earth, breaking in upon them, buries them alive. And frequently sulphureous vapors, kindled in an instant by the light of their candles, form subterraneous thunder and lightning. What a dreadful phenomenon! how impetuous is the blast! how fierce the rolling flames! how intolerable the noisome smell! how dreadful the continued roar! how violent and fatal the explosion!

Wonderful Providence! some of the unhappy men have time to prostrate themselves—the fiery scourge grazes their backs, the ground shields their breasts; they escape. See them wound up out of the blazing dungeon, and say if these are not brands plucked out of the fire. A pestiferous steam, and clouds of suffocating smoke pursue them. Half dead themselves, they hold their dead or dying companions in their trembling arms. Merciful God of Shadrach! Kind Protector of Meshech!—Mighty Deliverer of Abednego! Patient Preserver of rebellious Jonah! Will not these utter a song—a song of praise to thee—praise, ardent as the flames they es-

cape—lasting as the life thou prolongest!—alas! they refuse! and some—O, tell it not among the heathens, lest they forever abhor the name of Christian—some return to the very pits, where they have been branded with sulphureous fire by the warning hand of Providence; and there, sporting themselves again with the most infernal wishes, call aloud for a fire that can not be quenched, and challenge the Almighty to cast them into hell, that bottomless pit whence there is no return.

Leave these black men at their perilous work, and see yonder bargemen hauling that loaded vessel against wind and stream. Since the dawn of the day, they have wrestled with the impetuous current; and now that it almost overpowers them, how do they exert all their remaining strength, and strain their every nerve! how are they bathed in sweat and rain! Fastened to their lines as horses to their traces, wherein do they differ from the laborious brutes?—Not in an erect posture of body, for in the intenseness of their toil they bend forward, their head is foremost, and their hands upon the ground. If there is any difference, it consists in this: horses are indulged with a collar to save their breasts; and these, as if theirs were not worth saving, draw without one; the beasts tug in patience, silence, and mutual harmony; but the men with

loud contention and horrible imprecations. O, sin, what hast thou done! is it not enough that these drudges should toil like brutes; must they also curse one another like devils?

If you have gone beyond the hearing of their impious oaths, stop to consider the sons of Vulcan confined to these forges and furnaces. Is their lot much preferable? a sultry air, and clouds of smoke and dust, are the element in which they labor. The confused noise of water falling, steam hissing, fire-engines working, wheels turning, fires creaking, hammers beating, ore bursting, and bellows roaring, form the dismal concert that strikes the ears, while a continual eruption of flames, ascending from the mouth of their artificial volcanoes, dazzle their eyes with a horrible glare. Massy bars of hot iron are the heavy tools they handle, cylinders of the first magnitude the enormous weights they heave, vessels full of melted metal the dangerous loads they carry; streams of the same burning fluid the fiery rivers which they conduct into the deep cavities of their subterraneous molds; and millions of flying sparks, with a thousand drops of liquid hissing iron, the horrible showers to which they are exposed.— See them cast; you would think them in a bath, and not in a furnace; they bedew the burning sand with their streaming sweat;

nor are their wet garments dried up, either by the fierce fires that they attend, or the fiery streams which they manage. Certainly, of all men, these have reason to remember the just sentence of an offended God: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread all the days of thy life.

All, indeed, do not go through the same toil; but all have their share of it, either in body or in mind. Behold the studious son of learning; his intense application hath wasted his flesh, exhausted his spirits, and almost dried up his radical moisture. Consider the man of fortune; can his thousands a year exempt him from the curse of Adam? No: he toils perhaps harder in his sports and debaucheries, than the poor plowman that works his estate.

View that corpulent epicure, who idles away the whole day between the festal board and the dozing couch. You may think that he, at least, is free from the curse which I describe: but you are mistaken; while he is living, as he thinks, a life of luxurious ease and gentle inactivity, he fills himself with crude humors, and makes way for the gnawing gout and racking gravel. See even now, how strongly he perspires, and with what uneasiness he draws his short breath, and wipes his dewy, shining face! Surely he toils under the load of an indigested meal. A porter carries a bur-

den upon his brawny shoulders, but this wretch has conveyed one into his sick stomach. He will not work; let him alone; and ere long acute pains will bathe him in as profuse a sweat as that of the furnace man; and strong medicines will exercise him to such a degree, that he will envy even the collier's lot.

It is evident, therefore, that mankind are under a curse of toil and sweat, according to the Divine sentence recorded by Moses;* and that they are frequently condemned by Providence to as hard labor for life, as wretched felons rowing in the galleys, or digging in the mines.† But, as it is absolutely incredible, that a good God, who by a word can supply the wants of all his creatures, should have sentenced innocent mankind to these inconceivable hardships, to procure or enjoy the necessaries of life, it is evident they are guilty, miserable offenders.

* It has been asserted that the short pleasure of eating and drinking makes amends for the severest toil. The best way to bring such idle, sensual objectors to reason, would be to make them earn every meal by two or three hours' threshing. Besides, what great pleasure can those have in eating, who actually starve, or just stay gnawing hunger by food coarser than that which their rich neighbors give to their dogs?

† God's image disinherited of day,

Here plunged in mines forgets a sun was made,
There, beings deathless as their haughty lord,
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life,
And plow the winter's wave, and reap despair.

YOUNG.

TENTH ARGUMENT.

Hard labor and sweat make up but one of the innumerable calamities incident to the wretched inhabitants of this world.— Turn your eyes which way you please, and you will see some flying from, others groaning under, the rod of God; and the greatest number busily making a scourge for the backs of their fellow-creatures, or their own.

To pass over the misery of the brute creation; to say nothing of the subtlety and rapaciousness with which—after the example of men*—they long wait for, and prey upon one another; to cast a veil over the agonies of millions, that are daily stabbed, strangled, shot, and even flayed, boiled, or swallowed up alive, for the support of man's life, or the indulgence of his luxury; and not to mention again the almost uninterrupted cries of feeble infancy; only take notice of the tedious confinement of childhood, the blasted schemes of youth, the anxious cares of riper years, and the deep groans of wrinkled, decrepit, tottering old age. Fix

- Eager ambition's fiery chase I see ;
I see the circling hunt of noisy men,
Burst law's inclosure, leap the bounds of right,
Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey ;
As wolves, for rapine ; as the fox, for wiles ;
Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

YOUNG.

your attention upon family trials; here a prodigal father ruins his children, or undutiful children break the hearts of their fond parents; there an unkind husband imbitters the life of his wife, or an imprudent wife stains the honor of her husband; a servant disobeys, a relation misbehaves, a son lies ill, a tenant breaks, a neighbor provokes, a rival supplants, a friend betrays, or an enemy triumphs; peace seldom continues one day.

Listen to the sighs of the afflicted, the moans of the disconsolate, the complaints of the oppressed, and shrieks of the tortured; consider the deformity of the faces of some, and distortion or mutilation of the limbs of others; to awaken your compassion,* here a beggar holds out the stump of a thigh or an arm; there a ragged wretch hops after you, upon one leg and two crutches; and a little farther you meet with a poor creature, using his hands instead of feet, and dragging through the mire the cumbrous weight of a body without lower parts.

Imagine, if possible, the hardships of those who are destitute of one of their senses; here, the blind is guided by a dog, or gropes his way in the blaze of noon;

* Some for hard masters broken under arms,
In battle lopp'd away, with half their limbs,
Beg bitter bread through realms their valor saved.

there, the deaf lies on the brink of danger, inattentive to the loudest calls; here, sits the dumb, sentenced to eternal silence; there, dribbles the idiot, doomed to perpetual childhood; and yonder, the paralytic shakes without intermission, or lies senseless, the frightful image of a lifeless corpse.

Leaving these wretched creatures, consider the tears of the disappointed—the sorrows of the captive—the anxieties of the accused—the fears of the guilty, and terrors of the condemned. Take a turn through jails, inquisitions, houses of correction, and places of execution. Proceed to the mournful rooms of the languishing, and wearisome beds of the sick; and let not the fear of human woe, in some of its most deplorable appearances, prevent you from visiting hospitals, infirmaries, and bedlams:

A place
Before your eyes appears, sad, noisome, dark,
A lazar-house it seems, wherein are laid
Numbers of all diseased : all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick ageny, all fev'rous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone, and ulcer, colic-pangs,
Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums
Dire is the tossing! Deep the groans! Despair
Attends the sick, busiest from couch to couch;
And over them, triumphant Death his dart
Shakes; but delays to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

MILTON.

To close the horrible prospect, view the ruins of cities and kingdoms—the calamities of wrecks and sieges—the horrors of sea-fights and fields of battle, with all the crimes, devastation, and cruelties, that accompany revenge, contention, and war, and you will be obliged to conclude, with Job, that corrupt man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward; with David, that the earth is full of darkness and cruel habitations; and with every impartial inquirer, that our depravity and God's justice concur to make this world a vale of tears, as well as a field of toil and sweat; a vast prison for rebels already "tied with the chains of their sins," a boundless scaffold for their execution, a golgotha, an aceldama, an immense field of torture and blood.

Some will probably say, "This picture of the world is drawn with black lines, but a kinder Providence blends light and shade together, and tempers our calamities with numberless blessings." I answer—it can not be too thankfully acknowledged, that while patience suspends the stroke of justice, God, for Christ's sake, restores us a thousand forfeited blessings, that his goodness may lead us to repentance. But, alas! what is the consequence, where Divine grace does not prove victorious over corrupt nature? To all our sins, do we not add the crime of either enjoying the favors of Prov-

idence with the greatest ingratitude, or of abusing them with the most provoking insolence?

Our actions are far more expressive of our real sentiments than our words. Why this variety of exquisite food? says the voluptuary whose life loudly speaks what his lips dare not utter. Why this abundance of delicious wines, but to tempt my unbridled appetite, and please my luxurious palate? Would God have given softness to silks, brightness to colors, and luster to diamonds? says the self-applauding smile of a foolish virgin who worships herself in a glass; would he have commanded the white of the lily thus to meet the blush of the rose, and highten so elegant a proportion of features, if he had not designed that the united powers of art, dress and beauty, should make me share his divine honors? Why are we blessed with our dear children and amiable friends, says the ridiculous behavior of fond parents and raptured lovers, but that we should suspend our happiness on their ravishing smiles, and place them as favorite idols in the shrine of our hearts? And why has Heaven favored me both with a strong constitution and an affluent fortune, says the rich slave of brutish lusts, but I may drink deeper of earthly joys and sensual delights?

Thus blessings, abused or unimproved,

become curses in our hands. God's indulgence encourages us to offend him; we have the fatal skill of extracting poison from the sweetest flowers; and madly turn the gifts of Providence into weapons to attack our Benefactor, and destroy ourselves. That there are, then, such perverted gifts, does not prove that mankind are innocent, but that God's patience endureth yet daily, and that a Savior ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Should it be farther objected, that "our pleasures counterbalance calamities," I answer, the greatest part of mankind are so oppressed with want and cares, toil and sickness, that their intervals of ease may rather be termed "an alleviation of misery," than an "enjoyment of happiness." Our pains are real and lasting—our joys imaginary and momentary. Could we exercise all our senses upon the most pleasing objects, the toothache would render all insipid and burdensome; a fit of the gout alone damps every worldly joy, while all earthly delights together can not give us ease under it—so vastly superior is the bitterness of one bodily pain to the sweetness of all the pleasures of sense!

If objectors will urge that "sufferings are needful for our trial," I reply, they are necessary for our punishment and correction, but not for our trial. A good king can try

the loyalty of his subjects without putting them to the rack. Let Nero and Bonner try the innocent by all sorts of tortures, but let not their barbarity be charged upon a God strictly just and infinitely good.

However, "calamities prove a blessing to some." And so does transportation. But who ever inferred from thence, that reformed felons were transported for the trial of their virtue, and not for the punishment of their crimes? I conclude, therefore, that our calamities and miseries demonstrate our corruption as strongly as the punishment of the bastinado and pillory, appointed by an equitable judge, prove the guilt of those on whom they are frequently and severely inflicted.

ELEVENTH ARGUMENT.

Would to God the multiplied calamities of life were a sufficient punishment for our desperate wickedness! But, alas! they only make way for the pangs of death. Like traitors, or rather like wolves and vipers, to which the Son of God compares natural men, we are all devoted to destruction.—Yes, as we kill those mischievous creatures, so God destroys the sinful sons of men.

If the reader is offended, and denies the mortifying assertion, let him visit with me the mournful spot where thousands are-daily

executed, and where hundreds make this moment their dying speech. I do not mean what some call "the bed of honor"—a field of battle—but a common death-bed.

Observing, as we go along, those black trophies of the king of terrors, those escutcheons, which preposterous vanity fixes up in honor of the deceased, when kind charity should hang them out as a warning to the living, let us repair to those mournful apartments where weeping attendants support the dying, where swooning friends embrace the dead, or whence distracted relatives carry out the pale remains of all their joy.

Guided by their groans and funeral lights, let us proceed to the dreary charnel-houses and calvaries, which we decently call vaults and church-yards; and, without stopping to look at the monuments of some, whom my objector remembers as vigorous as himself, and of others, who were, perhaps, his partners in nightly revels, let us hasten to see the dust of his moldered ancestors, and to read upon yonder coffins the dear name of a parent, a child, perhaps a wife, turned off from his bosom into the gulf of eternity!

If this sight does not convince him, I shall open one of the noisome repositories, and show him the deep hollows of those eyes that darted tender sensation into his soul, and odious reptiles fattened upon the once charming, now ghastly, face he doated

upon! But methinks he turns pale at the very proposal, and, rather than be confronted with such witnesses, acknowledges that he is condemned to die, with all his dear relatives, and the whole human race.

And is this the case? Are we, then, under sentence of death? How awful is the consideration! Of all the things that nature dreads, is not death the most terrible? And is it not—as being the greatest of temporal evils—appointed by human and divine laws for the punishment of capital offenders, whether they are named felons and traitors, or more genteelly called men and sinners? Let matter of fact decide.

While earthly judges condemn murderers and traitors to be hanged or beheaded, does not the Judge of all sentence sinful mankind either to pine away with old age, or be wasted with consumptions, burned with fevers, scalded with hot humors, eaten up with cancers, putrefied by mortifications, suffocated by asthmas, strangled by quinsies, poisoned by the cup of excess, stabbed with the knife of luxury, or racked to death by disorders as loathsome, and accidents as various, as their sins?

If you consider the circumstances of their execution, where is the material difference between the malefactor and the sinner? The jailer and the turnkey confine the one to his cell; the disorder and the physician

confine the other to his bed. The one lives upon bread and water; the other upon draughts and boluses. The one can walk with his fetters; the other, loaded with blisters, can scarcely turn himself. The one enjoys freedom from pain, and has the perfect use of his senses; the other complains he is racked all over, and is frequently delirious. The executioner does his office upon the one in a few minutes; but the physician and his medicines make the other linger for days, before he can die out of his misery. An honest sheriff, and constables armed with staves, wait upon one; while a greedy undertaker and his party, with like emblems of authority, accompany the other: and if it is any advantage to have a numerous attendance, without comparison the felon has the greater train.

When the pangs of death are over, does not the difference made between the corpses consist more in appearance than reality?—The murderer is dissected in the surgeon's hall, gratis; and the rich sinner is embowelled in his own apartment at great expense.

The robber, exposed to open air, wastes away in hoops of iron; and the gentleman, confined to a damp vault, molds away in sheets of lead: and while the fowls of the air greedily prey upon the one, the vermin of the earth eagerly devour the other.

And if you consider them as launching

into the world of spirits, is not the advantage, in one respect, on the malefactor's side? He is solemnly assured he must die; and when the death-warrant comes down, all about him bid him prepare, and make the best of his short time: but the physician and chaplain, friends and attendants, generally flatter the honorable sinner to the last. And what is the consequence? He either sleeps on in carnal security, till death puts an end to all his delusive dreams, or, if he has some notion that he must repent, for fear of discomposing his spirits, he still puts it off till to-morrow; and, in the midst of his delays, God says, Thou fool, *this night* thy soul shall be required of thee.—What wonder is it then, if, when the converted thief goes from the ignominious tree to paradise, the impenitent rich man passes from his purple bed into an awful eternity, and there lifts up his eyes in unexpected torments?

If these are truths too obvious to be denied, wilt thou, sinner, as the thoughtless vulgar, blunt their edge by saying, with amazing unconcern, "Death is a debt we must all pay to nature?" Alas! this is granting the point; for if all have contracted so dreadful a debt, all are in a corrupt and lost estate. Nor is this debt to be paid to nature, but to justice; otherwise, dying would be as easy as sleeping, or any other

natural action: but it is beyond expression terrible to thee, from whose soul the Redeemer has not extracted sin, the monster's sting; and if thou dost not see it now, in the most alarming light, it is because thou either imaginest it at a great distance, or the double vail of rash presumption, and brutish stupidity, is yet upon thy hardened heart.

Or wilt thou, as the poor heathens, comfort thyself with the cruel thought, that "thou shalt not die alone?" Alas! dying companions may increase, but can not take off the horror of dissolution. Besides, though we live in a crowd, we generally die alone: each must drink that bitter cup, as if he were the only mortal in the universe.

What must we do, then, in such deplorable circumstances? What, but humble ourselves in the dust, and bow low to the scepter of Divine justice; confessing that, since the righteous God has condemned us to certain death, and, in general, to a far more lingering and painful death than murderers and traitors are made to undergo, we are certainly degenerate creatures and capital offenders, who stand in absolute need of an almighty Redeemer.

Permit me now, candid reader, to make a solemn appeal to thy reason, assisted by the fear of God. From all that has been advanced, does it not appear that man is no

more the favored, happy, and innocent creature he was when he came out of the hands of his infinitely gracious Creator? And is it not evident that, whether we consider him as born into this disordered world, or dying out of it, or passing from the womb to the grave under a variety of calamitous circumstances, God's providential dealings with him prove that he is, by nature, in a corrupt and lost estate?

A part, how small, of this terraqueous globe
Is tenanted by man, the rest a waste.
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands,
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death;
Such is earth's melancholy map; but far
More sad, this earth is a true map of man;
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights;
So wide woe's empire, where deep troubles toss,
Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,
Ravenous calamities our vitals seize,
And threat'ning fate wide opens to devour.—YOUNG.

THIRD PART.

WE have hitherto considered man as a miserable inhabitant of a wretched world. We have seen him surrounded by multitudes of wants—pursued by legions of distresses, maladies, and woes—arrested by the king of terrors—cast into the grave, and shut up there, the loathsome prey of corruption and worms. Let us now consider

him as a moral agent; and, by examining his disposition, character, and conduct, let us see whether he is wisely punished, according to the sentence of impartial justice; or wantonly tormented, at the caprice of arbitrary power.

We can not help acknowledging, it is highly reasonable, first, that all intelligent creatures should love, reverence and obey their Creator; because he is most eminently their Father, their Master, and their King: secondly, that they should assist, support, and love each other, as fellow-subjects, fellow-servants, and children of the same universal parent: and, thirdly, that they should preserve their souls and bodies in peace and purity; by which means alone they can be happy in themselves, profitable to man, and acceptable to God. This is what we generally call natural religion; which is evidently founded upon eternal reason, the fitness of things, and the essential relations of persons.

The propriety of these sanctions is so self-evident, that the Gentiles, who have not the written law, are a law to themselves, and do—but, alas! how seldom, and from what motives:—the things contained in the law; thus showing that the work, the sum and substance of the law, though much blotted by the fall, is still written in the heart.—Nor will it be erased thence, in hell itself;

for nothing but a sight of the equity of God's law can clear his vindictive justice in the guilty breast, give a scorpion's sting to the worm that gnaws the stubborn offender, and arm his upbraiding conscience with a whip of biting serpents.

Since the moral law so strongly recommends itself to reason, let us see how universally it is observed or broken; so shall matter of fact decide, whether we are pure and upright, or polluted and depraved.

TWELFTH ARGUMENT.

Those who reject the Scriptures, universally agree that all have sinned, and that in many things we offend all. Hence, it appears that persons of various constitutions, ranks, and education, in all nations, religions, times, and places, are born in such a state and with such a nature, and they infallibly commit many sins in thought, word, or deed.

But one transgression would be sufficient to render them obnoxious to God's displeasure, and to bring them under the fearful curse of his broken law; for, even according to the statutes of this realm, a man who once robs a traveler of a small sum of money, forfeits his life, as well as the bloody highwayman, who for years barbarously murders all those whom he stops, and accumulates immense wealth by his repeated barbarities.

The reason is obvious: both incur the penalty of the law which forbids robbery; for both effectually break it, though one does it oftener, and with far more aggravating circumstances than the other. So sure, then, as one robbery deserves the gallows, one sin deserves death; for the soul that sinneth, says God's law, and not the soul that committeth so many sins, of such or such a heinousness, it shall die. Hence it is that the first sin of the first man was punished both with spiritual and bodily death, and with ten thousand other evils. The justice of this sanction will appear in a satisfactory light, if we consider the following remarks:

1. In our present natural state, we are such strangers to God's glory and the spirituality of his law, and we are so used to drink the deadly poison of iniquity like water, that we have no idea of the horror which should seize upon us after a breach of the divine law. We are, therefore, as unfit judges of the atrociousness of sin, as lawless, hardened assassins, who shed human blood like water, are of the heinousness of murder.

2. As every willful sin arises from a disregard of that sovereign authority, which is equally stamped upon all the commandments, it hath in it the principle and nature

of all possible iniquity ; that is, the disregard and contempt of the Almighty.

3. There is no proper merit before God in the longest and most exact course of obedience, but infinite demerit in one, even the last act of willful disobedience. When we have done all that is commanded us, we are still unprofitable servants ; for the self-sufficient God has no more need of us, than a mighty monarch has of the vilest insect that creeps in the dust beneath his feet : and our best actions, strictly speaking, deserve absolutely nothing from our Creator and Preserver, because we owe him all we have, and are, and can possibly be. But if we transgress in one point, we ruin all our obedience, and expose ourselves to the just penalty of his broken law. The following example may illustrate this observation :

If a rich man gives a thousand meals to an indigent neighbor, he acts only as a man—he does nothing but his duty—and the Judge allows him no reward. But if he gives him only one dose of poison, he acts as a murderer, and must die a shameful death ; so greatly does one act of sin outweigh a thousand acts of obedience ! How exceedingly absurd, then, is the common notion, that our good works counterbalance our bad ones ! Add to this that,

4. Guilt necessarily rises in proportion to the baseness of the offender, the greatness

of the favors conferred upon him, and the dignity of the person offended. An insulting behavior to a servant is a fault, to a magistrate it is a crime, to a king it is treason. And what is willful sin, but an injury offered by an impotent rebel, to the infinitely-powerful Lawgiver of the universe, to the kindest of benefactors, to the gracious Creator and Preserver of men—an insult given to the supreme Majesty of heaven and earth, in whose glorious presence the dignity of the greatest potentates and archangels as truly disappears as the splendor of the stars in the blaze of the meridian sun? Sin, therefore, flying into the face of such a Lawgiver, Benefactor, and Monarch, has in it a kind of infinite demerit from its infinite object; and rebellious, ungrateful, wretched man, who commits it a thousand times with a thousand aggravations, may, in the nervous language of our Church, be said, in some sense, to deserve a thousand hells, if there were so many.

THIRTEENTH ARGUMENT.

Our natural depravity manifests itself by constant omissions of duty, as much as by flagrant commissions of sin, and perhaps much more. Take one instance out of many that might be produced. Constant displays of persevering goodness, and presents undeservedly and uninterruptedly bestowed upon

us, deserve a perpetual tribute of heart-felt gratitude; God demands it in his law; and conscience, his agent in our souls, declares it ought in justice to be paid.

But where shall we find a Deist properly conscious of what he owes the supreme Being for his "creation, preservation, and all the blessings of his life?" And where a Christian, duly sensible of "God's inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ?" A due sense of his ever-multiplied mercies would fill our souls with never-ceasing wonder, and make our lips overflow with rapturous praise. The poet's language would suit our grateful sensations, and, without exaggeration, paint the just ardor of our transports:

"Bound, every heart, and every bosom burn;
Praise, flow forever, (if astonishment
Will give thee leave,) my praise, forever flow—
Praise ardent, cordial, constant," etc.

Is not any thing short of this thankful frame of mind a sin of omission, a degree of ingratitude, of which all are naturally guilty, and for which, it is to be feared, the best owe ten thousand talents both to Divine goodness and justice?

Throw only a few bones to a dog, and you win him; he follows you; your word becomes his law; upon the first motion of your hand he flies through land and water to execute your commands: obedience is his

delight, and your presence his paradise: he convinces you of it by all the demonstrations of joy which he is capable of giving; and if he unhappily loses sight of you, he exerts all his sagacity to trace your footsteps; nor will he rest till he finds his benefactor again.

Shall a brute be so thankful to a man for some offals, while man himself is so full of ingratitude to God who created him, preserves his life from destruction, and hourly crowns him with mercies and loving-kindness? How should shame cover our guilty faces? Surely, if the royal prophet could say he was as a beast before God, may we not well confess that, in point of gratitude, we are worse than the dullest and most stupid part of the brute creation? For even the ox, says the Lord, knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know me, my people doth not consider my daily favors. And if the very heathens affirm, that to call a man ungrateful to a human benefactor, was to say of him all possible evil in one word,* how can we express the baseness and depravity of mankind, who are universally so ungrateful to so bounteous a benefactor as God himself.

* *Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dicis.—Juv.*

FOURTEENTH ARGUMENT.

But though we seem made of cold inattention, when the sight of Divine mercies should kindle our hearts into gratitude and praise, we soon get out of this languid frame of mind ; for, in the pursuit of sensual gratifications, we are all activity and warmth ; we seem an ardent compound of life and fire.

What can be the reason of this amazing difference ? What but rebellious sense and wanton appetite, raised at the sight or idea of some forbidden object ! The bait of pleasure appears—corrupt nature summons all her powers—every nerve of expectation is stretched—every pulse of desire beats high—the blood is in a general ferment—the spirits are in a universal hurry—and though the hook of a fatal consequence is often apparent, the alluring bait must be swallowed. The fear of God, the most inestimable of all treasures, is already gone ; and if the sinful gratification cannot be enjoyed upon any other term, a good reputation shall go also. Reason, indeed, makes remonstrances ; but the loud clamors of flesh and blood soon drown her soft whispers. The carnal mind steps imperiously upon the throne ; sense, that conquers the greatest conquerors, bears down all opposition ; the yielding man is led captive by a

brutish lust ; and while angels blush, there is joy in hell over the actual and complete degradation of a heaven-born spirit.

Some, indeed, affirm that these conflicts suit a state of probation and trial. But it is evident that either our temptations are too violent for our strength, or our strength too weak for our temptations ; since, notwithstanding the additional help of Divine grace, there never was a mere mortal over whom they never triumphed.

Nor can we exculpate ourselves by pleading, that these triumphs of sense over reason are neither long nor frequent. Alas ! how many perpetrate an act of wickedness in a moment, and suffer death itself for a crime which they never repeated !

See that crystal vessel. Its brightness and brittleness represent the shining and delicate nature of true virtue. If I let it fall, and break it, what avails it to say, " I never broke it before ; I dropped it but once ; I am excessively sorry for my carelessness : I will set the pieces together, and never break it again ? " Will these excuses and resolutions prevent the vessel from being broken—broken forever ? The reader may easily make the application.

Even heathen moralists, by their fabulous account of the companions of Ulysses, turned into swine upon drinking once of Circe's enchanted cup, teach us, that one fall into

sensuality turns a man into a brute, just as one slip into unchastity or dishonesty changes a modest woman into a strumpet, or an honest man into a thief. Again :

Ought not reason to have as absolute a command over appetite, as a skillful rider has over a well-broken horse? But suppose we saw all horsemen universally mastered, one time or other, by their beasts, and forced, though but for a few minutes, to receive the bit, and go or stop at the pleasure of the wanton brutes ; should we not wonder, and justly infer, that man had lost the kind of superiority which he still maintains over domestic animals? And what, then, but the commonness of the case, can prevent our being shocked when we see rational creatures overcome and led captive by carnal appetites? Is not this the wanton, rebellious beast, mounting upon his vanquished, dastardly rider?

We may then conclude, that the universal rebellion of our lower faculties against our superior powers, and the triumphs of sense over reason, demonstrate that human nature has suffered as fatal a revolution as these kingdoms did when a degraded king was seen bleeding on the scaffold, and a base usurper lording it in the seat of majesty.

FIFTEENTH ARGUMENT.

Happy would it be for us, if our fall manifested itself only by some transient advantages of sense over reason. But, alas! the experience of the best demonstrates the truth of Isaiah's words, The whole head is sick.

+ To say nothing of the gross stupidity and unconquerable ignorance that keeps the generality of mankind just above the level of brutes, how strong, how clear is the *understanding* of men of sense in worldly affairs! How weak, how dark in spiritual things! How few idiots are there but can distinguish between the shadow and the substance, the cup and the liquor, the dress and the person! But how many learned men, to this day, see no difference between water baptism and spiritual regeneration, between the means of grace and grace itself, between the form and power of godliness! At our devotions, is not our mind generally like the roving butterfly? and at our favorite diversions, and lucrative business, like the fastening leech? Can it not fix itself on anything sooner than on the one thing needful; and find out any way before that of peace and salvation?

What can be more extravagant than our *imagination*? How often have we caught this wild power forming and pursuing phan

toms, building and pulling down castles in the air! how frequently hath it raised us into proud conceit, and then sunk us into gloomy apprehensions! And where is the man that it never led into such mental scenes of vanity and lewdness, as would have made him the object of universal contempt, if the veil of a grave and modest countenance had not happily concealed him from public notice.

And has our *Memory* escaped unimpaired by the fall? Alas! let us only consider, how easily we forget the favors of our Creator, and recollect the injuries of our fellow-creatures; how little we retain of a good book or pious discourse, and how much of a play or frivolous conversation; and how exactly we remember an invitation to a party of pleasure, while the loudest calls to turn to God and prepare for death, are no sooner heard than forgotten: let us, I say, consider these things, and we shall be forced to confess that this useful power loses like a sieve the living water of truth, drinks in like a sponge the muddy streams of vanity, and is never so retentive as when it is excited by revenge, or some other detestable temper.

“A wretch that is condemned to die tomorrow cannot forget it,” says Baxter: “yet poor sinners, who are uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the majesty of the Lord, to their inconceivable joy or

terror, can forget these things, for which they have their memory, and which, one would think, should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a cannon does a whisper, or as the sun obscures the poorest glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an unregenerate soul! O astonishing distraction of the ungodly! That every man can forget eternal joy, eternal woe, the eternal God, and the place of their unchangeable abode; when they stand even at the door, and there is but the thin veil of flesh between them and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf, into which thousands are daily plunging."

Nor does our *reason* * make us amends for the defects of our other faculties. Its beams, it is true, wonderfully guide some persons through the circle of sciences, and the mazes of commercial or political affairs. But when it should lead us in the search of the truth which is after godliness, unless it is assisted from above, how are its faint rays obstructed by the gross medium of flesh and blood, broken by that of passion, and sometimes lost in that of prejudice? Wise sons of reason, learned philosophers, your two hundred and eighty-eight opinions concerning the chief good, are a multiplied proof of

* By reason I mean that power by which we pass judgment upon, and draw inferences from, what the understanding has simply apprehended.

my sad assertion: all miss the mark. Not one of them makes the supreme felicity to consist in the knowledge and enjoyment of God, the amiable and adorable Parent of all good.

True reason, alas! is as rare as true piety. The poor thing, which, in spiritual matters, the world calls reason, is only the ape of that noble faculty. How partial, how unreasonable* is this false pretender! If it does not altogether overlook the awful realities of the invisible world, which is too frequently the case, how busy is it to reason away faith, and raise objections against the most evident truth,† even that which I now

* Our earth's the bedlam of the universe,
Where Reason (undiseased in heaven) runs mad,
And nurses folly's children as her own,
Fond of the foulest.—YOUNG.

† A late publication, in vindication of Pelagianism, appears to me no small instance of this. The reverend author takes his estimate of human nature, not from universal experience, but his indulged imagination; not from St. Paul, the chief of the apostles, but from Dr. Taylor, to whom he acknowledges his obligations for several of the best passages in his sermon. Passing over the exposition of his text, where he oddly supposes that our Lord meant, by the drawing of God, the natural powers of man, which is as reasonable as to suppose that when he said, Without *me* ye can do nothing, he meant that *me* should signify ourselves. Passing this over, I shall just point out his capital mistake. He tells us that all our faculties and powers *are* good and beautiful in their order, (that they were so before the fall is fully granted,) and tend naturally to the happi

contend for? And when right reason has been worsted by sense, how ready is the

ness both of the individual and of the system; and he adds, how weak soever and imperfect our intellectual faculties may be, yet to speak reproachfully of them in general is a species of blasphemy against our Creator. If to expose the present weakness of our rational faculties, and show how greatly they are disordered and impaired by the fall, is what this divine calls speaking reproachfully of them, have not the best men been guilty of this pretended blasphemy? How far the sacred writers carried it, may be seen in the first part of this treatise. * * * * *

Far from seeing that all the faculties and powers, by which this is done, are good and beautiful, I cannot help thinking that some of them are materially defective; and that though such a conduct may very much tend to the emolument of the individual, it has little tendency to the happiness of the system. For my part, were I to commence advocate for the uprightness of human nature, I would save appearances, lest Dr. Taylor himself should say, *Non defensoribus istis*, etc. But dropping this point, I appeal to common sense: who is most guilty of blasphemy against our Creator, he who says God made man both holy and happy, affirming that the present weakness of our rational powers is entirely owing to the original apostasy of mankind, or he who intimates that the gracious Author of our being formed our intellectual faculties weak and imperfect as they now are? If it is not the latter, my understanding is strangely defective. In vain does this learned divine tell us, that the candle of the Lord which was lighted up in man at first, when the inspiration of the Almighty gave him understanding, was not extinguished by the original apostasy, but has kept burning ever since, and that the divine flame has caught from father to son, and has been propagated quite down to the present generation. If it is reasonable to charge with a species of blasphemy those who reverence their Creator too much to father our present state of imperfection upon him, I must confess my reason fails. I have outlived the di-

imposter to plead against the faculty which it personates! How skillful in cloaking bad habits under the genteel name of "human foibles!" And how ingenious in defending the most irrational and dangerous methods of losing time, as "innocent sports and harmless diversions!"

These observations, which must appear self-evident to all who know the world or themselves, incontestibly prove the degeneracy of all our rational powers, and, consequently, the universality of our natural corruption.

SIXTEENTH ARGUMENT.

When the whole head is sick, is not the whole heart faint? Can our will, conscience, and affections run parallel to the line of duty, when our understanding, imagination, memory, and reason, are so much warped from original rectitude? Impossible! Experience, thou best of judges, I appeal to thee. Erect thy fair tribunal in the reader's breast, and bear an honest testimony of the truth of the following assertions.

Our *will*, in general, is full of obstinacy ;

vine flame for one, or it never caught from my father to me. A fear lest some well-meaning person should mistake the taper of Pelagius, or the lamp of Dr. Taylor, for the candle of the Lord, and follow it in the destructive paths of error, extorts this note from my pen. See the objections that follow the twenty-second Argument.

we must have our own way, right or wrong. 'Tis pregnant with inconstancy: we are passionately fond of a thing one day, and tired of it the next; we form good resolutions in the morning, and break them before night. 'Tis impotent: when we see what is right, instead of doing it with all our might, we frequently remain as inactive as if we were bound by invisible chains; and we wonder by what charms the wheels of duty thus stop against our apparent inclination, till we discover that the spring of our will is broken, or naturally works the wrong way; yes, it is not only unable to follow the good, that the understanding approves, but full of perverseness to pursue the evil, that reason disapproves. We are prone to do, contrary to our design, those things which breed remorse and wound conscience: and, sooner or later, we may all say with the heathen princess who was going to murder her child,

*Video meliora, proboque,
Deteriora sequor.**

Nor is *conscience* itself untainted. Alas! how slow is it to reprove in some cases! In others, how apt not to do it at all! In one person, it is easy under mountains of guilt; and in another, it is unreasonably scrupulous

* If the reader wants to know the English of these words, he may find it in Rom. vii, 15.

about mere trifles; it either strains at a gnat, or swallows a camel; when it is alarmed, in some it shows itself ready to be made easy by every wrong method; in others, it obstinately refuses to be pacified by the right. To-day, you may with propriety compare it to a dumb dog, that does not bark at a thief; and to-morrow, to a snarling cur, that flies indifferently at a friend, a foe, or a shadow, and then madly turns upon himself, and tears his own flesh.

If conscience, the best power of the unconverted man, is so corrupt, good God! what are his *affections*? Almost perpetually deficient in some, and excessive in others, when do they attain to, or stop at, the line of moderation? Who can tell how oft he has been the sport of their irregularity and violence? One hour we are hurried into rashness by their impetuosity: the next, we are bound in sloth by their inactivity. Sometimes every blast of foolish hope, or ill-grounded fear; every gale of base desire, or unreasonable aversion; every wave of idolatrous love, or sinful hatred; every surge of misplaced admiration, or groundless horror; every billow of noisy joy, or undue sorrow, tosses, raises, or sinks our soul, as a ship in a storm, which has neither rudder nor ballast. At other times we are totally becalmed; all our sails are furled; not one breath of devout or human affection stirs in

our stoical, frozen breast; and we remain stupidly insensible, till the spark of temptation, dropping upon the combustible matter in our hearts, blows us up again into loud passion; and then how dreadful and ridiculous together is the new explosion!

If experience pronounces that these reflections are just, the point is gained. Our whole heart is faint, through the unaccountable disorders of our will, the lethargy or boisterous fits of our conscience, and the swooning, or high fever, of our affections; and we may, without hypocrisy, join in our daily confession, and say, "There is no health in us."

SEVENTEENTH ARGUMENT.

The danger of these complicated maladies of our souls, evidences itself, by the most fatal of all symptoms, our manifest alienation from God. Yes, shocking as the confession is, we must make it, if truth has any dominion in our breast: unrenewed man loves not his God. That eternal beauty, for whose contemplation, that supreme good, for whose enjoyment he was created, is generally forgotten, despised, or hated. If the thought of his Holy Majesty presents itself he looks upon it as an intruder; it lays him under as disagreeable a restraint as that which the presence of a grave, pious master, puts upon a wanton, idle servant; nor can

he quietly pursue his sinful courses, till he has driven away the troublesome idea; or imagined, with the epicure, a careless God, who wants resolution to call him to an account, and justice to punish him for his iniquity.

Does any one offer an indignity to his favorite friend, or only speak contemptuously of the object of his esteem, he feels as if he was the person insulted, and reddening with indignation, directly espouses his cause; but every body, the meanest of his attendants not excepted, may with impunity insult the King of kings in his presence, and take the most profane liberties with his name and word, his laws and ministers; he hears the wild blasphemy, and regards it not; he sees the horrid outrage, and resents it not; and yet, amazing infatuation! he pretends to love God.

If he goes to the play, he can fix his roving eyes and wandering mind, three hours together upon the same trifling object, not only without weariness, but with uncommon delight. If he has an appointment with the person whom he adores as a deity, his spirits are elevated—expectation and joy flutter in his dilated breast—he sweetly anticipates the pleasing interview, or impatiently chides the slowly-flowing minutes; his feelings are inexpressible. But if he attends the great congregation, which he too

often omits upon the most frivolous pretenses, it is rather out of form and decency, than out of devotion and love; rather with indifference or reluctance, than with delight and transport. And when he is present there, how absent are his thoughts! How wandering his eyes! How trifling, supine, irreverent* his whole behavior! He would be ashamed to speak to the meanest of his servants with as little attention as he sometimes prays to the Majesty of heaven. Were he to stare about when he gives them orders, as he does when he presents his supplications to the Lord of lords, he would be afraid they would think he was half drunk, or had a touch of lunacy.

Suppose he still retains a sense of outward decency, while the church goes through her solemn offices; yet how heavy are his spirits! how heartless his confessions! how cold his prayers! The blessing comes at last, and he is blessed indeed—not with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost; for that he gladly leaves to “poor enthusiasts”—but with a release from his confinement and

* Men homage pay to men,
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on Thee,
Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing;
To prostrate angels an amazing scene!—YOUNG.

tedious work. And now that he has "done his duty, and served God," he hastens away to the company that suits his taste.

See him there. Do not his very looks declare he is in his own element? With what eagerness of spirit, energy of gesture, and volubility of tongue, does he talk over his last entertainment, chase, or bargain? Does not the oil of cheerfulness make all his motions as free and easy as if weight and friction had no place at all in his light and airy frame?

Love of God, thou sweetest, strongest of all powers, didst thou ever thus metamorphose his soul, and impart such a sprightly activity to his body? And you that converse most familiarly with him, did you ever hear him say, Come, and I will tell you what the Lord has done for my soul: taste, and see how good the Lord is? No, never; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; nor can it be expected that God, who hath no place in his joyous reflections, should have one in his cheerful conversation. On the contrary, it will be matter of surprise to those who introduce the delightful subject of the love of God, if he does not waive it off, as dull, melancholy, or enthusiastical.

But as he will give you to understand "he is no hypocrite, and, therefore, confines devotion to his closet," follow him there. Alas!

he scarce ever bends the knee to Him that sees in secret: or, if he says his prayers as regularly as he winds his watch, it is much in the same spirit; for suppose he does not hurry them over, or cut them as short as possible, yet the careless, formal manner in which he offers them up, indicates as plainly as his public conduct, the aversion lurking in his heart against God: and yet he fancies he loves him: with a sneer that indicates self-applause, and a pharisaic contempt of others, "Away with all your feelings and raptures," says he; "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." But, alas! which of them does he keep? Certainly not the first; for the Lord is not the supreme object of his hopes and fears, his confidence and joy; nor yet the last; for discontent and wrong desires are still indulged in his selfish and worldly heart. How unfortunate, therefore, is his appeal to the commandments, by which his secret enmity to the law, government, and nature of God, is brought to the clearest light.

EIGHTEENTH ARGUMENT.

But as the heart-felt love of God is supposed to be downright enthusiasm by some moralists, who, dashing in pieces the first table of the law against the second, pretend that all our duty to God consists in the love of our neighbor, let us examine the un-

converted man's charity, and see whether he bears more love to his fellow-creatures than to his Creator.

Nothing can be more erroneous than his notions of charity. He confounds it with the bare giving of alms; not considering that it is possible to do this kind of good from the most selfish and uncharitable motives.—Therefore, when the fear of being accounted covetous, the desire of passing for generous, the vanity of seeing his name in a list of noble subscribers, the shame of being outdone by his equals, the teasing importunity of an obstinate beggar, the moving address of a solicitor, whom he would blush to deny, or the pharisaic notion of making amends for his sins, and purchasing heaven by his alms — when any, I say, of these sinister motives sets him upon assisting industrious poverty, relieving friendless old age, or supporting infirm and mutilated indigence, he fancies that he gives an indubitable proof of his charity.

Sometimes, too, he affixes to that word the idea of a fond hope that every body is going to heaven: for if you intimate that the rich voluptuary is not with Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom, and that the foolish virgins are not promiscuously admitted to glory with the wise, he wonders at "your uncharitableness," and thanks God "he never en-

tertained such unchristian thoughts of his neighbors.”

He considers not that charity is the fair offspring of the love of God, to which he is yet an utter stranger; and that it consists in a universal, disinterested benevolence to all mankind, our worst enemies not excepted—a benevolence that sweetly evidences itself by bearing with patience the evil which they do to us, and kindly doing them all the good we possibly can, both with respect to their soul and body, their property and reputation.

If this is a just definition of charity, the unrenewed man has not even the outside of it. To prove it, I might appeal to his impatience and ill-humor, his unkind words and cutting raileries, (for I suppose him too moral ever to slander or curse any one;) I might mention his supercilious behavior to some, who are entitled to his affability as men, countrymen, and neighbors; I might expatiate on his readiness to exculpate, enrich, or aggrandize himself at the expense of others, whenever he can do it without exposing himself.

But, waiving all these particulars, I ask, Whom does he truly love? You answer, “Doubtless the person to whom he makes daily protestations of the warmest regard.” But how does he prove this regard? Why, perhaps, with the most artful insinuations,

and dangerous attempts to rob her of her virtue. Perhaps he has already gained his end. Unhappy Magdalen! How much better would it have been for thee to have fallen into the hands of a highwayman! Thou wouldst only have lost thy money, but now thou art despoiled of the honor of thy sex, and the peace of thy mind: thou art robbed at once of virgin innocence, a fair reputation, and possibly a healthy constitution. If this is a specimen of the unconverted man's love, what must be his hatred?

But I haply mistake: "He is no libertine; he has a virtuous wife, and amiable children, and he loves them," say you, "with the tenderest affection." I reply, that these relations, being immortal spirits, confined for a few years in a tenement of clay, and continually on the remove for eternity, his laudable regard for their frail bodies, and proper care of their temporal prosperity, are not a sufficient proof that he loves them in a right manner. For even according to wise heathens, our soul is our better part, our true self.* And what tender concern does the unrenewed man feel for the soul of his bosom friend? Does he regard it more than the body of his groom, or the life of his horse? Does he with any degree of importunity, carry it daily in the arms of love and

* *Nos non corpora sumus: Corpus quidem vas est aut aliquod animi receptaculum.—Cic. Tusc. Quæst., lib. 1.*

prayer to the throne of grace for life and salvation? Does he, by good instructions, and a virtuous example, excite his children to secure an eternal inheritance; and is he at least as desirous to see them wise and pious; as well-bred, rich, handsome, and great? Alas! I fear it is just the reverse. He is probably the first to poison their tender minds with some of the dangerous maxims that vanity and ambition have invented; and, supposing he has a favorite dog, it is well if he is not more anxious for the preservation of that one domestic animal, than for the salvation of all their souls.

If these observations are founded upon matter of fact, as daily experience demonstrates, I appeal to common sense, and ask, Can the natural man, with all his fondness, be said to have a true love even for his nearest relatives? And is not the regard that he manifests for their bodies more like the common instinct by which doves cleave to their mates, and swallows provide for their young, than like the generous affection which a rational creature ought to bear to immortal *spirits*, awfully hovering in a scale of probation, which is just going to turn for hell or heaven?

NINETEENTH ARGUMENT.

Nor is it surprising that the unrenewed man should be devoid of all true love to his

nearest relations; for he is so completely fallen, that he bears no true love even to himself. Let us overlook those who cut their throats, shoot, drown, or hang themselves. Let us take no notice of those who sacrifice a year's health for a night's revel; who inflame their blood into fevers, or drive putrefaction into their bones, for the momentary gratification of a shameful appetite; and are so hot in the pursuit of base pleasure, that they leap after it even into the jaws of an untimely grave: let us, I say, pass by those innumerable, unhappy victims of intemperance and debauchery, who squander their money upon panders and harlots, and have as little regard for their health as for their fortune and reputation; and let us consider the case of those good-natured, decent persons, who profess to have a real value for both.

Upon the principle laid down in the last Argument, may I not ask, What love have these for their immortal part, their true self? What do they do for their souls? Or, rather, what do they not leave undone? And who can show less concern for their greatest interest than they?

Alas! in spiritual matters, the wisest of them seem on a level with the most foolish. They anxiously secure their title to a few possessions in this transitory world, out of which the stream of time carries them with

unabated impetuosity ; while they remain * stupidly thoughtless of their portion in the unchangeable world, into which they are just going to launch ; they take particular notice of every trivial incident in life, every idle report raised in their neighborhood, and supinely overlook the great realities of death and judgment, hell and heaven.

You see them perpetually contriving how to preserve, indulge, and adorn their dying bodies, and daily neglecting the safety, welfare, and ornament of their immortal souls. So great is their folly, that earthly toys make them slight heavenly thrones ! So willful their self-deception, that a point of time † hides from them a boundless eternity !

* Time flies, death urges, knells call, heaven invites,
Hell threatens ; all exert ; in effort all :
More than creation labors ! labors more !
And is there in creation, what, amidst
This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,
And ardent energy, supinely yawns ?
Man sleeps—and man alone ; and man, whose fate—
Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken—o'er the gulf
A moment trembles—drops ! and man, for whom
All else is in alarm—man, the sole cause
Of this surrounding storm !—and yet he sleeps,
As the storm rocked to rest.—YOUNG.

† And is it in the flight of threescore years
To push eternity from human thought,
And bury souls immortal in the dust ?
A soul immortal spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness ;
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,

So perverted is their moral taste, that they nauseate the word of truth, the precious food of souls, and greedily run upon the tempter's hook, if it is but made of solid gold, or gilt over with the specious appearance of honor, or only baited with the prospect of a favorite diversion. And while, by uneasy, fretful tempers, they too often impair their bodily health, by exorbitant affections, and pungent cares, they frequently break their hearts, or pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

Does such a conduct deserve the name of well-ordered, self-love, or preposterous self-hatred? O man, sinful man, how totally art thou depraved, if thou art not only thine own most dangerous enemy, but often thy most cruel tormentor!

TWENTIETH ARGUMENT.

This depravity is productive of the most detestable brood. When it has suppressed the love of God, perverted the love of our neighbor, and vitiated self-love, it soon gives birth to a variety of execrable tempers and dire affections, which should have no place but in the breast of fiends, no outbreking but in the chambers of hell.

If you ask their name, I answer, Pride,

At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
Resembles ocean into tempest wrought
To waft a feather or to drown a fly.—YOUNG.

that odious vice, which feeds on the praises it slyly procures, lives by the applause it has meanly courted, and is equally stabbed by the reproof of a friend, and the sneer of a foe. The spirit of Independence, which cannot bear control, is galled by the easiest yoke, gnaws the slender cords of just authority, as if they were the heavy chains of tyrannical power; nor ever ceases struggling till they break, and he can say: "Now I am my own master." Ambition and Vanity, which, like Proteus, take a thousand shapes, and wind a thousand ways, to climb up the high seat of power, shine on the tottering stage of honor, wear the golden badge of fortune, glitter in the gaudy pomp of dress, and draw, by distinguishing appearances, the admiration of a gaping multitude. Sloth, which unnerves the soul, enfeebles the body, and makes the whole man deaf to the calls of duty, loth to set about his business—even when want, fear, or shame drives him to it—ready to postpone or omit it upon any pretence, and willing to give up even the interests of society, virtue, and religion, so he may saunter undisturbed, doze the time away in stupid inactivity, or enjoy himself in that dastardly indolence, which passes in the world for quietness and good-nature. Envy, that looks with an evil eye at the good things our competitors enjoy, takes a secret pleasure in their misfortunes,

under various pretexts exposes their faults, slyly tries to add to our reputation what it detracts from theirs, and stings our heart when they eclipse us by their greater success or superior excellencies. Covetousness, which is always dissatisfied with its portion, watches it with tormenting fears, increases it by every sordid means, and turning its own executioner, justly pines for want over the treasure it madly saves for a prodigal heir. Impatience, which frets at every thing, finds fault with every person, and madly tears herself under the distressing sense of a present evil, or the anxious expectation of an absent good. Wrath, which distorts our faces, racks our breasts, alarms our households, threatens, curses, stamps, and storms, even upon imaginary or trifling provocations. Jealousy, that through a fatal skill in diabolical optics, sees contempt in all the words of a favorite friend, discovers infidelity in all his actions, lives upon the wicked suspicions it begets, and turns the sweets of the mildest passion into wormwood and gall. Idolatrous love, which preys upon the spirits, consumes the flesh, tears the throbbing heart, and when it is disappointed, frequently forces its wretched slaves to lay violent hands upon themselves. Hatred of our fellow-creatures, which keeps us void of tender benevolence, a chief ingredient in the bliss of angels, and

fills us with some of the most unhappy sensations belonging to accursed spirits. Malice, which takes an unnatural, hellish pleasure, in teasing beasts, and hurting men, in their persons, properties, or reputation. And the offspring of malice, Revenge,* who always thirsts after mischief or blood; and shares the only delight of devils, when he can repay a real or fancied injury sevenfold. Hypocrisy, who borrows the cloak of religion; bids her flexible muscles imitate vital piety; attends at the sacred altars, to make a show of her fictitious devotion; there raises her affected zeal in proportion to the number of the spectators; calls upon God to get the praise of man; and lifts up adulterous eyes and thievish hands to heaven, to procure herself the good things of the earth. And Hypocrisy's sister, narrow-hearted Bigotry, who pushes from her Civility and Good-nature, stops her ears against arguments and entreaties; calls Huguenots, infidels, Papists, or heretics, all who do not

* Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things
 Most horrid! Midst stupendous, highly strange!
 Yet oft his courtesies are smoother wrongs;
 Pride brandishes the favors he confers,
 And contumelious his humanity:
 What then his vengeance! Hear it not, ye stars!
 And thou, pale moon! turn paler at the sound,
 Man is to man the sorest, surest ill——
 Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings but himself,
 That hideous sight, a naked human heart.—YOUNG.

directly subscribe to her absurd or impious creeds; dogs them with a malignant eye; throws stones or dirt at them about an empty ceremony, or an indifferent opinion; and at last, if she can, sets churches or kingdoms on fire, about a turban, a surplice, or a cowl. Perfidiousness, who puts on the looks of true benevolence, speaks the language of the warmest affection; with solemn protestations invites men to depend on her sincerity, while she lays a deep plot for their sudden destruction; and, with repeated oaths, beseeches Heaven to be witness of her artless innocence, while she moves the centre of hell to accomplish her dire designs. The fatal hour is come—her stratagem has succeeded—and she now kisses and betrays, drinks health and poisons—offers a friendly embrace, and gives a deadly stab. Despair, who scorns to be beholden to Mercy, gives the lie to all the declarations issued from the throne of grace, obstinately turns his wild eyes from the great expiatory sacrifice; and at last, impatient to drink the cup of trembling, wildly looks for some weapon to destroy himself. Distraction, begotten by the shocking mixture of two or more of these infernal passions, raised to the highest degree of extravagance—distraction, that wrings her hands, tears her disheveled hair, fixes her ghastly eyes, turns her swimming brains, quenches the

last spark of reason, and, like a fierce tiger, must at last be chained by the hand of caution, and confined with iron bars in her dreary dwelling.

And to close the dismal train, Self-murder, who always points wretched mortals to ponds and rivers, or presents them with cords, razors, pistols, daggers, and poison, and perpetually urges them to the choice of one of them. "You are guilty, miserable creatures," whispers he: "the sun of prosperity is forever set, the deepest night of distress is come upon you; you are in a hell of woe; the hell prepared for Satan cannot be worse than that which you feel, but it may be more tolerable; take this, and boldly force your passage out of the cursed state in which you groan." He persuades, and his desperate victims, tired of the company of their fellow-mortals, fly for refuge to that of devils! they shut their eyes, and, horrible to say! but how much more horrible to do! deliberately venture from one hell into another, to seek ease; or, to speak with more truth, leap, with all the miseries of a known hell, into all the horrors of one which is unknown.

And are your hearts, O ye sons of men, the favorite seats of this infernal crew! Then shame on the wretch that made the first panegyric on the dignity of human na-

ture! He proved my point: he began in pride, and ended in distraction.

Detestable as these vices and tempers are, where is the natural man that is always free from them? Where is even the child ten years old, who never felt most of these vipers, upon some occasion or other, shooting their venom through his lips, darting their baleful influence through his eyes, or at least stirring and hissing in his disturbed breast? If any one never felt them, he may be pronounced more than mortal; but if he has, his own experience furnishes him with a sensible demonstration, that he is a fallen spirit, infected with the poison that rages in the devil himself.

TWENTY-FIRST ARGUMENT.

Bad roots, which vigorously shoot in the spring, will naturally produce their dangerous fruit in summer. We may, therefore, go one step farther, and ask, where is the man thirty years old, whose depravity has not broken out into the greatest variety of sinful acts? Among the persons of that age, who never were esteemed worse than their neighbors, shall we find a forehead that never betrayed daring insolence? A cheek, that never indicated concealed guilt by an involuntary blush, or unnatural paleness? A neck, that never was stretched out in pride and vain confidence? An eye,

that never cast a disdainful, malignant, or wanton look? An ear, that an evil curiosity never opened to frothy, loose, or defaming intercourse? A tongue, that never was tainted with unedifying, false, indecent, or uncharitable language? A palate, that never became the seat of luxurious indulgence? A throat that never was the channel of excess? A stomach, that never felt the oppressive load of abused mercies? Hands, that never plucked or touched the forbidden fruit of pleasing sin? Feet, that never once moved in the broad, downward road of iniquity? And a bosom, that never heaved under the dreadful workings of some exorbitant passion? Where, in short, is there a face, ever so disagreeable, that never was the object of self-worship in a glass? And where a body, however deformed, that never was set up as a favorite idol by the fallen spirit that inhabits it?

If iniquity thus works by all the powers, and breaks out through all the parts of the human body, we may conclude, by woeful experience, not only that the plague of sin is begun, but that it rages with universal fury; and to use again the evangelical prophet's words, that from the sole of the foot, even to the head of the natural man, there is no spiritual soundness in him, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.

TWENTY-SECOND ARGUMENT.

What can be said of each individual, may with the same propriety, be affirmed of all the different nations of the earth. Let an impartial judge take four unconverted men or children, from the four parts of the world. Let him examine their actions, and trace them back to their spring; and, if he makes some allowance for the accidental difference of their climate, constitution, taste and education, he will soon find their disposition as equally earthly, sensual, and devilish, as if they had all been cast in the same mold. Yes, as oak-trees are oaks all the world over, though by particular circumstances some grow taller and harder, and some more knotted and crooked than others, so all unregenerate men resemble one another; for all are proud, self-willed, impenitent, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Do not sloth, gluttony, drunkenness, and uncleanness; cheating, defrauding, stealing, and oppression; lying, perjury, treachery, and cruelty, stalk openly or lurk secretly every-where? Are not all these vices predominant among black and white people, among savages and civilized nations, among Turks and Jews, heathens and Christians, whether they live on the banks of the Ganges or the Thames, the Mississippi or the

Seine? whether they starve in the snows of Lapland, or burn in the sands of Guinea?

O sin! thou fatal pest: thou soul-destroying plague! would to God thy fixed abode were only in the Levant! and that like the external pestilence, thou wert chiefly confined to the Turkish dominions! But alas! the gross immorality and profaneness—the various crimes and villanies—the desperate impiety and wild blasphemy, under which every kingdom and city has groaned, and still continues to do night and day, over the face of the whole earth, are black spots so similar, and symptoms so equally terrible, that we are obliged to confess they must have a common internal principle—which can be no other than a bad habit of soul—a fallen, corrupted nature. Yes, the universality and equality of the effects show to an unprejudiced mind that the cause is universal, and equally interwoven with the nature which is common to all nations, and remains the same in all countries and ages.

FIVE OBJECTIONS.

I. If the self-righteous moralist answers that “sin and wickedness are not so universal as this argument supposes,” I reply that the more we are acquainted with ourselves, with the history of the dead, and secret transactions of the living, the more we are convinced, that if all are not guilty of cut-

ward enormities, all are deeply tainted with spiritual wickedness.

Even those excellent persons who, like Jeremiah, have been in part sanctified before they came forth out of the womb, can, from sad experience, confess with him that the heart is deceitful above all things, and say, with David, my heart showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly.

Thousands, indeed, boast of the goodness of their hearts; they flatter themselves that to be righteous, it is enough to avoid gross acts of intemperance and injustice; with the Pharisees, they shut their eyes against the destructive nature of the love of the world, the thirst of praise, the fear of men, the love of ease, sloth, sensuality, indevotion, self-righteousness, discontent, impatience, selfishness, carnal security, unbelief, hardness of heart, and a thousand other spiritual evils. Full of self-ignorance, like Peter, they imagine there is no combustible matter of wickedness in their breasts, because they are not actually fired by the spark of a suitable temptation. And when they hear what their corrupt nature may one day prompt them to do, they cry out with Hazeael, Am I a dog, that I should do this thing? Nevertheless, by and by they do it, if not outwardly, as he did, at least in their vain thoughts by day, or wicked, lewd imaginations by night. So true is the wise

man's saying, He that trusteth his own heart is a fool.

II. "If histories give us frequent accounts of the notorious wickedness of mankind—say the advocates of human excellence—it is because private virtue is not the subject of history; and to judge of the moral rectitude of the world by the corruption of courts, is as absurd as to estimate the health of a people from an infirmary."

And is private vice any more the subject of history than private virtue? If it were, what folios would contain the fulsome and black accounts of all the lies and scandal—the secret grudges and open quarrels—the filthy talking and malicious jesting—the unkind or unjust behavior—the gross or refined intemperance, which deluge both town and country?

Suppose the annals of any one numerous family were published, how many volumes might be filled with the detail of the undue fondness, or forbidden coldness—the variance, animosity, and strife, which break out between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, masters and domestics, upper and lower servants, &c.? What ridiculous, impertinent scenes would be opened to public view! What fretfulness, dissimulation, envy, jealousy, talebearing, deceit! What concealed suspicions, aggravated charges, false accusations, underhand

dealings, imaginary provocations, glaring partiality, insolent behavior, loud passions!

Was even the best moralist to write the memoirs of his own heart, and give the public a minute account of all his impertinent thoughts and wild imaginations, how many paragraphs would make him blush! How many pages, by presenting the astonished reader with a blank or a blot, would demonstrate the truth of St. Paul's assertion, They are all gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good, none but spoils his best works by a mixture of essential evil! Far, then, from finding* "those vastly superior numbers, who in safe obscurity are virtuously and innocently employed," we may every-where see the truth of the confession which our objectors make in the church, "There is no health in us."

I say every-where; for is cabal confined to court, any more than lewdness to the army, and profaneness to the navy? Does not the same spirit of self-interest and intrigue which influences the choice of ministers of state, preside also at the election of members of Parliament, mayors of corporate towns, burgesses of boroughs, and petty officers in a country parish? We may, then— notwithstanding the unfortunate comparison on which this objection is founded—con-

* See the note on page 47.

clude, without absurdity, that, as all men, sooner or later, by pain, sickness, and death, evidence their natural weakness and mortality—whether they live in infirmaries, palaces, or cottages—so all men, sooner or later, by their thoughts, words, and actions, demonstrate their natural corruption, whether they crowd the jail yard, the drawing-room, or the obscure green of a country village.

III. The same objectors will probably reply: “If corruption is universal, it can not be said to be equal; for numbers lead a very harmless, and not a few a very useful life.”

To this I answer, that all have naturally an evil heart of unbelief, forgetful of, and departing from the living God. In this respect, there is no difference; all the world is guilty before God. But, thanks be to the Father of mercies! all do not remain so. Many cherish the seed of supernatural grace, which we have from the Redeemer; they bow to his scepter, become new creatures, depart from iniquity, and are zealous of good works. And the same gracious power which has renewed them is at work upon thousands more, hourly restraining them from much evil, and daily exciting them to many useful actions.

With respect to the harmlessness, for which some unrenewed persons are remarkable, it can not spring from a better nature than that of their fellow-mortals; for the

nature of all men, like that of all wolves, is the same throughout the whole species. It must then be owing to the restraining grace of God, or to a happier constitution, a stricter education, a deeper sense of decency, or a greater regard for their character; perhaps only to the fear of consequences, and to the want of natural boldness, or of a suitable temptation and fair opportunity to sin. Nor are there few who pass for temperate, merely because the diabolical pride, lurking in their hearts, scorns to stoop so low as to indulge their beastly appetites: while others have the undeserved reputation of being good-natured, because they find more delight in quietly gratifying their sheepish indolence or brutal desires, than in yielding to the uneasy, boisterous tempers, which they have in common with devils.

As to the virtues by which some of the unconverted distinguish themselves from others, they either spring from God's preventing grace or are only vices in disguise. The love of praise, the desire of honor, and the thirst of gold, excite thousands to laudable designs and useful actions. Wicked men, set on work by these powerful springs, do lying wonders in the moral world, as the magicians did in the land of Egypt. They counterfeit divine grace, and for a time seem even to outdo believers themselves. Hence it is, that we frequently see the indolent in-

dustrious, the coward brave, the covetous charitable, the Pharisee religious, the Magdalen modest, and the dastardly slave of his lusts a bold asserter of public liberty. But the Searcher of hearts is not deceived by fair appearances: he judges of their actions according to the motives whence they spring, and the ends for which they are performed. You are, says he to all these seemingly-virtuous sinners, like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness.

Were I to describe these saints of the world by a comparison, I would say that some of them resemble persons who artfully conceal their ulcers, under the most agreeable appearance of cleanliness and health. Many that admire their faces and looks, little suspect what a putrid, virulent fluid runs out of their secret sores. Others of them, whose hypocrisy is not of so gross a kind, are like persons infected with a mortal disease, who, though the mass of their blood is tainted, and some noble part attacked, still walk about, do business, and look as fresh-colored as if they were the picture of health. Ye sons of Æsculapius, who, without feeling their pulse, and carefully weighing every symptom, pronounce them very well upon their look alone, do ye not blunder in physic, just as my objectors do in divinity?

IV. But still they urge, that “it is wrong to father our sinfulness upon a pretended natural depravity, when it may be entirely owing to the force of ill example, the influence of a bad education, or the strong ferments of youthful blood.”

All these, I reply, like rich soil and rank manure, cause original corruption to shoot the higher, but do not form its pernicious seeds. That these seeds lurk within the heart, before they are forced up by the heat of temptation, appears indubitable, if we consider, 1. That all children, on particular occasions, manifest some early inclinations to those sins, which the feebleness of their bodily organs, and the want of proper ferments in their blood, do not permit them to commit: 2. That infants betray envy, ill-humor, impatience, selfishness, anger, and obstinacy, even before they can take particular notice of ill examples, and understand bad counsels: and 3. That though uncleanness, fornication, and adultery, on account of the shame and danger attending them, are committed with so much secrecy, that the examples of them are seldom, if ever given in public, they are nevertheless some of the crimes which are most universally or eagerly committed.

Besides, if we were not more inclined to vice than virtue, good examples would be as common, and have as much force, as bad

ones. Therefore, the generality of bad examples can not arise but from the general sinfulness of man; and to account for this general sinfulness by the generality of bad examples, is begging the question, and not proving the point.

Add to this, that as weeds, since the curse, grow even in fields sown with the best wheat, so vice, since the fall, grows in the midst of the best examples, and the most excellent education: witness the barbarous crimes committed by pious Jacob's children, and penitent Adam's eldest son.

V. "But if Cain sinned," say our objectors, "and all mankind sin also, it is no more than Adam himself once did by his own free choice, though he was created as exempt from original depravity as an angel. What need is there then to suppose that he communicated to his posterity an inbred proneness to sin?"

To this I reply: it is not one accident or single event, but a continual repetition of the same event, that proves a proneness. If a man, who is perfectly in his senses, by some unforeseen accident falls into a fit of madness, we may account for his misfortune from that accident; and no certain judgment can be formed of the bodily habit of his family. But if all his children, through a hundred generations, are not only subject to the same mad fits, but also die in conse-

quence of them, in all sorts of climates, and under all sorts of physicians, common sense will not allow us to doubt, that it is now a family disorder, incurable by human art. The man is Adam, the family mankind, and the madness sin. Reader, you are desired to make the application.

TWENTY-THIRD ARGUMENT.

“But all are not employed in sin and wickedness, for many go through a constant round of innocent diversions; and these, at least, must be innocent and happy.” Let us then consider the amusements of mankind; or, rather, without stopping to look at the wise dance of the Israelites round the golden calf, and the modest, sober, and humane diversions of the heathens, in the festivals of their lewd, drunken, and bloody gods, let us see how far our own pleasures demonstrate the innocence and happiness of mankind.

How excessively foolish are the plays of children! How full of mischief and cruelty the sports of boys! How vain, foppish, and frothy the joys of young people! And how much below the dignity of upright, pure creatures, the snares that persons of different sexes perpetually lay for each other! When they are together, is not this their favorite amusement, till they are deservedly caught

in the net which they imprudently spread?
But see them asunder.

Here, a circle of idle women, supping a decoction of Indian herbs, talk or laugh all together, like so many chirping birds or chattering monkeys, and, scandal excepted, every way to as good purpose; and there, a club of grave men blow, by the hour, clouds of stinking smoke out of their mouth, or wash it down their throat with repeated draughts of intoxicating liquors. The strong fumes have already reached their heads; and while some stagger home, others triumphantly keep the field of excess; though one is already stamped with the heaviness of the ox, another worked up to the fierceness and roar of the lion, and a third brought down to the filthiness of the vomiting dog.

Leave them at their manly sport to follow those musical sounds, mixed with a noise of stamping, and you will find others profusely perspiring, and violently fatiguing themselves, in skipping up and down a room for a whole night, and ridiculously turning their backs and faces to each other a hundred different ways. Would not a man of sense prefer running ten miles upon a useful errand, to this useless manner of losing his rest, heating his blood, exhausting his spirits, unfitting himself for the duties of the following day, and laying the foundation of a putrid fever or a consumption, by breath-

ing the midnight air corrupted by clouds of dust, by the unwholesome fumes of candles, and by the more pernicious steam that issues from the bodies of many persons, who use a strong exercise in a confined place?

In the next room, indeed, they are more quiet; but are they more rationally employed? Why do they so earnestly rattle those ivory cubes, and so anxiously study those packs of loose spotted leaves? Is happiness graven upon the one, or stamped upon the other? Answer, ye gamesters, who curse your stars as ye go home, with an empty purse and a heart full of rage.

“We hope there is no harm in taking an innocent game at cards,” reply a ridiculous party of superannuated ladies; “gain is not our aim, we only play to kill time.” You are not, then, so well employed as the foolish heathen emperor, who amused himself in killing troublesome flies and wearisome time together. The delight of rational creatures, much more of Christians on the brink of the grave, is to redeem, improve, and solidly enjoy time; but yours, alas! consists in the bare, irreparable loss of that invaluable treasure! O, what account will you give of the souls you neglect, and the talents you bury!

And shall we kill each day! If trifling kill,
Sure vice must butcher. O! what heaps of slain
Call out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd
Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.—YOUNG.

And are public diversions better evidences of our innocence and happiness! Let reason decide. In cities, some are lavish of the gold which should be laid by for payment of their debts, or the relief of the poor, to buy an opportunity of acting, under a mask, an impertinent or immodest part without a blush; and others are guilty of the same injustice or prodigality, that they may be entitled to the honor of waiting upon a company of idle buffoons, and seeing them act what would make a modest woman blush, or hearing them speak what persons of true piety, or pure morals, would gladly pay them never to utter.

Are country amusements more rational and innocent? What shall we say of those Christian, or rather heathenish festivals, called wakes, annually kept in honor of the saint to whom the parish church was formally dedicated? Are they not celebrated with the idleness, vanity, and debauchery of the *floralia*—with the noise, riots, and frantic mirth of the *bacchanals*—rather than with the decent solemnity, pious cheerfulness, and strict temperance, which characterize the religion of the holy Jesus?

The assizes are held, the judge passes an awful sentence of transportation or death upon guilty wretches who stand, pale and trembling, before his tribunal; and twenty couple of gay gentlemen and ladies, as if

they rejoiced in the infamy and destruction of their fellow-mortals, dance all night, perhaps in the very apartment where the distracted victims of justice a few hours before wrung their hands and rattled their irons!

The races are advertised—all the country is in motion—neither business, rain, nor storm, can prevent thousands from running for miles, and sometimes through the worst of roads, to feast their eyes upon the danger of their fellow-creatures, and divert themselves with the misery of the most useful animals. Daring mortals hazard their necks upon swift coursers, which are tortured by the severest lashes of the whip, and incessant pricks or tearing gashes of the spur, that they may exert their utmost force, strain every nerve, and make continued efforts even beyond the powers of nature; whence—to say nothing of the fatal accidents, which yet, alas! too frequently happen—they sometimes pant away their wretched lives in a bath of sweat and blood; and all this, that they may afford a barbarous pleasure to their idle, wanton, and barbarous beholders.

In one place, the inhuman sport is afforded by an unhappy bird, fixed at a distance, that the sons of cruelty may long exercise their merciless skill in its lingering and painful destruction, or by two of them trained up and high fed for the battle. The hour fixed

for the obstinate engagement is come; and, as if it was not enough that they should pick other's eyes out with the strong bills nature has given them, human malice, or rather diabolical cruelty, comes to the assistance of their native fierceness. Silver spurs, or steel talons, sharper than those of the eagle, are barbarously fastened to their feet; thus armed, they are excited to leap at each other, and, in a hundred repeated onsets, to tear their feathers and flesh as if they were contending vultures; and if, at last, one, blinded, covered with blood and wounds, and unable to stand any longer the metallic claws of his antagonist, enters into the agonies of death, the numerous ring of stamping, clapping, shouting, eagerly-betting, or horribly-cursing spectators, is as highly delighted as if the tortured, dying creature was the common enemy of mankind.

In another place, a multitude of spectators is delightfully entertained by two brawny men, who unmercifully knock one another down, as if they were oxen appointed for the slaughter, and continue the savage play till one, with his flesh bruised and his bones shattered, bleeding and gasping as in the pangs of death, yields to his antagonist, and thus puts an end to the shocking sport.

But it is, perhaps, a different spectacle that recommends itself to the bloody taste of our baptized heathens. Fierce dogs are

excited by fiercer men, with fury to fasten upon the nose, or tear out the eyes, of a poor confined animal, which pierces the sky with its painful and lamentable bellowings, enough to force compassion from the heart of barbarians not totally lost to all sense of humanity; while, in the mean time, the surrounding savage mob rend the very heavens with the most horrid imprecations and shouts of applauding joy; sporting themselves with that very misery which human nature—were it not deplorably corrupted—would teach them to alleviate.*

These are thy favorite amusements, O England, thou center of the civilized world,

* “I ever thought,” says Judge Hale, in his *Contemplations*, “that there is a certain degree of justice due from man to the creatures, as from man to man; and that an excessive use of the creature’s labor is an injustice for which he must account. I have, therefore, always esteemed it as a part of my duty, and it has always been my practice, to be merciful to my beasts; and upon the same account I have declined any cruelty to any of thy creatures, and, as much as I might, prevented it in others as a tyranny. I have abhorred those sports that consist in the torturing of thy creatures; and if any noxious creature must be destroyed, or creatures for food must be taken, it has been my practice to do it in the manner that may be with the least torture or cruelty to the creature; ever remembering that though God has given us a dominion over his creatures, yet it is under a law of justice, prudence, and moderation; otherwise we should become tyrants and not lords over God’s creatures; and therefore those things of this nature, which others have practiced as recreations, I have avoided as sins.”

where reformed Christianity, deep-thinking wisdom, and polite learning, with all its refinements, have fixed their abode! But, in the name of common sense, how can we clear them from the imputation of absurdity, folly, and madness? And by what means can they be reconciled, I will not say to the religion of the meek Jesus, but to the philosophy of a Plato, or calm reason of any thinking man? How perverted must be the taste, how irrational and cruel the diversions of barbarians in other parts of the globe! And how applicable to all the wise man's observation: "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, and madness in the breasts of the sons of men."

TWENTY-FOURTH ARGUMENT.

The total corruption of our nature appears not only in the inclination of mankind to pursue irrational and cruel amusements, but in their general propensity to commit the most unprofitable, ridiculous, inhuman, impious, and diabolical sins.

1. The most unprofitable; for instance, that of sporting in profane oaths and curses, with the tremendous name of the supreme Being. Because of swearing the land mourneth, said a prophet, thousands of years ago; and what land, even in Christendom, yea, what parish in this reformed island mourns not, or ought not to mourn, for the

same provoking crime? a crime which is the hellish offspring of practical Atheism and heathenish insolence — a crime that brings neither profit, honor, nor pleasure to the profane wretch who commits it— a crime for which he may be put to open shame, forced to appear before a magistrate, and sent for ten days to the house of correction, unless he pays an ignominious fine; and what is more awful still, a crime which, if persisted in, will one day cause him to gnaw his impious tongue in the severest torments. Surely man, who drinks this insipid, and yet destructive iniquity like water, must have his moral taste strangely vitiated, not to say diabolically perverted.

2. The most ridiculous sins. In what country, town, or village, do not women betray their silly vanity? Is it not the same foolish disposition of heart, which makes them bore their ears in Europe, and slit their noses in America, that they may unnaturally graft in their flesh pieces of glass, shining pebbles, glittering gold, or trinkets of meaner metals? And when female Hottentots fancy they add to the importance of their filthy person by some yards of the bloody intestines of a beast twisted round their arms or necks, do they not evidence the very spirit of the ladies in our hemisphere, who too often measure their dignity by the yards of colored silk bands with which they crown

themselves, and turn the grave matron into a pitiful May queen!

3. The most inhuman sins. "A hundred thousand mad animals, whose heads are covered with hats," says Voltaire, "advance to kill, or to be killed, by a like number of their fellow-mortals, covered with turbans. By this strange procedure, they want, at best to decide whether a tract of land, to which none of them all lays any claim, shall belong to a certain man whom they call Sultan, or to another whom they name Cesar, neither of whom ever saw, or will see, the spot so furiously contended for; and very few of those creatures who thus mutually butcher one another, ever beheld the animal for whom they cut each other's throats. From time immemorial this has been the way of mankind almost over all the earth. What an excess of madness is this! And how deservedly might a superior Being crush to atoms this earthly ball, the bloody nest of such ridiculous murderers!"

The same author makes elsewhere the following reflections on the same melancholy subject. "Famine, pestilence, and war, are the three most famous ingredients of this lower world. The two first come from God; but the last, in which all three concur, comes from the imagination of princes or ministers. A king fancies that he has a right to a distant province. He

raises a multitude of men, who have nothing to do, and nothing to lose, gives them a red coat and a laced hat, and makes them wheel to the right, and wheel to the left, and march to glory. Five or six of these belligerent powers sometimes engage together, three against three, or two against four; but whatever part they take, they all agree in one point—which is, to do their neighbor all possible mischief. The most astonishing thing belonging to their infernal undertaking is, that every ringleader of those murderers gets his colors consecrated and solemnly blessed in the name of God, before he marches up to the destruction of his fellow-creatures. If a chief warrior has had the good fortune of getting only two or three thousand men slaughtered, he does not think it worth while to thank God for it; but if ten thousand have been destroyed by fire and sword, and it, to complete his good fortune, some capital city has been totally overthrown, a day of public thanksgiving is appointed on the joyful occasion. Is not that a fine art which carries such desolation through the earth, and one year with another, destroys forty thousand men out of a hundred thousand!”

4. The most impious sins; for instance, that of idolatry. “Before the coming of Christ,” says a late divine, “all the polite and barbarous nations among the heathens

plunged into it with equal blindness. And the Jews were so strongly wedded to it, that God's miraculous interposition, both by dreadful judgments and astonishing mercies, could not for eight hundred years restrain them from committing it in the grossest manner."

Nor need we look at either heathens or Jews, to see the proneness of mankind to that detestable crime: Christians alone can prove the charge. To this day, the greatest part of them pray to dead men and dead women, bow to images of stone and crosses of wood, and make, adore, and swallow down the wafer god; and those who pity them for this ridiculous idolatry, till converting grace interposes, daily set up their idols in their hearts, and, without going to the plain of Dura, sacrifice all to the king's golden image.

And, 5. The most diabolical sin: persecution, that favorite offspring of Satan, transformed into an angel of light. Persecution, that bloody, hypocritical monster, which carries a Bible, a liturgy, and a bundle of canons, in one hand, with fire, fagots, and all the weapons invented by cruelty in the other; and with sanctified looks, distresses, racks, or murders men, either because they love God or because they can not all think alike.

Time would fail to tell of those who, on religious accounts, have been stoned and sawn asunder by the Jews, cast to the lions and burnt by the heathens, strangled and impaled by the Mohammedans, and butchered in all manner of ways by the Christians.

Yes, we must confess it, Christian Rome hath glutted herself with the blood of martyrs, which heathenish Rome had but comparatively tasted; and when Protestants fled from her bloody pale, they brought along with them too much of her bloody spirit: prove the sad assertion, poor Servetus. When Romish inquisition had forced thee to fly to Geneva, what reception didst thou meet with in that reformed city? Alas! the Papists had burned thee in effigy, the Protestants burned thee in reality, and Moloch triumphed to see the two opposite parties agree in offering him the human sacrifice.

So universally restless is the spirit of persecution, which inspires the unrenewed part of mankind, that when people of the same religion have no outward opposer to tear, they bark at, bite, and devour one another. Is it not the same bitter zeal that made the Pharisees and Saducees among the Jews, and now makes the sects of Ali and Omar among the Mohammedans, those of the Jansenists and Molinists among the Papists, and those of the Calvinists and Arminians

among the Protestants, oppose each other with such acrimony and virulence?

But let us look around us at home. When persecuting Popery had almost expired in the fires in which it burned our first churchmen, how soon did those who survived them commence persecutors of the Presbyterians? When these, forced to fly to New England for rest, got there the staff of power in their hand, did they not, in their turn, fall upon, and even hang the Quakers? And now that an act of toleration binds the monster, and the lash of pens, consecrated to the defense of our civil and religious liberties, makes him either afraid or ashamed of roaring aloud for his prey, does he not show, by his supercilious looks, malicious sneers, and settled contempt of vital piety, what he would do should an opportunity offer? And does he not still, under artful pretenses, go to the utmost length of his chain, to wound the reputation of those whom he can not devour, and inflict at least* academic death upon those whose person is happily secured from his rage?

O, ye unconverted among mankind, if all these abominations every-where break out upon you, what cages of unclean birds, what nests swarming with cruel vipers, are your deceitful and desperately-wicked hearts!

* See *Pietas Oxoniensis*.

TWENTY-FIFTH ARGUMENT.

How dreadfully fallen is man, if he has not only a propensity to commit the above-mentioned sins, but to transgress the Divine commands with a variety of shocking aggravations! Yes, mankind are prone to sin:

I. Immediately, by a kind of evil instinct; as children who peevishly strike the very breast they suck, and betray the rage of their little hearts by sobbing and swelling sometimes till, by forcing their bowels out of their place, they bring a rupture upon themselves; and frequently till they are black in the face, and almost suffocated. II. Deliberately; as those who, having life and death clearly set before them, willfully, obstinately, choose the way that leads to certain destruction. III. Repeatedly; witness liars, who, because their crime costs them but a breath, frequently commit it at every breath. IV. Continually; as rakes, who would make their whole life one uninterrupted scene of debauchery, if their exhausted strength, or purse, did not force them to intermit their lewd practices, though not without a promise to renew them again at the first convenient opportunity. V. Treacherously; as those Christians who forget Divine mercies, and their own repeated resolutions, break

through the solemn vows and promises made in their sacraments, and, sinning with a high hand against their profession, perfidiously fly in the face of their conscience, the Church, and their Savior. VI. Daringly; as those who steal under the gallows, openly insult their parents or their king, laugh at all laws, human and divine, and put at defiance all that are invested with power to see them executed. VII. Triumphantly; as the vast number of those who glory in their shame, sound aloud the trumpet of their own wickedness, and boast of their horrid, repeated debaucheries, as admirable and praiseworthy deeds. VIII. Progressively; till they have filled up the measure of their iniquities, as individuals; witness Judas, who, from covetousness, proceeded to hypocrisy, theft, treason, despair, and self-murder; or, as a nation, witness the Jews, who, after despising and killing their prophets, rejected the Son of God, affirmed he was mad, stigmatized him with the name of deceiver, said he was Beelzebub himself, offered him all manner of indignities, bought his blood, prayed it might be on them and their children, rested not till they had put the Prince of Life to the most ignominious death, and, horrible to say! made sport with the groans which rent the rocks around them, and threw the earth into convulsions under their feet. IX. Unnaturally; 1. By

astonishing barbarities, as the women who murder their own children, the Greeks and Romans, who exposed them to be the living prey of wild beasts, the savages, who knock their aged parents on the head, the cannibals, who roast and eat their prisoners of war, and some revengeful people, who, to taste all the sweetness of their devilish passion, have murdered their enemy, and eaten up his liver and heart. 2. By the most diabolical superstitions; as the Israelites, who, when they had learned the works of the heathens, sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils, and, by the horrible practices of witchcraft, endeavored to raise, and deal with infernal spirits; and 3. By the most preposterous gratification of sense; witness the incests* and rapes committed in this land, the infamous fires which drew fire and brimstone down from heaven upon accursed cities, and the horrid lusts of the Canaanites — though, alas! not confined to

* The reason which engaged the publisher of these sheets to preach to some of the colliers in his neighborhood, was the horrid length they went in immorality. One of them, whose father was hanged, upon returning himself from transportation, in cold blood, attempted to ravish his own daughter in the presence of his own wife, and was just prevented from completing his crime, by the utmost exertion of the united strength of the mother and child. When brutish ignorance and heathenish wickedness break out into such unnatural enormities, who would not break through the hedge of canonical regularity?

Canaan — which gave birth to the laws recorded, Lev. xvii. 7, 23, and xx. 16*—laws that are at once the disgrace of mankind, and the proof of my assertion. X. What is most astonishing of all, by apostasy; as those who, having begun in the spirit, and tasted the bitterness of repentance, the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, make shipwreck of the faith, deny the Lord that bought them, account the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and so scandalously end in the flesh, that they are justly compared to trees withered, plucked up by the roots, twice dead, and to raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Good God! what line can fathom an abyss of corruption, the overflowings of which are more or less attended with these multiplied and shocking aggravations?

TWENTY-SIXTH ARGUMENT.

If the force of a torrent may be known by the height and number of the banks which it overflows, the strength of this corruption will be rightly estimated from the high and

* In the last century, an Irish bishop was clearly convicted of the crime forbidden in those laws, and suffered death for it.

numerous dikes raised to stem it, which it nevertheless continually breaks through.

Ignorance and debauchery, injustice and impiety, in all their shapes, still overspread the whole earth, notwithstanding innumerable means used in all ages to suppress and prevent them.

The almost total extirpation of mankind by the deluge, the fiery showers that consumed Sodom, the ten Egyptian plagues, the entire excision of whole nations who were once famous for their wickedness, the captivities of the Jews, the destruction of thousands of cities and kingdoms, and millions of more private judgments, never fully stopped immorality in any one country.

The striking miracles wrought by prophets, the alarming sermons preached by divines, the infinite number of good books published in almost all languages, and the founding of myriads of churches, religious houses, schools, colleges, and universities, have not yet caused impiety to hide its brazen face anywhere. The making of all sorts of excellent laws, the appointing of magistrates and judges to put them in force, the forming of associations, for the reformation of manners, the filling of thousands of prisons, and erecting of millions of racks and gallowses, have not yet suppressed one vice.

And what is most amazing of all, the life, miracles, sufferings, death, and heavenly

doctrine of the Son of God ; the labors, writings, and martyrdom of his disciples ; the example and entreaties of millions that have lived and died in the faith ; the inexpressible horrors and frightful warnings of thousands of wicked men, who have testified in their last moments, that they had worked out their damnation, and were just going to their own place ; the blood of myriads of martyrs, the strivings of the Holy Spirit, the dreadful curses of the law, and the glorious promises of the Gospel—all these means together have not extirpated immorality and profaneness out of one single town or village in all the world ; no, nor out of one single family for any length of time. And this will probably continue to be the desperate case of mankind, till the Lord lays to his powerful hand ; seconds these means by the continued strokes of the sword of his Spirit ; pleads by fire and sword with all flesh, and, according to his promise, causes righteousness to cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

Is not this demonstration founded on matter of fact, that human corruption is not only deep as the ocean, but impetuous as an overflowing river which breaks down all its banks, and leaves marks of devastation in every place ? This will still appear in a clearer light, if we consider the strong opposition which our natural depravity makes to divine grace in the unconverted.

TWENTY-SEVENTH ARGUMENT.

When the Lord, by the rod of affliction, the sword of the Spirit, and the power of his grace, attacks the hard heart of a sinner, how obstinately does he resist the sharp, though gracious operation! To make an honorable and vigorous defense, he puts on the shining robes of his formality; he stands firm in the boasted armor of his moral powers; he daubs with untempered mortar the ruinous wall of his conduct; with self-righteous resolutions, and pharisaic professions of virtue, he builds, as he thinks, an impregnable tower; musters and draws up in battle array his poor works, artfully putting in the front those that make the finest appearance, and carefully concealing the vices which he can neither disguise nor dress up in the regimentals of virtue.

In the meantime he prepares the carnal weapons of his warfare, and raises the battery of a multitude of objections to silence the truth that begins to gall him. He affirms "the preachers of it are deceivers and madmen," till he sees the Jews and heathens fixed even upon Christ and St. Paul the very same opprobrious names; he calls it a "new doctrine," till he is obliged to acknowledge that it is as old as the reformers, the apostles, and the prophets; he says "it

is fancy, delusion, enthusiasm," till the blessed effects of it on true believers constrain him to drop the trite and slanderous assertion; he declares that "it drives people out of their senses, or makes them melancholy," till he is compelled to confess that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that none are so happy and joyful as those who truly love and zealously serve God; he urges that "it destroys good works," till a sight of the readiness of believers, and of his own backwardness to perform them, makes him ashamed of the groundless accusation; he will tell you twenty times over, "there is no need of so much ado," till he discovers the folly of being careless on the brink of eternal ruin, and observes that the nearness of temporal danger puts him upon the utmost exertion of all his powers. Perhaps, to get himself a name among his profane companions, he lampoons the Scriptures, or casts out firebrands and arrows against the despised disciples of Jesus: "They are all poor, illiterate," says he, "fools or knaves, cheats and hypocrites," etc., till the word of God stops his mouth, and he sees himself the greatest hypocrite with whom he is acquainted.

When by such heavy charges he has long kept off the truth from his heart, and the servants of God from his company, this kind of ammunition begins to fail; and he bari-

cedes himself with the fear of being undone in his circumstances, till experience convinces him that no good thing shall God withhold from them that live a godly life, and that all things shall be added to them who seek first the kingdom of God. He then hides himself in the crowd of the ungodly, and says, "if he perishes, many will share the same fate," till he sees the glaring absurdity of going to hell for the sake of company. He shelters, at last, under the protection of the rich, the great, the learned despisers of Christ and the cross, till the mines of their wickedness springing on all sides around him, makes him fly to the sanctuary of the Lord; and there he sees the ways and understands the end of these men.

When all his batteries are silenced, and a breach is made in his conscience, he looks out for some secret way to leave Sodom, without being taken notice of, and derided by those who fight under Satan's banner; and the fear of being taken for one of them that fly from the wrath to come, and openly take the part of a holy God against a sinful world, pierces him through with many sorrows.

Are the outworks taken, has he been forced to part with his gross immoralities, he has generally recourse to a variety of stratagems. Sometimes he publicly dis-

misses Satan's garrison—fleshly lusts which war against the godly, and keep under the ungodly soul; but it is only to let them in again secretly, either one by one or with forces seven times greater, so that his last state is worse than the first. At other times he hoists up the white flag of truth, apparently yields to conviction, favors the ministers of the Gospel, admits the language of Canaan, and warmly contends for evangelical doctrines; but, alas! the place has not surrendered, his heart is not given to God; spiritual wickedness, under fair shows of zeal, still keeps possession for the god of this world; and the shrewd hypocrite artfully imitates the behavior of a true Israelite, just as Satan transforms himself to an angel of light.

Is he at last deeply convinced, that the only means of escaping destruction and capitulating to advantage is, to deliver up the traitor sin! Yet what a long parley does he hold about it! What a multitude of plausible reasons does he advance to put it off from day to day! "He is yet young—the Lord is merciful—all have their foibles—we are here in an imperfect state—it is a little sin—it may be consistent with loyalty to God—it hurts nobody but himself—many pious men were once guilty of it—by and by he will repent as they did," etc. When louder summons and increasing fears com-

pel him to renounce the lusts of the flesh, how strongly does he plead for those of the mind! And after he has given up his bosom sin with his lips, how treacherously does he hide it in the inmost recesses of his heart!

Never did a besieged town dispute the ground with such obstinacy, and hold out by such a variety of stratagems, as corrupt man stands it out against the repeated attacks of truth and grace. If he yields at all, it is seldom before he is brought to the greatest extremity. He feeds on the dust of the earth: he tries to fill his soul with the husks of vanity, and fares hard on sounds, names, forms, opinions, withered experience, dry notions of faith, and empty professions of hope, and fawning shows of love, till the mighty famine arises, and the intolerable want of substantial bread forces him to surrender at discretion, and without reserve.

Some stand it out thus against the God of their salvation ten or twenty years; and others never yield till the terrors of death storm their affrighted souls, their last sickness batters down their tortured bodies, and the poison of the arrows of the Almighty drinks up their wasted spirits. What a strong proof is this of the inveteracy and the obstinacy of our corruption!

TWENTY-EIGHTH ARGUMENT.

But a still stronger may be drawn from the amazing struggles of God's children with their depravity, even after they have, through grace, powerfully subdued, and gloriously triumphed over it. Their Redeemer himself is the Captain of their salvation; they are embarked with him and bound for heaven; they look at the compass of God's word; they hold the rudder of sincerity; they crowd all the sails of their good resolutions, and pious affections, to catch the gales of Divine assistance; they exhort one another daily, to ply the oars of faith and prayer with watchful industry; tears of deep repentance and fervent desire often bedew their faces in the pious toil; they would rather die than draw back to perdition; but, alas! the stream of corruption is so impetuous, that it often prevents their making any sensible progress in their spiritual voyage; and if in an unguarded hour they drop the oar, and faint in the work of faith, the patience of hope, or the labor of love, they are presently carried down into the dead sea of religious formality, or the whirlpools of scandalous wickedness. Witness the lukewarmness of the Laodiceans — the adultery of David — the perjury of Peter — the final apostasy of Judas, and the shameful flight of all the disciples.

TWENTY-NINTH ARGUMENT.

When evidences of the most opposite interest agree in their deposition of a matter of fact, its truth is greatly corroborated. To the last argument, taken from some sad experiences of God's people, I shall, therefore, add one drawn from the religious rites of Paganism, the confessions of ancient heathens, and the testimony of modern Deists.

When the heathens made their temples stream with the blood of slaughtered hecatombs, did they not often explicitly deprecate the wrath of Heaven and impending destruction? And was it not a sense of their guilt and danger, and a hope that the punishment they deserved might be transferred to their bleeding victims, which gave birth to their numerous expiatory and propitiatory sacrifices? If this must be granted, it is plain those sacrifices were so many proofs that the considerate heathens were not utter strangers to their corruption and danger.

But let them speak their own sentiments. Not to mention their allegorical fables of Prometheus, who brought a curse upon earth by stealing fire out of heaven, and of Pandora, whose fatal curiosity let all sorts of woes and diseases loose upon mankind, does not Ovid, in his *Metamorphoses*, give a striking account of the fall and its dreadful consequences? Read his description of the

golden age, and you see Adam in Paradise; proceed to the iron age, and you behold the horrid picture of our consummate wickedness.

If the ancients had no idea of that native propensity to evil which we call original depravity, what did Plato mean by our natural wickedness? * And Pythagoras, by the fatal companion, the noxious strife that lurks within us, and was born along with us? † Did not Solon take for his motto the well-known saying which, though so much neglected now, was formerly written in golden capitals over the door of Apollo's temple at Delphos, Know thyself? ‡ Are we not informed by the heathen historians that Socrates, the prince of the Greek sages, acknowledged he was naturally prone to the grossest vices? Does not Seneca, the best of the Roman philosophers, observe, We are born in such a condition, that we are not subject to fewer disorders of the mind than of the body? § Yea, that all vices are

* *Kakia en phusei*. Hence that excellent definition of true religion. *Therapeia psuches*. The cure of a diseased soul.

† *Eurethre gar sunopados eris blaptousa leletheu Sumphtuos*. Aur. Carm.

‡ *Gnothi seauton*.

§ *Hac conditione nati sumus*. *Animalia obnoxia non paucioribus animi quam corporis morbis*.

in all men, though they do not break out in every one: * and that to confess them is the beginning of our cure? † And had not Cicero lamented before Seneca, that men are brought into life by nature as a step-mother, with a naked, frail, and infirm body, and a soul prone to divers lusts?

Even some of the sprightliest poets bear their testimony to the mournful truth I contend for. Propertius could say, Every body has a vice to which he is inclined by nature. ‡ Horace declared, that no man is born free from vices, and that he is the best man who is oppressed with the least; § that mankind rush into wickedness, and always desire what is forbidden; || that youth hath the softness of wax to receive vicious impressions, and the hardness of a rock to resist virtuous admonitions; ¶ in a word, that we are mad enough to attack heaven itself, and that our repeated crimes do not suffer

* Omnia in omnibus vitia sunt, sed non omnia in singulis extant.

† Vitia sua confiteri sanitatis principium est.

‡ Unicuique dedit vitium natura creato.

§ Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur, optimus ille est, Qui minimis urgetur.

|| Gens humana ruit per vitium nefas,
Nitimur in vitium semper cupimusque negata.

¶ Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper.

the God of heaven to lay by his wrathful thunderbolts.*

And Juvenal, as if he had understood what St. Paul says of the carnal mind, affirms that nature, unchangeably fixed, tends, yea, runs back to wickedness, as bodies to their center.†

Thus the very depositions of the heathens, in their lucid intervals, as well as their sacrifices, prove the depravity and danger of mankind. And so does likewise the testimony of some of our modern Deistical philosophers.

The ingenious author of a book called *Philosophical Inquiries concerning the Americans*, informs us, it is a custom among some Indians, that as soon as the wife is delivered of a child, the husband must take to his bed, where he is waited on by the poor woman who should have been brought there; and that to this day, the same ridiculous custom prevails in some parts of France. “From this and other instances,” says our Inquirer, “we may collect that, however men may differ in other points, there is a most striking conformity among them in *absurdity*.”

* Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia; neque
Per nostrum patimur scelus
Iracunda Jovem ponere fulmina.

† Ad mores natura recurrit
Damnatos, fixa et mutari nescia.

The same philosopher, who is by no means tainted with what some persons are pleased to call enthusiasm, confirms the doctrine of our natural depravity by the following anecdote, and the ironical observation with which it is closed. The Esquimaux—the wildest and most sottish people in all America—call themselves men, and all other nations barbarians. “Human vanity, we see, thrives equally well in all climates; in Labrador as in Asia. Beneficent nature has dealt out as much of this comfortable quality to a Greenlander, as to the most consummate French *petit maitre*.”

The following testimony is so much more striking, as it comes from one of the greatest poets, philosophers, and Deists of this present free-thinking age. “Who can without horror consider the whole earth as the empire of destruction! It abounds in wonders, it abounds also in victims; it is a vast field of carnage and contagion. Every species is, without pity, pursued and torn to pieces through the earth, and air, and water. In man there is more wretchedness than in all other animals put together; he smarts continually under two scourges, which other animals never feel—anxiety, and a listlessness in appetite, which makes him weary of himself. He loves life, and yet he knows that he must die. If he enjoys some transient good, for which he is thankful to hea-

ven, he suffers various evils, and is at last devoured by worms. This knowledge is his fatal prerogative: other animals have it not. He feels it every moment rankling and corroding in his breast. Yet he spends the transient moment of his existence in diffusing the misery that he suffers—in cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay—in cheating and in being cheated—in robbing and in being robbed—in serving that he may command, and in repenting of all that he does. The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches, equally criminal and unfortunate, and the globe contains rather carcasses than men. I tremble, upon a review of this dreadful picture, to find that it implies a complaint against Providence, and I wish that I had never been born.”—*Voltaire's Gospel of the Day*.*

* Wild error is often the guide, and glaring contradiction the badge, both of those who reject revelation, like Voltaire, and of those who indirectly set aside one-half of it, like the Pharisees and Antinomians around us. See a striking proof of it. This very author, in another book—O! see what antichristian morality comes to—represents the horrible sin of Sodom as an excusable mistake of nature, and assures us, that, “At the worst of times, there is at most upon the earth, one man in a thousand that can be called wicked.” Now for the proof! Hardly do we see one of those enormous crimes that shock human nature committed in ten years, at Rome, Paris, or London, those cities where the thirst of gain, which is the parent of all crimes, is carried to the highest pitch. If men were essentially wicked, we

THIRTIETH ARGUMENT.

And yet, O strange infatuation! vain man will be wise, and wicked man pretends to be righteous! Far from repenting in the dust, he pleads his innocence, and claims the rewards of imaginary merit! Incredible as

should find every morning husbands murdered by their wives, etc., as we do hens killed by foxes." According to this apostle of the Deistical world, it seems, that the most intense thirst of gold is no degree of wickedness; that a woman to be very good, needs only not to cut her husband's throat while he is asleep; and that it even little matters whether she omits the dire murder out of regard to his life, or her own. What moral philosophy is here! Why, if the sin of Sodom is a peccadillo, or frolicsome mistake, and nothing is wickedness but a treacherous cutting of a husband's or a parent's throat, I extend my charity four times beyond thee, O Voltaire, and do maintain that there is not one wicked man in five thousand.

I insert this note to obviate the charges of severe critics, who accuse me of dealing in "gross misrepresentations, false quotations, and forgeries," because I quote some authors, when they speak as the oracles of God; and do not swell my book with their inconsistencies, when they contradict the Scriptures, reason, and the truths which they themselves have advanced in some happy moments; and because I cannot force my reason to maintain with them both sides of a glaring contradiction.

O, ye Deistical moralists, let me meet with more candor, justice, and mercy from you, than I have done from the warm opposers of the second Gospel axiom. It is enough that you discard Scripture; do not, like them, make it a part of your orthodoxy to murder reason, and kick common sense out of doors.

the assertion is, a thousand witnesses are ready to confirm it.

Come forth, ye natural sons of virtue, who, with scornful boasts, attack the doctrine of man's depravity! To drown the whispers of reason and experience, sound each your own trumpet—thank God that you “are not as other men”—inform us you “have a good heart” and “a clear conscience;” assure us, you “do your duty, your endeavors, your best endeavors,” to please the Author of your lives; vow you “never were guilty of any crime, never did any harm;” and tell us, you hope to mount to heaven, on the strong pinions of your “good works and pious resolutions.”

When you have thus acted the Pharisee's part before your fellow-creatures, go to your Creator, and assume the character of the publican. Confess with your lips, you are miserable sinners, who have done what you ought not to have done, and left undone what you ought to have done. Protest, there is no health in you; complain that the remembrance of your sins is grievous to you, and the burden of them intolerable. But remember, O ye self-righteous formalists, that by this glaring inconsistency you give the strongest proof of your unrighteousness. You are, nevertheless, modest, when compared with your brethren of the Romish Church.

These, far from thinking themselves unprofitable servants, fancy they are literally righteous over much. Becoming merit-mongers, they make a stock of their works of supererogation, set up shop with the righteousness they can spare to others, and expose to sale indulgences and pardons out of their pretended treasury. Nor are there wanting sons of Simon, who, with ready money, purchase, as they think, not livings in the Church below, but, what is far preferable, seats in the Church above, and good places at the heavenly court.

Was ever a robe of righteousness—I had almost said a fool's coat—so coarsely woven by the slaves of imposture and avarice! And so dearly bought by the sons of superstition and credulity!

O, ye spiritual Ethiopians, who paint yourselves all over with the corroding white of hypocrisy, and, after all, are artful enough to lay on red paint, and imitate the blush of humble modesty—ye that borrow virtue's robes to procure admiration, and put on religion's cloak to hide your shameful deformity—ye that deal in external righteousness, to carry on with better success the most sordid of all trades, that of sin; of the worst of sins, pride; of the worst of pride, which is spiritual—ye numerous followers of those whom the prophet of Christians called crafty serpents, and soft brood of vipers—

ye to whom he declared that publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of heaven before you ; if I call you in last to prove the desperate wickedness of the human heart, it is not because I esteem you the weakest advocates of the truth I contend for, but because you really are the strongest of my witnesses.

And now, candid reader, forget not plain matter of fact, recollect the evidence given by reason, pass sentence upon these last arguments which I have offered to thy consideration, and say, whether man's disposition and conduct to his Creator, his fellow-creatures, and himself, do not abundantly prove that he is by nature in a fallen and lost estate.

FOURTH PART.

THE preceding arguments recommend themselves to the common sense of thinking heathens, and the conscience of reasonable Deists, as being all taken from those two amazing volumes, which are open and legible to all—the world and man. The following are taken from a third volume, the Bible, despised by the wits of the age, merely because they study and understand it even less than the other two.

THIRTY-FIRST ARGUMENT.

The spiritual life of the soul consists in its union with God, as the natural life of the body does in its union with the soul: and as poison and the sword kill the latter, so unbelief and sin destroy the former.

The first man was endued with this twofold life. God, says the divine historian, breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living body and a living soul; he had both an animal life in common with beasts and a spiritual life in common with angels. St. Paul, who calls this angelical life the life of God, intimates that it consisted both in that experimental knowledge of our Creator, wherein "standeth our eternal life," and in righteousness and true holiness, the moral and most glorious image of the Supreme Being.

To suppose man was created void of this essential knowledge and holy love, is to suppose he came very wicked out of the hands of the Parent of all good; for what is a rational creature that neither knows nor loves his Creator, but a monster of stupidity and ingratitude, a wretch actually dead to God, and deserving present destruction?

When the Lord therefore said to man, in the day that thou eatest thereof, that is, in the day that thou sinnest, thou shalt surely

die, it was as if he had said, "in that very day sin shall assuredly separate between thee and the God of thy life; thou shalt certainly lose the glorious view which thou hast of my boundless goodness and infinite perfections; thou shalt infallibly quench the spirit of ardent love, and stop the breath of delightful praise, by which thou livest both to my glory and thy comfort; and thy soul, dead in trespasses and sins, shall remain in the filthy prison of a mortal body, till death breaks it open, to remove thee to thy own place."

And was not this Adam's case after his fall? Did he not know that he was naked—stripped of the glorious image of his Creator? Did not guilty shame immediately prompt him to hide and protect, as well as he could, his degenerate and enfeebled body? Devoid of the ardent love he felt for God before, and of the pure delight he enjoyed in him, was not he left the wretched prey of tormenting fears? Did he not evidence his hatred of his heavenly Benefactor, by dreading his voice, and flying from him as hastily as he should have fled from the infernal serpent?

Was he not deprived of the knowledge by which, at first sight, he discovered the nature of Eve, and gave to all living creatures names expressive of their respective properties? Was he not, I say, deprived of that

intuitive knowledge and excellent wisdom, when he foolishly hid himself among the trees from his all-seeing, omnipresent Creator? And is it not evident that he was lost to all sense of filial fear toward God, and conjugal love toward Eve, when, instead of self-accusations, penitential confessions, and earnest pleas for mercy, he showed nothing at his trial but stubbornness, malice, and insolence?

Such was the state of corruption into which Adam had deplorably fallen, before he multiplied the human species. Now, according to the invariable laws of Providence, an upright, holy nature can no more proceed from a fallen, sinful one, than gentle lambs can be begotten by fierce tigers, or harmless doves by venomous serpents. Common sense, therefore, and natural philosophy, dictate that our first parents could not communicate the angelical life which they had lost, nor impart to their children a better nature than their own, and that their depravity is as much ours by nature, as the fierceness of the first lion is the natural property of all the lions in the world.

FOUR OBJECTIONS.

I. Should it be said, that “this doctrine reflects on the attributes of God, who, as the wise and gracious Governor of the

world, should have foreseen and prevented the fall of Adam.”

I answer, 1. God made man in his image, part of which consists in free agency, or a power to determine his own actions. And if creating a free agent is not repugnant to Divine wisdom and goodness, the wrong choice, or sin of a free agent, can be no impeachment of those perfections in the Deity.*

* God answers thus for himself in Milton :

Man will fall,

He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault ?
 Whose but his own ? Ingrate ! he had of me
 All he could have : I made him just and right ;
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall,
 Such I created all th' ethereal powers :
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd ;
 Not what they would ? What praise could they receive ?
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason, (reason also is choice,)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
 Made passive both, had served necessity,
 Not me ? They, therefore, as to right belong'd
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate.
 As if predestination overruled
 Their will, disposed by absolute decree,
 Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I : if I foreknew,
 Fore knowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.

Young expresses the same sentiment, with his peculiar boldness and energy.

2. Suppose man had not been endued with freedom of choice, he would only have ranked among admirable machines; and nothing could have been more absurd than to place him in a state of probation. And suppose, when he was in that state divine Power had irresistibly turned the scale of his will to obedience, the trial would have been prevented, and the counsel of divine Wisdom foolishly defeated.

3. God did all that a wise and good ruler of rational and free creatures could do to prevent sin. He placed in Adam's heart a vigorous principle of holiness; he granted him sufficient strength to continue in obedience: he indulged him with his blessed presence and converse to encourage him in the way of duty; he strictly forbade him to sin; he enforced the prohibition by the fearful threatening of death; he promised to crown his continuance in holiness with a

Blame not the bowels of the Deity :
 Man shall be bless'd as far as man permits.
 Not man alone, all rationals, Heaven arms
 With an illustrious, but tremendous power,
 To counteract its own most gracious ends ;
 And this of strict necessity, not choice ;
 That power denied, man, angels were no more
 but passive engines, void of praise or blame.
 Heaven wills our happiness, allows our doom :
 Invites us ardently, but not compels :
 Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees ;
 Man is the maker of immortal fates,
 Man falls by man, if finally he falls

glorious immortality, and gave him the tree of life as a pledge of this inestimable blessing. To have gone farther would have been entirely inconsistent with his wisdom; an absolute restraint being as contrary to the liberty of a moral agent, and the nature of the divine law, as chaining down a harmless man that he may not commit murder, is contrary to the freedom of Englishmen, and the laws of this realm. Nor can we, either with reason or decency, complain that God did not make us absolutely immutable and perfect like himself; this is charging him with folly, for not enduing us with infinite wisdom, and knowledge every way boundless; that is, for not making us gods instead of men.

4. In case man fell, Divine mercy had decreed his recovery by Jesus Christ; and when the Almighty Redeemer shall have brought life out of death, and light out of darkness, the mysterious drama of creation and redemption, of which we see but one or two acts, will appear, even to our objectors, every way worthy of its infinitely-wise and gracious Author.

II. In the meantime, they will still urge that "Adam's posterity [then unborn] could not justly partake of the consequences of his transgression." But shall cavils overthrow matter of fact? Do not we see in every unrenewed person, the unbelief, pride,

sinful curiosity, sensuality, and alienation from God, to which our first parents were subjected at their fall? Do not women bear children with sorrow as well as Eve? Is the ground less cursed for us than for Adam; and do we not toil, suffer, and die, as he did? If this order of things were unjust, would the righteous God have permitted its continuance to the present time?

Besides, Adam contained in himself, as in miniature, all his posterity. The various nations of men are nothing but different branches growing from that original root. They are Adam, or man, existing at large; as the branches of a spreading oak, with all the acorns that have grown upon, and dropped from them, during a long succession of summers, are nothing but the original acorn, unfolding and multiplying itself with all its essential properties. It is, then, as ridiculous to wonder that the sons of depraved Adam should naturally be depraved, as that an acorn should naturally produce an oak, and a poisonous root a malignant plant. Again:

Adam was the general head, representative, and father of mankind; and we suffer for his rebellion legally; as the children of those who have sold themselves for slaves are born in a state of wretched slavery; and as the descendants of a noble traitor lose the title by their ancestor's crime; naturally,

as the sons of a bankrupt suffer poverty for their father's extravagance, or as Gehazi's leprosy clave to him and his seed forever; and unavoidably, as an unborn child shares the fate of his unhappy mother, when she inadvertently poisons, or desperately stabs herself.

III. "But," say the same objectors, supposing it be granted, that we are naturally depraved, yet, if our depravity is natural, it is necessary; and we are no more blamable for it than lions for their fierceness, or Ethiopians for their black complexion."

1. Our objectors would not, I presume, be understood to insinuate, by blamable," that our depravity does not render us detestable in the eyes of a holy God, or that it is not in itself blameworthy. Do they less dislike the complexion of the Ethiopians, or less detest the destructive rage of lions, because it is natural to them? If moral dispositions ceased to be worthy of praise or dispraise as soon as they are rooted, morally necessary, and in that sense natural, what absurd consequences would follow? Sinners would be come guiltless by arriving at complete impenitency; and God could not be praised for his holiness, nor satan dispraised for his sinfulness—holiness being as essential to God, by the absolute perfection of his nature, as sin is morally necessary to the devil by the unconquerable habit which he ha

willfully contracted, and in which he obstinately remains.

2. Should they mean, that “we are not answerable, or accountable for our depravity,” I reply, though I grant—which I am very far from doing*—that we are no way accountable for our moral infection, yet it can not be denied that we are answerable for our obstinate refusal of relief, and for the willful neglect of the means found out by Divine mercy for our cure. Can we justly charge God with either our misfortune or our guilt? Do not parents, by the law of nature, represent their unborn posterity? If Adam ruined us by a common transgression, has not Christ, the second Adam, provided for us a common salvation? Jude 3: Heb. ii. 3. If, by the offense of one, [Adam,]

* We can easily conceive how all men can be involved in the consequences of Adam’s sin, so as to possess a *depraved nature*, inclined only to evil without the grace of God; but cannot receive the idea that *personal guilt* can be attached to any man for an act which transpired before he was born. “This is the condemnation; that light has come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light.” Man’s guilt and final ruin are wholly in consequence of his own act, in obstinately rejecting the only saving remedy. Hence, strictly speaking, no one can be “accountable for his depravity” until he voluntarily endorses it by preferring it to the righteousness of Christ. By rejecting the offer of the gospel to *pardon* his sins and to *cleanse* him from *all unrighteousness*, he becomes accountable, not only for his sinful *acts*, but for the indwelling disposition which prompts to the acts. He might have a clean heart and a right spirit, but he prefers the old depraved nature.—*Ed. of Rev. Edition.*

judgment came upon all men to condemnation, by the righteousness of one, [Christ,] is not the free gift come upon all men to justification of life? Rom. v. 18. And since God has declared that the son shall bear the iniquity of the father beyond the short period of this transitory life, if any suffer after death, is it not entirely for their unbelief and peculiar sins? * Compare John iii. 18, 19, and Mark xiv. 16. But what follows completely vindicates our Creator's goodness.

3. Do sin and misery abound by our fall in Adam? Grace and glory abound much more by our own redemption in Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 20. And "it must be owing to our own perverseness, or our own negligence"—says the ingenious Hervey, with great truth—"if we do not levy a tax

* Milton introduces God speaking thus to the Messiah:

Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will,
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 Freely vouchsafed: once more I will renew
 His lapsed powers—yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe,
 By me upheld. Be thou in Adam's room
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restored,
 As many as are restored, without thee none.
 His crimes make guilty all his sons; thy merit
 Imputed shall absolve them, who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life.

upon our loss, and rise even by our fall.”* This leaves us not the least shadow of reason to complain of the Divine proceedings respecting us.

We may, then, conclude that a moral depravity, which comes upon us by the willful choice of a parent, in whom we seminally and federally existed—a depravity which cleaves to us by an obstinate neglect of the infinitely precious means provided to remove it—a depravity which works now by our own personal choice, and to which we daily give our assent by the free commission of sins that are avoidable, leaves us not only accountable, but inexcusable before God.

IV. However, the advocates for the natural purity of the human race—endeavoring to clog with difficulties what they can not disprove to be matter of fact—still assert, “As we have our souls immediately from God, if we are born sinful, he must either create sinful souls, which cannot be supposed without impiety, or send sinless souls into sinful bodies, to be defiled by the unhappy union, which is as inconsistent with his

* Creation’s great superior, man, is thine :
Thine is Redemption. How should this great truth
Raise man o’er man, and kindle seraphs here !
Redemption ! ’Twas Creation more sublime :
Redemption ! ’Twas the labor of the skies :
Far more than labor—it was death in heaven.
A truth so strange ! ’Twere bold to think it true ;
If not far bolder still to disbelieve.—YOUNG.

goodness as his justice. Add to this," say the objectors, "that nothing can be more unphilosophical than to suppose that a body, a mere lump of organized matter, is able to communicate to a spirit that moral pollution of which itself is as incapable as the murderer's sword is incapable of cruelty."

This specious objection, which Dr. Watts acknowledges to be "the very chief point of difficulty in all the controversies about original sin," is wholly founded upon the vulgar notion, that we have our souls immediately from God by infusion; it will therefore entirely fall to the ground, if we prove that we receive them, as well as our bodies, by traduction from Adam; and that this is a fact, appears, if I am not mistaken, by the following arguments:

1. We have no ground, from Scripture or reason, to think that adulterers can, when they please, put God upon creating new souls to animate the spurious fruit of their crime. On the contrary, it is said that God rested on the seventh day from *all* his work of creation.

2. Eve herself was not created but in Adam; God breathed no breath of life into her, as he did into her husband, to make him a living soul. Therefore, when Adam saw her, he said, she shall be called woman, because she—her whole self, not her body only—was taken out of man. If then, the soul of

the first woman sprang from Adam's soul, as her body from his body, what reason have we to believe that the souls of her posterity are immediately infused, as Adam's was when God created him?

3. All agree that, under God, we receive life from our parents; and if life, then certainly our soul, which is the principle of life.

4. Other animals have power to propagate their own species after its kind; they can generate animated bodies. Why should man be but half a father? When did God stint him to propagate the mere shell of his person, the body without the soul? Was it when he blessed him, and said, Be ye fruitful and multiply? When he spoke thus, did he not address himself to the soul, as well as to the body? Can the body, alone, either understand or execute a command? Is it not, on the contrary, highly reasonable to conclude, that by virtue of the Divine appointment and blessing, the whole man can be fruitful and multiply, and the soul, under proper circumstances, can generate a soul, as a thought begets a thought; and can kindle the flame of life, as one taper lights another, without weakening its immortal substance, any more than God the Father—if I may be allowed the comparison—impairs the Divine essence by the eternal generation of his only-begotten Son?

5. Does not matter of fact corroborate the preceding argument? A sprightly race-horse generally begets a mettlesome colt; while a heavy cart-horse begets a colt that bears the stamp of its sire's dullness. And is it not so with mankind in general? The children of the Hottentots and Esquimaux are commonly as stupid, while those of the English and French are usually as sharp, as their parents. You seldom see a wit springing from two half-witted people, or a fool descended from very sensible parents. The children of men of genius are frequently as remarkable for some branch of hereditary genius, as those of blockheads for their native stupidity. Nothing is more common, than to see very passionate and flighty parents have very passionate and flighty children. And I have a hundred times discovered, not only the features, look, and complexion, of a father and mother in the child's face, but seen a congenial soul looking out,—if I may so speak—at those windows of the body which we call the eyes. Hence I conclude that the advice frequently given to those who are about to choose a companion for life, "Take care of the breed," is not absolutely without foundation, although some lay too much stress upon it, forgetting that a thousand unknown accidents may form exceptions to the general rule, and not considering that the peculiarity of the

father's breed may be happily corrected by that of the mother, and vice versa; and that as the grace of God, yielded to, may sweeten the worst temper, so sin, persisted in, may sour the best.

6. Again: Moses informs us, that fallen Adam begat a son in his own likeness and after his image; but had he generated a body without a soul, he would not have begotten a son in his own likeness, since he was not a mere mortal body, but a fallen embodied spirit: Compare Gen. v. 3, with xlv. 26.

“But upon this scheme,” will objectors say, “if Adam was converted when he begat a son, he begat a converted soul.” This does by no means follow; for if he was born of God after his fall, it was by grace through faith, and not by nature through generation; he could not, therefore, communicate his spiritual regeneration by natural generation, any more than a great scholar can propagate his learning together with his species.

Should it be again objected, that the soul is not generated, because the Scriptures declare, “The Lord is the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and the spirit returns to God who gave it,” I answer, it is also written, that Job and David were “fearfully made and fashioned by the hands of God in the womb;” that he “formed Jeremiah in the

belly;" and that "we are the offspring of him who made of one blood all nations of men." Now, if the latter Scriptures do not exclude the interposition of parents in the formation of their children's bodies, by what rule of criticism or divinity can we prove, that the former exclude that interposition in the production of their souls?

Nor can materialists, who have no ideas of generation, but such as are gross and carnal like their own system, with any shadow of reason infer, that "if the soul is generated with the body, it will also perish with it;" for dissolution is so far from being a necessary consequence of the spiritual generation of souls, that it would not so much as have followed the generation of our bodies, if Adam had not brought "sin into the world, and death by sin." Again: if wheat, a material seed which grows out of the same earthly clod with the chaff that incloses it, can subsist unimpaired, when that mean cover is destroyed, how much more can the soul—that spiritual, vital, heavenly power, which is of a nature so vastly superior to the body in which it is confined—continue to exist, when flesh and blood are returned to their native dust!

Should some persons reject what I say of the traduction of souls, in order to illustrate the derivation of original sin, and should they say that they have no more idea of the

generation than honest Nicodemus had of the regeneration of a spirit, I beg leave to observe two things:

First: If such objectors are converted, they will not deny the regeneration of souls by the Spirit of God, since they experienced it, and our Lord speaks of it as a blessed reality, even while he represents it as a mystery unknown as to the manner of it.—John iii. 8–13. Now, if pious souls have been regenerated from the beginning of the world, without exactly knowing how, is it reasonable to deny that souls are generated, merely because we can not exactly account for the manner in which that wonder takes place?

Second: Should my objectors be versed in natural philosophy, they need not be told, that even the kind of generation which they allow is as much a mystery to man, as the movement of a watch is to a child that just sees the case and the glass. If they will not believe me, let them believe him who “gave his heart to search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven;” and who, touching upon our question, says, “As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all.” Eccles xi. 5.

For my part, I do not see why the same almighty Preserver of men, who—as St. Paul tells us—“made of *one blood* the bodies of all nations of men,” might not, of one *active thought* and *ardent desire*, have made the souls of all nations of men also. Have not thought and desire as great affinity to the nature of the soul as blood has to that of the body? And, consequently, are not our ideas of the traduction of the soul as clear as those which we can form of the generation of the body?

Having dwelt so long upon the manner in which mankind naturally propagate original corruption together with their whole species, I hope I may reasonably resume the conclusion of my argument, and affirm, that if Adam corrupted the fountain of human nature in himself, we, the streams, can not but be naturally corrupted.

THIRTY-SECOND ARGUMENT.

God being a spirit, reason and revelation jointly inform us, that his law is spiritual, and extends to our thoughts and tempers, as well as to our words and actions. At all times, and in all places, it forbids every thing that is sinful, or has the least tendency to sin; it commands all that is excellent, and enjoins it to be done in the utmost perfection of our dispensation.

Therefore, if we have not always trusted

and delighted in God more than in all things and persons; if for one instant we have loved or feared the creature more than the Creator, we have had another god besides the Lord. Col. iii. 5; Phil. iii. 19.—Have we once omitted to adore him in spirit and in truth inwardly, or at any time worshiped him without becoming veneration outwardly, we have transgressed as if we had bowed to a graven image. John iv. 24. Though perjury and imprecations should never have defiled our lips, yet, if ever we mentioned God's tremendous name thoughtlessly, or irreverently, in prayer, reading, or conversation, we have taken it in vain, and the Searcher of hearts will not hold us guiltless. Phil. ii. 10. And if it has not been our constant practice and delight to enter his courts with praise, and spend the whole Sabbath in his blessed service, we have polluted that sacred day, and the guilt of profaneness may justly be charged upon us. Isaiah lviii. 13.

Did we ever show any disrespect to our superiors, or unkindness to our equals and inferiors, we have violated the precept that commands us to honor all men, and be punctual in the discharge of all social and relative duties. 1 Pet. ii. 17. Did we ever weaken our constitution by excess, strike our neighbor in anger, or wound his character with an injurious word, or only suffer

hatred to rise in our breast against him, we have committed a species of murder; for, "whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire;" and "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. Matt. v. 22; 1 John ii. 15. Are we "the friends of the world," an apostle brands us with the name of adulterers, because we are false to our heavenly bridegroom. James iv. 4. And if we have only "looked on a woman to lust after her," Christ declares that we "have committed adultery with her already in our heart.—Matt. v. 28. Have we overcharged our customers, exacted upon any one in our bargains, insisted on a full salary for work done by halves, defrauded the king of any part of his taxes, or taken advantage of the necessity and ignorance of others to get by their loss, we swell the numerous tribe of reputable thieves and genteel robbers.—Matt. xxii. 21. Neglecting to keep our word and baptismal vow, or speaking an untruth, is "bearing false witness against our neighbor," ourselves, or Christ, who styles himself "the truth." Rev. xxii. 15. And giving place to a fretful, discontented thought, or an irregular, envious desire, is a breach of that spiritual precept, which made St. Paul say, "I had not known lust," or a wrong desire to be sin, "except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Romans vii. 7.

Such being the extreme spirituality of the law, who can plead that he never was guilty of breaking one, or even all of the ten commandments?

And if we have broken them all, either in their literal or spiritual meaning, and are threatened for every transgression with a curse suitable to the Lawgiver's infinite majesty, who can conceive the greatness of our guilt and danger? Till we find a sanctuary under the shadow of a Savior's wings, are we not as liable to the strokes of divine vengeance as a felon, guilty of breaking all the statutes of his country, is liable to the penalty of human laws?

If this is not the case, there is no justice in the court of heaven, and the laws given with so much terror from the Almighty's throne, like the statutes of children, or the Pope's bulls, are only "*bruta fulmina*"—words without effect, and thunders without lightnings.

Some indeed flatter themselves that "the law, since the Gospel dispensation, abates much of its demands of perfect love." But their hope is equally unsupported by reason and Scripture. The law is the eternal rule of right, the moral picture of the God of holiness and love. It can no more vary than its eternal, unchangeable Original. The Lord "will not alter the thing that has gone out of his mouth." He must cease to

be what he is, before his law can lose its power to bind either men or angels; and all creatures shall break sooner than it shall bend; for if it commands us only to "love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves," what *just* abatement can be made in so equitable a precept? Therefore, man who breaks the righteous law of God as naturally as he breathes, is and must continue under its fearful curse, till he has secured the pardon and help offered him in the Gospel.

THIRTY-THIRD ARGUMENT.

Nor is the Gospel itself without its threatenings; for if the Lord, on the one hand, "opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers," he declares, on the other, that "they all shall be damned who believe not the truth," when it is proposed to them with sufficient evidence; and that "he who believeth not is condemned already, *because* he hath not believed on the name of the only-begotten Son of God." 2 Thess. ii. 12; John iii. 18. From these awful declarations I draw the following argument:

If faith is so essential a virtue, how depraved and wretched is man who is so excessively slow of heart to believe the things that concern his salvation! Matter of fact daily proves that we readily admit the evidence of men, while we peremptorily reject

the testimony of God. Commodore Byron's extraordinary account of the giants in Patagonia is, or was, every where received; but that of Jesus Christ, concerning those who "walk in the broad way to destruction," is and has always been too generally disregarded. Matt. vii. 13.

On reading in a newspaper an anonymous letter from Naples, we believe that rivers of liquid fire flow from the convulsed bowels of a mountain, and form burning lakes in the adjacent plains: but if we read in the Scripture that Tophet, the burning lake, is prepared of old for the impenitent, we beg leave to withhold our assent; and, unless Divine grace prevents, we must fall in, and feel, before we will assent and believe. Isa. xxx. 33.

Who that has seen a map of Africa ever doubted whether there is such a kingdom as that of Morocco, though he never saw it, or any of its natives? But who that has perused the Gospel, never doubted whether "the kingdom of heaven within us," or that state of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," which God opens to believers upon earth, is not a mere imagination? though Christ himself invites us to it, and many pious persons not only testify they enjoy it, but actually show its blessed fruits, in heavenly tempers, a blameless life,

and a triumphant death. Mark i. 14; Luke xvii. 21; Rom. xiv. 17; Rev. i. 6.

With what readiness do we depend upon an honest man's promise, especially if it is reduced into a bond? But with what reluctance do we rely on the "many great and precious promises" of God, "confirmed by an oath," delivered before the most unexceptionable witnesses, and sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ? 2 Pet. i. 4; 2 Cor. i. 20; Heb. vi. 17.

And ye numerous tribes of patients, how do ye shame those who call themselves Christians! So entire is the trust which you repose upon a physician's advice, whom perhaps you have seen but once, that you immediately abstain from your pleasant food, and regularly take medicines, which, for what you know, may be as injurious to your stomach as they are offensive to your palate; but we who profess Christianity generally quarrel with Christ's prescriptions; and if we do not understand the nature of a remedy which he recommends, we think this a sufficient reason for refusing it. From Christ only, if we can help it, we will take nothing upon trust.

One false witness is often sufficient to make us believe that a neighbor vows to do us an injury; but twenty ministers of Jesus can not persuade us God hath sworn in his

wrath, that, if we die in our sins, we shall not enter into his rest; Psa. xcv. 11. or that, if we come to him for pardon and life, he will in no wise cast us out. John vi. 37. The most defamatory and improbable reports spread with uncommon swiftness, and pass for matter of fact; but when St. Paul testifies, that if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his, Rom. viii. 9. who believes his testimony? Does not the same mind that was open to scandalous lies, prove shut against such a revealed truth?

Isaiah asks, "Who hath believed our report?" and Jesus says, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?" Alas! there would have been no room for these plaintive questions, if the word of God had not been proposed to our faith; for the most groundless and absurd assertions of men find multitudes of believers. We see daily, that an idle rumor about a peace or a war meets with such credit as to raise or sink the stocks in a few hours.

It is evident that man has a foolish and evil heart of unbelief, ready to strain out a gnat in divine revelation, while he greedily swallows up the camel of human imposture. Now, if it is part of the Gospel which Christ commands his ministers to preach to every creature, that he who believeth not shall be

damned, Mark xvi. 16. how great is the depravity, and how imminent the danger of fallen man, who has such a strong propensity to so destructive, so damnable a sin as unbelief?

THIRTY-FOURTH ARGUMENT.

But let us come still nearer to the point. If we are not by nature conceived in sin, and children of wrath, millions of infants, who die without actual sin, have no need of the blood of Christ to wash their robes, nor his Spirit to purify their hearts. The incarnation of the eternal Word, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, are as unnecessary to them as the visits of a physician, and his remedies, to persons in perfect health. Their spotless innocency is a sufficient passport for heaven; baptism is ridiculous, and the Christian religion absurd, in their case.

Nor does it appear, why it might not be as absurd with regard to the rest of mankind, did they but act their part a little better; for if we are naturally innocent, we have a natural power to remain so; and by a proper use of it, we may avoid standing in need of the salvation procured by Christ for the lost.

Nay, if innocent nature, carefully improved, may be the way to eternal life, it is certainly the readiest way, and the Son of God

speaks like the grand deceiver of mankind, when he says, "I am the way; *no man* cometh to the Father, but *by me.*" Christians, let self-conceited Deists entertain the thought, but harbor it not a moment; in you it would be highly blasphemous.

THIRTY-FIFTH ARGUMENT.

And that you may detest it the more, consider farther that all the capital doctrines of Christianity are built upon that fundamental article of our depravity and danger. If all flesh hath not corrupted its way, how severe are those words of Christ, "Except ye repent, ye shall all perish;" and, "Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven!" If all are not carnal and earthly by their first birth, how absurd is what he said to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of heaven!" If there is any spiritual health in us by nature, how notoriously false are these assertions! All our sufficiency is of God—Without me ye can do nothing. If every natural man is not the reverse of the holiness in which Adam was created, how irrational these and the like Scriptures: If any man is in Christ, he is a *new creature*; In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a *new creature*. To conclude: if mankind are not universally cor-

rupt, guilty, and condemned, how unnecessarily alarming is this declaration: He that believeth not on the Son of God is condemned already; the wrath of God abideth on him: and if we are not foolish, unrighteous, unholy, and enslaved to sin, why is Christ made to us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? Take away, then, the doctrine of the fall, and the tower of evangelical truth, built by Jesus Christ, is no more founded on a rock, but upon the sand: or, rather, the stately fabric is instantly thrown down, and leaves no ruins behind it but the dry morality of Epictetus, covered with the rubbish of the wildest metaphors, and buried in the most impertinent ceremonies.

THIRTY-SIXTH ARGUMENT.

One more absurdity still remains. If man is not in the most imminent danger of destruction, nothing can be more extravagant than the great article of the Christian faith, thus expressed in the Nicene creed: "Jesus Christ, very God of very God, by whom all things were made, for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, was made man, and was crucified *for us*."

Is it not astonishing that there should be people so infatuated as to join every Lord's day in this solemn confession, and to deny, the other six, the horrible danger to which

they are exposed, till they have an interest in Christ! Is not the least grain of common sense sufficient to make an attentive person see, that if He, by whom all things were made, came from heaven for *our* salvation—if he was made man that he might suffer, and be crucified for *us* he saw us guilty, condemned, lost, and obnoxious to the damnation which we continually deprecate in the litany? Shall we charge the Son of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of divine wisdom, with the unparalleled folly of coming from heaven to atone for innocent creatures; to reprieve persons uncondemned; to redeem a race of free men; to deliver from the curse a people not accursed; to hang by exquisitely-dolorous wounds, made in his sacred hands and feet, on a tree more ignominious than the gallows, for honest men, and very good sort of people; and to expire under the sense of the wrath of Heaven that he might save from hell people in no danger of going there.

Reader, is it possible to entertain for a moment these wild notions, without offering the utmost indignity to the Son of God, and the greatest violence to common sense? And does not reason cry, as with a sound of a thousand trumpets, “If our Creator could not save us consistently with his glorious attributes, but by becoming incarnate, passing through the deepest scenes of hu

miliation and temptation, distress and want, for thirty-three years, and undergoing, at last, the most shameful, painful, and accursed death, in our place, our wickedness must be desperate, our sins execrable, our guilt black as the shadow of death, and our danger dreadful as the gloom and torments of hell?"

"Shocking doctrine!" says the self-conceited moralist, as he rises from his chair full of indignation, and ready to throw aside the arguments he cannot answer. Reader, if you are the man, remember that this is an appeal to reason, and not to passion—to matter of fact, and not to vitiated taste for pleasing error. You may cry out at the sight of a shroud, a coffin, a grave, "Shocking objects!" But your loudest exclamations will not lessen the awful reality, by which many have happily been shocked into a timely consideration of, and preparation for, approaching death.

"But this doctrine," you still urge, "drives people to despair." Yes, to a despair of being saved by their own merits and righteousness; and this is as reasonable in a sinner who comes to the Savior as despairing to swim across the sea is rational in a passenger that takes ship.

A just despair of ourselves is widely different from a despair of God's mercy, and Christ's willingness to save the chief of sin-

ners, who flies to him for refuge. This horrible sin, this black crime of Judas, springs rather from a sullen, obstinate rejection of the remedy, than, as some vainly suppose, from a clear knowledge of the disease. And that none may commit it, Christ's ministers take particular care not to preach the law without the Gospel, and the fall without the recovery: no sooner have they opened the wound of sin, festering in the sinner's conscience, than they pour in the balm of Divine promises, and make gracious offers of a free pardon and full salvation by the compassionate Redeemer, who came to justify the ungodly, and save the lost.

And, indeed; those only who see their sin and misery, will cordially embrace the Gospel; for common sense dictates that none care for the king's mercy but those who know they are guilty, condemned criminals. How excessively unreasonable it is then to object, that the preaching of man's corrupt and lost estate drives people to despair of divine mercy, when it is absolutely the only means of showing them their need of it, and making them gladly accept it upon God's own terms.

Leaving, therefore, that trite objection to the unthinking vulgar, once more, judicious reader, summon all your rational powers, and, after imploring help from on high to

use them aright, say, whether these last arguments do not prove that no Christian can deny the complete fall of mankind, without renouncing the capital doctrines of his own religion—overturning the very foundation of the Gospel, which he professes to receive—staining the glory of the Redeemer, whom he pretends to honor, and impiously taking from his crown, wisdom, truth, and charity, the three jewels that are its brightest ornaments. Sum up, then, all that has been advanced concerning the afflictive dealings of God's providence with mankind, and the base conduct, or wicked temper of mankind toward God, one another, and themselves—declare if all the arguments laid before you, and cleared from the thickest clouds of objections that might obscure them, do not cast more light upon the black subject of our depravity than is sufficient to show that it is a melancholy truth—and finally pronounce, whether the doctrine of our corrupt and lost estate, stated in the words of the sacred writers, and of our pious reformers, is not rationally demonstrated and established upon the firmest basis in the world, matter of fact and the dictates of common sense.

FIFTH PART.

WHEN a doctrine has been clearly demonstrated, the truths that necessarily spring from it cannot reasonably be rejected. Let, then, common sense decide, whether the following consequences do not necessarily result from the doctrine of the fall, established in the preceding parts of this treatise.

INFERENCE 1. If we are by nature in a corrupt and lost estate, the grand business of ministers is to rouse our drowsy consciences, and warn us of our imminent danger. It behooves them to cry aloud and spare not, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show us our transgressions and our sins. Nor are they to desist from this unpleasing part of their office till we awake to righteousness, and lay hold on the hope set before us.

If preachers, under pretense of peace and good-nature, let the wound fester in the conscience of their hearers, to avoid the thankless office of probing it to the bottom—if, for fear of giving them pain by a timely amputation, they let them die of a mortification—or if they heal the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly, saying, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace—they imitate those sycophants of old, who, for fear of displeasing the rich, and offend-

ing the great, preached smooth things, and prophesied deceit.

This cruel gentleness, this soft barbarity, is attended with the most pernicious consequences, and will deservedly meet with the most dreadful punishment. Give sinners warning from me, says the Lord to every minister; when I say to the wicked, the unconverted, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, he shall die in his iniquity, in his unconverted state; but his blood will I require at *thy* hand. See Matt. xviii. 3; Ezek. iii. 18; and xii. 10.

INFERENCE 2. If we are naturally depraved and condemned creatures, self-righteousness and pride are the most absurd and monstrous of all our sins. The deepest repentance, and profoundest humility, become us. To neglect them, is to stumble at the very threshold of true religion; and to ridicule them is to pour contempt upon reason, revelation, and the first operations of divine grace on a sinner's heart.

INFERENCE 3. If the corruption of mankind is universal, inveterate, and amazingly powerful, no mere creature can deliver them from it. They must remain unrestored, or they must have an almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, unwearied, infinitely-patient Savior, willing, day and night, to attend to the wants and public or secret applications of millions of wretched souls, and able to

give them immediate assistance throughout the world, in all their various trials, temptations, and the conflicts both in life and in death. Is the most exalted creature sufficient for these things?

When such a vast body as mankind, spread over all the earth for thousands of years, made up of numerous nations, all of which consist of multitudes of individuals, each of whom has the springs of all his faculties and powers enfeebled, disordered, or broken—when such an immense body as this is to be restored to the image of the infinitely-holy, glorious, and blessed God, common sense dictates that the amazing task can be performed by no other than the original Artist, the great Searcher of hearts, the omnipotent Creator of mankind.

Hence it appears, that, notwithstanding the cavils of Arius, the Savior is *God over all* blessed for ever; all things were made by him, he upholds all things by the word of his power, and every believer may adore him, and say with the wondering apostle, when the light of faith shone into his benighted soul, My Lord and my God?

INFERENCE 4. If our guilt is immense, it can not be expiated without a sacrifice of infinite dignity. Hence we discover the mistake of heathens and carnal Jews, who trusted in the sacrifice of beasts, the error of Deists, Mohammedans, and Socinians,

who see no need of any expiatory sacrifice and the amazing presumption of too many Christians, who repose a considerable part of their confidence in the proper merit of their works, instead of placing it entirely in the infinitely meritorious sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb of God, humbly acknowledging that all the gracious rewardableness of the best works of faith is derived from his precious blood and original merit.

INFERENCE 5. If our spiritual maladies are both numerous and mortal, it is evident we can not recover the spiritual health that we enjoyed in our first parents, but by the powerful help of our heavenly Physician, the second Adam. How absurd is it then to say, that we are saved, or recovered, by doing good works, without the quickening grace of a Savior!

A wretched beggar is lame, both in his hands and feet. An officious man, instead of taking him to a person famous for his skill in relieving such objects of distress, assures him that the only way of getting well is to run of errands for his prince, and work for his fellow beggars. You justly wonder at the cruelty and folly of such a director, but you have much more reason to be astonished at the conduct of those miserable empirics who direct poor, blind, lame sinners, laboring under a complication of spiritual disorders, and sick even to eternal

death, to save themselves merely by serving God and doing good to their neighbors, as if they needed neither repentance toward God, nor faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, nor yet free grace to enable them to repent, believe, and serve God acceptably.

How much more rational is the evangelical method of salvation! We are saved, says the apostle, we are restored to saving health, and a spiritual activity to serve God and our neighbor, not by works, not of ourselves, but by grace, by mere favor, through faith, through such an entire confidence in our Physician as makes us gladly take his powerful remedies, abstain from the pleasing poison of sin, and feed on those divine truths which communicate angelical vigor and happiness to our souls. Eph. ii. 8.

INFERENCE 6. If our nature is so completely fallen, and totally helpless, that in spiritual things we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing truly good as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, it is plain we stand in absolute need of his Spirit's assistance, to enable us to pray, repent, believe, love, and obey aright. Consequently, those who ridicule the Holy Spirit and his sacred influence, despise the great helper of our infirmities, and act a most irrational, wicked, and desperate part. Rom. viii. 26.

INFERENCE 7. If by nature we are really

and truly born in sin, our regeneration can not be a mere metaphor, or a vain ceremony—our spiritual birth must be real and positive. How fatal, therefore, is the mistake of those who suppose that the new birth is only a figurative expression for a decent behavior! How dreadful the error of those who imagine that all whose faces have been typically washed with material water in baptism, are now effectually born again of living water and the Holy Spirit!

INFERENCE 8. If the fall of mankind in Adam does not consist in a capricious imputation of his personal guilt, but in a real, present participation of his depravity, impotence, and misery, the salvation that believers have in Christ is not a capricious imputation of his personal righteousness, but a real, present participation of his purity, power, and blessedness, together with pardon and acceptance.

Unspeakably dangerous, then, is the delusion of those whose brains and mouths are filled with the notions and expressions of imputed righteousness, while their poor, carnal, unregenerate hearts remain perfect strangers to the Lord, our righteousness.

INFERENCE 9. If the corrupt nature which sinners derive from Adam spontaneously produces all the wickedness that overspreads the earth, the holy nature which believers receive from Christ is also spontaneously

productive of all the fruits of righteousness described in the oracles of God—good works springing out, *necessarily*,* of a true and lively faith.

Such ministers, therefore, as clearly preach our fall in Adam, and that faith in Christ which is productive of genuine holiness and active love, will infallibly promote good works and pure morality, when those who insist only upon works and moral duties will neither be zealous of good works themselves, nor instrumental in turning sinners from their gross immoralities. The reason is obvious: evangelical preachers follow their Lord's wise direction: Make the tree good, and the fruit shall be good also: but moralists will have corrupt trees bring forth good fruit, which, in the nature of things, is impossible. Matt. xiii. 33; Luke vi. 43. Therefore, as nothing but faith makes the tree good, and as without faith it is impossible to please God, the Christian that will come to him with good works must not only believe [as heathens] that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him, but also that he was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, etc.

INFERENCE 10. If corruption and sin work so powerfully and sensibly in the

* This is to be understood of a moral, and not of an absolute, irresistible necessity; for faith never unmans the believer.

hearts of the unregenerate, we may, without deserving the name of enthusiasts, affirm that the regenerate are sensible of the powerful effects of divine grace in their souls; or, to use the words of our seventeenth article, we may say, They feel in themselves the workings of the Spirit of Christ; for, where the poison of sin hath abounded, and has been, of course, abundantly felt, grace, the powerful antidote that expels it, does much more abound, and, consequently, may be much more perceived.

Therefore, the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, the assurance of faith, and the peace of God passing all understanding, are the *experienced* blessings of the converted, as certainly as a guilty conscience, the gnawing of worldly cares, the working of evil tempers, the tumults of unbridled appetites, and the uproars of rebellious passions, are the *experienced* curses of the unconverted.

Reader, if these inferences are justly drawn, is it not evident that the principles* generally exploded among us, as en-

* Those doctrines, pointed out in the ten above mentioned inferences, are, 1. The alarming severity of the law. 2. The need of a deep, heart-felt repentance. 3. The divinity of Christ. 4. The infinite merit of his sacrifice. 5. Salvation by faith in him. 6. The influence of his Holy Spirit. 7. The reality of the new birth. 8. The necessity of a present salvation. 9. The zeal of believers for good works; and, 10. The comfortable assurance which they have of their regeneration.

thusiastical or methodistical, flow from the doctrine demonstrated in this treatise, as naturally as light from the sun? These consequences lead you perhaps farther than you could wish; but let them not make you either afraid or ashamed of the Gospel. Prejudices, like clouds, will vanish away; but truth, which they obscure for a time, like the sun, will shine for ever. A great man in the law said, *Fiat justitia, ruat mundus*. Improve the noble sentiment, and say with equal fortitude, *Stet veritas, ruat mundus*—Let truth stand, though the universe should sink into ruins.

But, happily for us, the danger is all on the side of the opposite doctrine; and that you may be convinced of it, I present you next with a view of the

DREADFUL CONSEQUENCES

NECESSARILY RESULTING FROM THE IGNORANCE OF OUR
DEPRAVITY AND DANGER.

1. As the tempter caused the fall of our first parents, by inducing them to believe that they should not surely die if they broke the Divine law, so, now we are fallen, he prevents our recovery, by suggesting “the bitterness of death is past,” and “we are in a state of safety.” Hence it is that you sleep on in carnal security, O ye deluded sons of men, and even dream ye are safe and righteous. Nor can ye escape for your

lives, till the veil of unbelief is taken away, and ye awake to a sight of your corrupt and lost estate; for there is no guarding against, nor flying from, an unseen, unsuspected evil. Here, as in a conspiracy, the danger continually increases, till it is happily discovered.

2. If we are not sensible of our natural corruption, and the justice of the curse entailed upon us on that account, can we help thinking God a tyrant, when he threatens unconverted moralists with the severest of his judgments, or causes the black storms of his providence to overtake us and our dearest relatives?

Answer, ye self-righteous Pharisees, that so bitterly exclaim against the ministers who declare, by the authority of Scripture, that, Except ye repent, ye shall all perish. Answer, fond mother, whose tears of distraction mix with the cold sweat of the convulsed, dying infant on thy lap. Dost thou not secretly impeach divine Justice, and accuse Heaven of barbarity? Ah! if thou didst but know the evil nature which thou and thy Isaac have brought into the world; if thou sawest the root of bitterness which the hand of a gracious Providence even now extracts from his heart, far from being ready to curse God and die with thy child, thou wouldst patiently acquiesce in the kindly-severe dispensation, thou wouldst

clear him when he is judged by such as thyself, and even glorify him in the evil day of this painful visitation.

3. Though man's heart is hardened as steel, it does not frequently emit the hellish sparks of such murmurings against God, because it can seldom be struck by the flint of such severe afflictions; yet the mischief is there, and will break out, if not by blasphemous despair, at least by its contrary—presumptuous madness. Yes, reader, unless thou art happily made acquainted with the strength of thy inbred depravity, thou wilt rashly venture among the sparks of temptation—with carnal confidence thou wilt ask, "What harm can they do me?"—And thou wilt continue the hazardous sport, till sin and wrath consume thee together. Nor will this be more surprising than that one who carries a bag of gunpowder, and knows not the dangerous nature of his load, should fearlessly rush through the midst of flames, or sparks, till he is blown up and destroyed.

4. This fatal rashness is generally accompanied with a glaring inconsistency. Do not you make the assertion good, ye saints of the present age, who pretend to have found the secret of loving both God and the world? Do not we hear you deny to men that you are condemned, and yet cry to God to have mercy upon you? But if you are

not condemned, what need have you of mercy? And if you are, why do you deny your lost estate? Thou, too, reader, wilt fall into this absurdity, unless thou knowest thy just condemnation. But the mischief will not stop here; for,

5. Ignorance of the mystery of iniquity within you must, in the nature of things, cause you to neglect prayer, or to pray out of character. As unhumbled moralists, instead of approaching the throne of grace with the self-abasement of the penitent publican, saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner, you will provoke the Most High by the open profaneness of the Sadducee, or insult him by the self-conceited services of the Pharisee, boasting ye do no harm, and thanking God ye are not as other men. On these rocks your formal devotion will split, till you know, that, as the impenitent and prayerless shall perish, so the Lord accepts no penitential prayer but that of the man who knows the plague of his own heart, because he alone prays in his own character, and without hypocrisy. 1 Pet. v. 5; 1 Kings viii. 38.

6. And as you can not approach the throne of grace aright, while you remain insensible of your corruption, so the reading or preaching of God's word, till it answers the end of conviction, is of no service to you, but rather proves, to use St. Paul's

nervous expression, the savor of death unto death; for when the terrors of the law only suit your case, you vainly catch at the comforts of the Gospel, or, rather, you remain as unaffected under the threatenings of the one as under the promises of the other; you look on Mount Sinai and on Mount Sion with equal indifference, and the warmth of the preacher who invites you to fly from the wrath to come, appears to you an instance of religious madness. Nor is it a wonder it should, while you continue unacquainted with your danger; when a mortal disease is neither felt nor suspected, a pathetic address upon its consequences and cure must be received by any reasonable man with the greatest unconcern, and the person that makes it in earnest must appear exceedingly ridiculous. Again:

7. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, says the Lord. This is true, particularly with regard to the knowledge of our depravity. Reader, if thou remainest a stranger to it, thou wilt look upon slight confession of outward sins as true repentance, and the godly sorrow, that worketh repentance to salvation, will appear to thee a symptom of melancholy. Taking an external reformation of manners, or a change of ceremonies and opinions, for true conversion, thou wilt think thyself in a safe state, while thy heart continues habitually wander-

ing from God, and under the dominion of a worldly spirit. In a word, some of the branches of the tree of corruption thou mayest possibly lop off, but the root will still remain and gather strength: for it is plain that a bad root, supposed not to exist, can neither be heartily lamented, nor earnestly struck at with the ax of self-denial.

Even a heathen could say, "The knowledge of sin is the first step towards salvation from it; for he who knows not that he sins, will not submit to be set right; thou must find out what thou art before thou canst mend thyself; therefore, when thou discoverest thy vices, to which thou wast before a stranger, it is a sign that thy soul is in a better state.

8. It is owing to the want of this discovery, O ye pretended sons of reason, that, thinking yourselves born pure, or supposing the diseases of your nature to be inconsiderable, you imagine it possible to be your own physicians, when you are only your own destroyers. Hence it is, that, while you give to Jesus the titular honor of Savior, you speak perpetually of being "saved merely by your duties and best endeavors." Hear him warning you against this common delusion: O Israel, says he, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in *me* is thy help found. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick, beyond all hopes of recovering themselves.

9. The prescriptions of this wise Physician are excessively severe to flesh and blood, and some of his remedies as violent as our disease. Therefore, except we see the greatness of our danger, we shall beg to be excused from taking the bitter potion. Who can have resolution enough to cut off a right hand, pluck out a right eye, to take up his cross daily, to deny himself, and lose even his own life, or what is often dearer, his fair reputation? Who, I say, can do this, till a sight of imminent ruin on the one hand, and of redeeming love on the other, makes him submit to the painful injunctions? Thou lovely youth, noted in the Gospel for thy harmlessness, I appeal to thy wretched experience. When the Physician of souls, at whose feet thou wast prostrate, commanded thee to sell all and follow him, what made thee go away sorrowful and undone? Not barely thy great possessions, but the ignorance of thy condition; for all that a man hath will he give for his life, when he sees it in immediate danger. Matt. xix. 22.

10. If it is a desperate step to turn away from the Prince of life, it is a daring one to approach him with a mere compliment. Of this, nevertheless, you are guilty, ye unawakened sinners, who daily appear before the throne of grace, with thanks and praises to God for his inestimable love in the re-

demption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. Alas! when you deny the state of sin and misery in which you are by nature, and yet presume to thank God for redemption from it, do you not mock him as solemnly as you would the king, were you to present him every day an address of thanks for redeeming you from Turkish slavery, when you never knew yourselves slaves in Turkey? O, how provoking to God must these unmeaning thanksgivings be! Surely, one day, they will be ranked among the indignities offered by earthly worms to the Majesty on high.

11. Some, indeed, more consistent than you, openly throw off the mask. Seeing neither the unfathomable depth of their misery by the fall, nor the immense height of their aggravated iniquities, they do not trifle with, but at once deny, the Lord that bought them. Yes, far from admiring the established method of a salvation procured at so immense a price as the incarnation and crucifixion of the Son of God, they are not afraid to intimate it is irrational; and upon their principle they may well do it, for, if our ruin is not immense, what need is there for an immensely glorious Redeemer? And if our guilt reaches not up to heaven, why should the Son of God have come down from thence, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?

12. As we slight or reject the Savior, till we are truly convinced of the evil and danger of sin, so we worship a false god—a mere idol; for, instead of adoring Jehovah, infinite in his holiness and hatred of sin, inviolable in the truth of his threatenings against it, and impartial in his strict justice—a God in whose presence unhumiliated sinners are not able to stand, and with whom evil can not dwell, we bow to a strange god, whom pious men never knew,—a god formed by our own fancy, so unholy as to connive at sin, so unjust as to set aside his most righteous law, and so false as to break his solemn word, that we must turn or die. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Is not this worshipping a god of our own making? or, as David describes him, a god altogether such as ourselves? To adore an idol of paste, made by the baker and the priest, may be indeed more foolish, but cannot be more wicked, than to adore one made by our wild imagination and impious unbelief.

13. We may go one step farther still, and affirm, that, till we are deeply convinced of sin, far from worshipping the true God; which implies knowing, loving and admiring him in all his perfections—we hate and oppose him in his infinite holiness and justice. The proof is obvious: two things diametrically opposite in their nature can never be approved of at once. If we do not side with

divine Holiness and Justice, abhor our corruption, and condemn ourselves as hell-deserving sinners, far from approving, we shall rise against the holy and righteous God, who sentences us to eternal death for our sin: we shall at least wish he were less pure and just than he is; which amounts to wishing him to be no God. While proud fiends betray this horrid disposition by loud blasphemies in hell, ye do it, O ye unconvinced sons of men, by your aversion to godliness upon earth. Haters of God is, then, the proper name, and enmity against him the settled temper, of all unhumiliated, unconverted sinners. Rom. i. 30, and viii. 7.

14. When the nature of God is mistaken, what wonder if his law is misapprehended? The law is good, says St. Paul, if a man use it lawfully; but if we make an improper use of it, the consequence is fatal. Since the fall, the law of God, as contradistinguished from the Gospel of Christ, points out to us the spotless holiness and inflexible justice of its divine Author. It teaches us with what ardor and constancy we should love both our Creator and our fellow-creatures. As a bank cast against the stream of our iniquity, it accidentally serves to make it rise the higher, and to discover its impetuosity; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. It demonstrates man's weak-

ness, who consents, indeed, to the law that it is good, but finds not how to fulfill it. Rom. vii. 16, 19. As a battery erected against our pride, when it has its due effect, it silences all our self-righteous pleas, and convinces us that a returning sinner is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ; a broken law—a law which worketh wrath, being absolutely unable to absolve its violator. In a word, it is our school-master to bring us to Christ, and drives us with the rod of threatening punishments, to make us touch the scepter of mercy held out to us from the throne of grace.

But while we remain strangers to our helpless and hopeless state by nature, far from making this proper use of the law, we trust in it, and fancy that the merit of our unsprinkled obedience to it is the way of salvation. Thus we go about to establish our own righteousness, making light of the atoning blood which marks the new and living way to heaven. This very mistake ruined the Pharisees of old, and destroys their numerous followers in all ages. Rom. ix. 31.

15. And when we form such wrong apprehensions of the law, is it possible that we should have right views of the Gospel, and receive it with cordial affection? Reason and experience answer in the negative.

What says the Gospel to sinners? You are saved *by grace*, through mere favor and mercy, not by the covenant of works, lest any man should boast, like the Pharisee. Eph. ii. 8. Now, ye decent formalists, ye fond admirers of your own virtue, are you not utterly disqualified to seek and accept a pardon in the Gospel way? for your seeking it upon the footing of mere mercy, implies an acknowledgment that you deserve the ruin threatened against sinners. And supposing a pardon were granted you, before you had a consciousness of your sad deserts, you could not receive it as an act of mere grace, but only as a reward justly bestowed upon you for the merit of your works. It is plain, then, that, according to the Gospel plan, none can be fit subjects of salvation but those who are truly sensible of their condemnation.

16. But as the grace of God in Christ is the original and properly-meritorious cause of our salvation, so the grand, instrumental cause of it is faith on our part. Through faith are ye saved, says St. Paul. Now, if to have faith in Christ is habitually to lift up our hearts to him with a humble, and yet cheerful confidence, seeking in him all our wisdom, righteousness, and strength, as being our instructing prophet, atoning priest, and protecting king, it is evident, that, till we awake to a sight of our fallen

state, we cannot believe, nor, consequently, be saved. O, ye that never were sensible of your spiritual blindness, can you with sincerity take Jesus for your guide, and desire his Spirit to lead you into all truth? Does not David's prayer, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wonderful things of thy law," appear to you needless, if not fanatical? And is not the Redeemer's prophetic office thrown away upon such sons of wisdom as you are?

Have you a greater value for Jesus than they, O ye just men, who have no sensible need of heart-felt repentance, and whose breasts were never dilated by one sigh under a due sense of your guilt and condemnation? Can you, without hypocrisy apply to him as the high priest of the guilty, claim him as the advocate of the condemned, or fly to him as the Savior of the lost! Impossible! Ye fondly hope ye never were lost—ye were always "good livers, good believers, good Churchmen"—ye need not make so much ado about an interest in the blood of the new covenant.

And ye who, flushed with the conceit of your native strength, wonder at the weakness of those that continually bow to the scepter of Jesus' grace for protection and power, can you, without a smile of pity, hear him say, "Without me ye can do nothing?" Is it possible that you should sin-

cerely implore the exertion of his royal power for victory over sins, which you suppose yourselves able to conquer, and for the restoration of a nature, with the goodness of which you are already so well satisfied? Your reason loudly answers, No. Therefore, till you see yourselves corrupt, impotent creatures, you will openly neglect the Redeemer, give to your aggravated sins the name of "human frailties," and trust to your baffled, and yet boasted endeavors. Self-deception! Art thou not of all impostors the most common and dangerous, because the least suspected?

To sum up and close these important remarks: Look at those who, in mystic Babylon, are not truly sensible of their total fall from God, and you will see them setting their own reason above the holy Scriptures, and their works in competition with the infinitely-meritorious sacrifice of Christ. Inquire into their principles, and you will discover that they either openly explode as enthusiastical, or slightly receive, as unnecessary, the doctrines of salvation by faith in Christ, and regeneration by the Spirit of God. Examine their conduct, and you will find they all commit sin, and receive the mark of the beast secretly in the right hand, or openly in their foreheads. Rev. xiii. 16. Sort them, and you will have two bands, the one of skeptics and the other of formal-

ists, who, though at as great enmity between themselves as Pilate and Herod, are, like them, made friends together by jointly deriding and condemning Jesus in his living members.

And if, with the candle of the Lord, you search the Jerusalem of professing Christians, you will perceive that the want of a heart-felt, humbling knowledge of their natural depravity, gives birth to the double-mindedness of hypocrites, and the miscarriages or apostasy of those who once distinguished themselves in the evangelical race; you will easily trace back to the same corrupt source the seemingly-opposite errors of the loose Antinomian, and the Pharisaic legalist, those spiritual thieves by whom the sincere Christian is perpetually reviled; and, in short, you will be convinced, that, if you set your eyes upon a man who is not yet deeply conscious of his corrupt and lost estate, or whose consciousness of it has worn away, you behold either a trifler in religion, a dead-hearted Pharisee, a sly hypocrite, a loose Antinomian, a self-conceited formalist, a scoffing infidel, or a wretched apostate.

You see, reader, what a train of fatal consequences result from rejecting, or not properly receiving, the doctrine demonstrated in these sheets; and now that you may cordially embrace it, permit me to enumerate the—

UNSPEAKABLE ADVANTAGES

SPRINGING FROM AN AFFECTING KNOWLEDGE OF OUR FALLEN
AND LOST ESTATE.

No sooner is the disease rightly known, than the neglected Jesus, who is both our gracious Physician and powerful remedy, is properly valued, and ardently sought. All that thus seek, find: and all that find him, find saving health, eternal life, and heaven.

Bear your testimony with me, ye children of Abraham and of God, who see the brightness of a Gospel day, and rejoice. Say, what made you first wishfully look to the hills, whence your salvation is come, and fervently desire to behold the sin-dispelling beams of the Sun of righteousness? Was it not the deep, dismal night of our fallen nature, which you happily discovered when, awakening from the sleep of sin, you first saw the delusive dreams of life, as they appear to the dying? What was the Desire of nations to you till you felt yourselves lost sinners? Alas! nothing—perhaps less than nothing—an object of disgust or scorn.—When the pearl of great price was presented to you, did you regard it more than the vilest of brutes an oriental pearl? and, as if it had not been enough to look at it with disdain, were not some of you ready to turn again, and rend, after the example of snarl-

ing animals, those who affectionately made you the invaluable offer? Matt. vii. 6.

But when the storm that shook Mount Sinai overtook your careless souls, and ye saw yourselves sinking into an abyss of misery, did ye not cry out, and say, as the alarmed disciples, with an unknown energy of desire, "Save, Lord, or we perish?" And when conscious of your lost estate, ye began to believe that he came to seek and to save that which was lost, how dear, how precious was he to you in all his offices! How glad were you to take guilty, weeping, Magdalen's place, and wait for a pardon at your High Priest's feet! How importunate in saying to your King, as the hapless widow, Lord, avenge me of mine adversary, my evil heart of unbelief! How earnest, how unwearied in your applications to your Prophet for heavenly light and wisdom! The incessant prayer of blind Bartimeus was then yours, and so was the gracious answer which the Lord returned to him; you received your spiritual sight. And O! what saw you then? The sacred book unsealed! Your sins blotted out as a cloud! The glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ; and "the kingdom of heaven open to all believers!"

Then, and not till then, you could say from the heart, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ

came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Then you could cry out with his first disciples, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! 1 John iii. 1. We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, whom, having not seen, we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls. Gal. iii. 26; 1 Peter i. 8. We trusted in him, and are helped; therefore our heart danced for joy, and in our song will we praise him. Psa. xxviii. 8. To him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Rev. i. 5.

And this will also be your triumphant song, attentive reader, if, deeply conscious of your lost estate, you spread your guilt and misery before Him who came to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; and to comfort all that mourn, by giving them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Isa. lxi. 1. Your sorrow, it is true, may

endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning, the joy of God's salvation, and the pardon of your sins. Having much forgiven you, you will then love much, and admire in proportion, the riches of divine Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, and Power, that so graciously contrived, and so wonderfully executed the plan of your redemption. You will be ravished in experiencing that a condemned sinner can not only escape impending ruin, but enter into present possession of a spiritual paradise, where peace and joy blossom together, and whence welcome death, will, ere long, translate your triumphant soul to those unseen, unheard-of, inconceivable glories, which God hath prepared for them that love him. 1 Cor. ii. 9.

Nor will the blossoms of heavenly peace and joy only diffuse their divine fragrancy in your soul; all the fruits of holiness will grow together with them, to the glory of God, and the profit of mankind. And thou wilt not be the last, thou fair, thou blushing humility, to bend all the spreading branches of pride to the tree of righteousness. No, we can not be vain, or despisers of others, when we see that we are all corrupted, dying shoots, of the same corrupted, dead stalk; we can not be self-righteous, when we are persuaded that the best fruit which we can naturally produce, is only splendid sin, or vice colored over with the

specious appearance of virtue: we must lie prostrate in the dust, when we consider the ignominious cross, where our divine Surety hung, bled, and died, to ransom our guilty souls.

A genuine conviction of our corruption and demerit thus striking at the very root of our pride, necessarily fills our hearts with inexpressible gratitude for every favor we receive, gives an exquisite relish to the least blessing we enjoy, and teaches us to say with the thankful patriarch, I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies: and as it renders us grateful to God, and all our benefactors, so it makes us patient under the greatest injuries, resigned in the heaviest trials, glad to be reprov'd, willing to forgive the faults of others, open to acknowledge our own, disposed to sympathize with the guilty, tender-hearted toward the miserable, incapable of being offended at any one, and ready to do every office of kindness, even to the meanest of mankind.

Again: no sooner are we properly acquainted with our helplessness, than we give over leaning on an arm of flesh, and the broken reed of our own resolutions. Reposing our entire confidence in the living God, we fervently implore his continual assistance, carefully avoid temptations, gladly acknowledge that the help which is done upon the earth the Lord doeth it himself,

and humbly give him the glory of all the good that appears in ourselves and others.

Once more: as soon as we can discover our spiritual blindness, we mistrust our own judgment, feel the need of instruction, modestly repair to the experienced for advice, carefully search the Scriptures, readily follow their blessed directions, and fervently pray that no false light may mislead us out of the way of salvation.

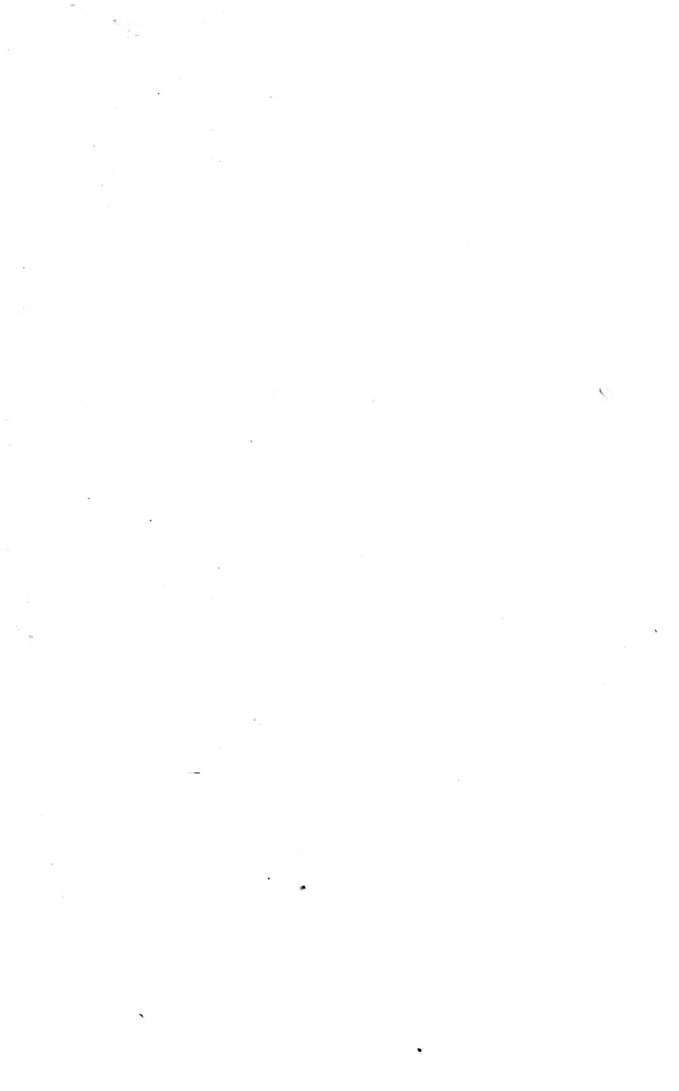
To conclude: a right knowledge that the crown is fallen from our head, will make us abominate sin, the cause of our ruin, and raise in us a noble ambition of regaining our original state of blissful and glorious righteousness. It will set us upon an earnest inquiry into, and a proper use of, all the means conducive to our recovery. Even the sense of our guilt will prove useful, by helping to break our obdurate hearts, by imbittering the baits of worldly vanities, and filling our souls with penitential sorrow. Before honor is humility. This happy humiliation makes way for the greatest exaltation; for thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite, to fill the hungry with good things, and beautify the meek with salvation." Isaiah lvii. 15.

If these advantages, which exceed the worth of earthly crowns, necessarily result from the proper knowledge of our corrupt and lost estate, who, but an infatuated enemy of his own soul, would be afraid of that self-science? who but an obstinate Pharisee would not esteem it, next to the knowledge of Christ, the greatest blessing which Heaven can bestow upon the self-destroyed, and yet self-conceited children of men? Careless reader, if thou art the person—if remaining unshaken in thy carnal confidence, and supposing thyself wiser than seven men that can render a reason, thou not only despisest the testimony of the sacred writers, and our pious reformers, laid before thee in the first part of this treatise, but disregardest the numerous arguments it contains, tramplest under foot both matter of fact and common sense, and remainest unaffected by the most dreadful consequences of self-ignorance on the one hand, and by the greatest advantages of self-knowledge on the other, I have done, and must take my leave of thee.

May the merciful and holy God, whose laws thou dost daily violate, whose word thou hourly opposest or forgettest, whose salvation thou dost every moment neglect, whose vengeance thou continually provokest, and whose cause I have attempted to plead, bear with thee and thy insults a little

longer! May his infinite patience yet afford thee some means of conviction more effectual than that which is at present in thy hands! Or, shouldst thou look into this labor of love once more, may it then answer a better purpose than to aggravate thy guilt, and enhance thy condemnation, by rendering the folly of thy unbelief more glaring, and, consequently, more inexcusable!

THE END.



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